

**MANIFESTATIONS OF RACE AND GENDER EQUITY POST-MERGER: A  
CASE STUDY OF A MERGER IN SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION**

by

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**To the most remarkable women of corn, Sophie Nyanisi N'wa-gatsisi Dhlomu,  
Nxalati Teleni Mawila and Nkhensani Rebecca Mnisi, Rock on!**

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

In 2001, South Africa's higher education system started grappling with issues relating to the transformation and possible restructuring of the institutional landscape. The Minister of Education's appointment of a National Working Group (NWG) in May 2001, following the release of the National Plan for Higher Education in March 2001, signaled the beginning of a process driven by the Ministry which culminated in mergers of postsecondary institutions. The South African government saw postsecondary education mergers as a means for achieving racial and gender equity.

The National Plan for Higher Education was a key document as it established several government goals for merged campuses. Among these goals were: reducing the number of higher education institutions; eliminating regional duplication; increasing the enrolment of students within the Sciences as opposed to the Humanities; increasing the ratios of black staff, students and females within institutions; funding institutions on the basis of a five year rolling plan and finally, tightening regulations pertaining to private higher education institutions (National Plan for Higher Education, 2001).

This case study is aimed at understanding how the Ministry's goals, particularly those of achieving race and gender equity, were manifest at a merged institution-

Metropolitan University<sup>1</sup> (henceforth referred to as MU) and to explain why different groups of administrators varied in their interpretations of events.

This study seeks to investigate the following research questions:

1. How are the goals of achieving race and gender equity, as articulated in the government National Plan for Higher Education, manifest at MU, an institution created by merging universities for whites and blacks that were established during the apartheid era?

The following sub-questions guide the analysis of the case:

- a. What were the race and gender equity goals, as stated in the government National Plan for Higher Education document?
- b. What specific steps did key administrators at the MU take to address race and gender equity and why do administrators say they proceeded in this way?
- c. How have administrators at the MU interpreted the government's National Plan for achieving race and gender equity?
- d. What administrative structures, policies and practices created in the first year were directed at achieving race and gender equity at MU?
- e. What challenges have administrators encountered during the first year-both from within and outside MU as they pursue racial and gender equity?
- f. What has been the impact of the merger on racial and gender equity, as reported in documents and as perceived by MU administrators?

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<sup>1</sup>This is a pseudonym. In this research, the names of the institutions that are party to the MU merger and their geographic location have been changed to protect their identity.

## **1.1 Rationale for the study**

The complex political, regulatory and technological changes that confront most organizations have made organizational change and adaptation a central research issue of the 1990s (Greenwood & Hinings, 1996). Higher education institutional mergers are a radical change process (Skodvin, 1999) that has become an increasingly common phenomenon across many higher education systems internationally (Harman and Harman, 2003). In fact, a brief look at recent literature suggests when mergers happen, change occurs in the original institutions' organizational activity and assets, human interplay-, staff, management, students and other stakeholders; financial structure; institutional identity; allocation of resources and factors of production; ownership structure; and legal incorporation of organization (Larsson, 1990; Marchildon, 1991; Got & Sanz, 2002; Lang 2002; Stewart, 2003; Parvinen, 2003). While mergers have been happening within higher education systems for at least three decades, scholars have paid little attention to studying the phenomenon. Whatever literature exists on mergers focuses largely on due diligence, human and cultural aspects and not on diversity within merged organizations (Skodvin, 1999, Lang 2002, Harman and Harman, 2003, Swanepoel, 2004).

Higher education institutional mergers warrant our attention for several reasons. From a theoretical perspective, mergers are of interest because they have unique characteristics that challenge the capabilities of extant higher education change theory to frame, describe and explain their causes, operation and outcomes (Martin and Samels, 1994; Swanepoel, 2004). Despite the very high cost of mergers in economic, curricular and human terms, there is a lack of experience on the part of the players, such as college

principals (Stewart, 2003). There is also an absence of well-founded evidence about mergers which creates a continued and greater need for those embarking on mergers to learn lessons from other sectors about the planning and implementation of the process (Stewart, 2003; Swanepoel, 2004).

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

The study has two key goals: to examine administrators' assumptions regarding the merger goals as articulated by the national ministry and their perceptions of how race and gender equity were approached during the merger and to explain why different groups of administrators varied in their interpretations of events. Critical race, power and merger theories are used to understand why administrators varied in their understanding of circumstances in MU and the goals to be achieved through the merger. The case identifies mechanisms implemented by administrators at MU as they pursued race and gender equity and the challenges they experienced in the first year of the merger as a result of policy choices and actions they took.

My goal in this research is to generate an interpretive understanding of a complex phenomenon, race and gender equity, within the post-apartheid societal context and a particular organizational environment. Consequently, I decided to use case study methods to capture aspects of both organizational processes and the societal conditions surrounding the phenomenon (Merriam, 1998). The case study approach is also appropriate for my study because it is an inductive-interpretive approach rather than the hypothetical-deductive research model (Van Maanen, 1998).

I chose to study the MU merger because of the unique circumstances and characteristics of the institutions involved. The MU merger resulted from (a) a combination of institutions across sectors (Trinity Technikon and Urban Ramsey University<sup>2</sup>); (b) an incorporation of two medium sized universities (prior to the MU merger, Vermont Scottsville and Erlington were incorporated into URU) into a large one, the MU; (c) a combination of institutions previously segregated by race, gender and ethnicity that were shaped by the legacy of apartheid (Mabokela, 2000; Subotzky, 1997; Keto, 1990; Barnard, 2005); and (d) institutions which had different peripheral agencies lobbying for their interests, the South African University Vice-Chancellor's Association (SAUVCA) and the Committee of Technikon Principals (CTP). All these institutional characteristics have the potential to affect administrators' perceptions of the situation and their decisions (Jansen, Bandi, Chalufu, Lethoko, Schoole & Soobrayan, 2002).

### **1.3 Overview of the study**

I used observations, interviews and document analysis to track the activities, events, processes, norms and organizational structure changes of the MU merger. The findings of this study provide a rich understanding of administrators' interpretations of the government's goals for achieving racial and gender equity, the organizational structures, policies and practices they implemented and the challenges they faced. What emerges from this study is an understanding of the complexity of the merger of racially segregated South African institutions, how time-consuming and rife with racial tension and gender wars it can be. These mergers require careful planning and political maneuvering to succeed. Further, this case reveals how the race, gender, current institutional position and

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<sup>2</sup> Not real names or locations.

previous institutional affiliation shaped the experiences and interpretations of MU administrators. While the findings of this case are not generalizable across all mergers of racially segregated institutions, it offers critical insights on the preparation that one institution, the MU, went through to consolidate its functions, staff, policies, processes, mission and vision. This case provides insights that may guide efforts by others to identify, analyze and transform the structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions within institutions of higher learning.

At beginning of Chapter One, I explain the rationale and purpose of the study, and lay out the main research questions and sub-questions that are used to guide the data collection. In Chapter Two, I describe the South African national and higher education policy contexts, establishing the significance of this study. In Chapter Three, I briefly review what is currently known about mergers in higher education, identifying the challenges and issues embedded in the merger. I also construct a theoretical framework for studying the merger of previously segregated institutions by drawing upon critical race theory and feminist theory. The theoretical framework serves to guide the examination of respondents' perceptions of the merger events and process.

Chapter Four offers a detailed discussion of the methods used for the study, elaborating the rationales for using the case study method, data collection, and data analysis process. Chapter Five reports the merger events as recounted in official documents and factual accounts. The chapter is divided into two sections, the pre- and post-merger phases, showing: (a) what the institutions were like before the merger; (b) the structures and process designed and put in place while the institutions were still

separate legal entities (transitional phase); and (c) the key events during this time (integration phase).

Chapter Six reports the findings of the study. I begin this chapter by presenting the context for the merger, following it with a detailed narrative of the integration process. Chapter Seven offers an interpretation of the findings. The discussions are structured according to the conceptual framework developed previously. Finally, in Chapter 8, I summarize the findings from this study, discuss their implications for theory as well as for practitioners, and revisit some of the methodological challenges that this study has presented.

## CHAPTER 2

### SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

In 1948, the National Party (NP) came into power in the Republic of South Africa. What followed was a harder life for the natives, propelled by a policy of racial exclusion<sup>3</sup> and separate development, *apartheid* (Reddy, 2004). In 1953 the Republic of South Africa's Minister of Native Affairs, Hendrik Verwoerd, took the floor in Parliament in Cape Town, to make the case for legislation restricting the quality of schools serving Africans. In his speech, he said:

“Racial relations cannot improve if the wrong type of education is given to Natives” he declared. “They [Africans] cannot improve if the result of Native education is the creation of frustrated people who, as a result of the education they received, have expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa do not allow to be fulfilled immediately” (Sparks, 1990, p.96).

The Afrikaaner-dominated Parliament accepted Verwoerd's arguments and approved the Bantu Education Act of 1953, which asserted government control of church-run schools and forbade African teachers from criticizing the government or

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<sup>3</sup> The racial classification terms used in this paper carry particular historical undertones specific to the South African context. The author acknowledges that these terms are contentious particularly as South Africa attempts to shed its legacy of apartheid and carve a new identity as a democratic country. As vestiges of the apartheid past are still pervasive in institutions of higher education, these terms are used to facilitate a concise discussion. In the context of this paper African refers to people of indigenous ancestry. Colored refers to South Africans of mixed heritage, usually Dutch, African, Malay and Khoisan heritage. Indian refers to people of Indian descent, and White refers to South Africans of European descent. The term Black is used to refer collectively to Africans, Coloreds, and Indians.

school authorities. In 1958 Hendrik Verwoerd became the Prime Minister of the Republic and he would rule the country with an iron fist, inculcating a repressive governance system. His intense hatred for Africans resulted in him being perceived as a chief architect and personal symbol of apartheid, the cornerstone of the apartheid era” (Denoon, 1986, p.198). In 1959 parliament passed the Extension of University Education Act, which provided for the establishment of African higher education institutions as part of the Bantustan self-government (Bantu Self-Governing Act of 1958). Hendrik Verwoerd’s term as Prime Minister ended when he was assassinated in Parliament 1966. J.B. Vorster took over the reigns and continued to advance the segregation agenda established and reinforced during Verwoerd’s years in power.

The 16<sup>th</sup> of June 1976, became a momentous day in the history of the Republic of South Africa. An estimated 15,000 school children took to the streets of Soweto,<sup>4</sup> to protest an aggressive government policy that required that half of all classes should be taught in Afrikaans. Students who saw Afrikaans as the language of the oppressor, launched the demonstrations over the admonition of parents and teachers. The government dispatched a small armed unit of white policemen who were ordered to halt the protesters. Students jeered and waved fits, displaying posters with slogans such as Afrikaans stinks, away with it; We are a new generation we’ve got no time for boers<sup>5</sup>; We want equal education, as tear gas was fired, rocks and sticks were thrown. Police opened fire with live ammunition and Hector Peterson was the first student killed when a

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<sup>4</sup> The South West Township (SOWETO). A historically black townships south west of Johannesburg. Propelled by the increasing eviction of black Africans by city and state authorities. Black Africans had been drawn to work on the gold mines that sprang up after 1886. From the start they were accommodated in separate areas on the outskirts of Johannesburg, Soweto, was one of these areas.

<sup>5</sup> Boer is the Dutch (and Afrikaans) word for, farmer. It came to denote the descendants of the Afrikaans-speaking pastoralists of the eastern Cape frontier in South Africa as well as those who left the Cape Colony to settle in the Orange Free State, Transvaal and to a lesser extent Natal.

shot hit him in the back (Sparks, 1990, p.302). Pictures of the scenes of this incident, later referred to as the Soweto Uprising, would become a lasting visual symbol of the struggle against apartheid. An image from these pictures is engraved on a marble monument at the site of the incident and the apartheid museum. The death of Hector Peterson and several others on that day had a domino effect in other black residential areas across the Republic. It was no longer a march against Afrikaans as a language of instruction but one against the apartheid policy, a march not only for school children but for every parent, worker and civilian who was regarded as a stranger in their native land. The fact such a pivotal protest happened and was initiated by students angry with government education policy demonstrates how important schools and students were to the apartheid government and the struggle against it (Fiske & Ladd, 20004).

In 1983, the constitution divided the national parliament into three chambers with separate representation of White voters (House of Assembly), Coloreds voters (House of Representatives), and Indian voters (House of Delegates). There was no provision for representation for Africans. In the same year, provincial education departments became sub-departments of the Department of Education and Culture, Administration: House of Assembly and higher education became the responsibility of the Minister in this portfolio. The Department of National Education assisted the Minister of National Education in determining the South African education policy (CHE, 2004). The arrangements for higher education mentioned here would have implications for access. All higher education institutions were designated for a particular race, and students from other racial groups could not be admitted without special permits obtained by the higher education institution from its administering government department (CHE, 2004). In

addition, the different legal status and racial basis of higher education institutions led to complex differentiation in governance and funding arrangements (CHE, 2004).

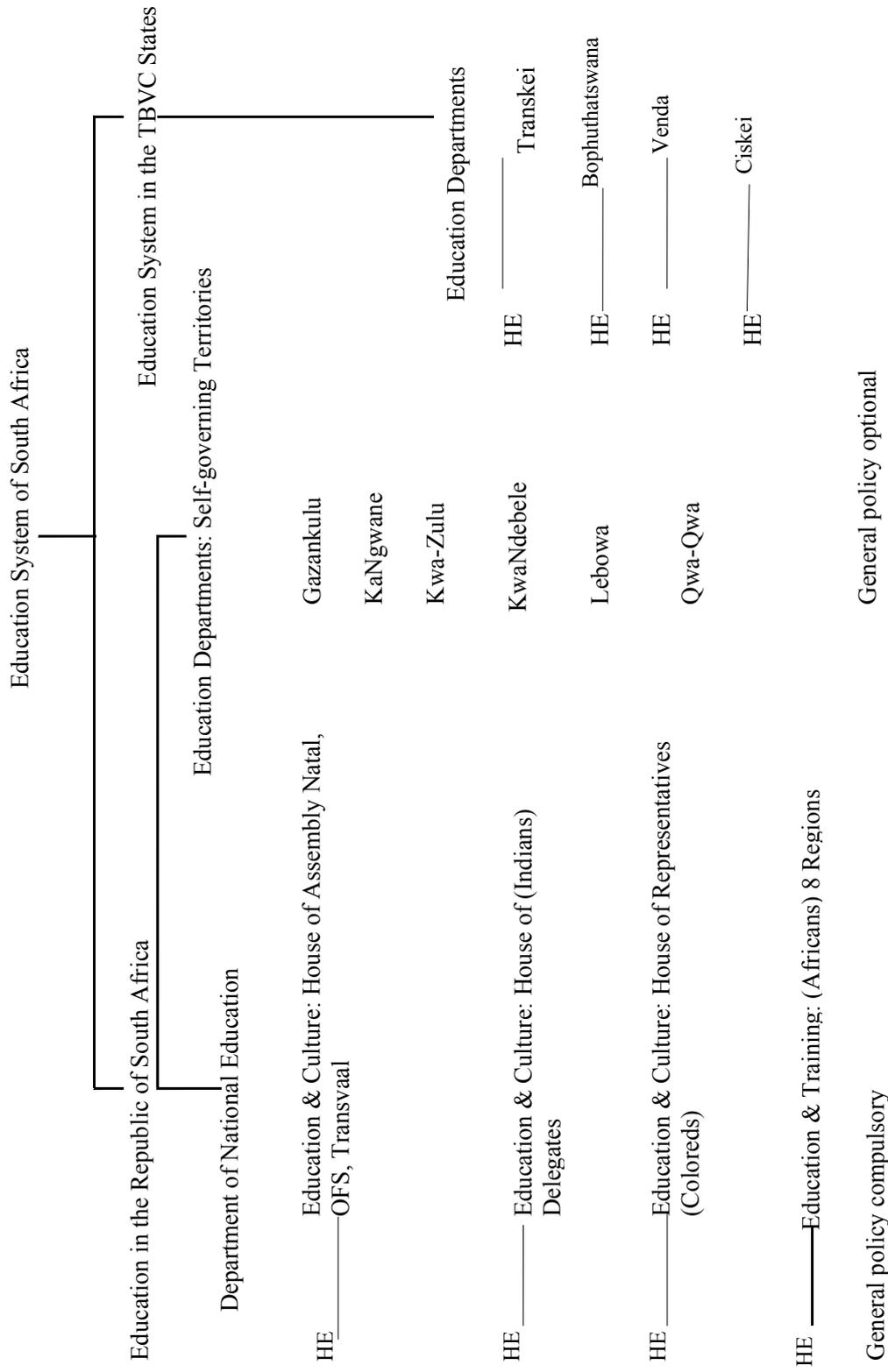
In 1984, the Provincial Departments were responsible for providing all education except that defined by law as higher education (technical colleges, technikons, and universities). In 1968 the administration of Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) was decentralized into the Bantustan regions<sup>6</sup> (CHE, 2004). In 1967, an act of Parliament championed the emergence of Technikons from former Colleges of Advanced Technical Education (CATEs). After investigating the training of engineering technicians, the Goode Committee recommended that ‘technikons’, as CATEs would now be called, should train technicians and technologists, a function that would parallel, but be separate from, that served by universities (CHE, 2004). Technikons would also be distinct from colleges, which focused on practical training in non-technology fields. Thus, in policy terms, science and the development of knowledge would be the domain of the university, while technology and its application would be the domain of the Technikon (CHE, 2004). Technikons would not offer degrees (Mabizela, 2002). Higher Education was the responsibility of the Department of National Education (CHE, 2004, p.22). A second division was made between institutional types, such as technikons, universities and colleges (see Figure 1.1). The relationship of universities to apartheid society was highly particularized in legal and policy terms. Legally, each university was a ‘corporation’ founded by an act of Parliament, meaning its functions would be prescribed

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<sup>6</sup>Bantustan was any tribal reserve for indigenous black inhabitants of South Africa and South-West Africa (now Namibia), as part of the racial segregation policies of apartheid. Ten bantustans were established in South Africa, and ten in neighboring South-West Africa (then under South African administration), for the purpose of concentrating there members of designated ethnic groups, thus making each of those territories ethnically homogeneous. In the Republic of South Africa, Bophuthatswana, Gazankulu, Venda, Transkei and Ciskei (also known as the TBVC states) were the designated bantustans.

and could be terminated by the state (CHE, 2004, p24). In policy terms, a university was “an independent sphere of social relationship”, separate from the spheres of the state, religion and other societal spheres, and for as long as it existed, the state could not interfere directly in its affairs (Cooper & Subotzky, 2001, p.4-10; Cloete, Fehnel et al. 2002, p.64-85). In turn, the university could not interfere in the affairs of the state by, for example, rejecting the state’s designation of it for a particular race group (Mabizela, 2002).

**FIGURE 2.1: The Public and Higher Education System during apartheid**



Source: Adopted from the Department of National Education, 1993

The Apartheid system began to crumble in the mid-1980s, due to increasingly effective mass resistance within South Africa, economic circumstances, international pressure and the imposition of economic sanctions (Louw, 2004). Increasing civil unrest and township violence led the government to declare a state of emergency on 20 July 1985. Then President P.W. Botha declared a state of emergency in 36 magisterial districts and detained about 2,436 people under the Internal Security Act of 1985. This act gave police and the military sweeping powers. The government could implement curfews controlling the movement of people. The president could rule by decree without referring to the constitution or to parliament.

By 1988, there were thirteen HDIs in the Republic of South Africa. Of these, five were vocational training institutions such as Mangosuthu Technikon; Border Technikon; Cape Peninsula Technikon; Vaal Triangle Technikon and Technikon Northern Transvaal. The other eight were universities such as the University of Fort Hare, University of Venda, University of the North, University of Bophuthatswana, University of Transkei, University of the Western Cape, the Medical University of South Africa and University of Zululand. The Minister of Education and Training administered all African education including historically advantaged institutions (HAIs).

## **2.1 Changes in the South African society**

The social, economic and political system of apartheid was self-consciously racist and unequal (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, Enslin, 1986). Starting from the tradition of racial segregation present in South Africa throughout the colonial period, apartheid systematically expanded and enforced the privileges of white South Africans, who in

1993 accounted for less than 12% of the population, at the expense of the majority. Under apartheid, “whites enjoyed good education, ready employment and through racially exclusive democratic structures, a sense of control of their individual and collective destinies” (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p. 2). In contrast, black people (Indian, colored and Africans) lived in an essentially oppressive and dehumanizing environment in which their every move was restricted, education and vocational opportunities were severely circumscribed, and they were reminded daily, in big ways and little, of their relative powerlessness (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). The apartheid national policies permeated society and dictated how people lived their day to day lives. For example, black people were not allowed to run businesses or professional practices in those areas designated as white areas (i.e. all economically significant towns and commercial areas) without a permit. They were excluded from living or working in white areas and were forcibly moved to the black homelands. There, they could set up businesses and professional practice. Transport systems and civil facilities were segregated. Black buses became known as *green* buses because they had a green marker on the front windscreen and stopped at black bus stops. White buses stopped at white ones. First and second class train carriages were for whites only. The third class carriages were for blacks only. Throughout apartheid, hospitals and ambulances were segregated. The white hospitals were generally of very good standard with well-educated staff and ample funds, while black hospitals were seriously understaffed and under funded. Many black areas were without a hospital at all. Black people were not allowed to employ white people. Although trade unions for black and coloreds (mixed race) workers had existed since the early 20th century, it was not until the 1980s reforms that membership in a trade union by black workers became

legal. Black police were not allowed to arrest whites. Blacks were not allowed to buy hard liquor (although this was relaxed later). Black areas rarely had plumbing or electricity. Public beaches were racially segregated, with the best ones reserved for whites (white beaches were typically developed; whereas black beaches were situated in remote areas with little or no development). Public swimming pools and libraries were segregated, and there were practically no pools nor libraries for blacks. Pedestrian bridges, drive-in cinema parking spaces, graveyards, parks, pedestrian crossings, public toilets and taxis were also segregated.

After several years of protracted negotiations between National Party government (NP) officials and leaders of the black liberation movement, South Africans of all races went to the poll to vote in the country's truly democratic election. On the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1994, the African National Congress (ANC) won the national elections. The four decades of Afrikaaner domination and apartheid policies had come to an end. The NP had lost. Here starts the ambitious task of transforming the rigid and inequitable political, economic and social structures fashioned during the apartheid era into a democratic society which offered South Africans of all races the opportunity to participate as citizens, workers and fulfilled individuals. The reform of the education system would be a very crucial task. An estimated 1 billion people around the world were glued to the televisions, witnessing Nelson Mandela, at the Union Building, Pretoria, take an oath of office as the first black president of democratic South Africa (Fiske & Ladd, 2004). This marked the orderly transfer of political power from white Afrikaaners to black control.

Mandela's inauguration was an extraordinary moment in modern history (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p.1). In his address, Mandela laid out a vision for the new South Africa that

would “reinforce humanity’s belief in justice, strengthen its confidence in the nobility of the human soul and sustain all our hopes for a glorious life for all” (Sampson, 1999, p.483-5). The constitution of the new nation, adopted on an interim basis in 1993, endorsed officially in 1996, guaranteed to South Africans of all races “the right to a basic education, including adult education” (Fiske & Ladd, 2004, p.2). Since 1994, changes have been achieved in different spheres of the society. While a discussion of the various changes is beyond the scope of this dissertation, a few examples from the health sector serve to illustrate changes in areas other than education. Bearing in mind that the Government of National Unity had established a parliament Act of 1997 on the *Transformation of the Health System* which aimed at eliminating discriminatory structures and practices in the public health system, the following summary, not exhaustive, reflects a few of the significant key achievements:

- 14 fragmented and racially segregated health administrations, inherited from the apartheid system, were consolidated into a single national public health system with 9 provincial departments. These consolidations produced comprehensive national health service that emphasizes the health needs of the previously disadvantaged people, especially in the homelands
- The primary care infrastructure was expanded, 700 new clinics have been built or had major upgrading. Of these 495 were built from scratch. 2298 existing clinics have received new equipment and were upgraded while 124 new visiting point were built and 125 mobile clinics purchased.
- The government now provides primary nutrition services which have benefited 5 million children, especially in the black communities. There is also an Integrated

Management of Childhood Illnesses program (IMCI) with training offered to health workers. From these programs, employment opportunities have been created for many black people (Department of Health, 2000).

## **2.2 Specific changes in the South African Higher Education system**

By 1994 higher education policy featured prominently in national debates and discussion that focused on creating an equitable, economically developed and democratic South Africa. A significant consensus was reached on areas of education policy including “the type of system desired, the need for greater accountability, increased government supervision and protection of major aspects of institutional autonomy” (Moja & Hayward, 2000, p.336). There was also agreement about the principles-such as increased access, redress, equality, and high quality-that would underpin the new system. There were contested areas such as, “national governance structures, limits on institutional autonomy, and whether or not there would be fundamental differences between the missions of what were then distinct types of institutions. Moja and Hayward (2000) aptly summarize the dilemma in asking, would the new single system lead to homogenization of institutions or would there continue to be marked differences between universities, technikons and colleges?

Several demands for greater participation in policy making had been made prior to the 1994 elections. A central concern for the anti-apartheid struggle was to transform the system of higher education in South Africa to ensure that all citizens have access. According to Moja and Hayward (2000), participants in the Mass Democratic Movement of the late 1980s and early 1990s were very suspicious of policy experts who did not

share the same political views and were from the existing departments of education. These individuals were seen as fully steeped in the values that maintained the apartheid structure of higher education. Thus, these individuals were seen as incapable of both understanding the needed changes and of providing useful expertise or assistance to the transformation. Thus, criteria were developed by the African National Congress (ANC), for inclusion in the policy making process: (a) a previous record of research and publication; (b) willingness and ability to take the additional workload without compensation; and (c) commitment to transforming the higher education system into one based on equity, access, justice and quality (Moja & Hayward, 2000). This culminated in policy research conducted under the auspices of the National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI), the policy forum of the Union of Democratic University Staff Associations (UDUSA), and the Centre for the Educational Policy Development (CEPD), all linked to the ANC.

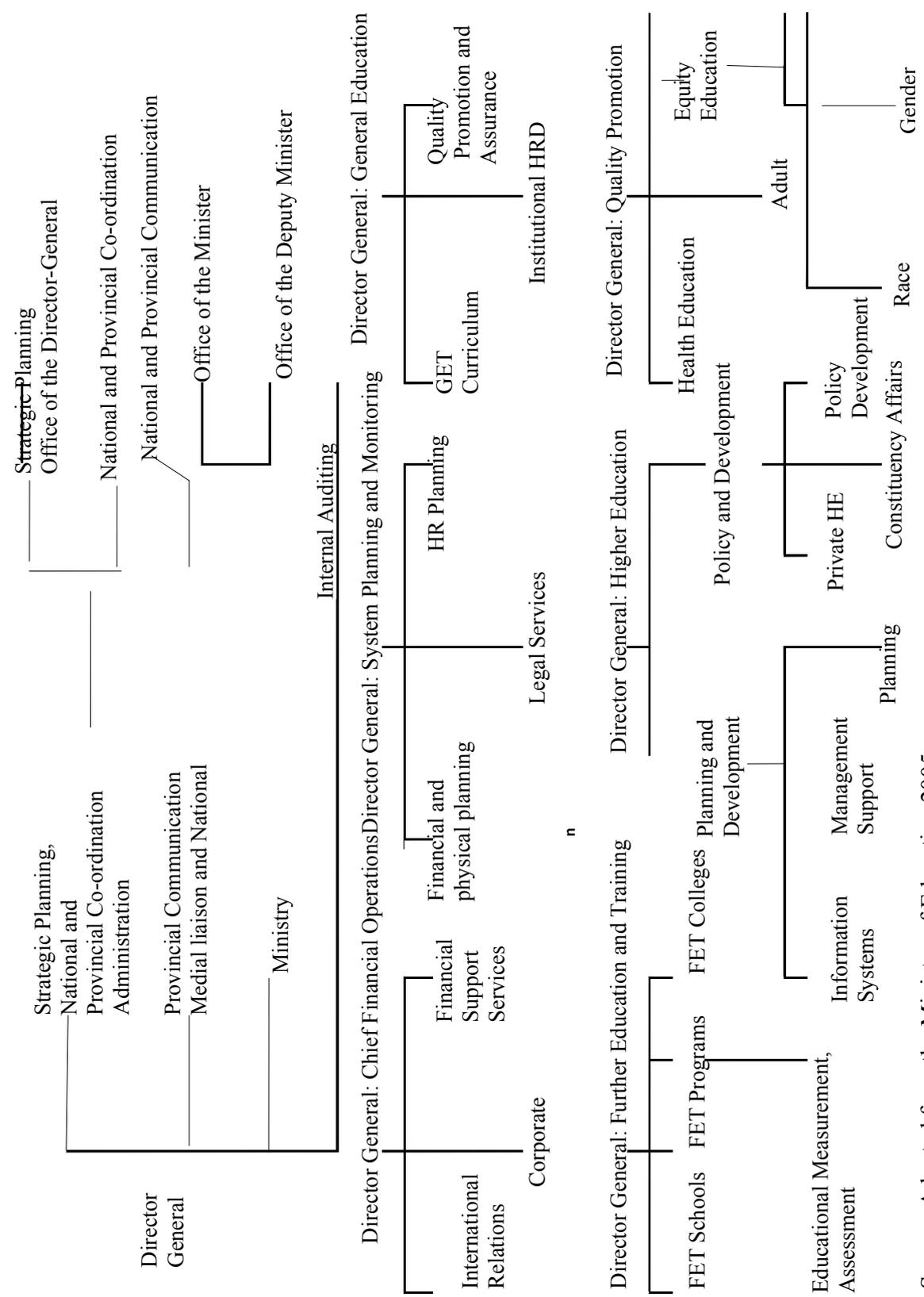
Prior to and congruent with the 1994 elections, most Historically Disadvantaged Institutions (HDIs) and some Historically Advantaged Institutions (HAIs) had already started engaging in anti-apartheid activities (Moja & Hayward, 2000; CHE, 2004). In such institutions policy management bodies and student organizations were debating policy options and putting forward proposals for consideration by the government. These institutions expected a new democratically elected government to usher in equal social, political, economic and educational opportunities for all citizens. This would be a far cry from the stifling government control of institutions, student protests and direct combat with the police. Moja and Hayward (2000) noted that there was some inaction and quietness, especially among longtime critics of apartheid at the “liberal universities”, who

had earlier taken brave public stands against the apartheid policy and the segregation of higher education institutions (p.337). The ANC developed a national educational policy framework, and pledged an ANC-led government that would appoint a national commission to formulate recommendations for transforming higher education (CHE, 2004).

All of these initiatives emphasized five principles for higher education: “non-racialism, non-sexism, democracy, redress and a unitary system” (CHE, 2004, p.43, DoE, 1997). Some of these initiatives also stressed the balance that the higher education policy would need to achieve between equity and redress on one hand, and between quality and development on the other. It is important to note that the policy framework did not explicitly address policy trade-offs that might be needed, and it did not mention concrete strategies for redress within the higher education system (CHE, 2004). In 1994, the ANC announced the draft policy for education and training. After several revisions, debate and comments by both the public and parliament, the National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996 was concluded. This bill gives the Minister of Education the power to determine national norms and standards for education planning, provision, governance, monitoring and evaluation. This bill also transformed the multi-tier education structure of apartheid into a single national education system. This single system is organized and managed by the National Department of Education and the provincial departments (see Figure 1.2). Simultaneously, the South Africa Schools Act 48 of 1996 was established to further decentralize responsibility for compulsory school level education by delegating the governance of public schools to democratically elected school governing bodies

consisting of parents, educators, non-educator staff and (in secondary schools) learner (CHE, 2004).

**FIGURE 2.2: The Education System of a democratic South Africa in 2005**



Source: Adopted from the Ministry of Education 2005

Several statutory bodies were established post-apartheid. The Council of Education Ministers (CEM) was one such body. It consists of the Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Education and nine provincial executive council members (MECs) for education. This body meets regularly to discuss the promotion of national education policy, share information and views on all aspects of education in South Africa and co-ordinate action on matters of mutual interest (DoE, 1997). The Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) consists of the Director-General of the Education Department, his deputies in the Department of Education and the heads of provincial education departments (DoE, 2002). This committee oversees the development of a national education system, coordinating administrative action on matters of mutual interest and advising the Department on a range of specific matters relating to the proper functioning of the national education system (DoE, 1997). In June 2002, the South African Certification Council was replaced by UMALUSI, a statutory council which reports directly to the Minister of Education. This council is responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of national qualifications, norms and standards of curriculum. UMALUSI is also responsible for the assessment of public and independent schools; academic and technical colleges; Adult Board of Education and Training (ABET) institutions and private providers; and for issuing certificates to candidates when programs are completed (CHE, 2004).

In democratic South Africa, the plan was to create a seamless education system that includes the integration of early child development (ECD), General Education and Training (GET), ABET, Further Education and Training (FET) and Higher Education, through the development of the National Qualification Framework (NQF). Thus in 1995,

a statutory body called, the South African National Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established and reports directly to the Ministers of Education and Labor (CHE, 2004). SAQA via the NQF ensures that, South African Qualifications meet high standards and are internationally comparable. SAQA is charged with overseeing the (a) development of the National Qualification Framework and (b) formulating policy and criteria for the registration of bodies responsible for establishing education and training standards, accrediting bodies responsible for monitoring and auditing achievements in terms of such standards and qualifications (DoE, 1997).

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) was established by parliament (Act 101 of 1997), to be responsible for advising the Minister of Education on all aspects of higher education. In particular, it advises the Minister on funding arrangements, language policy and the appropriate shape and size of the system (CHE, 2002). It is also responsible for designing and implementing a system for quality assurance in higher education. The CHE promotes student access to higher education, publishes an annual report on the state thereof and convenes an annual summit for stakeholders (CHE, 2004). This Council also has executive responsibility for quality assurance through its permanent subcommittee, the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). In 2001, the HEQC was awarded “Education and Training Assurer” status<sup>7</sup> by SAQA (CHE, 2004, p.24).

The *Education White Paper 3: A Programme for the Transformation of higher Education* and the Higher Education Act of 1997 set the tone for future changes and provided the policy and legislative framework for the transformation of higher education

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<sup>7</sup> This means that HEQC has been assigned the responsibility, by SAQA, to monitor and audit the level of achievement of national standards or qualifications offered by providers and to which specific functions have been assigned by SAQA.

in South Africa (DoE, 2001). Under the Higher Education Act of 1997, the role of higher education in the South Africa education system is three-fold:

- Human resource development-the mobilization of human talent and potential through lifelong learning to contribute to the social, economic, cultural and intellectual life of a rapidly-changing society;
- Skills training- the training and provision of person power to strengthen the country's enterprise, services and infrastructure; and
- Production, acquisition and application of new knowledge-national growth and continuous technological improvement and innovation, driven by well-organized, vibrant research and development system, which integrates the research and training capacity of higher education with the needs of industry and of social reconstruction.

The *National Plan for Higher Education*, released in March 2001, established targets for the shape and size of the higher education system, including overall growth; participation rates; institutional and program mixes; equity and efficiency goals (DoE, 2001). This document also outlined a process and signposts for the development of institutional plans. The proposals in the Plan were to:

- Increase higher education participation from 15% to 20%
- Shift the balance of enrollments between humanities, business and commerce, engineering and technology, in the next 5 to 10 years, from the current ratios of 49:26:25 to 40:30:30 respectively

- Establish student equity targets with emphasis on programs in which black and female students are underrepresented and develop strategies to ensure equity outcomes
- Develop employment equity plans with clear targets for rectifying race and gender inequities
- Achieve institutional diversity through the approval of distinct mission and academic program profiles for each university and technikon
- Determine the academic program mix of individual institutions on the basis of their current program profiles, as well as demonstrated capacity to add new programs
- Link the redress of historically black institutions to agreed missions and program profiles, including developmental strategies and capacity
- Loosely maintain the existing mission and program differentiation between technikons and universities, for the next five years, at the least
- Dedicate a single institution to distance education, to be established through the merger of the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the incorporation of the distance education campus of the Vista University
- Fund research through a separate formula based on research output, including, at a minimum, master's and doctoral graduates and research publication
- Allocate earmarked funds to build research capacity, including scholarships to promote postgraduate enrolment; and

- Restructure the institutional landscape through collaboration at the regional level in program development, delivery and rationalization of small and costly programs

To kick start the process of implementing the National Plan, the Minister of Education appointed the National Working Group (NWG) to advise him on restructuring the institutional landscape of the higher education system (CHE, 2004). Thus, the NWG investigated the feasibility of providing higher education by consolidating and reducing the number of institutions (Professor, S.J. Saunders and Miss E, Gillard, personal interviews<sup>8</sup>, October 2005). The NWG report was released in February 2002, and was subsequently approved in May of the same year by the Cabinet.

Baldrige, Curtis, Eckel & Riley (2000) suggest that any studies of higher education change must embrace and be cognizant of the general social environment and context within which such change happens. Furthermore, scholars agree that while mergers continue to become more common in the postsecondary education sector, they are volatile and traumatic events for most organizations and their employees (Abbott, 1996; Harman and Harman, 2003; Burkhardt, 1994; Martin & Samel, 1994; Rowley, 1997; Fielden, 1991; Mahony, 1995). Governments use mandated mergers to achieve major restructuring and to address problems of institutional fragmentation, lack of financial and academic viability, falling student demand, competition, low administrative efficiency and quality (Harman and Harman, 2003; Lang, 2003; Deetman, 1983; White paper on Higher Education and the Higher Education Act of 1997). Forced mergers in

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<sup>8</sup> Both were members of the National Working Group. Saunders would later become the Ministerial appointed Chairman of Council for the merger that resulted in the new Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

particular introduce a different and more complex environment within which change is to happen. It is against the background of dramatic changes in national policies and practices that this case study examines how government goals for race and gender equity manifest themselves within a university created by mandated mergers, for these changes are at the heart of the transformation and restructuring of the higher education landscape.

### **2.3 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, I outlined the historical socio-political background for higher education in South Africa system that was originally founded upon the apartheid policy led by the National Party Regime (NP). I have shown that there has been a political shift since the African National Congress (ANC) gained power leading the country through its first democratically elections. Subsequent to winning the elections, the ANC government embarked on nation-wide revamp of governing structure, policies and the economy that would usher a dispensation of non-racialism, non-sexism, power-sharing and desegregated public services. The restructuring of educational institutions constitutes one of the ANC's programs. Hence mergers were the means through which the newly elected government would seek to eliminate the racial divide between historically white and black institutions; create a balance in the race and gender compositions of academic institutions and eliminate duplication with the higher education sector by streamlining academic programs. In the next chapter, I discuss the merger literature that informs this study.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter I map out the literature that I use to analyze the case study of the MU merger. Three specific bodies of literature are covered: merger theory, critical race theory, policy and practice theory and feminist theory. These theories were chosen because they fill a gap in the study of mergers between racially segregated higher education institutions. Critical race theory is relevant for this case study because it offers insights, perspectives and research methods to identify and analyze the structural and cultural aspects of education that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions (Solorzano & Yosso, 2000). Feminist theory is important because it entails exploring the relationship between gendered employment, family and household institutions, and state and public policies (Figart, 2005). Feminist approaches “demonstrate the integrated analysis of economic, social and political institutions in maintaining discrimination” (Figart, 1997, p. 514). Within the chapter, I outline the tenets of these theories and draw attention to those elements that are important to consider for my research.

#### **3.1 Defining a merger**

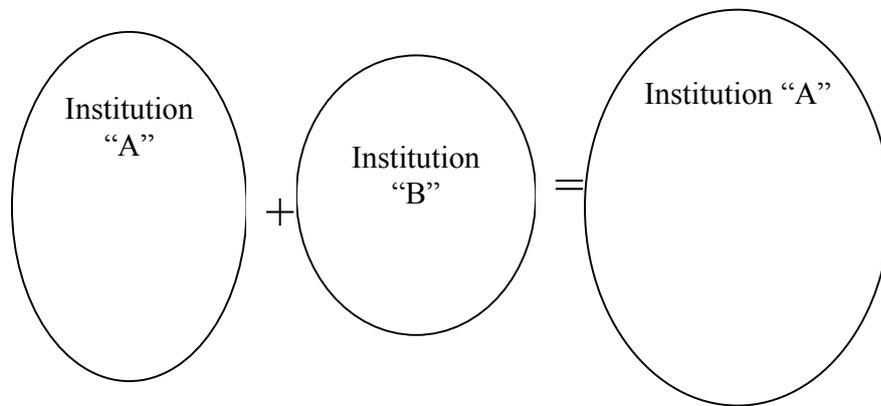
A merger is “an amalgamation of two or more separate institutions that surrender their legal and culturally independent identities in favor of a new joint identity under the control of a single governing body. During this process by and large all assets liabilities and responsibilities of the former institutions are transferred to either a continuing or to a

new institution” (Goedegebuure, 1992, p16). Mergers can happen through mutual negotiation between organizations (Weston, Sui & Johnson, 2001) where neither party can be seen at the ‘acquirer’ (Vaara, 2000, p.82). Mergers can also result in a situation where the identity of an acquiring institution is maintained in the new organization (Scott, 1997).

The particular organizational merger to be achieved will have a major influence on the character of the merger process. It also shapes the kinds of difficulties experienced, the patterns of structures likely to emerge, and the likelihood of success (Harman & Harman, 2003). The most common type of mergers can be portrayed is a forced/mandated; consolidations/takeovers; single sector/cross-sector; two partner/multiple-partner; similar academic/business profile (‘horizontal’) and different academic/business profile (‘vertical’) mergers (Harman & Meek, 2002).

Martin and Samels (1994) suggested a typology for categorizing mergers. Their typology categorizes mergers into six common merger types: pure mergers; consolidations; transfer of assets; consortiums, federations and associations; and joint ventures and affiliations. Pure mergers involve the total absorption of one institution into another (Figure 3.1).

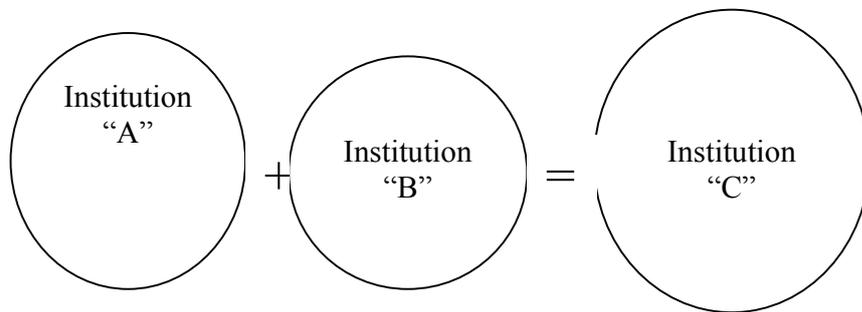
**FIGURE 3.1: A pure merger**



Adopted from text by Martin and Samels, (1995)

As demonstrated in Figure 3.1, the absorbed institution loses any independence and self-governance it once enjoyed. Consolidations on the other hand, allow some aspects of the two institutions' to remain in the new entity (see Figure 3.2). When institutions transfer assets, the bulk of intrusiveness is centered upon the particular area being relinquished; other areas of the institutions remain autonomous. A transfer of assets is not a complete merger but rather a shift of resources such as individual schools, departments or programs (Figure 3.3).

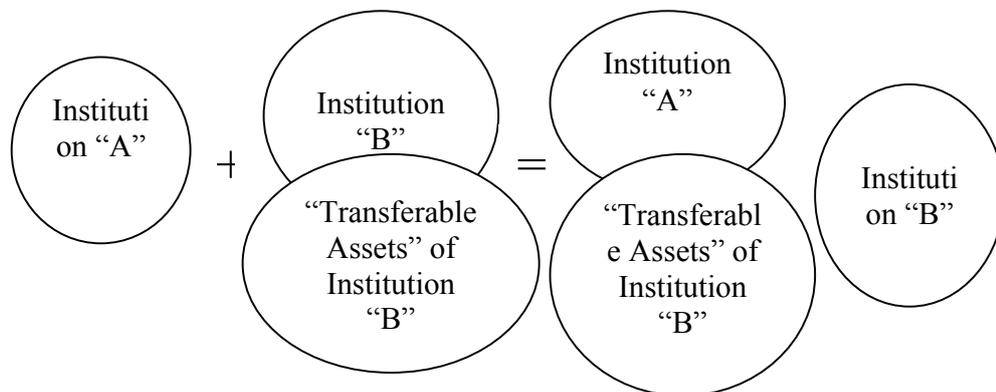
**FIGURE 3.2: A consolidation**



Adopted from text by Martin and Samels, (1995)

Occasionally, an institution will transfer its entire operations and become a separate school within a new, parent institution. Consortiums, federations, and associations utilize common resources such as library services, online education, or faculty to reduce operating costs (Figure 3.4).

**FIGURE 3.3: A transfer of assets**

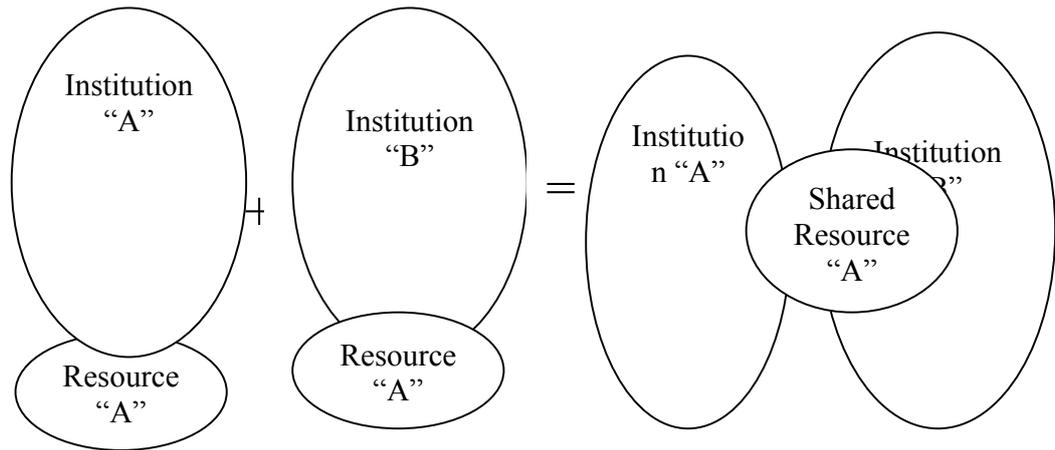


Adopted from text by Martin and Samels, (1995)

Similarly, joint ventures and affiliations also pool resources or procedures such as courses, tuition agreements and combined programs to benefit both programs (Figure

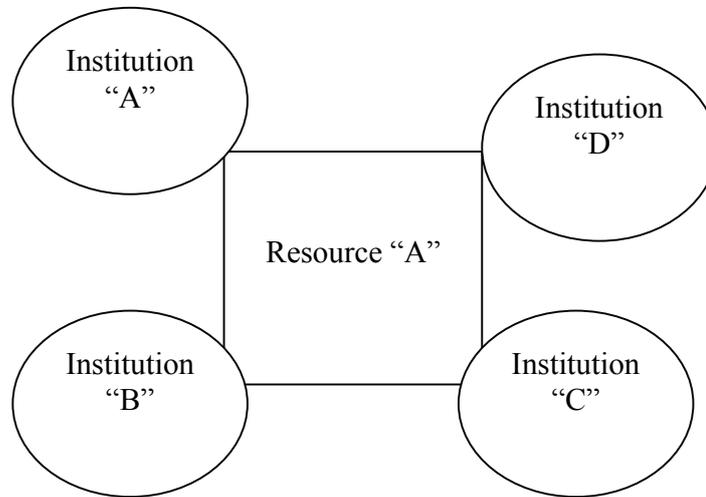
3.5). As depicted in Figure 3.5, Joint ventures differ from consortiums, federations, and associations in their ephemeral nature and indiscernible links.

**FIGURE 3.4: Consortiums, federations and associations**



Adopted from text by Martin and Samels, (1995)

**FIGURE 3.5: Joint ventures**



Adopted from text by Martin and Samels, (1995)

#### Voluntary versus mandated mergers

Central questions concerning mergers are; who initiates the mergers? Are they forced or voluntary? By definition, a voluntary merger happens when the institutions themselves have instigated the merger, while a forced merger happens when the instigator of the merger is external to the institutions (Skodvin, 1999). Nevertheless, it may be difficult sometimes to ascertain whether the merger is voluntary or forced. This is because circumstances often do force the need for voluntary mergers. In most countries, mergers have in part been involuntary, in the sense that educational authorities have initiated them (see Table 3.1). Although authorities regard mergers to be a means to restructure higher education systems, they use different incentives to implement such reforms.

The South African mergers are a good example of a forced merger and as such present a challenge for institutional leaders who must integrate campus cultures that are “historically and symbolically uncomplimentary” (Harman & Meek, 2002, p.3). The varying cultural backgrounds of the partner institutions are likely to collide and consequently become a powerful force for disintegration. International studies have shown that merging culturally different institutions warrant expert leadership in order to reduce the damaging cultural conflict and develop new loyalties, higher morale and a sense of community within a newly merged institution (Harman & Meek, 2002). Hence as the merger plays itself out, the “human dimension” will test the capacity and resolve of institutional leaders (Hay & Fourie, 2002).

**TABLE 3.1 : An overview of forced mergers and voluntary mergers in a few countries**

Countries	Forced	Voluntary
Australia (1960s 'the binary system'; 1987-90 'the unified System')	X	
USA (1960-1997)	X	X
Canada (the reform of college education; the creation of Cegeps in the 1960s. The establishment of a new regional network university in the 1960s)	X	X
Norway (the state college reform in 1994)	X	
Sweden (the university and college reform in 1977, and the Establishment of Mid Sweden University in 1993)	X	X
The Netherlands (HBO reform 1983-87, and the new voluntary mergers from 1988)	X	X
Belgium (Flemish college reform 1994)	X	
Germany ( <i>Gesamthochschulen</i> during the 1970s, <i>Fachhochschulen</i> during the 1980s)	X	
Finland (the polytechnic reform, 1991)	X	
South Africa (reform of Technikons and Universities 2001 And the incorporation of colleges of education into established universities 2001)	X	

Source: Skodvin, 1999, p. 67.

Mergers take place as both a reaction to educational policy and a result of competition among institutions (Skodvin, 1999). Similar to Australia and the Netherlands, the South African government threatened to withdraw state funding from institutions that refuses to comply (Dawkins, 1987, 1988; Deetman, 1983; White Paper on Higher Education and the Higher Education Act of 1997). Such forced mergers produce a master-servant type of dynamic between the powerful controller (government) and the powerless or controlled (the nationally centralized and mostly governmentally funded public higher education institutions). This situation, in turn, can produce very

hostile responses and resistance to change. Several scholars have demonstrated that in general, the announcement of the merger in South Africa came as a shock to the higher education community (Barnard, 2005; Mabokela & Mawila, 2005; Jansen et al, 2002; Hay & Fourie, 2002). To this effect, there was great misunderstanding, suspicion of the South African Government's motives and tension within the higher education community (students, administrators, academics etc).

#### Single versus cross-sectoral mergers

Mergers involve institutions from the same higher education sector. In the case of South Africa, the merger of the University of Potchefstroom, the University of the Bophuthatswana and the Sebokeng campus of Vermont University into the University of the Northwest is a good example. A merger may also happen between two public universities or two technikons, or they may involve institutions from different sectors- the MU is a good example of a cross-sectoral merger. By combining a Technikon, and University, the government essentially creates an opportunity for institutions to forge a joint identify regardless of their disparate mission and academic visions. And while such a combination presents an opportunity for a broad course offering for students, it also necessitates some major academic architecture and curriculum overhaul for the MU. It is clear from the NPHE that the government intends to create comprehensive universities through mergers between technikons and universities (DoE, 1997). The unresolved question however remains defining the academic mission of such an institution. To this end, institutional leaders face the challenge establishing and creating value that set these comprehensive universities apart from the traditional universities.

## Government involvement

When it comes to publicly funded colleges and universities, government usually plays a role in a merger (Lang, 2003). From time to time the government's role is extremely proactive, as when a government forces a merger. Many mergers among public colleges and universities are involuntary; they are the creations of government and often have characteristics of "corporate take-overs and acquisitions (Lang, 2003). It is therefore not 'logically or practically' possible for public colleges and universities mergers to set the objectives of government aside" (Lang, 2003, p.26). In fact, according to Lang (2003), governments want the same things that the institutions, small or large, want:

- Governments want new programs at a relatively low marginal cost instead of at an average cost. Here governments are victims of their own funding formulas that inherently fund at the average. Mergers can make the marginal costs of new programs lower.
- Mergers can especially reduce the capital costs of new programs as the sunk costs of previous investments can be more efficiently utilized.
- Governments are driven towards economies of scale just as individual higher education institutions are, and perhaps more so
- There are some objectives that are of greater interest to government than to public colleges and universities. These objectives are not necessarily antithetical to the interests of the institution, but they may be of less value to them.
- Systems of higher education, especially in older jurisdictions, may not be rational or efficient in terms of public policy because there may have been no public policy when some institutions that make up the system were founded.

Alternatively, public policy may have changed; an example here would be the shift to mass higher education with very high rates of participation.

The government's involvement in mergers poses a challenge for institutions such as the MU. The manner in which government or interest groups convey their views with regards how universities function or how to influence such functions without disregard for dictating terms warrants careful attention because it flies in the face of concerns for institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

In some cases, demand may have shifted to the extent that certain institutions, typically in under-populated areas, that were viable under conventional funding formulas cease to be viable. In such instances, I believe mergers may be a more attractive alternative than receivership or anomalous funding. While affordability is often a concern at both the institutional and government levels, the government perspective is different. In most jurisdictions governments use block transfer grants to fund colleges and universities, they do so without specifying how the funds should be spent. This causes governments, when faced with affordability problems, to tend to think in terms of simple unit costs such as funding per student. Their own funding formulas draw them to such perspective, or to thinking of mergers as a way of moving all institutions to an average unit cost. This may happen in either direction, college to university or vice versa. Upon reflection, some governments recognize that they may have insufficient time to make sound decisions about all of the public colleges and universities for which they are responsible, particularly smaller and more specialized institutions. Mergers in those cases are an organizational device for delegating or narrowing some responsibility to a lower

level, specifically to larger institutions that became hosts through a merger with smaller, more specialized institutions.

#### Two- versus multiple-partner mergers

Mergers between two partners are different in character and their detail is handled differently from multi-partner mergers (Harman & Harman, 2003). In the early 1960s and 1970s, the most common of Australian mergers were between two partner institutions. The early 1980s however, saw many cases of multi-institution mergers that usually took the form of consolidations rather than acquisitions. Sometimes small institutions work hard to attract additional partners into merger negotiations in order to avoid being “swallowed-up” by a larger institution (Skodvin, 1999). There is vast literature on mergers between similar institutions or those with similar products or service offerings and yet, little is known about mergers of very different institutions. What are the consequences of mergers between different institutions with varied histories, identities and language backgrounds? Such mergers, when initiated, produce unstable, contentious and politicized experiences for affected constituents. Neglecting the human problems is one particularly strong reason why mergers fail (McCambridge & Weis, 1998). Among other issues, resistance to change, culture clashes, duplication of services and communication disparities have been the most commonly cited human problems of mergers (Marks & Mirvis, 1998; Martin & Samels, 1994). How true this is for Metropolitan University remains a mystery. I did however anticipate that the pre-merger institutional characteristics of the former Urban Ramsey University and Trinity Technikon may affect the organizational climate.

## Federal versus unitary structures

Mergers may result in the adoption of either federal or unitary structures (Harman & Harman, 2003). Federal structures consist of specified responsibilities that usually remain with participating institutions. They have a central body that executes agreed upon responsibility. This option is favorable in state-wide mergers, such as those of the State of Minnesota, USA. While Minnesota may not be the only state-wide merger in USA, the occurrence of public institution mergers has been extensively written about (Harman & Robertson Cuninghame, 1995; Fielden & Markham, 1997; Massingham, 2000). Federal models are attractive because they promise retention of substantial autonomy and key elements of separate identity. They also take into account the different cultures and organizational characteristics of participating institutions. However, federal structures limit the amount of course and administrative rationalization and they are unstable in conflict situations (Massingham, 2001; Hatton, 2002).

Current experience with federal merger models has been disappointing (Massingham, 2001). For example, in Australia, of all the extensive cross-sectoral mergers that occurred between 1987 and 1991, only two institutions adopted the federal model. The University of New England split at the end of 1993, the University of Western Sydney experienced a high degree of conflict and has now adopted a unitary structure, while the Charles Stuart University organized itself internally from the start as a unitary organization (Harman & Cuninghame, 1995; Harman, 2002; Hatton, 2002).

The unitary model consists of no campus heads or campus budgets, but has key budget units, faculties and administrative divisions that function cross-university (Harman & Harman, 2003). In such cases, responsibility rests on the unit that approves academic

programs, awards degrees and diplomas, and allocates the budget (Fielded & Markham, 1997). Unitary structures consist of participating institutions, which are not recognized as individuals. Unitary structures have a single governing body, a single CEO and a single set of structures for governance (Harman & Harman, 2003).

Using a radical form of change such as a merger to reform an inequitable and racially segregated higher education system poses serious challenges for South Africa. Nevertheless, given the country's historic legacy of racial and gender discrimination, few people oppose the idea of taking corrective action to make the country's higher education system more equitable (Ramphela, 2008). The mergers made an already obvious problem of male dominance within academic institutions glaring. Staff profiles in most higher education institutions reflected noticeable inequalities in race and gender where in 1994, 90% of academic and administrative staff at Historically White Institutions (HWIs) consisted of white males (Ramphela, 2008). And while white women theoretically had the same educational opportunities as their male counterparts, they were under-represented in senior management posts of most HWIs partly due to the male-dominated culture of these institutions. Similarly, Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) were male-dominated at senior management levels (Ramphela, 2008). The exclusion of non-whites and women from the academic enterprise undermines the competitiveness of higher education institutions. And as institutional leaders pursue race and gender equity, they will meet some resistance from some males and whites who have benefited and become comfortable with the under-representation of women and non-whites pre-merger.

The crux of the South African higher education mergers is to enhance institutional capacity to produce quality education (DoE, 2004). Hence, students and staff will be

affected in various ways and will be exposed variously to changing, and sometimes contrasting, institutional (Technikon vs University; Historically Black vs Historically White Institutions) and academic cultures (Vocational Training vs Research Oriented curriculums). Student governance and more specifically the constitution of Student Representative Councils (SRCs) has become an area of contestation (DoE, 2004). This challenge becomes more complex as the mergers inevitably produce multi-campus. The MU merger involves a combination of a Historically White Institution (HWI) with a Historically Black Institution (HBI) which were established along racial lines. The HBIs had a history of political activism and defiance against the apartheid regime's principle of discrimination whereas the HWI had a history of advancing the apartheid regime's policy of separate racial development, discrimination and segregation or being nonchalant (Ramphela, 2008). These different histories set a stage for many potential conflicts post-merger especially since the success of the merger and of race and gender equity transformation hinges upon collaboration and cooperation between all stakeholders involved. Therefore, group tensions, contests over space, allocation of resources, recruitment and selection of staff, governance and power-sharing, gender and race discrimination will likely ensue as various constituent groups stake their claim in the newly merged institution.

The Apartheid Dogma legalized the dominance of the White and Afrikaans people over non-whites. This dogma created significant cultural differences and made for difficult relationships between English- and Afrikaans-medium institutions (Ramphela, 2008). The merger of the MU brings together institutions that have a history of racial antagonism towards one another making for a hostile campus climate. However, a chilly

campus climate hampers progress towards race and gender equity implementation because without a supportive environment all efforts made towards advancing the status of women and non-whites result in the “revolving door syndrome” where staff retention rates are low and resignations rates among people from the designated groups are high (White Paper, 1997:2.29).

Under apartheid, HWIs held the negative perception about HBIs and non-whites and these persist today. Three specific perceptions were highlighted in the wake of the merger. The first was that “blacks cannot manage”, the second perception was that another was that opening access to blacks lowers academic quality and standards (Ramphela, 2008, p. 206) and third perception that hold that “Afrikaans is the language of the oppressor” (Kellman, 2003, p.225). These perceptions are somewhat justifiable given that HBIs were under-resourced and their educational standards were intended, by the apartheid government, to be sub-par compared to those of HWIs. With the merger, these perceptions play themselves out in ways that slows down the progress of race and gender equity. The first perceptions plays itself out in that, white males, are still preoccupied with the need to maintain standards in higher education, professional appointments and management positions (Ramphela, 2008). They are threatened by the government’s intention to change the student and staff profile as they continue to see such corrective action as a lowering of standards. They presume that being white and male embodies the standards. The second perception plays itself out in that, those calling for radical change, such as is personified by the merger tend to want to replace an “old order” with greater representation of black people (Ramphela, 2008). As the merger unfolds, non-whites fear that they will be dominated again by Afrikaners at a merged

institution. They are concerned about losing their institutional identity and voice as an historically black institution located in a vibrant black township where political activism and apartheid regime defiance reigned. They are also concerned about losing or switching their language of preference, usually native languages and English (Kell, 1997). Institutional leaders will face the daunting task of changing these perceptions and mindsets among their campus constituencies and seek ways that allow for significant race and gender equity transformation without compromising quality or simply replacing an 'old order' with a new one without ensuring the adequate training and preparation of incumbents.

### **3.2 Conceptual framework for race and gender equity**

An institutions' governance structure reveals the formal allocation of power which impacts decisions made regarding policies and practices within that institution (Peterson & Mets, 1987). Once authority is allocated to the role, a group or to a particular institution, then a value position has been taken about who deserves power and who does not; who will struggle for power and who will not; who gets to maneuver and who does not; what policies are prioritized, legitimized and which are not (Kennedy, 2003; Askling & Kristensen, 2000; de Boer & Denters, 1999; de Groof, Neave and Švek, 1998; Ehara, 1998; Lee, 2000, Locke, 2001). In this research, I use critical race theory, feminist theory and policy practice theories as lenses through which to understand the dynamics at play at MU as administrators' progress towards achieving racial and gender equity.

The contributions higher education institutions to the collapse of the apartheid regime cannot be answered in an abstract manner (Reddy, 2004). While progressive

academics participated in the internal resistance against apartheid, universities themselves did not provide major levers against the repressive old order. Instead, these institutions served as reformatories where academic freedom barely existed, radical debate was prohibited, critical knowledge was considered propaganda against the state, student protests against the state were squashed by the national security forces and the dissemination of critical scholarship content or the publication thereof was heavily sanctioned by campus Rectors-often conservative card carrying members of the ruling party (Reddy, 2004). Under these circumstances, scholars lived in fear and barely published anything critical about the need for racial reform. When they did publish, as many saw in the case of Steve Biko<sup>9</sup> the author of the defiant book, *I write what I like*, it was not without consequence (Biko, 1976).

Following the collapse of apartheid in the late 80's, there was a proliferation of race research. The abolishment of racial policies also ushered in a new era of critical legal studies (CLS) from which stems critical race theory (CRT). Consequently, various South African scholars began applying CRT to expose ways in which race was and continues to be instrumental in repressing, oppressing and denying non-whites access to national resources (West, 2003; Nkomo, 1990; Reddy, 2004). Thabo Mbeki's presidency (1999-current) has been characterized by the 'return of race' (Fullard, 2004). This 'return of race' has been forced upon the South African society by violence: through the actions of white extremists like the Boeremag<sup>10</sup> and cases of racial hatred. In light of these

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<sup>9</sup> Steven Bantu Biko was a political activist who founded the Black Consciousness Movement was a medical student at a South African historically black university student in the early 60's. On 12 September 1976, Biko was violently beaten and killed by the state as a result of advocating and proselytizing critical race thinking among black scholars.

<sup>10</sup> An Afrikaaner farmer's force or organization whose goal is to overthrow the coalition government (ANC, SACP and SADTU) regime. The primary aim of the Boeremag is to restore the boere Republic and to eradicate the increase of attacks against white Afrikaaner farmers in South Africa.

developments, South African legal professionals are increasingly using CRT to take legal action against the socialized and institutionalized oppression of racial minorities. However, the application of CRT to understand South African educational reforms is rare. In the next section of this dissertation, I abstract tenets of CRT as well as give examples, where possible, of the manifestations of each tenet which I will draw from both the National government politics and the higher education sector.

### Critical Race Theory

Critical race theory (CRT) emerged from trans-disciplinary knowledge and the methodological base of ethnic studies, women's studies, political science, sociology, history and law to forge better understandings of the various forms of discrimination. Theories tend to focus on five elements derived from critical legal studies which are applicable to higher education practice: (a) the centrality of race and racism and their inter-section with other forms of subordination, (b) the challenge to dominant ideology, (c) the commitment to social justice, (d) the centrality of experiential knowledge, and (e) the trans-disciplinary or integrative knowledge perspective (Solorzano & Yosso, 2000). The goal of CRT is to critically interrogate how the law produces, reifies and normalizes racism in society (Lopez, 2003).

As their first tenet, CRT theorists argue that racism is a normal and endemic component of our social fabric (Banks, 1993; Collins; Gordon, 1990; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Tatum, 1997; Tyson, 1998). As a result, society fails to see racism because it is such a common and everyday experience that is often taken for granted. In other words, racism is not only a part of our everyday lives, it is embedded in our

organizations, practices and structures (Scheurich & Young, 1997; Tyson, 1998)-it is the usual way “society does business” (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001, p.7). Critical race theorists recognize that the way public problems are defined can influence how laws and policies are constructed and interpreted (Tate, 1997). Because racism is so pervasive, we often fail to see how it functions and shapes our institutions, relationships and ways of thinking. By unmasking the hidden faces of racism, critical race theory exposes and unveils white privilege in its various variations and reveals a social order that is highly stratified and segmented along racial lines (Ladson-Billings, 1992).

A second tenet of critical race theory is “interest convergence” (Lopez, 2003, p.18) or the belief that whites will tolerate and advance the interests of non-whites only when they promote the self-interests of whites. In consideration of the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision, Bell (1995a), suggested that the Supreme Court decided in favor of desegregation, not because of the historical plight and social conditions of non-whites in America, but because the country needed to soften its stance on racism to politically appease its ally countries in the third world during the cold war. In addition, Bell documented how the American courts were particularly sympathetic to white people’s fear of another uprising by African Americans.

The concept of “interest convergence” in South Africa is manifest in the process through which democracy was ushered in. One might well argue that the ruling party, the National Party (NP), decided in favor of democracy because of (a) its fear of an uprising by non-whites, (b) the disinvestments campaign of the international community against the Republic and (c) the reformist momentum that had found expression through the repeal of 160 discriminatory laws in the period between 1981 and the early 1990s

(Terreblanche, 2002; Reddy, 2004; Binza, 2005). With its back against the wall, the NP released Nelson Mandela<sup>11</sup> from prison in February 1990 (Buhlungu, Daniel, Southall & Lutchman, 2007).

The formation of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1991 signaled the dawn of a democratic era in the Republic of South Africa. CODESA was the most important constitutional convention since 1901 (Callinicos, 2007). Through CODESA, the Republic's corporate sector, the ruling party white and the newly 'unbanned' liberation movements<sup>12</sup> would negotiate the terms of a peaceful co-existence and the country's future economic system (Callinicos, 2007; Terreblanche, 2002). For the first time in the history of the Republic, the apartheid government conceded that the escalating tension, violence between whites and non-whites and 'black-on-black' violence were "creating an almost unmanageable economic situation" which made the country ungovernable (O'Meara, 1996; Terreblanche, 2002). As a result of this, the NP announced its preparedness to enter into negotiations with the liberation movement over a new political dispensation and "power-sharing" (Reddy, 2004, p.30). This suggests there was a paradigm shift in the larger culture where the interests of the controlling groups (NP-representing white minority) and the dominated groups (ANC and liberation movements-representing non-white South African majority) converged.

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<sup>11</sup> By 1990, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela had spent a total of 27 years in prison for sabotage after the Apartheid government withdrew charges of treason against him.

<sup>12</sup> Under the leadership of the ANC and as a result of Mandela's invitation, various liberation movements (and Afrikaner anti-democracy parties) such as, the newly unbanned Azanian People's Liberation Movement (APLA), Azanian People's Organization (AZAPO), Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), South African Communist Party (SACP) to mention a few participated in the search for a peaceful resolution to the state of emergency that was prevailing as result of apartheid. However, there were some political parties that rejected the invitation to participate in shaping democracy, such as the Pan African Congress (PAC-a pro-black liberation movement), the Afrikaaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB-the Afrikaaner Resistance Movement).

The paradigm shift happened on many levels: from a legal system with repressive and unjust laws to a just and equitable state, from a racist state to a non-racial state, from a police state to a democratic and free society. This shift also culminated in the passing of the Interim Measures for Local Government Act of 1993, which allowed local communities to negotiate from a range of institutional options, such as total amalgamation to various forms of resource sharing or the establishment of joint service bodies (Craythorne, 2003). CODESA participants agreed that there would be two stages in local government reform—an interim phase and a final phase. These reforms galvanized a change process which required hundreds of locally negotiated transitions (Aktinson & Reitzes, 1998). The era of participatory local government had dawned.

By 1996, ordinary South Africans of all races had crafted, through a national consultative process, one of the world's most progressive, inclusive and detailed constitutions. This may be yet another example of interest convergence among and between citizens of a nation with a history of racial antagonism. This convergence centers on common concerns such as respect for human rights and dignity, the protection of citizens against discrimination based on gender, race, religious, disability and sexuality; the abolishing of apartheid laws, protection of women and children against violence and crime (RSA, 1996).

The third and final tenet of critical race theory is the understanding that there are two different accounts of reality: the dominant reality that looks ordinary and natural to most individuals and a racial reality that has been filtered, suppressed and censored (Bell, 1996). By highlighting subjugated accounts of these divergent realities, CRT demystifies the notion of a racially neutral society and tells another account, of a highly racialized

social order, where social institutions and practices serve the interests of white individuals. CRT seeks to better understand the “often invisible ways in which social interaction is structured, power wielded, and privileged interests protected in the organizational context” (Anderson, 1990a, p.40). CRT is an important intellectual and social tool for the deconstruction of oppressive structures and discourses. It is also a useful tool for the reconstruction of human agency and construction of equitable and socially just power relations (Ladson-Billings, 1998).

In relation to employment, access and epistemology, equity is unevenly developed in higher education (Morley, 1997). Few policy areas in higher education have received more recent attention than the issue of race on campus (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Penderson & Allen, 1998). This can be seen in the proliferation of programs related to college admissions, financial aid, affirmative action, employment equity, discrimination and harassment, and desegregation. Nevertheless, the racial climate at individual institutions was devoid of policy initiatives and until recently there has been no common framework for understanding the campus racial climate in a way that helps develop policies and practices that can be used to enhance the campus climate (Hurtado et al., 1998). When policies and statements do exist, it is questionable how much impact they have had on employment practices, organizational culture, epistemology, curriculum development, dominant academic discourse, and pedagogy. According to these authors, an institution must increase at all levels the number of previously excluded and underrepresented.

## Feminist Theory

The radical feminist perspective uses personal accounts of women's experiences in organizations to reveal an overall picture of marginalization, powerlessness and estrangement (Coser, 1981; Spender, 1982; Rendel, 1984; Acker, 1994; Davies & Holloway, 1995; Morley & Walsh, 1995, 1996). Social constructivist feminist thought has advanced the idea of interlocking systems of oppression (Hill-Collins, 1989). This theory shows how race, gender, sexuality and class can simultaneously be used to exclude and sabotage women in organizations. In particular, this theory has argued that those who control the schools, media and other cultural institutions are generally skilled in establishing their view of reality as superior to alternative interpretations. Social constructivist theory is also premised on the notion that groups that are unequal in power are correspondingly unequal in their access to resources necessary to implement their perspectives outside their particular group (Hill-Collins, 1989).

Since the early 1970's and alongside the wider feminist critique of gender in organizations and society, women academics have documented the various ways in which they have been marginalized, silenced and subordinated within academic institutions. Articles on the status of women in higher education highlight several underlying themes such as, window-dressing gender equity policies, hostile institutional climates, inadequate or no support systems and networks, role ambiguity and role overload, hierarchy in terms of pay and other systematic barriers that face women in the academy (Hodges, 1999; Bett, 1999; Baty, 2000). Thomas and Davies (2002) argued that organizations are sites for gender construction and contestation. For that reason, universities can be understood as "arenas of disciplines, with a plurality of competing discourses, some of which are

more dominant than others, and which have traditionally privileged and given hierarchical primacy to the images of masculinity” (p.377). Scholars have illustrated how universities, both in their management and organization, as well as in the generation of knowledge, have privileged dominant forms of masculinity, maleness and men (Pritchard, 1996; Goode & Bagilhole, 1998; Kerkfoot & Knights, 1999).

To restate Brewis (1999), the university organization, in both meaning and body, is a man’s world. Within this man’s world, new performance cultures have resulted in an intensification of work. Davies and Holloway (1995) argue that those most likely to be co-opted into this new performance culture will be the young and ambitious, without families or domestic responsibilities. Combining family and work demands has always been difficult for career women, due to the fact that the main burden of household duties fall on them (Wajcman, 1996). Acker (1994) has highlighted how the model of the meritocracy organization perpetuates images of gender neutrality, leaving dominant masculinist discourse and discursive practices unchallenged and unquestioned. Feminist theorists have challenged the image of meritocracy that is at the heart of the ‘ivory tower’ (Davies & Holloway, 1995; Morley & Walsh, 1995, 1996).

Dramatic change, as necessitated by a merger, can be very traumatizing for various institutional constituents. Apartheid policies resulted in the establishment of South African higher education institutions for whites and non-whites where no programs were in place to advance the ascension of women into senior positions in administration or to promote and achieve gender equity for women students. Over the years, these institutions have become comfortable with operating as male- and white- dominated entities (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Institutions also have deeply entrenched cultures of

governance, scientific research, professional and administrative practices that are numb to the needs and perspectives of women. Following the mergers, there has been considerable resistance by these institutions to reform these traditional ways of operation. Understanding these circumstances is of utmost importance if one is to fully grasp the status of women at MU, the administrators' perceptions of gender equity, as well as the perspectives of officials who write government documents and the press. Feminist theory implies that in order to understand efforts towards achieving gender equity; one has to recognize and acknowledge that gender differences in organizations are exacerbated by race (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Furthermore, it requires an understanding of how policy may affect access to higher education generally and for women in particular.

The South African Women's March of 9 August 1956, in protest of Pass Laws<sup>13</sup>, was a monumental event which catapulted the political role and voice of women in society. Until this date, women were virtually silenced and their opinions were omitted from all historical accounts of the Republic. Given the repressive regime, the majority of black women prioritized activism and everyday struggles in ways that few white women did. To air their concerns, they took to the street and engaged in massive boycotts. The early 60's until the late 70's marshaled a few written works by black women activists and scholars (Simons, 1968; Head, 1974). While these works were influenced by feminist pedagogy, highlighting social ills such as legalized as well as class relations,

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<sup>13</sup> On this date, an estimated 20,000 women converged at the Union Building in Pretoria, South Africa's legislative Capital, to protest against the introduction of the 'Pass Law'. According to this law, all non-whites had to obtain carry an identity document, the 'Pass' which would signify permission granted to them by the government to go to areas designated 'white areas' or the city. Any non-white found in the city or at 'white residential area' without this document was arrested. The apartheid government introduced the 'Pass' as part of their plan to control the mobility of urban blacks and ultimately aimed to use this law to remove from the cities those who did not serve the white man's needs.

institutionalized gender discrimination and oppression, these women writers often perceived themselves as *activists* rather than *feminists*.

During the late 80's till the early 90's, literature on women became autobiographical in nature. This work exposed experiences and hardships of black women living under an oppressive regime; challenged gender-based violence, sexual objectification and highlighted the negative effects of apartheid social and economic engineering programs on the social cohesion of the black family unit (Khuzwayo, 1985; Bernstein, 1985; Ramphele, 1993, 1995). During this period and along the periphery, there was an increase in gender research. White women, in particular, became instrumental in researching and teaching university courses on gender related topics. Few black women played an active role in the production of critical knowledge. The reason for this was South African black women had extremely limited social and educational opportunities for acquiring skills and training in comparison with white women (Fullard, 2004). This situation was also a consequence of the sanctions imposed on black women's mobility, freedom of speech and the severity of their oppression.

When black women did acquire educational leverage for producing scholarship, they had far fewer opportunities. The institutionalization of racism severely limited South African black women's access to publishing, research and teaching resources that were more easily accessible to South African white scholars. The connection between feminist activism and academia in post-apartheid South Africa has progressively been strengthened, with many academics working hard to *insert* women's voices into public-related developmental work and to dislodge the government's monopoly over development strategies and gender advocacy (Erlank, 2003). Scholars from various

academic backgrounds are now writing more using feminist theory to analyze gender inequality and to promote of women's rights, interests, women's access to education, and career mobility in the various sectors of the South African economy (Nkomo, 1990; Walker, 1997; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005).

Feminist activism and academic research played a major role in the establishment of the national gender machinery, a measure aimed at advancing women's rights (Buhlungu, Daniel, Southall & Lutchman, 2007). The gender machinery encompasses the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), the Office on the Status of Women (OSW) and the Parliamentary Joint Standing Committee on the Improvement of the Quality of Life and Status of Women. The members of these consortia are tasked by parliament to reform a variety of discriminatory laws and introduce quotas that increase the number of women holding political office. Individual women and their advocates have also sought to promote a women's rights agenda through the courts and Constitution (Gouws, 2005). These activities set the tone and context within which policy change happens.

### Policy and Practice

A fundamental obstacle to cultural change in academia is the belief that knowledge is de-contextualized, constructed and communicated with impartial power and authority (Morley, 1997). When it comes to enforcing and implementing policy, Berkhout and Wielemans (1999) argue that the translation of policy into practice assumes that administrators at various levels of an institution interpret and implement the wishes of policy makers (often expressed at high levels of abstraction) by generating rules and regulations. Fitz, Halpin & Power (1994) discuss various strains of implementation and

distinguish a variety of forces that have an impact on policy realization. Forces such as the historic antecedents to the development of the policy, management styles and micro-politics, organizational features and legitimate authority structures within a given system, and views of the public can be regarded as influencing the transformation of policy into practice. Raab (1994) argues that educational bureaucrats and teachers act as filters for the policy that is being transformed into programs and practice. Raab (1994) does not believe that these people act as mere pawns, but suggests that they contest the policy from a variety of historical developments and contexts. Policy as text (the language of the policy) contains divergent meanings, contradictions, and structured omissions, thus producing different effects. Codd (1988) asserts that different readers decode text in different ways and construct different meanings, depending on the contexts in which they read the text. According to Bowe, Ball & Gold (1992), the micro-political processes of schools provides the setting for policy re-contextualization, not as much “in the sense of being implemented but as being “re-created”, not so much “reproduced” as “produced” (p.120).

The days when universities were regarded as elite institutions operating on the fringes of social, economic and political concerns are over (Kennedy, 2003). Nowhere else is this fact more apparent than in the case of South Africa. The issue of who should govern a university; how and to what ends; what policies and practices should be in place to run universities and open access to marginalized individuals in society, have been recurring questions in the restructuring of South African universities (de Groof, Neave & Svek, 1998; Fiske & Ladd, 2004; Jansen et al, 2002). Institutions are arenas for internal politics. Marginson and Considine (2000) argue that there are at least two opposing

groups, each with an interest, in the internal environment of the university. There are outsiders such as governments, business and industry, the scientific community, professional groups, political groups and youth looking at universities with their own expectations (Kennedy, 2003, p.56). There are also insiders, the so-called academic heartland, used to being inside the university, and controlling it, but increasingly being asked look outside and deal with the increased expectation of various stakeholders (Kennedy, 2003, Kaplan, 2004).

The power of the government to unilaterally affect change becomes limited because such power is circumscribed by the contextual features of institutions and the struggle for meaning. Bolman and Deal, (1997) argue that government policy also goes awry as policy moves from the legislative floor to the targeted problems. A sizeable body of research documents the continuing saga of perverse ways in which policy implementation distorts policymakers' intentions (Bardach, 1977; Emore, 1978). As a consequence, policy becomes reconstructed through what Anderson (1990b) calls the "inner eye" of administrators, determining what they would not regard as events in the "socially constructed reality" of their districts (p.41). Marshall and Mitchell (1991) find that policy intentions become undermined as administrators follow the rules of their own "assumptive worlds" (p.397). They claim that these subjective understandings of the environment in which administrators operate, incorporate intermingled elements of belief, perception, evaluation, and intention as responses to the reality out there. A response is based on their distinctive organizational cultures, a shared sense of what they think is appropriate out there.

### **3.3 Chapter summary**

A merger is a radical form of radical organizational change that requires careful planning because it affects various important elements of an organization such as people, structures, processes, policies, culture and organizational outcomes. The historic legacy of apartheid makes the task of transforming a discriminatory and fragmented system of higher education very challenging. Merging white and black institutions and achieving race and gender within the new organizations added further to these challenges. To help understand the situation, I have chosen critical race and feminist theories, along with merger theories, to analyze the case of Metropolitan University. Critical race theories are appropriate for this case because they will help me identify and examine the structural and cultural aspects of the MU merger that maintain subordinate and dominant racial positions. Feminist Theories are appropriate because they help me understand how gendered employment policies maintain gender discrimination with an organization of higher learning.

## CHAPTER 4

### METHODS

The case approach is an optimal method for my study because I seek greater understanding of how race and gender equity has been pursued at MU. In this chapter, I explain the case study method I employed. A case study is an empirical inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”, (Yin, 1994, p.13). Yin (1994) notes that a case study inquiry copes with a technically distinct situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points. Stake (1994) described the case study method as an examination of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activities within important circumstances. A case study is an exploration of a “bounded system” involving in-depth data collection of rich information in context (Creswell, 1998, p.61). The bounded system is delimited by time and place.

In my study, the case is an event, the merger. The following key features of the merger set the boundaries of my case:

- a. There is a high degree of government involvement in both formal and legal capacities;
- b. There are multiple partners (some resulting from an incorporation);
- c. The partners have dissimilar academic profiles; and

- d. It is a unitary merger where participating campuses form a collective rather than an individual institution, a single governing body, a single CEO, and one a federation (Harman & Harman, 2003).

The method and procedures I used to gather information for my study took into account these boundaries and the constraints imposed by these key features on the achievement of race and gender equity. As a methodology, case study fulfills a unique role in research (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This methodology allows me to focus on a single, compact unit in a very detailed manner. Yin (1994) notes three conditions under which a case study approach is favorable: (a) the study asks “how” or “why” questions; (b) the topic does not require control over external events; and (c) the study focuses on contemporary events. All these conditions are applicable to my topic of study. Finally, a case study is a useful methodology to investigate and explain the causal links in real-life situations that are too complex for survey or experimental methods, such as a higher education merger (Merriam, 1998).

#### **4.1 Site selection**

Selecting a field research site is an important decision. Three factors were particularly relevant for me when I chose the MU as a field research site: the richness of the data, unfamiliarity and sustainability (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). In 2005, I was exposed to a research project on the merger of the University of the Northwest in South Africa (see reference on Mabokela & Mawila, 2005). From this involvement, I observed that little is known about mergers of historically black and white South African universities, universities from different geographic locations that use Afrikaans and English as the

mediums of instruction and have different academic traditions. Furthermore, mergers of research universities and technikons continue to present a challenge for South African scholars (Jansen et al, 2002). I chose MU, instead of the University of the Northwest, because the site was unfamiliar to me, and I believed this would make it easier for me to see cultural events and social relations from the perspectives of respondents. I also chose MU because I had ready access to individuals who were integral to the merger process and were willing to provide information and share insights about the process. These connections made entrée into the institution possible.

#### Gaining access

Several steps were involved in gaining access to the research site and individuals for the study. I gained permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and as well from the Human Subjects Review Board at MU. To this effect, I submitted a letter and summary of my proposal to the board that details the research procedures. I gained access to MU as an employee at the Research Office where I had previously worked for six months. I held the position of Senior Research Administrator during the March-August period of 2006. This position allowed me to build a network of useful contacts at the MU. To gain access as a researcher to the MU site, I also wrote a letter to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Principal of the MU. I have attached a draft copy of this letter asking for permission and detailing the focus of my research project, procedures and dissemination strategies (see APPENDIX A). Once approved, I started collecting data. I have appended a Research Timeline that details the scheduling of events throughout my study (see APPENDIX B).

## Interviews

One of the most important sources of case study information is the interview (Yin, 1994; Bassey, 1999). Thus, interviews were the primary source of data in this study. While interviews may take several forms, in this research study I used a semi-structured interview protocol (Yin, 1994). This type of interview allows the researcher to ask key respondents for the facts of a situation as well as for their opinions about events. In some situations, the investigator may ask the respondents to offer their own insights into certain occurrences, using such propositions as the basis for further inquiry and follow-up on points not anticipated (Yin, 1994; Wengraf, 2001). According to Yin (1994), key respondents are often critical to the success of a case study. Such persons not only provide the case investigator with insights into a matter but also can suggest sources of corroboratory evidence and initiate access to such sources.

Overall, I approached my study with the consideration that interviews are an essential source of case study evidence, because they are about 'human affairs'. According to Yin (1994), these human affairs must be reported and interpreted from the respondents' perspectives. I also presumed that well-informed respondents could provide important insights into a situation. While I appreciated the contributions made by these respondents to my study, I was cautious of becoming overly dependent on them. Yin (1994) has referred to a respondent's interpersonal influence (frequently indefinable) over a case investigator as a pitfall (Yin, 1994). Hence, I relied on other sources of evidence to corroborate any insight by such respondents and I searched for contrary evidence.

During the interviews, I asked all administrators the semi-structured questions set out in the interview protocol (see APPENDIX C). The findings presented in Chapter 6

are largely answers I received from administrators in response to the interview protocol questions.

#### **4.2 Sample selection**

I used snowball sampling (Payne and Payne, 2004). Snowball sampling is begins with a few respondents who refer the researcher to other individuals whom they know have experiences relevant with the phenomenon of interest (Lupton and Tulloch, 2002). Snowballing ends when there are no more people to add or extra people add no useful information, or when researchers run out of time. From an outsider's perspective, this sampling procedure of a referral chain is a practical way to gain access to respondents.

Snowball sampling also has methodological advantages. My review of MU documents suggested no one office was given over-all responsibility for racial and gender equity (like some institutions in USA have of Affirmative Action). Rather, all offices at MU are supposed to ensure that equity is achieved. Because of this, a snowball sampling strategy was suitable for my research because it allowed me to speak to various campus administrators to establish first, which administrators are involved in policy making at MU, and from there to establish which policies have taken priority and where gender and race equity feature in MU discourses. I selected those administrators whose names came up in the documents and then moved out to others based on their recommendations.

## Respondents

A respondent or key actor in the field of interest is a member with whom the researcher develops a relationship and who tells about, informs on, the field (Neuman, 2003). Accordingly, an ideal respondent has four distinct characteristics:

- a) The respondent is very familiar with the culture and is in position to witness significant events. S/he lives, breathes the culture and engages in routines in the setting without thinking about them. This is not a novice, but someone who has years of intimate experience in the culture, context or event being studied.
- b) The individual is currently involved in the field. Though ex-members may provide useful insights, their impressions may have been reconstructed following their indirect involvement with the field rendering their perspectives slightly direct from that of actively involved respondents.
- c) The respondent can spend time with the researcher. While interviewing can be extensive, some members due to their busy schedule and level of involvement might not be available for an extensive interview.
- d) Non-analytical individual make better respondents (Neuman, 2003). This type of individual is familiar with and uses pragmatic common sense. This contrasts with the analytic respondent who pre-analyzes the setting, using categories from media or education. Even educated members in social sciences can learn to respond in a non-analytical manner, setting aside their education and responding from the perspective of a member.

Since I used snowball sampling, I had variation in the type of respondents I interviewed. My sample included new employees and those with longstanding appointments, people in

the center and on the fringes of the of MU merger event, those who had recently changes status as a result of the restructuring following the merger, and those who were static, frustrated, needy, happy or secure people, the leaders in charge and the subordinates who follow.

There are two sets of respondents in this study. The first set is individuals whom official documents identified as key role players in the merger. The second set consists of people identified by those in the first set on the basis of their intimate knowledge of their pre-merger institutions and key events. All respondents in this study were employed by the MU and their personal histories with their pre-merger institutions provided useful context that enriched my understanding of their lived experiences at MU. Appendix D shows a list of the characteristics of respondents in this study. Their years of service with their pre-merger institutions ranged between 8 and 20 years. The majority, 14, had served their pre-merger institutions for at least 11 years.

#### Interview protocol and process

I conducted interviews with 20 respondents at Metropolitan University, South Africa, each was about an hour in duration. I arrived at the number 20 after compiling a list of individuals identified in MU publications as directly involved in the merger proceedings (see APPENDIX D). I was advised by respondents in my pilot study to interview all these respondents. This list was by no means exhaustive. The sample grew as I was referred to other people who were not in my list. I continued to interview all new respondents in the same way until I achieved data saturation. I stopped when I no longer heard new viewpoints.

I divided the interview process into two phases. In phase one of this research, I interviewed key respondents who were members of Trinity and Vermont Scottsville (pseudonyms for the institutions) at the time the merged was initiated. These administrators were mentioned consistently in the institutional documents that described the merger process. Then, I proceeded to interview others who were involved in the merger and were identified by the initial respondents as being central to the process. The focus of all the interviews was on how the merger unfolded – what the race and gender equity goals were, the societal and institutional conditions at the time, key issues respondents faced, etc. I allowed respondents to share their insights and subsequently, followed-up with questions that I had developed from reading the available documents (TABLE 4.1-an overview of documents analyzed in this research). Some of these questions were aimed at filling the gaps in the documentation and others were aimed at clarifying confusing dates, sequences, key actors, exploring differences in opinion etc.

**TABLE 4.1: An overview of the documents analyzed in this research**

<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Goals of Analysis</b>
<i>Documents</i> Government	Develop the story of the merger-its goals, the government process, key actors
Popular Press	Official government, campus documents, news accounts. These materials were also crucial in documenting the social-political context in which the merger began and what it is today.
<i>Interviews</i> Key actors in the mergers:	Follow-up themes identified in document analysis, seek clarification of documents confusing points, timing and learn how administrators perceive and experience the merger at MU

In phase two, I interviewed key respondents who were employed in the different campuses prior to the merger and who continued to hold appointments on each of the campuses that comprise MU. The interviews I conducted with this second set of respondents were also focused on the merger process and the changes in institutions post-merger. Creswell (1998) recommends the use of protocols for interviews. The interview protocol I created consisted of semi-structured questions (see APPENDIX D). There was ample space between questions for me to write notes about respondent's comments. The interview protocol briefly described my research project, captured details about the timing, location of the interview and biographical details of my respondents. As part of securing an appointment for an interview, I secured quiet locations free of distractions. I ensured that the physical setting lent itself to audiotaping for accurately recording information (Creswell, 1998). I obtained consent from the respondents to participate and

be audiotaped in the study I provided an informed consent form to the respondents for human relations review board (APPENDIX E).

### **4.3 Document analysis**

Yin (1994) and Gillham (2000) noted six sources of evidence for the case study: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, and physical artifacts. In addition to interviews - as my primary source of data - I collected letters, memoranda, MU Staff Newsletters, annual reports for the former URU and Trinity, announcements, internal circulars and minutes of meetings, and other written reports of events related to the merger. I collected administrative documents, in particular, proposals and progress reports related to the merger at MU (see TABLE 4.2- Categorical examples of sources of evidence on the South Africa Higher Education mergers). Formal studies, policy and procedure documents of the same “site” under study, newspapers clippings and articles appearing in mass media were also used in this research. According to Yin (1994), the use of these documents is not based on their necessary accuracy or lack of bias, but on their careful acceptance as literal recordings of events that have taken place. In this study, I used these documents to corroborate and augment evidence from interviews. Yin (1994) argues that while we can draw inference from these documents, inferences ought to be treated only as clues for further investigation rather than as definitive findings because they might turn out to be false later.

I began visiting the South African National Archives in Pretoria in September 2006. Following the first few visits, I devised a systematic strategy for searching for relevant information starting with government higher education policy documents, library

information, campus memos on merger procedures, internal policy documents and government archival information, or White papers on the new institutional landscape for Higher Education in South Africa. I also established electronic and hardcopy filing systems for storing news clippings, memos and internal communiqué on the MU merger. I documented the processes through which the merger and subsequently race and gender equity goals were carried out by analyzing written materials available such as official documents from the government and each of the higher education institutions as well as the popular press. To situate the MU merger, I created a pre- and post-merger timeline in order of the occurrences of events.

#### Document location

My document search covered national and local sources of evidence in South Africa. At the local level, I found the following information sources: new human resource policies for the merged institution, annual reports from some of the institutions in the year preceding the merger, 2004; official records of the organizational charts (for the periods 2003-2006); 2004 press releases from the various campuses regarding their views of the merger and memoranda from the newly elected Vice-chancellor at MU. At the national level, several key government documents have mapped the conception, formalization and implementation of higher education mergers in the South African context. Of these, a few reports become central to setting the context within which I framed and understand of the higher education landscape in South Africa: The Size and Shape of Higher Education Report (2000), The National Commission on Higher

Education: a Framework for Transformation Report (1996), the history of Universities in South Africa and websites related to this process.

#### Document selection and categorization

I took care not to select documents merely because they supported my hypotheses or views. I aimed for a balanced selection as much as possible. I sorted the documents into the following categories: primary vs secondary sources, deliberate vs inadvertent sources and witting vs unwitting evidence, (see TABLE 4.2). I shall elaborate on each category below.

**TABLE 4.2: Categorical examples of evidence on the South Africa Higher Education mergers**

- Jansen, J.D., Bandi, D.T., Chalufu, S., Lethoko, M., Sehoole, C., & Soobrayan, V. (Eds.), (2002). *Mergers in higher education: Lessons learned in transitional contexts*. South Africa, Pretoria: Unisa Press (**deliberate evidence**).
- National Plan for Higher Education, (2001). South African Ministry of Education. Pretoria: Author (**unwitting evidence**).
- Reddy, T. (2004). *Higher education and social transformation: South Africa case study*. Pretoria: Council on Higher Education (**deliberate evidence**).
- Department of Education. (2001). *The restructuring of the higher education system in South Africa: Report of the national working group to the minister of education*. South Africa: Author (**inadvertent evidence**).
- Jansen, J.D., Bandi, D.T., Chalufu, S., Lethoko, M., Sehoole, C., & Soobrayan, V. (Eds.), (2002). *Mergers in higher education: Lessons learned in transitional contexts*. South Africa, Pretoria: Unisa Press (**deliberate evidence**).
- Higher Education Act No. 101 of 1997 Republic of South Africa. Retrieved 10 March 2006, from [http://www.chc.ac.za/documents/d000004/Higher\\_Education\\_Act.pdf](http://www.chc.ac.za/documents/d000004/Higher_Education_Act.pdf) (**inadvertent evidence**)
- Mail and Guardian (2002, 15 February). *Storms gather over tertiary mergers*. Retrieved July, 25, 2004, from <http://www.archive.mg.co.za> (**deliberate evidence**).
- Jansen, J. D. (2002). *Mergers in higher education: Lessons learned in transitional contexts- setting the stage*. South Africa, Pretoria: Unisa Press (**deliberate evidence**).
- Jansen, J. (2003). Mergers in South African higher education: theorising change in transitional contexts, *Politikon*, 30(1), 27-50 (**deliberate evidence**).
- Swanepoel, A. (2004). Library mergers in higher education institutions: Different theories, beliefs and practices. A paper presented at the International Association of Technological University libraries. Technikon Pretoria, South Africa. Retrieved June, 26, 2004, [http://www.iatul.org/conference/proceedings/vol13/papers/SWANPEOEL\\_fulltext.pdf](http://www.iatul.org/conference/proceedings/vol13/papers/SWANPEOEL_fulltext.pdf) (**secondary evidence**).
- Mahlangu, I. (2006). *SABC man ready for top job at varsity: New vice-chancellor wants to increase intake* (**witting evidence**).
- Botha, R. (2006). *Communication on language policy in 2006*. Metropolitan University Circular to staff and students, 2005/464 (**inadvertent evidence**).
- Barnard, Z. (2005). *Information dissemination to Alumni of the Metropolitan University*, Auckland Park, South Africa: Metropolitan University Press (**deliberate evidence**).

Primary sources are those that came into existence during the period under research whilst secondary sources are interpretations of events of that period based on primary sources (Duffy, 1999). Primary sources can be divided into the following two categories, deliberate and inadvertent sources. Deliberate sources are produced for the attention of future researchers (Duffy, 1999). These types of sources would include memoirs of politicians or educationalists, diaries or letters intended for later publication and documents of self-justification (p.108). They involve a deliberate attempt to preserve evidence for the future, possibly for purposes of self-vindication or reputation enhancement. Inadvertent sources, “are produced by the processes of local or central government and from the everyday working of the educational system” (Duffy, 1999, 109). These sources are more common and usually a more valuable kind of primary source. Examples of these primary documents are, records from legislative bodies, government departments and local education authorities, minutes of academic boards, senior management groups, working groups, staff meetings, handbooks, prospectuses, personal files, bulletins, letters, newspapers, budget statements, school websites and other internet material. A final note about the nature of documents concerns their ‘witting’ and ‘unwitting’ evidence (Duffy, 1999). Witting evidence is the information that the original author of the documents wanted to impart. On the other hand, unwitting evidence is the information that can be learned from documents’ underlying assumptions, unintentionally revealed by the language used and the particular method used or chosen to deliver or reform a system (Bell, 1999).

#### **4.4 Data management**

The following principles guided the development of the case:

- (a) multiple sources of data, that is, evidence from two or more sources;
- (b) A case study database, a formal assembly of evidence distinct from the final case study report; and
- (c) A chain of evidence, that explicitly links the questions asked, the data collected, and the conclusions drawn.

The process of analyzing data is preceded by the process of pulling together and organizing data from multiple sources into an easily retrievable case study data set. Information is edited, redundancies are sorted out and parts are fitted together to create the case (Yin, 1994). Given the volume of the data collected, I found it helpful to use a software package for this study. I explored possible options by attending day courses on different packages before settling on NVIVO<sup>14</sup>. I chose NVIVO over other packages primarily because NVIVO provides a graphic user interface program for organizing, sorting and making subsets of text data. I am a visual learner and this makes NVIVO appealing and user-friendly for me. Having worked with the program before, I found it relatively easy to use and visualize the various nodes, themes and text selections. NVIVO also made it possible for me to import documents directly from a word processing package and code these documents easily on screen. As one example, of a text based managing program, NVIVO enabled me to search and retrieve various combinations of words, phrases, coded segments, memos or other material.

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<sup>14</sup> NVIVO is a software package to aid qualitative data analysis designed by QSR. Its full title is NUD.IST Vivo. In this paper where NVIVO is referred to, it is to the first version of the software.

**FIGURE 4.1: The coding process in inductive analysis**

Initial read through text data	Identify specific segments of information	Label the segments of information to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating the most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30-40 categories	15-20 categories	3-8 Major categories

Adapted from Creswell, 2002, Figure 9.4, p. 266

Figure 4.1 illustrates the steps I went through to develop codes for this study. I used both inductive and deductive coding to label categories of broad constructs. I closely read the transcripts in light of the research questions of this study, considering multiple meanings inherent in the text. This step resulted in an initial list of themes (APPENDIX F) and a matrix of broad constructs (APPENDIX G). Using this matrix, I read the transcripts again and identified text segments that contained meaning units and created labels for new categories into which I then assigned text segments. Thereafter, I added text segments that were semantically related to the relevant categories displayed in APPENDIX H (synthesized list of broad constructs) – such as events, challenges and impact. This was the first phase of coding. Following this process, I used NVIVO to generate reports for each category and analyzed these reports using both deductive and inductive processes, resulting in further categorization into the discourses of access, disadvantage, marketplace and power. This served as the second phase of the coding phase.

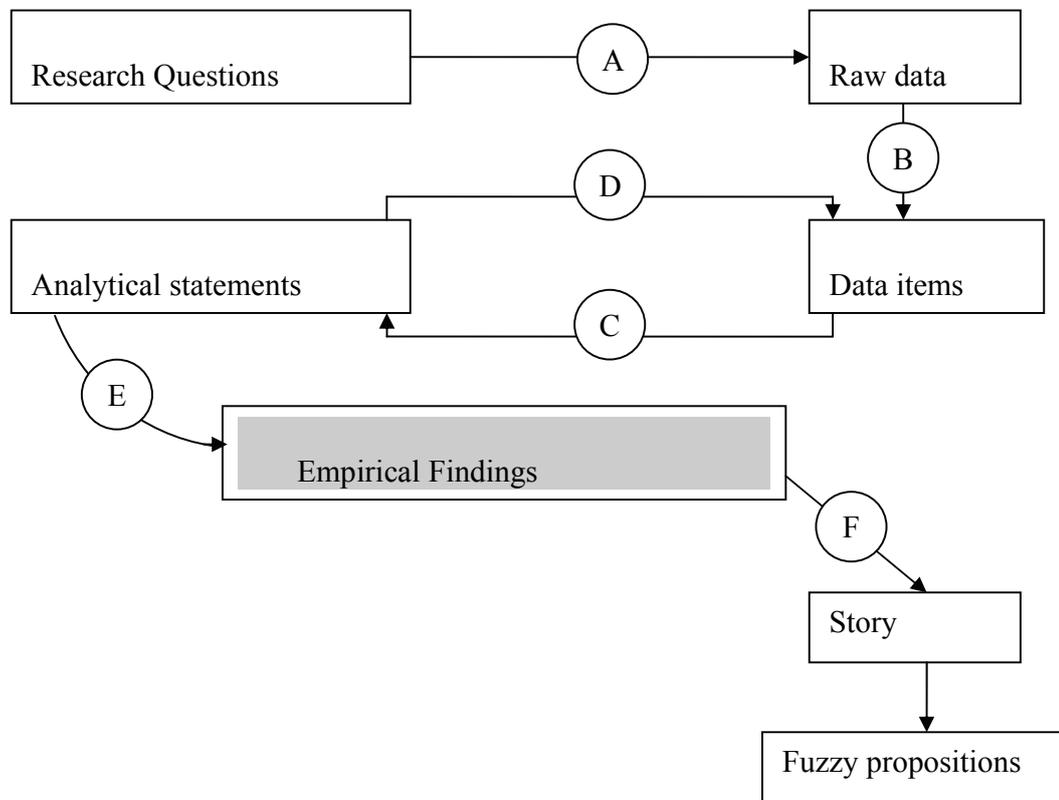
Coding stripes became visible in the margins of the documents so that I could see, at a glance, which codes I had used and where. In addition, I was able to write memos about particular aspects of documents and link these to relevant pieces of text in different documents. I used a systematic process of audio recording data. All interviews were tape-recorded, noting date, time and place where they happened. I made back-up files all taped conversations. As recommended by Davidson (1996), I kept backup copies (hardcopy and electronic) of all computer files throughout my study. I transcribed and saved raw data in multiple storage areas, such as, desktop hard drives, CDs and USB storage devices.

#### **4.5 Data analysis approach**

Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest general data analysis strategies that I found very useful. They recommend, first a general review of all information from observations, field notes, interview transcripts etc. I found it was useful to read through all collected information to gain a sense of the overall data, a procedure also advocated by Tesch (1990). In addition, I wrote findings in the form of memos and reflective notes. Creswell (1998) calls this an initial step a sorting-out process. I wrote field note summaries, did source checking and obtained feedback on the initial summaries from respondents, a key verification step in research as well as an analysis step.

Figure 4.2 (From research questions to empirical findings and case report) demonstrates the various processes that I employed throughout this research, such as the conception of the research question.

**FIGURE 4.2: From research questions to empirical findings and case report**



Adapted from: From research questions to empirical findings and case reports, Bassey (1999), p.85.

To elaborate, point A is where I asked research questions, conducted interviews and collected readings that constituted raw data for this research. At point B, I stored the raw data as data items, each with a locatable reference. At point C in the process, I started thinking creatively and reflectively about items from the raw data, this led to a process and draft analytical statements. I tested draft analytical statements against the data items, and amended or discarded them as necessary. Together, points C and D were an iterative process designed to get the most from raw data. Once the iterative process was exhausted,

I re-expressed the analytical statements as empirical findings (E). Point F delineates the empirical findings which led to the case of the MU.

#### Constant comparative analysis

During the reflective phase, I employed practices associated with the constant comparative method (Merriam 1998; Strauss 1987). This involves taking one piece of data (one interview, one statement, one theme) and comparing it with all others that may be similar or different in order to develop conceptualizations of the possible relations between various pieces of data (Thorne, 2006). For example, by comparing the accounts of two different key respondents who had a similar experience, I posed analytical questions such as: why is this different from that and how are the two related? As my study aimed to generate knowledge about common patterns and themes with the MU administrator's accounts of the merger, this analytic process continued with the comparison of each new interview or account until I had compared all documents with each other. A relevant example here is where I compared the responses of key respondents in phase one with those of phase two on my research sub-questions. Having identified possible similarities and differences, I investigated the connecting and distinct issues and formed conclusions on how administrators experience and perceive the merger in the MU context. The constant comparative analysis is well suited to this research because its design is specifically aimed at studying human phenomena and social processes that explain human behavior and experience (Thorne, 2006), such as resistance to change during a merger. Thus, my methodology used analytical strategy to create

knowledge that is more descriptive or interpretive, such as coping with new equity policies challenges post-merger.

#### Interpretation as a method

Stake (1995) argues that all research depends on interpretation and that qualitative design, in particular, calls for the persons most responsible for the interpretations to be in the field, making observations, exercising subjective judgment, analyzing and synthesizing data, all the while realizing their own consciousness.

#### Triangulation

Triangulating among data sources is beneficial in theory generation, as it provides multiple perspectives on an issue, supplies more information on emerging concepts, allows for crosschecking, and yields stronger substantiation of constructs (Pettigrew, 1990, p. 277). Denzin (1970) advocates the use of different perspectives ('theoretical triangulation'); data-sets ('data triangulation'); research workers (investigator triangulation'); studies ('in-method methodological triangulation'); and methods of data collection ('between-methods methodological triangulation'). The more extensive the triangulation, the more confident we can be about the reliability and validity of the findings (Payne and Payne, 2004, Gillham, 2000). The triangulation used in the present study involves crosschecking various print sources, e.g., official documents, published materials sources, such as newspapers, archival information, campus circulars and memos. To varying degrees such documents can be unrepresentative, incomplete, inaccessible and unreliable (Payne & Payne, 2004). To combat these limitations, I used

only complete and accessible documents. Where possible, as in the case of embargoed government archival documents, I requested permission to gain access. I kept a logbook of my thoughts and impressions during the data collection process. These, too, were useful in the triangulation process.

### Pattern matching

According to Stake (1995), the search for meaning is often a search for patterns, consistency, for consistency within certain conditions which he calls “correspondence” (p.78). The analytic technique of pattern matching has been suggested as a means to address issues of internal validity (Yin, 1994). Pattern matching is the most desirable because it compares empirically based patterns with predicted ones (Yin, 1994). According to Stake (1995), both categorical aggregation and direct interpretation depend on the search for patterns. Often, patterns “will be known in advance, drawn from the research questions, serving as a template for the analysis of the data” (p.78). Sometimes the patterns will emerge unexpectedly from the analysis<sup>15</sup>. Related to this analytic technique is explanation building. If patterns coincide, the results can help a case study strengthen its internal validity. In this case, pattern matching remains relevant as long as the predictive pattern is defined prior to data collection. Bearing in mind that I was trying to understand the issue of race and gender equity, I analyzed episodes or text material with a sense of correspondence. For important episodes or passages of text, I took more time, looking over them, reflecting, triangulating and being skeptical about first impressions and simple meanings. For evidence most critical to my assertions, I isolated

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<sup>15</sup> Emic issues, those important to the actors themselves, sometimes emerge late in the analysis

those repetitions and correspondences most pertinent, challenging myself as to the adequacy of these data to my assertions.

## CHAPTER 5

### AN OFFICIAL ACCOUNT OF THE MERGER

In this chapter, I report the merger events as recounted in official documents and factual accounts. At the time of the study, only two years had elapsed since the official merger of Trinity Tech, Urban Ramsey University and Vermont University, Scottsville on 1 January 2005. From this day forward, these combined institutions would be known as the Metropolitan University (MU). I collected the data for this study between June and September 2007. At the time, two years had lapsed since the MU merger became official. The new institution's Interim leadership had begun the task of consolidating their campus functions, staff and student profiles, re-engineering their curriculums and establishing a permanent governance structure for the MU. As is likely with any merger, all affected parties were concerned about matters such as job security, teaching loads, academic standards, student governance, institutional climate, institutional autonomy etc. The leadership attended to some of these fears by guaranteeing that current staff would retain their jobs and emphasizing that the mergers would create more jobs than result in losses<sup>16</sup> (Naude & Rademeyer, 2003; MU Annual Report, 2006). They also developed a race and gender equity policy aimed at ensuring that 75% of all new position in each employment category would be filled by people from the designated groups (MU Annual Report, 2006). However, many challenges still lay ahead of the new institution..

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<sup>16</sup> The Minister of Education urged universities to retain their staff because of he anticipated that 100 000 new students would complete their matriculation exams. He emphasized that universities would need to retain and create more jobs in order to cope with the increased in-take.

Besides ensuring a balanced representation in the race and gender equity profiles of universities, there were other merger goals stipulated in the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE). The merger was also intended to trounce the racial divide created by the apartheid legacy between historically black and white institutions; ensure effective and efficient use of resources through reducing the overlap and duplication in academic programs; consolidate existing academic programs to ensure broad course offering in response to regional and national needs; consolidate the deployment and use of academic personnel and ease the effect of unnecessary competition (Makgoba, 2003). So, alongside these goals, the Interim Management structures of the newly merged Metropolitan University embarked on new beginnings, setting new visions and directions for the Metropolitan University (MU).

I use a historic timeline to sketch the events of the merger as detailed in official documents from the Ministry of Education and the MU. For the purpose of discussion, this timeline is divided into two sections, the pre- and post-merger phases. However, these temporal distinctions are only for conceptual clarification. In reality, the boundaries between the phases are unclear (Garpin & Herndon, 2000). As will be seen throughout this chapter, the sequence of events does not lend itself to easy categorization between these two phases. The pre-merger phase details an account of why the merger of two particular institutions, Urban Ramsey University and Trinity Tech, was mandated by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and describes how the merger process unfolded. The purpose is to show: (a) what the institutions were like before the merger; (b) the structures and process designed and put in place while the institutions were still separate

legal entities (transitional phase); and (c) the key events during this time (integration phase).

**TABLE 5.1: Historical timeline and key merger events**

2001	February	MbE releases the National Plan for Higher Education.
	May	MbE announces the incorporation of VU Scottsville and Erlington into URU which will later merge with Trinity Technical Institute.
2002		Education Ministry in 2002 announced plans to streamline the apartheid through merging Higher Education institutions.
2005	January	VU Erlington and Scottsville campuses are incorporated into URU. DoE establishes Joint Merger Office (JMO).
	May	JMO holds first university open day sessions.
	June	First Interim Council meeting takes place, followed by a management conference.
	August	Council and Institutional Forum Elections take place. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academic Administration and former Trinity Tech Vice-Principal leaves.
	September	Interim Council announces 3 month Institutional branding campaign. Campaign ends in November of the same year.
2006	February	A new Vice-Chancellor for MU is appointed.
	March	A non-procedural student fee and academic exclusion protest takes place at Trinity Tech campus.
	June	Appointments are made for senior positions such as DVCs, Deans, Executive Directorships at MU. MEC is established.
	July	Student Representation Council (SRC) Constitution and Electoral Policy is established for MU. First black female Chancellor is appointed.
	August	Renewal and Integration process
	September	MEC sets employment equity targets.
2007	March	MU's mission, vision and values are made official. SCTT funding application is approved by DoE, R475 million is awarded by DoE to revitalized infrastructure at Scottsville and Erlington Campuses.

**TABLE 5.1 continued**

2007	May	Renaval and Integration process is completed
	June	Erlington campus is closed
	October	<p>Student protest takes place. Students allege that there is racism at MUs Applegate campus, challenge unequal distribution of resources at other campuses and resist proposal by Council to increase student fees by 11%.</p> <p>Violence erupts, there are shootings, injured students and some are jailed, protesters are denied access to any of the campuses.</p> <p>South African Institute of Race Relations issues a media statement condemning the fee increase because it is higher than the inflation rate, meaning the students from poor families will be unable to afford university education in 2008.</p> <p>ME appoints mediator to intervene in resolving conflict between students and MEC.</p>
	September	COSATU endorses student protest in media statement encouraging students to continue protest.

The historical timeline presented in this chapter sketches the legal phases through which the Department of Education (DoE) intended higher education mergers in South Africa to move. Each phase, summarized in Table 5.2, has a set of tasks that was to be achieved within stipulated time frames. It is on the basis of these legislated phases, tasks and timeframes, that I define the boundaries between the pre- and post-merger in this chapter. Accordingly, the pre-merger phase begins from the date of the announcement of the merger and lasts a minimum of 90 days (Hall, Symes & Luescher, 2004). The pre-merger phase begins with the official announcement of the merger and ends with the formal change of control (Applebaum, Gandell, Shapiro, Belisle & Hoeven, 2000). This stage includes planning discussions among top managers and executives about the possible merger (Garpin & Herndon, 2000) and emerging rumors of a merger among employees (Ivancevich, Schweiger & Power, 1987). During this phase, the separate organizations are still relatively stable (Buono & Bowditch, 1989).

**TABLE 5.2: Government legislated phases of the merger**

Phase 1: Pre-merger phase (lasts a minimum of 90 days)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Minister gives written notice to inform councils of affected institutions of the intended merger, and publishes the intention and reasons for the merger (section 23(2)a-b)</li> <li>2. The affected councils and interested persons have 90 days to respond (section 23 (2) c)</li> <li>3. The minister must consider responses (Section 23(2)d)</li> <li>4. The Minister must consult councils on the sate of establishment, type and name, location and address of the merged institutions (Section 23(3)b)</li> <li>5. The Minister must consult the Council on Higher Education (Section 23(1))</li> <li>6. The Minister must invite nominations for the interim council from institutions (at least 60 days prior to the publication of the Gazette notice) and appoint interim councilors (Section 23(12), Section 23(8) and Section 23 (13))</li> <li>7. The merging institutions can still rationalize the workforce according to applicable labor legislation and agreements (Section 23(2G)) until the date of establishment of the merged institution</li> <li>8. The Minister publishes a merger notice in the Government Gazette with the date of establishment, type, name and name, location and address of the merged institution (Section 23(1))</li> </ol>

Source: Hall, Symes & Luescher, (2004, p.182).

**TABLE 5.2 continued**

<p>Phase 2: Transitional Phase (lasts up to 12 months from the date of establishment)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. On the date of establishment of the merged institution (previously announced in the Gazette), the merged institution formally comes into legal being (section 23 (3) b(i))</li><li>2. On the date of establishment, the interim council starts its function for 6-12 months (Section 23(5-60))</li><li>3. The interim council governs the merged institution (Section 23(5)) in this period</li><li>4. The council must appoint an interim management body, and establish institutional governance structures in accordance with Standard Institutional Statute (Section 23(10))</li><li>5. The interim council must ensure that a new council is constituted (Section 23(10))</li><li>6. All assets, liabilities, rights and obligations of the former institutions devolve upon the merged institution (Section 23(4) [Section 22(1)b])</li><li>7. The existing workforce is transferred automatically to the merged institution (Section 23(2A-2F))</li><li>8. All academic programs offered by the former institutions (and the associated rules) immediately before the date of the merger must continue until such programs and rules are amended or restructured by the new council of the merged institution (Section 23(2H)i)</li></ol>
<p>Phase3: Integration Phase (from the appointment of the new council)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>9. The interim council may carry out its operations until such time as determined by the Minister (maximum of 12 month's existence), where after the new institutional council becomes accountable for the governance of the merged institution, and makes an institutional statute</li></ol>

Source: Hall, Symes & Luescher, (2004, p.182).

### **5.1 Ministry of Education narrative of the merger**

As I will show in this section, the official narrative of the Ministry of Education on the purpose of the merger, especially as a mechanism for achieving race and gender equity, has been reinterpreted several times and led academics to question the logic that mergers can impact both race and gender equity (Jansen et al, 2002). In 2001 the Ministry of Education released the National Plan for Higher Education. In this Plan, mergers were proposed as a mechanism for restructuring the higher education system (DoE, 2001). The Plan articulated targets for the size and shape of the higher education system, with the following major priorities:

- increasing the participation rates for young people; shifting the balance between humanities, business and commerce, and science, engineering and technology (SET);
- creating a single dedicated distance education institution through the merger of UNISA, Technikon SA and the Distance Education Campus of Vermont University (VUDEC);
- creating a National Institute for Higher Education in Mpumalanga and Northern Cape;
- Other specific restructuring measures included the incorporation of the Qwa-Qwa campus of the University of the North into the Free State University and the merger between the ML Sultan and Natal Technikon (DoE, 2001).

Following the report of the National Working Group on Restructuring (NWG) (2002), the MoE pursued a more systematic restructuring program for the higher education sector. As a result, the MoE considers restructuring to connote “mergers between various

institutions in differing partitions, as well as the incorporation of a select number of campuses into some universities” (DoE, 2002).

To facilitate the mergers of all the affected institutions, the MoE took a series of proactive steps including the:

- Provision of funding to the tune of R 3 billion, split between direct merger costs and the recapitalization of merged institutions;
- Publishing Merger Guidelines to help institutions with technical issues on mergers;
- Constituting a Merger Unit to oversee, support and monitor, including providing technical and financial support to the mergers and incorporations on an ongoing basis;
- Appointing a Reference Group to monitor ‘on the ground’ merger planning and implementation processes with a view to ensuring that the central principles underpinning the restructuring are infused into the implementation processes (DoE, 2004).

In its rhetoric, the MoE proclaimed that “the fundamental aim of mergers is the creation of a new institution in the full meaning of the term, that is real integration with a new institutional culture and ethos that is more than the sum of the parts” (DoE 2002, p. 39).

This is evident in the content of documents such as *Transformation and Restructuring: A New Institutional Landscape for Higher Education* (DoE, 2002), which provides a rationalization of the higher education sector, giving specific recommendations for the regional consolidation of universities and technikons; and the clustering recommended in the report which reduces the number of higher education institutions in South Africa from

36 to 21. The MoE articulated that “the crux of the mergers is to enhance institutional capacity to produce quality education” (DoE, 2004).

On 31 May 2002, the MoE announced the Urban Ramsey University (URU) and Trinity Tech merger (Trinity Tech, 2002a, 2002b, 2003a; Goldman & Coetzee, 2004; Goldman, 2005). This merger would be preceded by the incorporation of the Erlington and Scottsville campuses of VU into URU on 1 January 2004. The DoE essentially gave the merging partners 1 year to effect both the incorporation and the merger. In her inaugural speech of the new Metropolitan University, the Minister of Education said,

The key challenge that confronts Metropolitan University is to define what constitutes a comprehensive institution, combining as it does under one umbrella, a university (Urban Ramsey University) and a technical (Trinity Tech) and a distance education component (Erlington and Scottsville campuses of Vermont University). The challenge of defining the role and function of the Metropolitan University as [a] comprehensive institution cannot be pursued in isolation from the broader challenges of transformation. There is the challenge of equity. We need to vigorously address the legacy of racial and gender inequalities that continue to persist. This is especially so in the case of the staff composition of the higher education system. It goes without saying that the challenge of equity cannot be pursued at the expense of quality. Indeed, the poor throughput and graduation rates, suggest that quality is the key aspect by which to measure the success of equity, if the “revolving door” syndrome is to become a relic of the past (Ministry of Education, 2005).

Through these comments, the minister endorsed and reiterated the priorities of the National Plan on Higher Education to redress race and gender imbalances not only in the student composition but also in the composition of both academic and administrative staff. She acknowledged the challenges that lie ahead for MU as it addresses the goals of race and gender equity and similar to her predecessor, Minister Kader Asmal, she emphasized the important principles of equity (redress) and excellence (quality) (DoE, 2004). Interestingly, despite the continuous use of the term equity in government policy documents, no definition is offered for the term. Very often the word equity is used

interchangeably with equality. The South African National Gender Policy framework defines gender equity as “the fair and just distribution of all means of opportunities and resources between men and women” (Author, 2000).

Cloete & Moja (2005) observed that the National Commission on Higher Education Report of 1996 and the 1997 White Paper both started with equity as the first transformation principle. In contrast, the Council on Higher Education report (2000) listed effectiveness and efficiency challenges before equity. The National Plan for Higher Education (DoE, 2001) started its discussion of the challenges facing higher education with human resource development. Cloete and Moja (2005) note that the shifts in emphasis in the policy documents can be read as one indication of the shift towards efficiency after the formulation of the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) macroeconomic policy in 1996 (Department of Finance, 1996). The term redress also features prominently in the DoE’s policy documents. Barnes (2006) noted that, the meaning of the term redress has ranged from ‘rectifying a wrong’, to ‘reparation’, to ‘restoring equality’, to ‘empowerment’ (p.149). Despite these variations, redress has always been defined in monetary terms in South Africa. In South African “higher education speak there are two main types of redress: institutional and social” (Barnes, 2006, 149). Institutional redress refers “to programs that address the physical infrastructure related to teaching, learning and management/administration of a particular campus” (Barnes, 2006, p.150). Social redress on the other hand refers “to funding that is targeted at individual student”, an example of which is the National Student Financial Aid Scheme (NSFAS) which was established in late 1990s (Barnes, 2006, p.150).

Cooper argues that “the earlier stress found in policy documents between 1992 and 1997 on equity and redress, particularly in terms of earmarked funds for historically black institutions, has been greatly downplayed” (2001, p.7). He also argues that Minister Asmal “announced the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE), without first officially passing it through his own “expert” advisory Council on Higher Education (CHE), which had made some significantly different proposals in its own discussion document in 2000” (Cooper, 2001, p.7). Instead he sought, and obtained, prior approval from internal African National Congress (ANC—the ruling party) committees and the cabinet, and other "alliance" structures linked to the ANC such as the leading trade union federation and the South African Communist Party, both of which had raised political questions about his recent reforms in school education (Cooper, 2001). Furthermore, Cooper (2001) asserts that the content of the National Plan differed from a whole series of earlier policy discussion documents leading up to the higher education White Paper of 1997, the definitive document prior to the NPHE. Cooper (2001) concludes that these events suggest two things (a) the merger decisions were political and (b) that the goals and content of the National Plan have undergone several interpretations during pre- and post- implementation. The Chief Director of Higher Education Planning emphasized points (a) and (b) when he stated that “the National Plan will be reviewed annually and revised and adjusted in the light of the institutional plans and the ongoing analyses and monitoring of key trends and developments as well emerging regional and national needs. In this regard, it should be highlighted that this National Plan would have to be adjusted to take into account the concrete objectives and strategies that are likely to emerge from the government’s Human Resource Development strategy which was adopted by Cabinet

at its lekgotla in January 2001, as well as the Government's integrated rural development and urban renewal strategies" (Essop, 2001, p.12). In short, the National Plan is a constantly evolving document and the variation in definitions used across policy documents carries important implications for state policy, institutional action and stakeholder contestation.

## **5.2 Institutional profiles**

### Urban Ramsey University (URU)

In 1963, a conference delegation of 468 endorsed the motion to establish the Urban Ramsey University (URU). The decision culminated in the acceptance of an Act of Parliament on 4 August 1965 for the establishment of an independent Afrikaans university in the Westford area (Voogt, 2002; Von Staden, 2004). As a result, the URU was established in 1967 as the academic home of Afrikaans [only] speaking students from the Westford expanse of Metropolis (Voogt, 2002). Based on the spirit of Afrikaner solidarity and a separate development agenda of the Grand Apartheid project, URU was intended, through its Afrikaans spirit and character, to further and enrich the culture, philosophies of life, and pursuits of the Afrikaner nation.

In 2003, approximately 21,000 full-time and part-time students were enrolled at URU. The majority of them were, up until 1994, white Afrikaners from the Westford expanse. The philosophy governing URU was theoretically and practically imbedded and consistent with the government's ideology of apartheid. The preamble to the act of URU reads: "The University shall be Afrikaans in spirit and character and maintain the principles set out in the preamble to the constitution of the Republic. Among many, such

principles express humble submission to God Almighty, who controls the destinies of nations and the history of peoples. Accordingly, URU will also have a God-fearing spirit and character” (Voogt, 2002, p.4).

The University’s staff appointment policy under section 21 of the Act establishing URU stipulates that: “A student, research worker, professor, lecturer or other teacher or member of the administrative or library staff shall be admitted to the university on grounds of his academic, administrative qualifications and abilities. In addition, the staff is expected, through the performance of their duties, to accept the Afrikaans spirit and the character of the university, and follow the broad formulation of religious belief set out in the preamble of the constitution” (Voogt, 2002, p.4). As such, the language policy and medium of instruction was Afrikaans, except in the case of modern language, where instruction would be given in the language concerned (Von Staden, 2004). This meant that English-speaking students would be welcomed to attend Afrikaans classes and do their oral and written work in English. However, URU was a university established primarily for the Afrikaans community and the classes were not bilingual (Schepers, 2004; Van Biljon, 2004).

#### Vermont University (VU)

Vermont University (VU) was founded in an epoch of black student rebellion and protest in the late 1970’s. These protests resulted in national crises and prompted the penultimate Apartheid government to reform the educational system (Starfield, 2002). The government’s aim was to create VU as a black university, thereby offering blacks an

urban alternative to the ‘troubled’ rural universities<sup>17</sup> to which black students were constitutionally relegated. VU was established by terms of a parliament Act 106 of 1981. VU officially came into being on 1 January 1982 with a central administrative office in Pretoria, the legislative capital of the Republic.

VU is a multi-campus, mixed-mode university that provides tertiary education at its decentralized contact campuses located in seven major South African black townships. With a total student enrolment of 32,182, VU is the second largest and youngest university in South Africa. Apart from its academic mission (liberal arts) VU places strong emphasis on community development. Initially, the academic staff at VU was primarily white conservative and Afrikaans-speaking. This was motivated by the fact that a white Afrikaner Professor at URU had played a significant role in helping the Apartheid regime design a black university which would be located in the sprawling townships of the Republic. This was the apartheid government’s solution to the problem of the ‘troubled black students’ who persistently protested against inferior higher education in the homelands of the Republic. By creating VU, the government managed to keep blacks in the township, away from the white universities in the city. By 1992, white staff comprised 76 percent of the total staff body (Education Policy Unit Report, 1990).

The VU Scottsville campus is located in a massive agglomeration of 29 interlinked townships, with a population of 2 million people. In 1999, 50% of the 20-29 year olds in Scottsville were unemployed (Morris, 1999). VU Scottville still struggles to engage with and transform the ‘context’ of its past as a historically disadvantaged

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<sup>17</sup> Homeland or rural universities were established to keep non-whites away from the cities, where whites lived. As such, these universities became the grooming sites for anti-apartheid political activists and Africanists whose motto was to overthrow the apartheid government. Steve Biko, Mandela, Tambo, Kaunda, Mugabe were educated at some of these universities.

university in an impoverished township (Starfield, 2002). Academically, prior to the merger, many courses still maintained anti-theoretical pedagogies<sup>18</sup> (a cornerstone of apartheid). As was the case with all marginalized black universities in South Africa, VU Scottsville ran with humble facilities, insufficient resources and was totally dependent on government funding. Embittered by these conditions, VU Scottsville was characterized by ongoing student protests. Often these protests were directed at the financial and academic exclusions of students. Over the years, VU Scottsville has had its fair share of confrontations between students and the local police, especially during student protests.

#### Trinity Technical Institute (Trinity Tech)

Trinity Technical Institute (henceforth, Trinity Tech) dates back to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, it was established in 1903 as the Trinity Technical Institute to serve the needs of the gold-mining industry of Metropolis. A 1923 Act of Parliament made provision for technical (or vocational) training. This led to the establishment of the Trinity Technical Institute in 1925. Trinity Technical Institute went through some changes: it became the Metropolis Technical College in 1930, the Metropolis College for Advanced Technical Education in 1968 and finally, the Trinity Technical Institute of Metropolis in 1979. It was established as a white technical institution to serve a white student population. Over the years, Trinity had opened its gates to non-whites. By 2004, Trinity Tech was a large and complex institution boasting a racially diverse student population of 12,000. Trinity Tech had 1,200 staff members from all spheres of the city's multifaceted community and with a vibrant educational centre that extended across the

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18 Teaching strategies that implicitly maintain student's subaltern socioeconomic status

east-west axis of Metropolis. Trinity Tech was a progressive institution that, prior to the merger, dramatically transformed its student population to be closely representative of South Africa's population demographics (Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004). Through its curriculum and program offerings, it had managed to establish vibrant community partnerships and attract student from the designated groups<sup>19</sup>. Trinity Tech's staff in both the academic and administrative ranks was diverse and it had several equity initiatives going on. By South African standards, Trinity Tech was ahead of the game.

### **5.3 Institutional leadership narrative of the merger**

During the pre-merger phase, two senior university administrators, Professors Roeland and Mkhonto<sup>20</sup>, emerged as leading actors in negotiations. They facilitated dialogue and built consensus between the two merger partner institutions (Metropolitan University, 2005). Soon after assuming their roles as Interim Vice-Chancellor and Interim Pro Vice-Chancellor respectively, these two leaders publicly expressed their interpretations of the MU merger. Their narratives emphasized their perspectives on the motivations for the merger. According to Mkhonto, the reasons advanced by the Ministry of Education for the mergers were to:

- overcome the racial fragmentation of the educational system.
- achieve economies of scale through reducing unit costs, and economies of scope through broadening the range of programs

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<sup>19</sup> According to South Africa's employment equity legislation, the term designated groups, refers to Africans, Coloreds, Indians/Asians, women and persons with disabilities.

<sup>20</sup> Not real names.

- streamline governance and management structures, and to enhance administrative and management capacity
- achieve more effective utilization of existing academic staff capabilities
- improve administrative systems
- reduce duplication between institutions closely located to one another
- improve the quality of programs offered (Mkhonto, 2002).

In one of her speeches, Mkhonto also suggested that the merger of MU was politically and ideologically motivated (Mkhonto, 2002). In a media statement, Professor Roeland promoted Metropolitan University as one of the first comprehensive universities<sup>21</sup> in the country and emphasized that a comprehensive university offers a broader spectrum of qualifications with different entry requirements and exit levels (O'Reilly, 2005). This means that MU would offer academic and career-orientated qualifications which include certificates, diplomas, degrees and higher degrees. For that reason, the aim of offering such a curriculum is "not to blur the distinction between academic and technology degrees, but to extend the range of possible training activities," (O'Reilly, 2005).

Mkhonto and Roeland rallied their constituents, organized constituent groups around their respective interpretations of the government's intentions and formed teams that attended to the various elements of the merger. Through their hard-work, a consensus was reached between the merger partners and the resultant memorandum became a

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<sup>21</sup> The notion of a comprehensive university remains highly contested and undefined in South Africa. In an article titled *Comprehensive planning: the emergence of new HEIs in South Africa?* Auf der Heyde (2004) points out that "a senior official of the department personally confirmed that the word "comprehensive" was used not in an attempt to describe an institution that is somehow pedagogically or organizationally different from a university or a technikon, but for the simple reason that the department could not think of an appropriate name for an institution emerging out of a university and a Technikon" (p.1). Auf der Heyde (2004) argues that the term "comprehensive has taken a life of its own and that significant efforts continues to be made in constructing meaning around it" (p.1)

guiding document for proceeding with the merger. I was unable to secure a copy of the memorandum of agreement between Trinity tech and URU. However, from official documentation by the Ministry of education, I understood that this document was intended to be a “foundational script” which details the principles of negotiation between merger partners (DoE, 2003, p, 255). The memorandum also details the manner in which the merger will be advanced in light of the prescribed legal phases described in this chapter and hence discloses information regarding joint decision-making, equal partnership and the conditions that guide the full participation of all stakeholders, conflict resolution mechanisms, terms of reference for new structures, logos, new university names, the scheduling of events and the processes for monitoring the application of the agreement and liaison between the institution, Minister of Education and the DoE (Hall, Symes & Luscher, 2004). Once the terms and conditions of the agreement were clarified, both institutions that are party to the MU merger set up joint task teams where representatives from each institution sought to answer and resolve the tangled challenges. Among these challenges were incompatible administrative management systems, different institutional cultures, academic governance, information technology alignment, student admission and enrollment, financial management etc. Creating a new mission, vision and values thus became a main concern for the interim leaders of the MU.

## The establishment of select committees

In January 2004, a government mandated Joint Merger Office (JMO) was legally established (Masha, 2004; Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004). Senior university managers from Trinity Tech and Urban Ramsey University were installed to this JMO. The JMO was tasked with creating the academic architecture; monitoring and ensuring that various merger projects were achieved within the stipulated timeframes; and making sure that corrective action was taken where there were delays (Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004). One of JMO's accomplishments was hosting the new university's first open day to market the various campuses on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2004. The MU executive management felt that with the establishment of numerous task teams, there would be adequate and more focused means for dealing with the challenges arising from the merger. Alongside the JMO, a Joint Merger Steering Committee (JMSC) was established to deal with various change interventions post-merger (Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004). During the planning phase, Trinity Tech and URU engaged in consultation regarding the terms and conditions of the forced merger. Questions about the academic structure, rules, regulations, policies, processes governance and the location of the main campus percolated within these deliberations.

In 2003, the Minister of Education sent invitations to nominate individuals to serve on the Interim Council at the merging institutions (DoE, 2003). On 10 June 2004 the first meeting of Councils from URU and Trinity tech took place at URU's Council Chambers where matters such as nominations for interim council membership, academic architecture, vision, mission, core values and the branding of the new university were discussed (Trinity Tech, 2004). Following this meeting, a Management Conference took

place where the JSMC emphasized that “there would be no immediate retrenchments or voluntary severance packages at either Trinity Tech or URU, in order to not lose it’s most precious asset, staff, academic as well as non-academic” (Trinity Tech, 2004, p.5). Hence the JMSC was tasked with the responsibility to establish a number of joint task-teams that would negotiate various core issues. With these two committees in place, the preparations and scheduling of tasks began.

The newly appointed executive management of the MU felt very strongly that change had to be managed at this new institution and the establishment of task teams was aimed at change management. They also believed that change would take place over a number of years (MUE, 2005a). The executive management proceeded with the establishment of task teams because they saw “change management as an instrument for ensuring that strategies once implemented become permanently imbedded in the business of the changed institution” (MUE, 2005a, p.8). Table 5.3 lists several task teams that were established during the planning phase of the merger. Most of these teams continued the work post-merger. These task teams are coordinated via a Committee for Institutional Change that is assisted by the Office of Institutional Change, an institutional ‘sounding board’ which provides advice to each task team (MUE, 2005a). Each of these task teams is managed by a member of the executive management committee (henceforth referred to as the MEC) who reports to the university Principal or the Vice-Chancellor.

**TABLE 5.3: Committees established at MU during integration phase**

Name of Task Team	Committee Responsibilities
Academic Task Team	Investigates possible academic architecture of the new university,
Academic Task Team Sub-committee A	Resolves research matters
Academic Task Team Sub-committee B	Resolves intellectual property matters
Governance and Management Task Team	Governance and management issues including the drafting of new statutes, makes recommendation to the management on appointing individuals to formal university structures and advices on institutional cultural matters
Joint Working Group on Communication	Ensures that an internal communication strategy is designed and implemented to inform staff and students on new developments at MU. Organized Strategic planning sessions at both the Davidsville and Applegate campuses to brief students and staff, and to listen to their concerns about the merger.
Strategic Planning Task Team	Compiling a strategic plan for MU and to propose a system of strategic management. This team is responsible for compiling the Institutional Operational Plan required by the DoE before the end of the first year of the merger.
Quality Plan Task Team	Drawing up a quality plan for MU as required by the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC). This team prepares the institution for a quality audit to be conducted in 2009.

Sources: Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004; E, 2005a.

**TABLE 5.3 continued**

Name of Task Team	Committee Responsibilities
The Employees Assistance Program Task Team	Ensures that all employees receive quality assistance to deal with merger-related stress
Substantive Merger Project Task Team	Deals with the remaining facets of the substantive merger in order to create an efficient and fully aligned institution
Erlington Campus Task Team	Advises Council on the various options for the continued and sustainable offering of higher education on that campus.
Harmonization Imbumba <sup>22</sup> Forum	Unifying the conditions of service between the merger partners.
Institutional Advancement Task Team	Develops and implements new strategies for fund raising and redefines the relationships between the and its support base

Sources: Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004; MUE, 2005a.

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<sup>22</sup> Imbumba is a Zulu word for clay

#### **5.4 Structural diversity**

Trinity Tech's management executive structure was racially transformed but generally women were underrepresented comparative to URU. Table 5.4 shows that there was only 1 black female, the only woman in a prominent position. As many as five senior executives left Trinity Tech pre-merger to seek employment elsewhere, four were people from the designated groups. Looking at Table 5.5, one sees that mainly white males occupied executive management positions at URU pre-merger. In general, women and people from the designated groups were not in the executive management ranks of the URU. Of the two males from the designated groups at URU, one left the institution post-merger. Only 1 white male did not retain his Deanship post-merger.

**TABLE 5.4: Trinity Tech Executive Management structure 2004**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Qualification</b>
Vice-Chancellor & Principal	Black	Female	Professor
<b>VICE PRINCIPALS &amp; DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLORS</b>			
Academic & Registrar	Black	Male	Professor
Chief Operations Officer	White	Male	MBA
<b>EXECUTIVE DEANS</b>			
Art, Design & Architecture	White	Male	MFA
Business management	Indian	Male	Professor
Engineering	Indian	Male	Professor
Health Sciences	White	Male	Professor
Research	White	Male	Professor
Students	Black	Male	PhD
<b>DIRECTORS</b>			
Human Resources	White	Male	PhD
Marketing & Communications	White	Male	MA

Source: Trinity Tech Annual Report 2004, p.27.

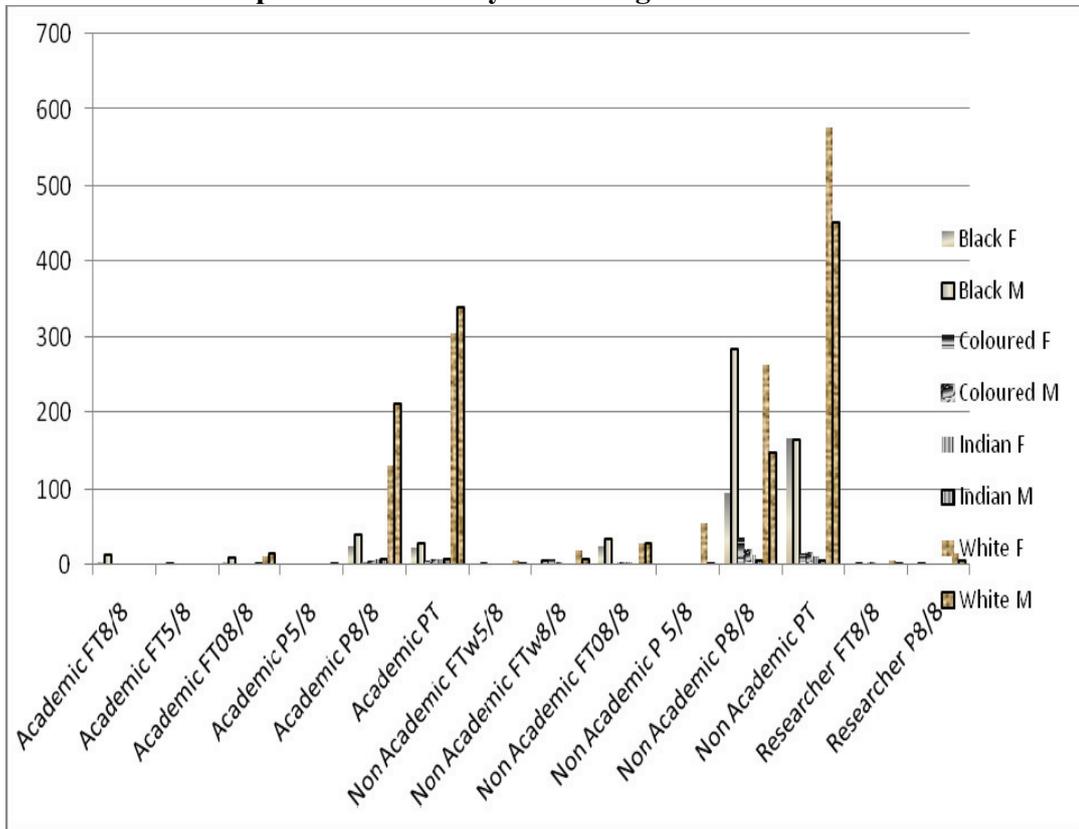
**TABLE 5.5: URU Management Executive structure 2003-2004**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Qualification</b>
Vice-Chancellor & Rector	White	Male	Professor
VICE RECTORS			
Strategic Planning & HR	Colored	Male	Professor
Research, & Academic Management	White	Male	Professor
Teaching & Information Systems	White	Female	Professor
REGISTRARS			
Finance	White	Male	Professor
Operations	White	Male	Unkown
Development	Black	Male	PhD
DEANS			
Arts	White	Male	Professor
Education & Nursing	White	Female	Professor
Science	White	Female	Professor
Economic & Management Sciences	White	Male	Professor
Law	White	Male	Professor
Engineering	White	Male	Professor
Student	White	Female	Professor
CHIEF DIRECTORS			
Library Services	White	Female	PhD
Finance	White	Male	MBA
Centre for learning, teaching & assessment	White	Male	Professor
Sport	White	Male	Professor
Institutional Information	White	Male	Uknown
Personnel Services	White	Male	Uknown

Sources: URU Annual Reports 2001; 2003, and URU Rapport 2000.

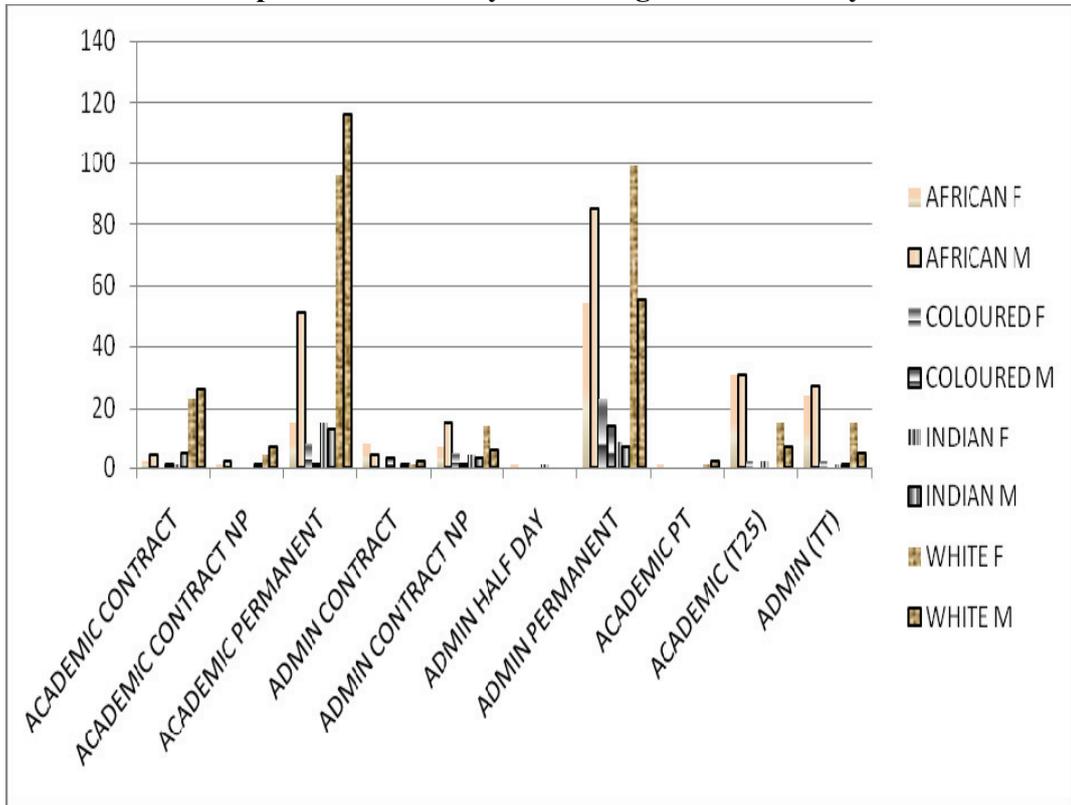
Figures 5.1 and 5.2 give a picture of racial and gender compositions of staff, both administrative and academic, at the partner institutions before and after the merger. The data in Figures 5.1, and 5.4 (which I will discuss in the post-merger section) group administrators according to the following criteria: remuneration package-whether an employee receives all eight benefits or less denoted by the code 8/8 or 5/8 respectively; employment agreement-whether an employee is employed on a permanent or part-time basis (FT vs PT); position type-whether an employee is an academic or administrator (Non Academic vs Academic) and whether an employee is engaged in research on a full-time or part-time basis receiving all or some of the benefits (Research FT8/8 or PT8/8). Since the VU campuses were already incorporated into URU before the merger, their personnel data were available. The categorization of the data in Figure 5.2 differs slightly from categorizations in Figures 5.1 and 5.4. In Figure 5.2, executive personnel are sorted by employment agreement-whether an employee is employed on contractual or permanently (contract vs permanent); position type (Academic vs. Administrative). There were no labels for researchers at Trinity Tech, this might be explained by the fact that the academic mission of technikons focused primarily on vocational and career education, product-related research and development rather than general formative, professional education, basic and applied research as the case with the traditional mission of a university (d'Almaine, Manhire & Atteh, 1997). According to Figure 5.1, URU personnel were predominantly white. The majority of white females were employed in administrative positions on a part-time basis. Blacks, Indian and colored males and females were underrepresented in the administrative structure of URU.

**FIGURE 5.1: Composition of staff by race and gender at URU**



Source: MU Management Information Systems Office, 2006.

**FIGURE 5.2: Composition of staff by race and gender at Trinity Tech**



Sources: Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004; MU Management Information Systems Office, 2006.

Figure 5.2 reveals that non-whites were spread out in all the various categories at Trinity Tech. Within the administrative ranks, white females dominate, followed by white males, black males and black males (Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004; MU Management Information Systems Office, 2006). While the presence of Africans is perceptible at Trinity Tech, coloreds and Indians males and females remain severely underrepresented.

## **5.5 Post-merger phase**

The post-merger phase begins when two separate legal entities become one legal entity. This phase of the merger includes finalizing the integration plans for the separate institutions and implementing the objectives that were identified in the pre-merger phase (Habeck, Kroger & Tram, 2000). According to Hall et al., (2004), the merged institution formally becomes a new legal entity on the date of establishment which happens during the transitional phase. Hence, I incorporate my discussion of the transitional and integration phases into the post-merger phase. The aim of this section is to (a) show what the new legal entity, the Metropolitan University, looks like; and (b) describe the apparent effects of merging on the structural diversity of the new institution, its policies and processes.

### **New Institutional Profile: Metropolitan University (MU)**

On 1 January 2005, Trinity Tech and URU were legally merged to create Metropolitan University (MU Annual Report, 2006). The MU merger was intended to produce a comprehensive university (DoE, 2001), an institution that would offer both academic and technical degrees. Metropolitan University has five racially mixed and multi-lingual campuses, nine faculties and a student population of 46, 000.

In January 2005, the planning phase gave way to the implementation of the merger. The merged institution, MU, brought with it new demands, processes, culture and problems. No longer was the scenario two institutions planning for what would be; it was now an evolving new organization in principle and the former institutions had ceased to exist. The first initiative embarked on by MU was to develop a strategic plan that

would steer the university in its preferred new direction. Although the strategic plan would act as a roadmap for the MU, it was only part of a larger institutional change initiative (MUE, 2005b). To help facilitate the change, a revised governance structure was drafted and accepted by the Executive Committee of the University (MUE, 2005b). MU's members of the executive committee (MEC, henceforth) indicate that they proceeded in this way to ensure that change efforts were strategic and coordinated through an appropriate governance structure (Goldman, 2005; MUE, 2005b). I shall discuss the formation of the MEC later in this chapter.

On 17 March 2007, the vision, mission and value statements for MU read as follows:

#### Vision

“A premier, embracing, African city university offering a mix of vocational and academic programs that advances freedom, democracy, equality and human dignity as high ideals of humanity through distinguished scholarship, excellence in teaching, reputable research and innovation, and through putting intellectual capital to work” (MU website, 2007).

According to Barnard (2005), the above vision, mission and value statements, would form the basic principles and guidelines for managing the new MU.

#### Mission

- Partnership with our communities
- Supporting access to a wide spectrum of academic and technological teaching, learning and research
- Leading, challenging, creating and exploring knowledge

## Values

- Academic distinction
- Integrity and respect for diversity and human dignity
- Academic freedom and accountability
- Individuality and collective effort
- Innovation

### **5.6 Transitional phase**

The DoE established an Interim Council, a transitional governance structure to oversee the interim governance of the university in the first year of the merger (Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004). The Interim Council, composed of eight members- four nominated by each of the two institutions, officially assumed its duties on 1 January 2005. The Minister of Education appointed an external chairperson, with no affiliation with either of the two institutions, to preside over the Interim Council (Cognoscenti, 2003; DoE, 2003). As part of their charge, the Interim Council oversaw consolidation of the various campuses, the installment of a permanent Council, the appointment of a permanent governing body and the integration of the various processes and regulations of the merged institutions (MUE, 2004). It was agreed that the first three tiers<sup>23</sup> of management would initially consist of incumbents of the corresponding tiers of the constituent institutions (MUE, 2005). The Interim Council proceeded with this

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<sup>23</sup> Accordingly, these tiers would consist of the positions of Deputy Vice-Chancellors, tier one; the second tier would consist of the Vice-Chancellor, Pro Vice-Chancellor and the Deputy Vice-Chancellors who would be responsible for managing the MU; and the third tier would result from the arrangement of the URU Registrar and the Trinity Tech's management which would form clusters coordinated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellors. It is important to note that a cluster could include senior staff members who are not at the second or third tier.

arrangement because they believed that, “clustering, would allow for the optimal utilization of the expertise and the experience of both institutions to the benefit of MU” (MUE, 2004, p. 2). These interim appointments were ratified in January 2005, by the Interim Council.

The Interim Council Vice-Chancellor adopted a “four-language policy” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.15). This policy officially made English rather than Afrikaans the language of instruction, administration, communication, marketing and record at MU (MU Annual Report, 2006). Operationally, this language policy resulted in the use of four additional native South African languages when distributing internal circulars and memos. After one year in operation, the MU Interim Council appointed and confirmed a permanent MU Council. In terms of the management, it was decided that a “unitary model<sup>24</sup> of governance would be used” (Trinity Tech, 2004, p.6).

#### Institutional Branding Campaign

On September 1 2005, the university’s transitional leadership announced the beginning of an extensive three-month brand awareness campaign, both internally and externally (MUE, 2005). This campaign was aimed at creating an awareness of the MU trade name with its various stakeholders. These leaders took four words from the MU mission, that they believed spelled out what MU was all about. These words are “Lead, Challenge, Create and Explore” (MUE, 2005, p.4). These words became the MU’s brand campaign slogan that characterized the institution’s advertising and marketing message. Soon after the slogan was made official, billboards were erected in and around the city of

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<sup>24</sup> This implies that the same function or activity would be managed centrally across all campuses. In reality this would later proved to be a challenge for MU.

Metropolis, at bus shelters, at the locations of the sister campuses, in newspapers, and cinemas (MUE, 2005). This was the external campaign. For its internal campaigns, the management stated, “we plan on branding each and every one of you by the end of the year. Wherever you go, you will be branded so that people can see you are part of the MU team” (MUE, 2005, p.4). With this announcement, the leaders sent the first package of “branded materials” to each university staff member. The package contained a T-shirt with the brand message to be worn on casual days, a lapel badge that says, I’m Committed! Staff members were advised to wear the badge or T-Shirt everyday in the months of October or September. If spotted wearing them, they could be the lucky winner of “a sweet surprise” (MUE, 2005, p.4).

The leadership also launched competition with up to R17, 000 for brags. To participate in this competition, staff members needed to keep a copy of a staff newsletter to find answers to questions. In the months following the three-month brand awareness campaign, there would be a puzzle competition where each staff member would receive a package to build their own version of the MU’s new vision, mission and values. This puzzle competition had three prize categories R10, 000 for the first prize, R5, 000 for the second and R2, 000 for the third (MUE, 2005). Again here, staff members were asked to rely on the staff newsletter to answer questions for the puzzles; the university provided even the glue for the placement of the puzzles on the puzzle board (MUE, 2005). This whole campaign culminated in a situation where even students were involved in giving their opinion through message boards at various campus locations. Through these efforts and those of the committees already established in the pre-merger phase, The Brand was launched.

## The Management Executive Committee (MEC)

In February 2006, the Interim Council Chairperson, from the incumbent from the designated groups, was appointed by the permanent Council as the new Vice-Chancellor for MU and he assumed work on 1 April 2006 (Macfarlane, 2005; Gadebe, 2006; MU Annual Report, 2006). On 15 June 2006, new senior appointments were made to the positions of the MEC and Deans and Executive Officers (MU Annual Report, 2006; MU Student Newsletter, 2006). The MEC is a 6 member body consisting of 4 white males, 1 colored male, 1 Indian male, 1 Indian female and 1 white female. The Executive Deanships consist of 4 white female and 5 male Deans at MU. Of the Executive Directors, 9 are white males, 2 are White females and 1 is a black female (MU Annual Report, 2006). In July of the same year, a prominent business woman, also from the designated groups, became the new Chancellor of MU. She assumed her duties on 1 September 2006 (MU Annual Report, 2006). The Interim Council embarked of filling of these positions with the chosen incumbents because it believed this “was a source of inspiration” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.2). Since their appointments, “these individuals had brought much needed stability, focus and strategic leadership and direction to the university” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p. 2). To avoid duplication of academic services, the Health Sciences Faculty at Trinity Tech and URU were merged. Also the facilities of the Education and Law Faculties at Erlington and Scottville were incorporated into URU. After the merger, academics, students and resources of the incorporated faculties were, in the case of the law faculty, partially, and fully relocated to the Applegate campus. The Deans positions within these merging faculties were externally advertised and new incumbents were chosen. With the Deans and academic staff in place, the process of

evaluating, assessing and redesigning the curriculum within the new faculties began. New priorities were set and these were incorporated into each faculty's operational and strategic plan.

### Student Governance

In conjunction with these developments in the administrative and academic subdivisions of the university, there were several efforts made to unite and redesign the student governance structures. The Interim Council of the MU decided that student governance structures should be retained as they were at the former institutions to focus on campus-specific issues (MU Student Newsletter, 2006). This decision saw the Student Representative Council (SRC) at the various campuses reporting to an over-arching or central SRC which was established by the Interim Council (MUE, 2004). The Interim Council also determined the functions and responsibilities of the central SRC. The SRC currently has a total membership of 10, 2 representatives from each of MU's campuses. Arriving at this composition was not an easy feat, it involved contested negotiations between the various elected campus SRCs.

The beginning of the 2006 academic year at Trinity Tech was marred by student protests (MU Annual Report, 2006). These protests, which were initiated by the South African Student's Congress (SASCO), were largely aimed at student fee increases and a perceived lack of legitimacy on the part of a central SRC (MU Annual Report, 2006). The MU executive management obtained an interdict against SASCO due to the threats these protests caused to persons and property within the university. Since 2005, when the merger became official, there have been notable student protests in February 2005;

March 2006 and October 2007 (Financial Mail, 2005; Maple, 2006; Sunday Times, 2007). While most protests have resulted in amicable consensus, it is the 2007 protest that has lasted the longest, one week, and has draw the attention and intervention of politicians nation-wide (Sunday Time, 2007). This particular protest has also brought some of the contentious issues of the MU institutional climate to light. I discuss the institutional climate in chapter six.

The Student Affairs, Academic and Development divisions of the former VU Scottsville, Trinity Tech and URU were not able to achieve a substantive merger in 2006. This failure was largely due to the institution's inability to make senior executive appointments for Student Affairs (MU Annual Report, 2006). Consequently, the SRC and other student organizations on these campuses functioned in a regulatory vacuum, until the approval of an SRC Constitution and an Electoral policy in July 2006. Eventually, the Student Affairs Division on the Applegate campus had to deal with a number of incidences that arose at the other campuses, such as, alcohol abuse among students (MU Annual Report, 2006).

#### Protests and student narratives of the merger

During all three phases of the merger, students regularly organized protests. In the Transitional Phase only, students embarked in a week long protest which took place as I was writing this dissertation. One journalist who covered the incident wrote,

Many protestors said the conflict, apart from increased fees, was about deeper issues related to the university merger. They were protesting again inequalities between the university's campuses (Mail and Guardian, 2007).

In an altercation with the police, one female student was shot and seriously injured. A total of 40 student protesters were arrested and jailed for damaging university property. 300 hundred more student protesters pelted police and passing motorists with stones, disrupted classes and barricaded main entrances to the Scottsville, Applegate, Braddock and the Davidsville campuses of MU (Sunday Times, 2007).

The student protests at MU provide a window on the dominant perceptions that blacks have of the management at MU. A student leader was interviewed by one of the national radio stations regarding the MU student protest. He said,

The Vice-Chancellor and his MEC team are not treating us like people, they treat us like animals. How can we submit our petition if we are locked outside the main campus entrance? He is arrogant and inhumane. The administration displays conservative views. The VC stands there inside campus, seeing us protesting outside the main entrance and watches the police shoot us. Is that the behavior of a parent? What is wrong with asking to be treated fairly? Like humans? We are only asking for access to an education and this is how we are treated. We want to make it clear to the public that we will not be submitting a memorandum of our concerns behind back gates. We will not be submitting them in the middle of the night. We will submit them in full public view. They must let us into campus then we will submit. I want the public to know that the 40 students who were jailed, including the SRC president have been released. We were so worried about it because we did not know if they will have a roof over their heads and up until 11pm yesterday, they had not been released from jail. Even though they have been released, they are still barred from campus for two weeks. And four of them will appear at the Magistrate's court soon on charges of damaging university property. We are doing our best to ensure safety for the peaceful protesters (Mazibuko, 11 October, 2007).

Paradoxically, the VC, "an anti-apartheid activist and leader spent several years in South Africa's prisons, without trial, in pursuit of freedom, democracy, equality and human dignity. During an extremely dangerous period, he had spearheaded the creation of teachers' and students' movements and was elected leader in various organizations at local, regional and international levels" (MU website, 2007).

When the Radio Tsonga talk show host asked the student leader to remind listeners what their protest agenda was. The student leader indicated the following: (a) the suggested 14% student fees hike for first year entering students was far beyond the inflation rate, (b) the quality of student services at the other MU campuses was comparably poorer than that offered to students studying at the main campus (Applegate) and lastly, (c) there was racism at the main campus. In a bid to seek a solution for their demands and as result of their inability to reach an amicable solution with the MEC, the student leader indicated that the SRC had approached several highly placed politicians for intervention. The student leader said they had asked Dr Naledi Pandor, the Minister of Education to appoint a mediator for them. The SRC had also launched a complaint with the National Independent Complaints Directorate and had asked the Mr Feroz Cachalia, the Provincial Management Executive Committee for Community Safety to intervene. In this stale mate situation, black student protesters concluded that their voice would not be heard and their complaints would not be addressed within MU. In his conclusion, the student leader indicated that the Vice-Chancellor was the “major problem” causing the delay in resolving the crisis.

On, 16 October 2007, COSATU issued an official statement endorsing the student protest against fee increases (Mail & Guardian, 2007a). In the same week, the South African Institute of Race Relations (SAIRR) objected to the student fee increases, sighting economic reasons and the reality that many black students can hardly afford their education as it is. Once the debate went public, politicians intervened, the DoE appointed a mediator to facilitate negotiations between students and the MEC. The mediator was from one of the DoE departments and his role was to help the concerned parties identify

issues, encourage joint problem solving and explore settlement options (Mail and Guardian, 2007b).

#### The establishment of select committees

In addition to the committees listed in Table V, the MEC commissioned an investigation, in 2005, into the provision of higher education at the Scottsville campus (Metropolitan University Highlights, 2005; Metropolitan University News Magazine, 2006). Since the campus was plagued by a downward trend in the student numbers, the MEC wanted to explore if the trend could be arrested and reversed. This led to the establishment of the Scottsville Campus Task Team (SCTT) which was chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Strategic, Institutional Planning and Implementation.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of May 2006 the SCTT conducted focus group interviews with academics, the student representative council, faculty coordinators, administrative staff, registrars, faculty officers and labor union representatives (SCTT Report, 2006). From their findings, they concluded that the VU Scottsville campus student body could be grown to 10 000 and thus, a substantial investment in infrastructure, the acquisition of additional academic building and facilities would be required (SCTT Report, 2006). In addition, the SCTT recommended the establishment of a Centre for Small Business and Medium Enterprise Development which would be a branch of the existing Business School of the university. Such a Centre, they argued, should become the focal point for the university. It should be a unique centre of excellence. They recommended that subjects such as economics, financial and business studies be made the hub of offerings

on the Scottsville campus. The Centre, they argued, should involve the transfer of established degree and national diploma programs to the campus (SCTT Report, 2006).

The report emphasized that the plan to “transform the Scottsville campus into a higher level” (SCTT Report, 2006, p.35) could only succeed if the following were taken seriously:

- a) The University Council gives their full and visible support to the development of the campus to a level, commensurate with the urban campuses of Davidsville, Brighton and Applegate;
- b) A comprehensive fundraising strategy is developed with targets, due dates, accountability and implemented to obtain the necessary wherewithal to underpin the development of the campus;
- c) An appropriate communication strategy is developed and implemented to change any negative perceptions regarding the status, potential and role of the Scottsville campus that may still linger in the minds of external and internal stakeholders. Simultaneously, the campus and what it has to offer must be promoted (SCTT Report, 2006).

By mid-2007, the work of the SCTT and MEC’s subsequent application for funds from the Department of Education, on the basis of the SCTT report, had paid off. The DoE decided to fund the Scottsville campus development. Such a triumph, though, was not experienced by Scottsville’s counterpart, the Erlington campus. In total, the MEC “had requested R475 million for the development which would be split between the Erlington and Scottsville campuses” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.8). However, the MU was only granted R340 million by the DoE. Given this outcome and the financial constraints of

running the Erlington campus of only 300 students and staff, the MEC<sup>25</sup> officially shut down Erlington for an unspecified amount of time.

### **5.7 Integration phase**

After 12 months, the Minister of Education dissolved the Interim Council. The work of the Interim led to the appointment of a new permanent Council and the integration phase of the merger official was initiated (CHE, 2004). The integration phase of the MU merger shepherded in many policy changes and the re-development of institutional statutes. Among these policies is the Affirmative Action and Equity policy, mandating individuals from the designated groups fill 75% of all vacant positions at MU (MU Annual Report, 2006). Alongside the policy changes are human resource processes that focus on the harmonization of conditions of service, remuneration packages, hiring and the matching and placing of administrative staff into re-designed positions in the new institution (MU Annual Report, 2006). In a bid to address race and gender equity, administrators set priorities and milestones which then became proxies for tackling imbalances of apartheid. All units, department heads and faculty Deans are responsible for ensuring the implementation of this race and gender equity policy. Other policies are also being drafted and evolving at MU. I discuss these priorities henceforth.

The MU has an employment equity plan which sets targets for achieving race and gender equity in the next 2 years. To reach compliance, MEC<sup>26</sup> is currently developing a separate recruitment and retention strategy for achieving race and gender equity of

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<sup>25</sup> At the time of this research, the MEC was currently reviewing strategic plans to use the campus site for engineering and technology as and when funding becomes available and the Erlington campus reopens.

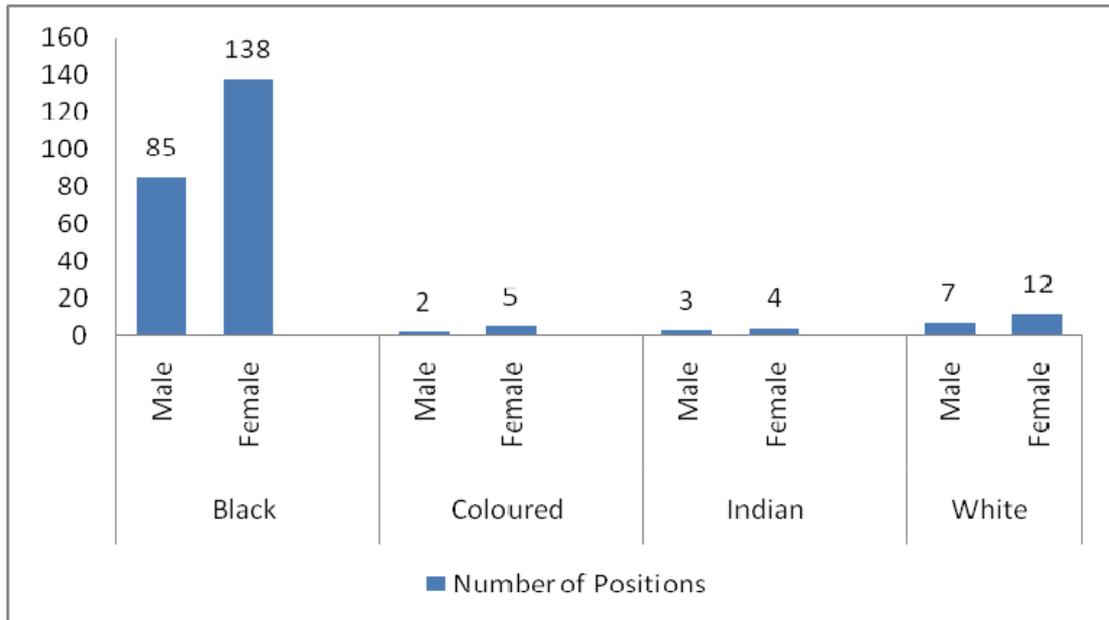
<sup>26</sup> According to the draft document, the core stakeholders responsible for developing this strategy are Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Human Resources) in close collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Finance) and the Executive Deans.

academic employees. The MEC plans to create 150 academic positions over the three-year period, “all of which are to be filled with employment equity appointments” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.54). The targets include 75% (113) of the 150 positions that would be filled over the next four years. According to their annual report, the MU embarked on several efforts to prepare employees for changes that would result from the implementation of the Employment equity plan. To keep everyone informed, the MEC visibly displayed a summary of the Employment Equity Act in various departments at MU (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.142). The university offered Employment Equity training courses and diversity management and discrimination awareness programs which were attended by 156, 20 and 28 employees, respectively. There were also change management programs which the university offered and these were attended by 211 managers of all levels (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.142). With regards to gender equity, the university set formal employment targets which were submitted to the Department of Labor (MU Annual Report, 2006). These targets have been set for the three-year period 1 September 2006 until 31 August 2009 (MU Annual Report, 2006).

Figure 5.3 depicts MD’s racial and gender employment equity targets for administrative posts. The targets shown in Figure 5.3 represent standards set by the MEC for advancing race and gender equity in both administrative and academic ranks. Figure 5.3 communicates the message that MU has the intention to appoint more black females and males in their administrative ranks. The former Minister of Education assured institutions that the merger would create more jobs and would not cause any job losses because the department anticipated an additional 100,000 students to enroll at institutions of higher learning (Naude & Rademeyer, 2003). In light of this, the MU’s executive

leadership guaranteed that there would be no job losses, current staff would be retained post-merger.

**FIGURE 5.3: MU 2006-2009 Employment equity targets by race and gender**



Source: Annual Report 2006, p. 147-150.

#### Legitimate structures for equity redress

From the MU internal and government documents, I learned that there were structures that were created at MU directed at achieving race or gender equity (Government Gazette, 1997; MU Annual Report, 2006). The structures that were created at MU are the Institutional Forum and the Consultative and Problem Solving Forum. These structures are avenues through which students, employees and the MEC can publicly debate, lobby their interests and negotiate, among other institutional level issues, race and gender equity policies. According to MU documents, these structures, their

functions and the outcome of their deliberations are broadly communicated to all members of the university community (MU Annual Report, 2006; MUE, 2005b).

The Institutional Forum (IF) of a public university must play an advisory role to the Council of that university on matters that include among others:

- The implementation of the Higher Education Act 1997 and the national policy on higher education;
- Race and gender equity policies
- The selection of candidates for senior management positions;
- Codes of conduct, mediation and dispute resolution procedures;
- The fostering of an institutional culture which promotes tolerance and respect for fundamental human right and creates an appropriate environment for teaching, research, learning and perform such functions as determined by Council, (DoE, 1997).

According to the Higher Education Act 1997, the Institutional forum of a public higher education institution must include representatives of:

- The management, as determined by the institutional statute or an Act of parliament;
- The council;
- The senate;
- The academic employees;
- The students; and the manner in which they are appointed or elected, as the case may be, are determined by the institutional 40 statute or an Act of parliament (DoE, 1997, p.27; Trinity Tech, 2004, p.17; MUE, 2005).

The Consultative Problem Solving Forum (CPSF) is a joint trade union and management forum which meets monthly throughout the reporting period. The CPSF addresses matters of mutual concern and interest that affect employees of the University (MU Annual Report, 2006). In addition to these two forums, trade unions at MU are also represented on all selection committees for the appointment and promotion of employees. In 2006, a Joint Management and Trade Union Task Team was established to “develop proposals on a future harmonized remuneration dispensation for the university” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p. 55). The work of this task team is reported to be under way, the MEC “believes that the task team is making substantial progress” (p. 55).

The MEC identified the following opportunities for achieving race and gender equity: recruitment procedures, advertising positions, selection criteria, appointments, job classification and grading, remuneration and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, training and development, promotions, transfers, demotions, disciplinary measures, dismissals, corporate culture and HIV/AIDS education and prevention programs (MU Annual Report, 2006). The MEC states that it has not achieved its numerical goals which were set in its employment equity plan for the period 1 September until 31 August 2006 (MU Annual Report, 2006). The MEC concedes to also failing to achieve its affirmative action objectives as set out in its employment equity plan for 2006. The MEC cited the processes leading to both the incorporation and merger as challenging on many fronts. Therefore, “not always allowing for a dedicated focus on the achievement of employment equity goals and objectives” (MU Annual Report, 2006, p.146).

According to official documents, the appointment of individuals from the designated groups in MU's executive management structure contributes to the achievement of race and gender equity in 2006. Table 5.6 offers a comparison of MU's Management Executive Structures pre- and post-merger. This table details the representation of managers by race, gender and qualification and exposes little has changed in the status of white males post-merger. Table 5.6 reveals that the majority of executive managers at MU are from the former URU, they are white, male and they used to hold powerful positions at the former URU. Generally, non-whites are underrepresented among management executives (see Table 5.6). White women have made some strides and are fairly well represented in the executive management structures-there are 6 senior white women in the MU's executive structures compared to the 2 non-white females (see Table 5.6). Interestingly, there is not a single manager from the former Erlington who has been appointed to the executive management structure post-incorporation and -merger.

**TABLE 5.6: Metropolitan University Management Executive structure 2005-2007**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Former Institution</b>	<b>Qualification</b>
Vice-Chancellor & Principal	Coloured	Male	URU	Professor
Pro Vice-Chancellor	White	Male	URU	Professor
<b>DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLORS</b>				
Strategic & institutional planning	Coloured	Male	URU	Professor
Academic	Indian	Female	Government Sector	Professor
Finance	White	Male	URU	MBA
HR & Operations	White	Male	U of TR	Professor
Research, Innovation & Advancement	Indian	Male	Government Sector	Professor
<b>EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS</b>				
Institutional Effectiveness	White	Male	URU	Professor
Advancement	White	Male	R University	Professor
Research & Innovation	White	Male	Trinity Tech	Professor
Sport	White	Male	URU	Professor
CENTAL	White	Male	URU	Professor
Financial Governance	White	Male	URU	CA

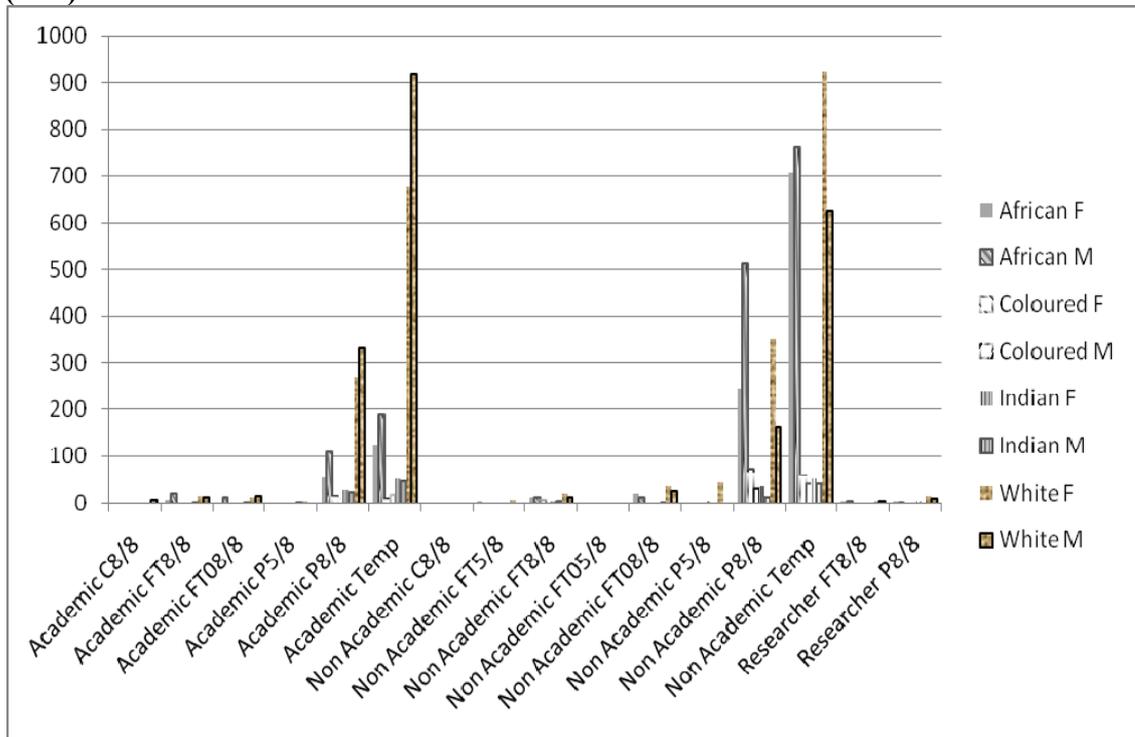
Source: Annual Report 2006

**TABLE 5.6 continued**

Expenditure	White	Male	Trinity Tech	BCom
Human Resources	White	Female	URU	Professor
Library & Information Centre	White	Female	URU	MBibl
Operations (Acting)	White	Male	Trinity Tech	PhD
Student Affairs (Acting)	Black	Female	URU	Professor
EXECUTIVE DEANS				
Science	White	Female	URU	Professor
Engineering & Built Environment	Indian	Male	Trinity Tech	Professor
Management	White	Male	U of W	Professor
Law	White	Male	URU	Professor
Health Sciences	White	Male	Trinity Tech	Professor
Humanities	White	Male	URU	Professor
Education	White	Female	URU	Professor
Economic & Financial Science	White	Female	URU	Professor
Art, Design & Architecture	White	Female	U of P	Professor
Chief Information Officer (Other)	White	Male	Corporate Sector	MSc

Source: Annual Report 2006

**FIGURE 5.4: Composition of staff by race and gender at Metropolitan University (MU)**



Sources: Trinity Tech Annual Report, 2004; MU Management Information Systems Office, 2006

Figure 5.4 illustrates how staff compositions in both Figures 5.1 and 5.2 have been affected by the merger. It appears that people from the designated groups have suffered a setback. The representation of blacks, Indians and coloreds males and females declined dramatically while white females and males are well represented across the various administrative and academic ranks of the university.

## Trade Unions

The three institutions were unionized. At URU, the South African Parastatal and Tertiary Institutions Union (SAPTU) represent academic and general staff members. SAPTU was established in 1993 and is a registered trade union in terms of the Labor Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995. SAPTU serves tertiary and all other related sectors. SAPTU sees itself as “politically unaffiliated” which means that all SAPTU contributions are focused on its members. SAPTU is affiliated with the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA). FEDUSA is the second largest trade union federation in South Africa with a membership of 550 000. SAPTU influences government legislation through FEDUSA. It is important to note that the majority of academic staff at historically white universities found expression through FEDUSA affiliated trade unions (SAPTU website, 2007).

At VU Scottsville, campus constituents were unionized under the National Education Health and Allied Workers’ Union (NEHAWU). NEHAWU was founded on the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1987, by workers from the fields of education, health, government and social welfare. NEHAWU is the biggest public sector union that organizes on behalf of civil servants. It has a bargaining council for public servants in South Africa (NEHAWU website, 2007). Its basic principles are: non-racialism; worker leadership; democratic decision-making through mandates and report backs; worker solidarity, as in, an injury to one is an injury to all; worker control of the union and finally, international solidarity.

It is important to note that NEHAWU is affiliated with the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) the biggest federation in the country with 1.9 million

members. COSATU was launched at the height of apartheid in 1985 to oppose apartheid and committed itself to the achievement of a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic South Africa. By virtue of its political affiliation to COSATU, NEHAWU is a politicized trade union. In the democratic South Africa, COSATU is a partner in the Tripartite Alliance together with the South African Communist Party (SACP). This tripartite alliance is what drives the policies of the present day democratic Government of National Unity (GNU).

Trinity Tech employees were unionized through NEHAWU and the National Union of Tertiary Employees in South Africa (NUTESA). Among its objectives are to (a) improve conditions of employment, benefits and working conditions in general of all its members; (b) promote equitable educational opportunity and sound educational practices at Tertiary institutions; (c) strive for the fulfilment of every person's fundamental right to enjoy full and equal opportunity towards self-development by fostering an equitable and most effective use of Tertiary institution resources; and (d) provide liaison between its members and management and between its members and the student body (NUTESA Constitution, 2005).

Union representation at MU, post-merger, remained the same as it was before, meaning all three unions were retained. Union representatives believe that this fosters greater inclusiveness. University officials also perceive that this separate arrangement is good for building consensus among the various MU campuses. However, there continue to be glaring racial imbalances and representation within these unions leading one to wonder how is the campus climate affected at MU?

## 5.8 Chapter summary

The timeline and key events of the merger described in this chapter suggest that there was a clear process that guided how the MU merger was implemented. The official documents divulge the narratives of various groups inside and outside of MU regarding the principles underlying the merger. It is clear from the accounts in this chapter that the perspectives of the merger as articulated in the documents change constantly as individuals re-interpret the goals set in the original 2001 National Plan document. Furthermore, the account shared earlier in this chapter by Professor Mkhonto, an Interim Pro Vice-chancellor from the former Trinity Tech, demonstrates the contentious nature of the merger decision. The comments of an Interim Vice-Chancellor, Professor Roeland, underscore a shift in an institution that is trying to reconstruct its identity during the pre-merger phase. The new Minister's account of the merger stressed the links between equity and quality, a marked shift from Minister Asmal's emphasis on efficiency, globalization and the knowledge economy. These various conversations demonstrate that the narratives about the goals of the merger are evolving, both within and outside the institution.

Finally, I have demonstrated with institutional data on the composition of the MEC, administrative and academic staff that during the two years post-merger, progress toward race and gender equity at MU is limited (See Table 5.6). In Chapter Six, I shall discuss interviews with key actors in the merger process and explain why, from their perspectives, the MU merger events unfolded in the way they did and why they took particular steps to address race and gender equity. I also present their understanding of the lack of progress toward race and gender equity.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FINDINGS**

Along with the official accounts of the MU merger, there are personal interpretations of what happened and why. In this chapter, I present the impressions administrators shared with me. I focus on administrators' perceptions of the merger events included in the official timeline elaborated in Chapter 5 and the challenges they encountered during the first year-both from within and outside MU- as they pursued racial and gender equity. I show that administrators' perceptions of the events and challenges in the first year of the merger differed among administrator groups, conditioned by their race, gender, position and previous institutional affiliation.

#### **6.1 Perceptions of key merger events**

When I inspected the accounts of how the merger unfolded, I found all administrators mentioned five pivotal points - policy making, "Match and Place" process, hiring practices, and the establishment of select committees. Furthermore, they all tended to describe six key challenges: the lack of monitoring for race and gender equity policy implementation, equity not being a priority, skills exodus, pipeline issues, chilly campus climate and disparate campus cultures. Since all 20 respondents chose to highlight similar pivotal points and challenges, I decided a close examination of these topics would best illuminate how administrators who varied in position, race and gender and held appointments on different campuses differed in their understanding of the merger event.

From individual responses to questions about each of the key events, I abstracted key themes that cut across the personal accounts. I then identified the administrative level, race and gender of individuals whose responses fit with each of the themes associated with each event. I then looked across events to see if there were patterns in the ways subgroups perceived the different events and challenges (See Tables 6.1 and 6.2 at the end of the chapter 6).

I found that respondents' views clustered into four groups, depending on the focal topic and their race, gender, administrative position, and institutional affiliation prior to the merger. Each cluster represented a predominant view of what happened and why. For the most part, all white males and individuals in executive level administrative positions shared a common perspective of pivotal events and challenges (Cluster One). The responses of males and females from designated groups and white females who held middle and junior administrative positions coalesced to form different patterns - Clusters Two and Three, respectively. This said there were instances where the views of the challenges and pivotal events differed between males and females; rank and race did not make a difference (Cluster Four). Here, crucial variations among the predominant views are discussed briefly as a way of foreshadowing the differences highlighted in the respondents' perceptions of pivotal events.

Within Cluster One, policy making was perceived to be inclusive, iterative, consultative, top down and 'outside-in' process. Both white and non-white executives, one black male and one Indian female, held this view, suggesting that on the theme of policy making, administrators' views differed based primarily on their rank. Non-

executive administrators said they were uninformed and bitter about the policy making process. They viewed it as secretive, non-inclusive.

The predominant view within this cluster was that achieving race and gender equity is a priority at MU and hiring practices are equitable and fair. The predominant view is that the “Match and Place” process is a fair and successful process and the lack of qualified individuals from designated groups is a barrier to achieving race and gender equity. As a result, the appointment of more white females into prominent positions is justified. They held that senior white males in the academic ranks are valued for their experience and are needed to mentor and train young professionals from the designated groups. Therefore, white males must also be considered for equity appointments, especially when their qualifications are in the areas where they are underrepresented.

A challenge that was consistently emphasized was the skills exodus and the competition for capable non-whites that hinders the achievement of race and gender equity within the higher education sector. White males and executive administrators consistently argued that qualified non-whites and women leave the country to seek employment and better salaries overseas and at rival institutions. Furthermore, the white administrators thought there was no hostile climate while non-whites in middle and junior administrative positions hinted that the chilly climate resulted from an unbearably frustrating working environment. The views of these two groups on trade unions were also different. White males and executive level administrators believed that unions were pro-active and powerful allies which gave voice to their membership’s concerns.

Cluster Two represents the views of non-whites in middle and junior administrator positions. As shown throughout this chapter, regardless of gender and

position, the views of these non-whites on the pivotal points were often similar. For example, they perceived that there was a hostile racial climate at MU. Unlike white males and executive level administrators, this subgroup did not perceive the lack of a monitoring structure as a barrier to achieving race and gender equity. In fact, this subgroup claimed that such a structure would not make a difference but transforming the predominantly ex-URU white male and Afrikaans dominated top management would bring about change.

In contrast to white males and executive administrators, these non-white mid and junior level administrators did not believe a lack of skilled black candidates was a hindrance to achieving race and gender equity at MU. Instead, this subgroup argued that there were plenty of suitably qualified candidates within the institution who were undervalued and frustrated and ultimately departed from MU. They did not believe that equity was a priority and were adamant that white women had been the primary beneficiaries of MU's equity policies. Their perception was that the government's categorization of white women as members of the designated groups further disadvantaged non-whites. The white women did not share the view that they had benefited more from MU's equity policy than their counterparts from designated groups.

The third cluster proxies the views of white female junior and middle administrators (non-executive). These individuals at times held the same views as middle and junior females from the designated groups. For example, this subgroup corroborated the views of their non-white counterparts in saying that equity was not a priority. However, white female non-executives held distinctly different views on pivotal themes such as trade unions, "Match and Place" process, skills exodus, and climate. They were

indifferent about the “Match and Place” process and thought the process created an antagonistic relationship between whites and non-whites, simply because non-whites were not happy to accept the outcome it yielded. In contrast, non-white middle and junior administrators argued that the “Match and Place” process was a ‘farce’. They concluded that the “Match and Place” process had reproduced glaring gender and racial disparities in MU’s administrative ranks. White females in non-executive positions also held markedly different views from those of white female executive administrators. For example and in contrast to white female executives, they did not believe that they were involved in the policy making process. Non-executive white females also did not believe that the process was transparent and consultative.

Cluster four captures the views of women of all races and ranks which differ markedly from those shared by all males in the sample. For example, on the theme of hiring practices, and in contrast to the view shared by males, female administrators in were disgruntled about the hiring and selection practices suggesting that such practices were unfair and biased against women and non-whites. They argued that the composition of selection panels was white male-dominated which put women and non-whites at a disadvantage. Unlike white males, all females agreed that equity was not a priority at MU. White female executives in particular hinted that other matters such as re-organizing the different administrative, admissions and academic architecture and the harmonization of employee conditions of service were more important.

I turn now to the pivotal points, using select quotes to illustrate how respondents’ perspectives varied. Then, in the section that follows, I take up differences in administrators’ views of matters that they all categorized as challenging.

## Policy making

The perspectives of administrators on the issue of policy making can be clustered by their rank. White male executive and middle administrators<sup>27</sup> suggested they were involved in policy making, while non-executive administrators said they were uninformed about the process. In contrast, non-executive white females were bitter about the policy making process and viewed it as secretive. In general, non-white females in my sample seemed unaware of the policy making processes.

To be honest with you, I don't know who makes equity policies around here. Don't even ask who they make them for because if it was for us, it [the policy making process] certainly doesn't involve us let alone filter down to us at the bottom (Roselyn, colored female junior administrator).

I suppose the big shot, the MEC [Management Executive Committee] makes policies for both race and gender equity. The only problem is that most of us only find out when the process is complete. I for one have never been asked to be a part of the process. Just ask around, you will see [that] many staff members here don't know anything about it. In fact, this lack of consultation is a serious issue which many of us are not happy about. It goes against the principles of equal partnership in the merger. At Trinity, we are asked to participate, here [MU] we are told what the rules are. Ja, that is my impression anyway (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

White male and female executive administrators described policy making as a top down and 'outside-in' process. They all agreed about the overt and formal structures of policy making and practice. There are MU guidelines on policy development which are widely circulated to the various university units and departments and they themselves are responsible for initiating, drafting, networking and disseminating policies, including

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<sup>27</sup> In this study, the term senior executive or administrators refers to those individuals who occupy positions in top levels of management, such as vice-chancellor, deputy vice-chancellors, deans, executive directors etc. The terms middle administrator refers to individuals who occupy the second tier within the organization chart who do not occupy the top level management posts but who have few management responsibility. And junior administrator refers to administrators who occupy the third tier and have comparatively fewer responsibilities.

those of race and gender equity. External consultants are sometimes hired to develop policies.

In many of the cases I write the policies. You know you had to. Literally somebody had to go into his/her office and sit down and say, rule number one, and you write it. So it was a long process but yes indeed I was involved in creating many of the policies at the moment (Theuns, white male executive administrator).

I have a person she's a retired lady that's on contract with me that drives the process. She's an old white lady who used to work at the former URU, she is now retired. She is the coordinator for me and she works just on policies. So she gets a group together and they look at their brief and the timeline. If I need a policy and I want it approved by senate by the end of the year, then timelines are tight. And the task team then drafts the policy, the policy comes to me. Then, I will decide whether the draft must serve at the management executive committee, whether it is necessary, whether it is contentious (Susan, white female executive administrator, ex-URU employee).

As Theuns and Susan's comments illustrate, there appeared to be consensus among the executive administrators, regardless of race and gender. The complimentary views shared by this subgroup of administrators, both male and female, presuppose that MU has a consultative policy making process. These views were corroborated by one black male and one white female executive administrator who explained that as and when a policy is revised, an updated copy is widely distributed by the Registrar to all Deans who then relay it to the Heads of Departments and Divisions who are responsible for communicating policy changes to staff. The Registrar's office ensures that the web versions of draft policies are updated.

Among the white middle administrators, there appeared to be less consensus about the policy making process.

The process of developing policies here is very transparent and open and all staff do have access to all documents via their faculties or structures and it all gets posted on the intranet as well (Brian, white male, middle administrator).

You know, at the old URU, we used to have lots of discussions of various policies at Senate, faculty and dean's committee ranks. That is where I could make an input. These

new policies about equity bursaries and appointments, I was never formally informed about it. I heard about it because I attended a cocktail party. I was talking to the head of personnel at that stage and he told me about it, sort of like informally over a glass of wine. We were talking about it and somehow it came up. So that's how I found out about it [equity bursaries and positions]. I think to a large extent this is still the tendency, you know top management decides and they just let us know (Magriet, white female, middle administrator).

White male middle administrators see policy making as an inclusive and iterative process. Conversely, their female counterparts and junior white female administrators believe it is secretive and takes place among a few highly placed individuals. As Magriet's comment suggests, they tend to be bitter. The non-white administrator's views resembled those of non-executive white females:

When it comes to policy making here, especially those equity issues, I wish they [management] involved us [unions], but they do not. I mean yes, we are invited into the monthly meetings but we don't have much influence on the agenda. It doesn't help that we have not been proactive as a union in resolving some of these issues. I have suggested we table this issue of taking control at our next think-tank because in the past at Trinity we used to also drive these processes. The problem is that the VC also does not really encourage this open debate with staff you can see moes the way he handles the students when they protest (Jerome, colored male middle administrator).

In fact, with the exception of non-executive white male and females, whose views are similar to those of executive males, the perspectives of all other non-executives (regardless and race and gender) revealed that they do not think they are directly involved in racial and gender equity policy making at MU.

No, I wasn't part of the drafting of the equity policy document. I think it was HR [human resource department]. They did not even consult us, they just handed it to us. You see? They just handed it to us (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

### Hiring practices

Perspectives of administrators on the issue of hiring practices can also be clustered by their race, gender and rank. The perspectives of administrators on this theme demonstrate how they were advantaged or disadvantaged by MU's current hiring practices. All

females in this study felt disadvantaged by gender biased hiring practices at MU while white males viewed the hiring practices as equitable and fair.

The problem is that we have too many men in these panels so if you are woman you are already disadvantaged by that. Then if you add being a white woman, it is worse because they say the equity appointments don't apply to us. If you do manage to get in you have to sweat to show that you deserve the post. I do think the male candidates don't struggle much as with these things (Hettie, white female, junior administrator).

The effect of the incorporation and merger on the staff at Trinity Tech, Vermont and URU was profound. All interview respondents agreed that the hiring practices should be an avenue for redressing race and gender equity at MU. However, Hettie's quote captures the sentiment of female administrators in this study who, regardless of race and rank, were disgruntled about the current hiring and selection practices. They questioned the composition of hiring and selection committees, implying that incumbents in these committees engage in unfair and racially biased practices which marginalize and exclude women and potential non-white candidates.

You know, the compositions of selection panels for senior appointments is in our statutes, so it is prescribed by the statutes of the university that are set out and negotiated over time. So, it is titles, okay? And who fills senior titles? Men! So, let's not kid ourselves, it's world-wide. So your university does not look much different from our universities. It is the same story in business. That is why there is the gender issue. In some of the meetings where I've sat in, women are put at a disadvantaged position when the majority of interviewers are male. Men want the candidate to present in a particular way. And male candidates know how to play that game and women often pitch differently. You see, during these interviews, everybody had to give a vision speech. I think women often pitch it in slightly different way and men are not always happy with that. And I think some women were disadvantaged because of the way they presented themselves. So, they were often not appointed. I'm not saying there is anything wrong, in fact, I agree with how they represented themselves but I think the audience sometime, you know, the panels sometimes are hard on women (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

Chantel's observations point toward a common concern held by non-white female administrators that legitimate mechanisms, such as statutes, rules and procedures of selection panel, have served to advantage white males in higher education over time and

the predominance of white males in selection committees hinders the progress of women at MU.

My perception is that when it comes to the black women who have kind of made some move up the ladder, the selection committees are pretty tactful about choosing women who won't rock the boat. I think that is true for black people in general at MU. It is certainly happening to women who are enormously good role models, wonderful people in of themselves. But they were chosen deliberately because there was no perception of-okay you are going to fundamentally change this institution. That's sad, because then they didn't go out and actively create opportunities to help other black women. There is one or two black women that I know of who actively go out and create routes and plans for other black women along the way but by and large it has not been in a way that actually fundamentally questions these selection committees and their tactics (Gabriella, colored female, middle administrator).

Non-white female administrators spoke of the need for senior and advanced women, regardless of race, to create agency for other women to move up the various administrative and academic ladders. Not only were administrators aware of the effort it takes to move up the ladder, they also recognized and acknowledged the challenges faced by women to stay on top.

It is not easy to progress and if you do progress, there is one of two perceptions: she is an affirmative action candidate so they're promoting her and she's probably not even so bright like everybody else. Or it's, someone is looking out for her and that's why she's moving. So there's little recognition for how hard it is to progress here. You need to be three times as good as the average [profane word] in the other office. And then you get only a quarter of the recognition that he is likely to get with the other challenges of being a woman with children or a partner or you have to go home and cook food which other men, not all men do. So, there are challenges that exist here for being a woman (Candice, colored female, junior administrator).

Black female administrators voiced their frustration with the lack of recognition they experienced when hired into prominent positions. A few of them complained about the stereotypes they confront on a daily basis while carrying out their responsibilities. Jerome, a colored male tended to agree with the views about the non-white female administrators.

I'm not sure how well you know the history of Trinity but we had the first black Vice-

chancellor in the history of the Technikon. She was a brilliant and hardworking person, a good leader who made you feel like you were part of the institution. She did a lot to ensure that we [ex-Trinity constituents] knew how we will be affected by the merger. In fact, she was a prominent leader in establishing the new institution. But, all that stuff didn't matter when the so-called MEC decided to look for new Vice-Chancellor for the MU. They passed her up. They found another white male to lead the institution. Imagine, at a time when this country needs more qualified black women, they simply let her go. That goes to show how the new management values women in general (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

As a group, white male administrators, regardless of rank, believe that the hiring practices at MU were fair and just. In particular, this sub-group emphasized that the panelists were adhering to the Labor Relations Act, Employment Equity Act and the National Constitution, all of which ensure that no candidates are discriminated against or treated unfairly as a result of their race, gender, creed, ethnicity, disability or religion.

The Employment Equity Act sets the tone for equity appointments and that is why we also have set equity targets for several vacant positions. So on that basis I would say we have fair hiring practices. That is not to say we have achieved equity as that has proved to be challenging as you shall see in some of the documents I will give you at the end of our talk. Let me say that we are concerned about the quality of the candidates when we review for vacant positions. It is important that you speak to our HR [Human Resources] people who will explain in detail and perhaps even expand on our mission to become the preferred employer for candidates who meet our requirements (Theuns, white male, executive administrator).

However, white male and female executive administrators recognize the challenges that impinge on hiring practices at MU and seek ways to rectify them.

It is not easy to get qualified people especially seeing as they are also being head-hunted by other institutions. That often makes our task of recruiting very tough. Other industries offer these candidates very salaries and you must admit, universities don't pay that well (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

#### “Match and Place” Process

Regardless of race and gender, all executive administrators in this study held the same views regarding the “Match and Place” process. In contrast, non-white administrators – males and females at all levels - argued that the “Match and Place” process was a ‘farce’

and a means to ‘put bums on seats’ rather than address race and gender equity through the ranks.

I must tell you there were a lot of resignations because of the merger. And the “Match and Place” process did not make things easy. In some departments you have tensions between people because the management simply used the process to promote white women (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

None of the official internal MU documents in my possession mentioned the “Match and Place” process. However, I gathered from administrators’ conversations that MU had just completed a human resource project aimed at reorganizing and streamlining administrative functions and reallocating staff into revamped positions. As Thabiso’s comments note, initially, all administrators applauded management’s decision to hire external facilitators<sup>28</sup> for the “Match and Place” process. They viewed the external facilitators as a neutral catalyst for change. However, Jayashree’s and Candace’s quotes illustrate that, for the non-whites in non-executive ranks who were interviewed, the outcome of the Match and Place process was a bitter pill to swallow.

The “Match and Place” was a very important and necessary process. If you remember, we had to reconstitute administrative positions and get rid of duplication. In the end it really consolidated staff members from various campuses (Thabiso, black male, executive administrator).

Okay, the “Match and Place” process should have addressed race and gender equity in the ranks of administration at the UM. In my opinion, the racial equity is not there. The racial equity is not there, definitely not there at all. At the moment it is just white, it is very white. In their first and second tiers of the organogram, Prof G is white and Afrikaans, Trudy is white and Afrikaans, the secretary is white and Afrikaans, all these people are white and Afrikaans. Then this position is still vacant, so we don’t know how they will fill it. But my speculation is that they will again bring in a lot more white Afrikaans women into these vacant positions (Jayashree, Indian female, junior administrator).

When they matched and placed people they appointed all the white people in all the higher positions then the black people. In my department for instance, all the blacks are

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<sup>28</sup> Accenture, a change management consulting company in South Africa was contracted by MU management to help the university’s Human Resource Department with the personnel restructuring and change management processes.

in the lower tier and all the white women are on the upper tier (Candice, colored female, junior administrator).

Middle and junior female administrators raised their dissatisfaction with the departmental rank structural changes that were implemented as a result of the “Match and Place” process. In general, this sub-group concurred with Jerome that the process had merely served to further reproduce glaring gender and racial disparities in MU’s administrative ranks.

Before the merger, our race and gender equity profile at Trinity used to be balanced. Now what we see is that management has sort of, for lack of a better word, demoted many non-white staff and upgraded the positions and roles of ex-URU white staff. There are still a lot of women in administration generally but the non-white ones are at the bottom. You can see this very without a doubt if you ask for any departmental organizational charts. In fact in other departments, this dramatic shit has caused a lot of strife and antagonism between staff members (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

In contrast with non-white respondents, white female executive administrators were satisfied with the outcome of the Match and Place process. The comments by Nicollette and Theuns typify the views expressed by the executive female and white male executive and middle administrators who perceive the “Match and Place” process is a useful tool and are also satisfied by its outcome.

In our case, we had totally different ways of doing things and I really found the Match and Place a very important process in terms of establishing true integration and starting to build a culture for my division. And that to me, more than the operating model which I think certainly has done a lot in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and things like that but has been in the way that the “Match and Place” has integrated people. So that was also why I really believed that was the way to go for the institution (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

There were several processes that were initiated immediately post-merger, the “Match and Place” was one of them. In essence, we recognized the duplication of administrative functions. We tried to harmonize and integrate these functional areas into more streamlined our workflow processes. That process has been completed and we had some positive outcome from that. Again, the HR people can elaborate more on this since they saw to the implementation and completion of that process together with some consultants (Theuns, white male, executive administrator).

White female middle and junior administrators’ views of the “Match and Place” process

differed from those of white male and female executives,

I think that there are people who still have difficulties dealing with this racial diversity and the “Match and Place” process sort of made those difficulties more obvious in our department. It didn’t affect me personally but some of my black colleagues didn’t take the outcome so well, you know? That created this *us* and *them* thing. Ja, it is very tense sometimes (Hettie, white female, junior administrator).

You know, with the “Match and Place” committee not approving my secondment into that position, I wasn’t quite happy with that outcome. I took the matter to Employee Relations Office. I actually said to the “Match and Place” committee, I understand you don’t want to approve the recommendation made by Director into this position. However, you must advertise the post externally as per the MU rules and that will give me an opportunity to re-apply and prove to the panel that I am capable. They flat out refused and to make matters worse, they appointed a white Afrikaner woman whom they liked. Ja, she was at URU before, she has a PhD even though we are doing exactly the same job and the same rank before. I guess compared to me, she wasn’t a threat (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

I probed further to see if there was any recourse for unsatisfied administrators, especially as it relates to how the “Match and Place” process aims to populate the MU administrative ranks and improve the representation of non-whites. I was informed by administrators that the Employee Relations Office (ERO) at MU is a legitimate structure through which administrators can address any issues with which they are not satisfied. However, middle and junior non-white female administrators were not satisfied with the Human Resources Department’s approach to the “Match and Place” process.

Ag, I have no energy to go through yet another process to repeal the decision they have taken to place me where they have. I know how the appeal process will go so what’s the point? I’m not going to waste my energy. In fact, I have decided to resign from my position and leave the institution in six months (Candice, colored female, junior administrator).

Candice’s comments capture the frustration of administrators who are unhappy about the “Match and Place” process, feel powerless and have little faith in the appeal mechanism. Rather than go through a long drawn out process, dissatisfied administrators resolve to leave the institution. Administrators from the designated groups indicated that the “Match and Place” process had advantaged their white counterparts even when members of

designated groups had the most experiential knowledge. These administrators suggested that the lack of appropriate educational credentials was repeatedly used as reason to not appoint them in various senior positions. Ironically, non-white female administrators in the middle and junior ranks claimed they often had to teach their “better educated” colleagues how to do the job. These administrators vigorously contested several appointments, especially those of colleagues who were less experienced, white and considered more educated. In some instances, non-white female middle administrators voiced their dissatisfaction with the incompetence of their black male superior.

I work at a department that is given the task to transform the institution. Our department itself ironically has not transformed at the basic rank, we are three black staff members and the rest are white, mainly white women of course that is some way of adhering to [equity goals] and helping some disadvantaged people by improving the status of white women, on a gender basis. But it presents quite a challenge because the one thing that comes up all the time is, how can you be at the forefront of transforming the institution if your own unit is not transformed? The unit itself looks very much like the old guard, you know, white and Afrikaans the only difference is there are more Afrikaans females up there. Sadly now, of the three of us [blacks], one person’s contract is not going to be renewed, so that leaves only two of us (Gabriella, colored female, middle administrator).

There was agreement among non-white female administrators in my sample that their white Afrikaner counterparts, especially from the ex-URU, had fared extremely well post-merger (see Table VIII Chapter 5). According to this subgroup, the “Match and Place” process was being used by top white management to sabotage progress toward race and gender equity.

#### Establishment of select committees

The formation of committees at MU was an event to which administrators constantly referred (see Chapter 5, see Table V). All administrators in my sample concurred that the establishment of committees was essential for building relationships across the merged

campuses. However, administrators' previous institutional affiliations and positions affected their views regarding the effectiveness of the committees.

All administrators agreed that the disparaging group dynamics between the partner institutions pre- and post- merger necessitated the formation of committees. They also hinted that a lot of time was spent building cohesion and collegiality.

The focus of those committees was to establish new working relationships. In terms of your research topic [manifestations of race and gender equity post-merger] we were building bridges between white and black. Remember the vast majority of the people at the old URU were white and we came largely from an Afrikaans speaking background so that meant our culture was also different. So you know there was no sameness of how you went about your business between us and the Trinity Tech. When the merger discussions started, you had to sit in a meeting with black colleagues from the Trinity Tech or black colleagues from VU. You had to find a common ground, you had to establish trust between the different groupings and that was difficult. The task teams gave us a chance to sit and talk as colleagues (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

In contrast, administrators' views of trade unions at MU differed markedly. In Chapter 5, I explained that all three unions from the precursor institutions still operate under their original mandates and names. Hence, the experiences administrators such as Theuns and Jerome are shaped by their union membership.

We are very highly (75% plus) unionized which also means that you forge those trust relationships with the trade unions more than anything else. We involve the unions in our selection panels and they take part in our discussions about gender and race equity issues. As I have already said earlier, the management meets at least once a month with the unions to discuss many issues of concern to their members. That in itself makes them powerful allies. The Consultative problem Solving forum is where the Trade Unions and management is represented. They meet on a regular basis and they talk about issues that may be of particular concern to the trade unions. And you can imagine that equity issues would always be on the agenda of the trade unions (Theuns, white male, executive administrator).

I'm very disappointed with the way we are treated as a union here. At the Trinity Tech, the union had the power of participation. We participated in the interviews, we argued about who should be appointed and what not. Now they've made us observers so you can't even ask questions unless the selection panel chairperson says, do you have anything to say? Or add? Jong, it is a part of a ploy by management to really keep the

unions at bay. They are taking us for granted. They are not taking us serious. I think we need to go on our own little think tank as a union to interrogate their decision to downgrade us to the observer role (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

Hettie, a white female junior administrator, intimated that unions gave more voice to its constituency and was influential while Chantel, a colored female middle administrator, believed that unions had no 'sway' anymore. In fact, Chantel believed that the union's 'wings had been clipped' because their role had been reduced to that of inactive observers post-merger.

We are given more voice now through our unions. I think it is just the way it went that there was a time for consultation and now it's the time for the unions. Something that's very interesting is that the unions in the new university are more in the front that it has been at old URU. So unions play a bigger and powerful role in my experience since the merger (Hettie, white female, junior administrator).

The trade unions don't have so much sway anymore because their wings have been clipped. I mean they are only allowed to observe how things like the appointment of university staff happens and not necessarily to initiate transformation. They are a bit less proactive than they used to be in the past. Before I came to work here even before the merger, I worked at Trinity so I am able to see the difference (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

In sum, all administrators acknowledge the legitimate role that unions have as a campus structure for problem solving, collective bargaining and representing the interests of their constituents. However, while white male and female administrators portray MU trade unions as engaged, proactive, collaborative but lacking technical sophistication to resolve certain complex problems such as harmonization of remuneration packages Indian, colored and black administrators suggested that unions had lost power and the ability to influence decisions post-merger. In essence all non-white, male and female administrators were unhappy with the new role and authority of unions at MU.

## **6.2 Perceptions of challenges in the first year of the merger**

In the interviews, I asked administrators to tell me about the challenges they encountered as they pursued race and gender equity post-merger. As I analyzed the transcripts, three generalizations emerged. First, it became clear that all respondents thought progress toward race and gender equity has not been strong or sufficient in the year following the merger. Second, they all acknowledged that the challenges encountered in the first year of the merger came from inside and outside of the MU. This said, it was evident that administrators' views of the challenges associated with pursuing race and gender equity within the context of the merger differed according to their race, gender, position (current and previous) and previous institutional affiliation. I shall now enumerate these challenges.

During the interviews, white and executive administrators tended to emphasize problems associated with monitoring, the academic pipeline and skills exodus. In contrast, non-white administrators tended to emphasized problems associated with institutional priorities, chilly climate and disparate campus cultures. I elaborate on these views in the discussion that follows.

#### Lack of monitoring

According to white male executive and middle administrators, the lack of a dedicated campus structure for monitoring the implementation of equity policies represents a barrier to the achievement of race and gender equity at MU.

You see, there is a problem. We do not have a specific office that deals with gender transformation or equity in terms of race, we don't have that. And I think it is a shortcoming especially for a university as big as ours. It's really a problem. We do need a central facility to deal with this because a lot of it is driven by the registrar. We urgently need to start looking at how different units are interpreting and applying these equity policies differently. Because if you look around, you will find that some apply them and others couldn't be bothered. They care only about qualifications and experience and not

race or gender (Jeffrey, white male, executive administrator).

In contrast, non-white male and female administrators were of the opinion that a dedicated office would not make a difference in the implementation of race and gender equity redress. Instead, they argued that transforming the predominantly URU white male and Afrikaans top management and bringing new leadership would usher positive change in terms of race and gender equity at MU.

I don't think you need an additional structure per se to monitor equity implementation. What needs to happen is management needs to change. The old guard needs to be replaced by new people who don't bring in excess baggage from their previous institutions. If you look around now, there are too many ex-URU leaders in this current management. I understand we need to have continuity but continuity of what? Because right now, these people are blocking the efforts of those who want to transform this place (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

#### Pipeline issues

The availability of qualified individuals from designated groups, were of more concern to white males. They tended to agree on challenges faced by women and non-whites as well as why there is a lack of qualified talent. Brian and Patrick's comments clearly articulate the views of white male respondents regarding the impediments they attribute to the attitudes of men in powerful positions and to the pool of available talent

To a large extent one might say that the older white males have not changed much especially if you look at their attitude towards working women and blacks. I might even argue that there are times when I feel that progress in the appointment of non-whites and females might happen if these pale males were out of the system but, we cannot just kick them out because they are also the most skilled members of our workforce (Brian, white male, middle administrator).

There are objective constraints to achieving race and gender equity here. There simply aren't as many black and female academic staff and especially researchers that are as

internationally competitive as there are white and female researchers in the country. That's simply an objective statement of fact. That doesn't mean that we can't develop those [who are black and female] (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

Brian succinctly discloses that white privilege has impaired the achievement of race and gender equity at MU. Patrick emphasizes the need to nurture talent, the length of time it takes to groom individuals for internationally competitive academic careers. Still others acknowledge the competition for talent as a debilitating factor towards achieving equity, and assert the challenge is due to the fact the MEC has not clearly communicated what administrators are to do when they do not find suitably qualified candidates who are black.

For instance when we say, 75% of all vacant posts will be filled by people from the designated groups, its not to say that if we address the issue of equity and you have 10 applicants who are black and two are whites, and you find that the best of the crop is only the two whites, so we are not going to say we are not going appoint because we don't have a black person. What we are saying is that equity must go hand-in-hand with quality. So, if we find a quality white candidate who fits the bill, we will appoint them because quality is also very important for us (Thabiso, black male, executive administrator).

I think that everybody pretty much understands the need to promote race and gender equity both in appointments as well as in promotions. But at the same time there is a strong feeling amongst senior academic management that we cannot do this at the expense of incrementing the quality of our senior academic personnel. So, if somebody is appointed as a professor they must be appointed as a professor because s/he is indeed a leading thinker, researcher and educator in his/her particular subject. So balancing that together with the demands of improving your racial and gender demographics of senior staff is an ongoing battle. Managing the tension between quality and equity is also an ongoing battle (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

White female executive administrators shared the view that skills shortage and emigration in the country explained why there were no qualified people from the designated groups, in both the academic and administrative ranks of the university. However, non-white male and female administrators did not believe there was a skill shortage and white female middle and junior administrators believed the problem was

about compensation rather than lack of skills.

As for qualified blacks, no they are there but I think they are simply not being given any recognition and certainly not being given the positions. And they are still being scrutinized with a racist eye so that I have to prove myself ten times more than the next person. And even if I have qualifications and I'm competing, I still have to prove myself twice as hard as if this qualification was given to me. I don't think there aren't qualified black women, oh, there definitely are (Candice, colored female, junior administrator).

Ag, *rerig*<sup>29</sup>, qualified non-white people are there but the pay is not good. Blacks have become the 'prime candidates' these days and they know that they can do better outside of the institution like in the public and private sector. So those sectors are recruiting them aggressively and they offer them better pay and benefits for their talent. So, I'm not surprised that they find it less attractive to work here. But while they leave, why won't the executive give us who stay and are qualified positions? If it wasn't for the fact that my children are here, I myself would retire because so much has changed since we merged (Hettie, white female, junior administrator).

Another view of the pipeline issues was expressed by administrators from the former Trinity Tech who divulged that they felt undervalued and that the spirit of the merger contributes to a persistent bias in race and gender equity at MU. In their view, the flow of non-white administrators from Trinity Tech into MU positions has been foreclosed and this is the reason why there was no parity in the race and gender composition of staff at MU.

Things are just not going right. Like I'm telling you now, this is a take-over. Initially, it was supposed to be a merger and here already it is becoming clear that it is a take-over. If you look in the first [management] tier, it is all URU staff holding senior positions. Trinity Tech existed since 1927 and there was nothing wrong with the institution and its leadership. So, you want to tell me that with us coming from Trinity Tech we don't have the necessary skills and knowledge to hold those positions? I doubt it! I seriously doubt it! (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

Within my sample, executive administrators, of both genders and all races, pointed out that selection committees have appointed white males when they could not find suitably qualified persons from the designated groups. When I probed for justification, these administrators told me that they proceeded in this way because they urgently needed to

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<sup>29</sup> *Rerig* is an Afrikaans word. It means truthfully.

fill the position and could justify these appointments to the university management on the basis of quality. The tension, created by dichotomizing equity and quality, is evident in the quotes from Thabiso and Patrick and it is embedded in the constantly evolving National Plan for Higher Education. As shown in Chapter 5, the achievement of equity was one of the initial primary goals for restructuring higher education. Throughout the years, the DoE's rhetoric has evolved to a point where quality and equity have become linked. It was beyond the scope of this study to probe how this evolving national policy rhetoric shapes administrator's interpretations and implementation of race and gender equity goals.

#### Skills exodus

Most white administrators in my sample, regardless of gender or rank, identified skills emigration as a significant external factor hampering effective implementation of race and gender equity policies within the academic ranks of MU. As Nicollette notes, whites perceive an exodus of talented blacks.

Now the trouble comes when we have to recruit skilled black staff, there is such a shortage of them in the market and we are really recruiting from a very small pool. Then you have the added constraint that a lot of the qualified people are leaving the country to seek employment overseas. That is a real constraint (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

Non-white female administrators in the middle and junior ranks construct a counter-narrative of the skills exodus narratives offered by their white counterparts. The non-white female administrators argued that skills emigration happens among mainly whites and that if any non-whites leave MU, they do so to work in the private sector or at other South African higher education institutions and not in other countries.

If you compare how many black women here have had enormously un-affirming,

marginalizing negative experiences to the point that they've left the MU then one must consider that actually, there is something wrong with this place [MU]. Few of them said this is why I am leaving, sadly now. So, there wasn't any conversation to say, but can you see what's happening here? You know, it is easier to bow [out] and say, I'm going elsewhere. Ironically one of them who moved to another traditionally Afrikaans university said to me, my god! It is even worse here (Ruendree, Indian female, junior administrator).

Equity is not a priority

There was a common definition of equity among all administrators in my sample. All administrators agree that equity refers to equality, equal opportunity or sameness of treatment, fairness and corrective justice for the previously disadvantaged populations in South Africa. They agreed that equity is a moral, ethical and objective imperative that should be addressed in all aspects of South African society in order to rectify the imbalances caused by apartheid.

All administrators in my sample spoke about the MU's commitment to race and gender equity. In fact, there was common agreement among white male executives that the Vice-Chancellor is determined to address race and gender equity. Theuns suggests the lengths to which some respondents believe MU is willing to go to attract and retain strong black academics. Patrick offers a very pragmatic reason why equity is a priority.

You must appreciate that equity is such a concern, not only at this institution but literally across the country. Black people with merit are being chased by many institutions you know and you find that their commercial value is very high because everybody is chasing after them. Now black academics are scarce simply because academic salaries cannot compete with business and industry. So what we are trying to do is when we recruit black academics and remember the policy says (70%) that sort of thing. Then we have to have some sort of strategy where we pay black academics more than we do white academics because if you don't do that you simply won't attract the black academics and then your institutional reputation suffers. We have a clear approach that we have to treat black academics differently from others for this reason if we are serious about meeting our equity targets then we have to have a different approach (Theuns, white male, executive administrator).

I think there are three key rationales for race and gender equity. The one is a moral and an ethical one. That is simply expressed to say that you know, for decades or centuries,

white males have been a main focus of the system. That's simply wrong and needs to change. That black and female colleagues should enjoy the same opportunities of the system that white males have enjoyed for decades. So that's simply the moral imperative. The other one is a political one. That employment equity is a fact of life and it's a political imperative that you would be foolish as a manager not to factor into your responsibilities. That is the one that I think most people understand quickest. Then there is a third one, which is the objective one, which is that there simply aren't enough white males in the system for us to grow our research portfolio in the way that it needs to be grown. So, you know even in the absence of the other two, if you want to grow your research output and your research performance, there aren't enough white males in the system to do it. So strategically, you have to focus on the promotion and grooming of black and female academics (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

However, there were other perspectives regarding MU's institutional priorities for race and gender equity redress. White female executive administrators believe that equity is not a priority and hinted that other matters took precedence.

Honestly speaking, in our case, we don't have time for the race and gender goals in the plan [National Plan for Higher Education]. We are so busy with the five campuses and trying to make the former VU campuses academically viable. There are many other policies that we are busy with right now and it was important for us to resolve those. The bringing together of the separate academic admin models that was very high on the priority list (Susan, white female, executive administrator).

Similar to white female executive administrators, non-white female junior and middle administrators alleged that the redress of race and gender equity was not a priority at MU. Non-whites in my sample believed that management has 'parked equity plans in a safe in the back-burner'. This subgroup also indicated that the MEC was attending to the interests and needs of white employees. For them, this is why little change has happened. A colored male middle administrator concurred with the views of middle and junior, non-white female administrators. The official position of the university is that people from the designated groups should be the primary target groups for equity redress (see Chapter 5). However, the administrators in my sample disagreed in their views regarding the prioritization of target groups. For example, a few male and female executive

administrators, whites and non-whites, held the view that white males had been disadvantaged in areas such as library, nursing and administrative/academic areas of the university. For this administrator sub-group, white males deserved to be considered members of the designated group within particular employment sectors where they were numerically under-represented.

One of the big risks that we have and in certain environments we are seeing it is a talent drain of pale males, excellent researchers, academics who no longer see themselves as fitting in to the new institutional culture. So that is a huge issue that I think we are going to have to address (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

The non-white administrators in my sample did not agree that white males must benefit from race and gender equity initiatives. In fact, they emphasized that white males had benefited from apartheid as a result of both their gender and race and had advantage as a result of their educational background. Others argued that gender equity policies had advantaged white females.

If you look around you can see that the white women have advanced quicker and effortlessly through the ranks since we merged. They have become deans, heads of departments, and senior managers whatever. Where are the colored women in senior positions, where are the Indian women in senior positions? And of course, where are the black women in senior positions? In my view, that says, equity here doesn't really do anything for us [non-whites]. You see, the way it is defined makes it very complex. On one hand, white women meet the gender criteria on the other they don't meet the one for race (Ruendree, Indian female, junior administrator).

Although equity was a pivotal point in the interviews, individuals constructed different interpretations of target groups. Among executive administrators, equity included members of designated groups and white males in academic areas where they as a group were underrepresented. Non-white female middle and junior administrators perceived that white females were the primary beneficiaries of equity at MU largely because the DoE's definition is vague and open to multiple interpretations within MU and predominant interpretations have continued to marginalize non-white women. According

to these administrators, the DoE's definition reverses any pre-merger gains made by non-whites in the academic and administrative ranks of their former institutions.

The way the government defines equity is a bit tricky especially for us [blacks and women]. The MU is still imbalanced in the fact that it is mainly white women who have advanced and we don't even see black women. So in my view the Department of Education's unqualified definition, if I may call it that, really sets us back, especially since it has resulted in white females benefiting more as a result of their gender and qualifications. They [DoE] don't even seem to care that these same white women benefited from apartheid because of the superior educational services which we [blacks] were denied! (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

### Chilly Climate

No theme reveals as much about the impact of racial equity practices as do administrators' accounts of MU's institutional climate. As administrators recounted merger events, they exposed the subjugated, suppressed and censored nature of their lived experiences. Their insights were at times, as I will show here, expressed visibly throughout campus. One day during my initial visits to the Applegate campus, I walked past a common student lounge. I could not help but notice an Afrikaans inscription in colored cello tape on one of the glass sliding doors. It read, URUKANNIEDOODNIE. Unpacked, it spells, URU kan nie dood nie. Translated into English, it means, URU will never die. Several months later, I noticed that the inscription had been scraped off.

When investigating the theme of institutional climate, I discovered that race and position appear to greatly shape administrator's perceptions. White male and female executive administrators tended to believe that the climate at MU around race was not hostile. During my interviews with them, white male and female executive administrators acknowledged that there were "teething issues" as a result of the merger but they insisted that these were only frustrations that people experience when a new organization is

formed and nothing more. In fact, Nicollette, a white female executive administrator claimed that feelings of hostility are a result of the negotiations that the merger partners had to engage in to find common ground.

However, my conversations with all non-white female administrators at MU reveal perceptions of a hostile climate that results in a stressful or debilitating work environment. Non-white females within the junior and middle ranks hinted that they do not feel safe to critique or dispute equity policies and practices at MU. They also suggested that this perceived threat has a bearing on their behavior and ability to communicate openly about race and gender issues on campus. Furthermore, they suggested that the institutional climate at MU was too hostile and resulted in obtrusive race and gender based inequities. They constantly felt threatened. In the finding below, Jayashree, an Indian female junior administrator sums up the views of the institutional climate held her peers.

One of the employees here told me that she met another colleague on a Saturday at a shopping mall. On Monday, she was called in to her Director's office and asked, what were you discussing with the former Employee Relations officer? She explained that it was on a Saturday and she just needed personal advice on a personal matter. But she was threatened do you understand? Some people are, especially those at the lower ground. You see, I happen not to be afraid. I'm not afraid to say what is [on] my mind and I'm so grateful of that (Jayashree, Indian female, junior administrator).

Embedded in this finding is a perception that the lack of safety extends beyond campus boundaries. I was struck by this account, especially for the reason that it raises the possibility that administrators' personal space is being violated. There was a sense of despair among these non-white female administrators.

There was also deep mistrust of the corrective structures set up on campus for them. Administrators indicated that they feel they are being watched and that they sense that there is no room for mistakes. Their dread of reproach was so apparent that during

interviews, they tended to lower their voices, close doors and constantly check to verify that they would be protected from identification if they shared any sensitive information regarding the campus climate. Junior administrators censored themselves during our conversations while middle rank administrators requested that I turn off the audio recorder whenever they wanted to share what they perceived to be incriminating information. An example of this behavior is most clearly exhibited in two conversations I had with Tshidi and Chantel. In my interview with Tshidi, she described the implementation of race and gender equity policies as ‘skewed’ and ‘inconsistent’. Tshidi emphasized that such inconsistency made employees feel unsafe, uncertain and lowered their morale. Tshidi’s comments were evidenced later in my interview with Chantel, a colored female, middle administrator who seemed precautious when she shared her views about the institutional climate at MU. In the following finding Chantel carefully elaborated on her anxiety,

Even if you challenge the university’s race and gender equity policies, some of the things they will just know it is me that told you. No, they will know because I never keep quiet. Oh me and my big mouth. Ja, but there’s nothing to hide anymore, you know? Unfortunately, the next part of my answer is very delicate. I would prefer that you take notes rather than record. Is that fine with you? (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

What seems to fuel these perceptions of insecurity among non-white female administrators at MU is the observation that management does not guarantee confidentiality and protection to administrators. Five of the seven non-white female administrators spoke about how their privacy was violated when they approached their superiors with problem. They perceived this violation of privacy and intrusion as a hindrance to their personal growth and development. To emphasize this point, Roselyn, a colored female, junior administrator told me that while administrators have access to

counseling services and are guaranteed anonymity, they feared that their information is relayed to the university management by counselors. As a result, Roselyn did not feel that confidentiality was observed. A few other administrators expressed similar concerns as Roselyn as the following quote reveals,

I was in the HR Task Team and we invited this lady, oh but this is so confidential. This lady started disclosing some confidential information about another staff member that has been to see her! I almost froze in my chair. I was like, my goodness! (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator)

The issue of trust was a recurring theme in most of the interviews as non-white administrators explained that they did not trust that they would be protected if they expressed their discontent with the skewed race and gender equity representation at MU.

During the interviews, non-white administrators informed me of an incident when the Vice-Chancellor paid the Trinity Tech campus a visit<sup>30</sup> to address the concerns of various constituents. When a staff member asked the VC what the MEC would do to address an employment inequity situation that was perceived on campus he answered,

We are embarking on a new strategy for redressing apartheid imbalances at our university. Some of you will like the outcome of this strategy while others will not. So, if you don't like the way we are doing things here you must just take your jacket and leave (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

This response has resulted in some ill feeling among non-white administrators who had celebrated the VC's appointment and aligned their interests with his as a result of his race and previous involvement with the struggle against apartheid.

The Vice-chancellor himself has got a good political background of non-racialism and all of that but I just don't think he has got the power to redress race and gender imbalances here nor does he have any power to transform this place fundamentally. Personally, I do not doubt that he is sincere about his intentions of redressing race and gender imbalances. I just

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<sup>30</sup> The Vice-Chancellor visits each campus once a term. He has open meetings with employees. And during these meetings, employees and students are given a chance to ask burning questions regarding various processes that were going on at the university.

think that the forces of this university are too strong for this one man. Just look at our university management and tell me who occupies those executive positions? There is some unshakable white male privilege, so much so that, I cannot imagine that those within that network would let him just pursue transformation just like that (Savita, Indian female, executive administrator).

Savita's comment concisely summarizes the depth of disappointment and concern that non-white administrators have at MU. Among those administrators who placed their hope of equity redress at MU in his hands, the VC's response shattered their faith in non-white administrators and any expectation that he will advocate for their interests or create agency for their cause.

#### Disparate campus cultures

Interview respondents' previous institutional affiliations were the main determinant of how administrators perceived the MU organizational culture. They experienced each other's culture as distinctly different and agreed that the different and often conflicting cultures of governance and decision-making that characterized the pre-merger campuses are barriers to achieving race and gender equity at MU. Administrators from Trinity Tech perceived their former institutional culture as consultative and inclusive. Within this culture, they felt safe voicing concerns and were encouraged to ask questions. They experienced a sense of belonging and took pride in their contributions. On the other hand, administrators from the URU perceive their former institutional culture as highly bureaucratic. The URU culture was characterized by close supervision and the management style was top-down, and autocratic. The URU administrators were not given to questioning authority nor did they complain much. Tsakani's comment clearly illustrates the distinctions between the two institutional cultures that may account for tensions experienced by administrators post-merger.

You know when we came, I mean when Trinity Tech into the MU with the culture of questioning things. We question everything, even if it is right. If I get a bonus, if I see that there's an increase in my salary, I still ask. Why are you giving me 10% extra, you know? You must still justify it, because I still want to know if the other managers got it or not. Or maybe, you know because there is no free lunch. I believe in that. What I've realized and my experiences have taught me that there is no free lunch. You give me that 10% why? I want to know. Because one day I'll have to pay it back. But what will be the payback, I need to know. Ja, otherwise you must take your 10% back. We question the way things are done, we negotiate and agree to disagree with management, do more questioning, negotiation until everybody reaches a settlement. We are different, you know? URU is so autocratic, it is very autocratic. And as employees, you know in the structure, there's a manager, there's a subordinate, as a subordinate, you cannot question your manager. That's how they still function so its gets tense when we don't fall into line and most of the times we don't (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

All administrators concur that MU needs to build a cohesive culture. However, their emphasis on how and what should be addressed differ. In general, Thabiso captures the sentiment of black administrators, regardless of position and gender,

You have three different types of institutions coming together now you have cultural imbalances or cultural difficulty. You have to address the culture. Each institution has its own identity and culture. Even our fee payment cultures were different. At URU for instance, all their student fees were fully paid up by the beginning of each academic year. At VU we had our own culture. For example students were not used to paying fees. For instance, that culture of toyi-toying<sup>31</sup>, we know we will spend about 2-3 weeks at the beginning of each academic year fighting about academic exclusions, because students did not pass 40% of their course last year so, they would not be excluded. Financial exclusions for instance, they have no fees so they must come in even if they don't have. So those were some of the dynamics, the challenges that we had under the former VU, and they are coming out now and we just have to face it, but on a very small scale, you see? (Thabiso, black male, executive administrator).

Several non-white administrators of different rank and gender emphasized that the issue of language, as in the choice of language with which to communicate campus-wide, should be addressed first,

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<sup>31</sup> The toyi-toyi is a South African black militant dance with high steps performed by protesters, accompanied by singing and chanting of slogans. Unarmed protesters used it as a way to intimidate armed soldiers and riot police of the white government. It became an integral part of any political protest. After Apartheid ended, people have used the toyi-toyi to express their grievances against current government policies. The toyi-toyi involves using with chants such as "Amandla" ("power") and "Awethu" ("ours"). These two sayings are often used together as in, "amandla ngawethu" literally meaning "the power is ours".

There is resistance to the language among blacks because the very same people who are speaking to me in Afrikaans, they are resisting to speak, at least, one official language, the English language. There is nothing wrong with speaking Afrikaans but with the history that we had with Afrikaans, you know the history that we had? During apartheid, Afrikaans was a language of domination, of oppression and it still symbolizes that to us. So, many of us are very skeptical when coming to that (Tshidi, black female, junior administrator).

Some administrators within this subgroup applauded the management's effort that resulted in a language policy that requires all written communication be made in four languages. Others still argued that this was not effort as their colleagues who spoke Afrikaans were resistant to communicating at meetings in English, a language easily preferred by the majority of non-white administrators. During my interview with Roselyn, a colored female junior administrator she revealed that during the integration phase of the merger, language became a powerful tool used by Afrikaans speaking administrators from the former URU to exclude non speakers of Afrikaans at meetings where important decisions about departmental changes were made. Another administrator, Ruendree, an Indian junior administrator recalled with vivid detail how interpreters were used to translate what was said in Afrikaans at meetings in her department. She believed that the unwillingness of some administrators to employ a commonly understood language was a tactic to render non-Afrikaans speakers powerless at these meetings.

### **6.3 Chapter summary**

The intent of this chapter was to highlight the qualitatively different explanations of merger events and challenges among MU administrators. These perceptions have been captured in Tables 6.1 and 6.2. In the next chapter, I analyze these findings and shed some light on why these differences emerged.

**TABLE 6.1: Perceptions of events in the first year of the merger by race, gender, rank and previous institutional affiliation**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Policy Making</b>				
There are overt policy making structures	1 executives, Scottsville	1 executive; external hire	3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity	2 executives, URU
There are covert policy making structures	1 Trinity non-executives	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	2 non executives, URU
Open, inclusive and transparent process	1 executive, Scottsville	1 executive, external hire	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	1 executive, URU
Top down, inside-out	1 executive, Scottsville	0	2 executives; URU	0
Secretive process that involves a few highly placed individuals	1 non-executive, Trinity	5 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	2 non-executives, URU
Uninvolved and unaware of the process	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	2 non-executives, URU
Policies are distributed widely	1 executive, Scottsville	0	3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity	2 executives, URU
<b>Hiring Practices</b>				
Should be avenue for redressing race and gender equity	2 ( executive Scottsville; 1 non-executive Trinity)	9 (1 executive external hire; 8 non-executives, Trinity and Scottsville)	5 (3 executives, 2 non-executives; Trinity and URU)	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU)
Selection panels are predominantly white male	1 non-executive, Trinity	9 (1 executive external hire; 8 non-executives, Trinity and Scottsville)	0	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU)
Selection panels and biased against women and non-whites	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU)

**TABLE 6.1 continued**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Hiring Practices</b>				
Gender stereotyping is prevalent in hiring practices	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	1 non-executive; URU
Need to create agency for the advancement of women's careers	0	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity	1 non-executive; URU
Hiring practices are fair and just	0	0	5 (3 executives, 2 non-executives; Trinity and URU)	0
Hiring practices perpetuate white male privilege	1 non-executive, Trinity	5 non-executives, all institutions	0	1 non-executive URU

**TABLE 6.1 continued**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>“Match and Place” Process</b>				
A pointless process that reproduces racial and gender disparities	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives; all 3 institutions	0	0
A process that benefits white women by placing them in prominent positions	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives; all 3 institutions	0	0
An important process for achieving true integration	1 executive, Scottsville	1 executive, external hire	5 (3 executives, 2 non-executives; Trinity and URU)	2 executives, URU
An important process for building institutional culture	1 executive, Scottsville	1 executive, external hire	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executive; URU)	1 executive, URU
Legitimate structures to appeal against the outcomes of this process are ineffective and disempowering	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
This process had nothing to do with achieving race and gender equity	1 non-executive, Trinity	5 non-execs, all 3 institutions	0	1 executive, URU
This process should have been used to achieve race and gender equity in administrative posts	1 non-executive, Trinity	5 non-execs, all 3 institutions	0	0
This process does not recognize experiential knowledge or prior learning	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
Management sabotage race and gender equity through this process	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0

<b>Establishment of Committees</b>					
Was legally mandated therefore had to be done	1 executive, Scottsville	1 executive, external hire	3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity	2 executives, URU	
Disparaging group dynamics also necessitated the formation of committees	2 ( executive Scottsville; 1 non-executive Trinity)	9 (1 executive external hire; 8 non-executives, Trinity and Scottsville)	5 (3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity; 2 non-executives)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executives; URU)	
Work of committees was time consuming but fostered cohesion between campuses and various stakeholders	2 ( executive Scottsville; 1 non-executive Trinity)	9 (1 executive external hire; 8 non-executives, Trinity and Scottsville)	5 (3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity; 2 non-executives)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executives; URU)	

**TABLE 6.1 continued**

Theme	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Trade Unions</b>				
Trade unions are powerful and give their constituents voice	1 executive, Scottsville	0	5 (3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity; 2 non-executives)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executives; URU)
Trade unions have no sway, their 'wings have been clipped'	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
Trade are a legitimate structure for solving race and gender equity issues	2 ( executive Scottsville; 1 non-executive Trinity)	9 (1 executive external hire; 8 non-executives, Trinity and URU)	5 (3 executives, 1 URU, 2 Trinity; 2 non-executives)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executives; URU)
Trade unions have less influence on race and gender equity issues	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
Trade union observer role render it powerless to influence hiring decisions and race and gender equity implementation decisions	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0

**TABLE 6.2: Perceptions of challenges in the first year of the merger by race, gender, position and previous institutional affiliation**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Lack of Monitoring</b>				
Lack of a dedicated structure for monitoring race and gender equity goals impedes implementation	0		5 (3 executives, 2 non-executives; Trinity and URU)	0
Need to transform the white male dominated management structure in order to achieve race and gender equity goals	0	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
A dedicated structure for monitoring implementation of race and gender equity goals will not achieve redress	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executive; URU)
<b>Pipeline issues</b>				
Developing and grooming competitive academics takes a lot time	0		3 executives (2 Trinity and 1 URU)	0
White male privilege persists and hinders progress in the appointment of non-whites and females	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	1 non-executive; URU
There are no suitably qualified non-whites	1 executive, Scottsville	0	5 (3 executives, 2 non-executives; URU, Trinity)	2 executives; URU
There are suitably qualified non-whites but they do not get hired	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all institutions	0	2 non-executives URU
No-white employees, especially women, are undervalued	0	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
Balancing equity goals and quality causes tensions	1 executive, Scottsville	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	3 (1 executive, URU; 2 executives, Trinity)	2 executives; URU

**TABLE 6.2 continued**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Equity is not a priority</b>				
The university has prioritized equity and developed targets	1 executive, Scottsville	0	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU and Trinity)	0
Equity plans and targets are in the ‘back burner’	1 Trinity non-executives	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
Academic architecture, centralizing admission functions, harmonizing conditions of employment-the ‘nuts and bolts’ were issues that took precedence over race and gender equity policies	0	0	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	2 executives, URU
Equity policies are confusing	0	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	2 non-executives, URU
White males must be counted in equity appointments especially in those areas where they are underrepresented	1 non-executive, Scottsville	0	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU and Trinity)	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU)
<b>Disparate Campus Cultures</b>				
Lack of cohesion	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executive Scottsville and Trinity)	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executive; URU)
Different ways of doing business caused tensions	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executive Scottsville and Trinity)	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executive; URU)
Different values, lack of trust among people caused tensions	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executive Scottsville and Trinity)	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executive; URU)
Different languages caused tension, especially Afrikaans	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executive Scottsville and Trinity)	5 non-executives, all institutions	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executive; URU)

**TABLE 6.2 continued**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Skills Exodus</b>				
Skills emigration is a significant external barrier to achieving race and gender equity	0		5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	2 executives, URU
The pool for suitably qualified non-white and female candidates is too small. That is why it is difficult to achieve race and gender equity targets	1 executive, Scottsville	0	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	3 (2 executives, 1 non-executive; URU)
Academic architecture, centralizing admission functions, harmonizing conditions of employment-the 'nuts and bolts' were issues that took precedence over race and gender equity policies	0	0	5 (3 executives; 2 non executives; URU and Trinity)	2 executives, URU
Qualified non-white candidates are leaving the country for overseas employment	0	0	2 non-executives; URU	4 (2 executives, 2 non-executives; URU)
Qualified non-white candidates are not leaving for overseas but for better salaries and recognition at rival institutions	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
There is a cohort of old white males who have not changed, they hinder race and gender equity progress	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	2 (1 executive, 1 non-executives; URU and Trinity)	0
There is a cohort of old white males who have not changed, they want to preserve their power and domination	1 non-executive, Trinity	8 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0

**TABLE 6.2 continued**

Themes	Designated Groups		Whites	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>Chilly Climate</b>				
There is a hostile climate, employees feel threatened and victimized	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
It is not safe to question management on equity policies and practices	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0
People engage in self-censorship	0	3 non-executives, Trinity and URU	0	0
There is mistrust and lack of confidentiality	1 non-executive, Trinity	7 non-executives, all 3 institutions	0	0

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **INTEPRETATION OF FINDINGS**

In Chapter 6, I described MU administrators' perspectives regarding the pursuit of racial and gender equity within the context of institutional mergers that brought together apartheid era black and white campuses, technikons and universities. In this chapter, I use Critical Race, Merger and Power theories to interpret variations in the perceptions of events and challenges associated with the MU merger. At the end of this Chapter, I highlight key differences in the interpretations that emerge from the three different lenses.

#### **7.1 Critical Race Theoretical perspective**

Racial experiences matter in understanding perceptions of mergers. It has been established that the racial experiences of blacks or non-whites in organizations are often not as positive as those of their white counterparts (Alderfer, Alderfer, Tucker & Tucker, 1980; Greenhouse, Parasuraman & Wormley, 1990). Critical race theorists argue that there are always at least two accounts of reality in organizations (Bell, 199b; Hill-Collins, 1989; Delgado, 1989). The first is the dominant reality which looks ordinary and natural to most individuals and the second, the counter-narrative, is the reality perceived by people of color, where experiences of people of color are filtered, suppressed and censored (Bell, 199b; Hill-Collins, 1989, Delgado, 1989). In this research, given the apartheid history of South Africa, the perceptions of white males (dominant group)

constitute the dominant reality whilst those of non-whites (non-dominant group) constitute the racial reality or counter-narrative.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) is grounded in the realities of lived experiences of racism that single out, with wide consensus among whites, the 'other' as worthy of suppression (Taylor, 1998). Hence, CRT embraces this subjectivity of perspective and openly acknowledges, "the perceptions of truth, fairness and justice reflect the mindset, status and experience of the knower" (Taylor, 1998, p. 122). In other words, these different mindsets can lead to different views of "reality" among social groups (dominant and other). There are several mindsets that explain why MU administrator's perceptions of events and challenges differed. These mindsets or ways of thinking constitute the lens through which members of the dominant and non-dominant groups represent the 'Other', construct subjective realities and make sense of the merger events and challenges.

When the dominant group uses Whiteness as a standard against which to measure the progress made by members of the non-dominant group, a particular picture of reality emerges. Furthermore, when members of the dominant group create perceived differences within racial minority groups, they reproduce sameness in relation to a white male experience. This sameness (re)produces a standard of eligibility that accords an elite status to members of the non-dominant groups who attain an insider status by doing, acting and thinking the same as white males. When the dominant group positions members of the non-dominant group as outsiders, a different reality and explanation emerges. Lastly, when the dominant group depicts members of the non-dominant group as victims- at risk for failure, discrimination, non-promotion and as insufficiently educated, yet another reality emerges (Iverson, 2007). Using administrator's comments in

this study, I shall now elaborate on how these realities produce differing perspectives for both the dominant and non-dominant groups at MU.

#### Whiteness as a criterion

According to Iverson (2000), individuals who hold views that privilege characteristics of white academic careers, credentials and success believe that blacks and coloreds most often have preparation that is inferior, and assume members of designated groups will be welcomed when and if they achieve these standards. As a form of oppositional scholarship, CRT challenges the experience of whites as a normative standard against which the distinctive experiences of the 'other' are situated. In this case, non-whites become the 'other'.

Patrick compares the advancement of black academics and researchers to that of white female researchers who are internationally competitive. In this instance, the reputation of white female academic staff is situated as the desirable standard by a white male who is a member of the dominant group.

There are objective constraints to achieving race and gender equity here. There simply aren't as many black and female academic staff especially researchers that are internationally competitive as there are white female researchers in the country. That's simply an objective statement of fact. That doesn't mean that we can't develop those [who are black and female] (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

Patrick's comment assumes white women are better trained and preferred employees than black females who do not 'measure up' to the standard achieved by the former group. Hence, unless black and female researchers reproduce the standard set by white women, they will not be accorded the same elite status. Patrick's comment situates non-white females as outsiders. The views expressed in Patrick's comment are consistent with

literature that shows that non-whites and females are regarded as outsiders in the construction of academic knowledge (Andersen, 1988). I shall elaborate on the insider/outsider status of women later on.

In Gert's comment, the white males are situated as the norm and their achievements are positioned as the preferred standard.

We have a dwindling number of pale males from our institutions all over the country. Those who are left are over 65 years and will retire soon without replacement. They are some of our best qualified members of the academic community. A majority of them have the National Research Foundation's A- rate status and with their knowledge and years of experience they are in a good position train the upcoming scholars from the so-called designated groups. We haven't got too many of those [scholars from the designated groups] coming through the system and so the concern we have now is how will we replenish this lost talent (Gert, white male, middle administrator).

The quote suggests that white males are valued members of the academic enterprise. There is a sense of despair in Gert's message when he talks about losing these scholars. Here, it is the standards that these white males have set that needs to be reproduced by people from the non-dominant groups who wish to occupy the same positions as the departing or departed valued members of the dominant group. Taken a step further, once the standard has been met, members of the non-dominant group will become insiders in the academy.

In Chantel's experience, non-white females, despite their credentials or work experience, face tougher scrutiny and monitoring by their white superiors.

I know of women even on this campus who've got many degrees like you won't believe, but the rope is tightened when it comes to us [non-whites and females] applying and getting the positions. And I can say, in fact, I do experience this, that there is always an eye over you, as if they are waiting for you slip up. Or you are not fully trusted and the lines of reporting that you go through are much more than for other people because you've got color (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

Embedded in Chantel's comment is the perception that non-white female administrators are victims of interlocking systems of oppression (Hill-Collins, 1990). This means that race, gender and educational attainment serve as mechanisms by which non-white females are silenced, oppressed and denied access to equal employment opportunity and career mobility at MU. I shall elaborate on this point later.

#### White male experience as a norm

Among the administrators interviewed, I found individuals who hold a view of the merger that privileges white male majority experiences and treat these as a yardstick against which the progress and success of people from the designated group are evaluated, appraised and judged. Theuns' comments about the pool of available talent, for example, assume that white privilege is 'normal'.

Because of the inequities of the past, we don't have the potential pool amongst the so-called designated grouping that we would like to see. Because a lot of people didn't have the opportunity to develop them to the extent that whites have had. So the pool we are working is relatively small I must say this with great respect. And that is the reality, the competition for that pool is severe not between higher education institutions only but also between higher education institutions and the private sector. So we are also losing staff [from the designated groups] continuously (Theuns, white male, executive administrator).

According to Iverson (2007), discussions of access particularly as related to entrée, representation and affirmation coalesce to produce a reality where people of color are outsiders. Taken a step further, individuals who ascribe to this mindset often situate the white and male experience as the norm against which people from the designated groups are evaluated, denied access, poorly retained and without affirmation. By *we*, Theuns refers to the MU leadership that advocates for race and gender equity despite the fact the MEC has not transformed itself to include members of the non-dominant group. Theuns'

comment is evidence that not only do people from the designated groups have to meet the requirements set by white males but that their credentials, candidacy and level of experience are also evaluated against those of the dominant group (white males).

Quotes by Patrick and Thabiso, reveal another dominant discourse among executive administrators - the achievement of quality is more important than race or gender equity.

I think that everybody pretty much understands the need to promote race and gender equity both in appointments as well as in promotions. But at the same time there is a strong feeling amongst senior academic management that we cannot do this at the expense of incrementing the quality of our senior academic personnel. So, if somebody is appointed as a professor they must be appointed as a professor because s/he is indeed a leading thinker, researcher and educator in his/her particular subject. So balancing that together with the demands of improving your racial and gender demographics of senior staff is an ongoing battle. Managing the tension between quality and equity is also an ongoing battle (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

For instance when we say, 75% of all vacant posts will be filled by people from the designated groups, it is not to say that if we address the issue of equity and you have 10 applicants who are black and two are whites, and you find that the best of the crop is only the two whites, so we are not going to say we are not going to appoint because we don't have a black person. What we are saying is that equity must go hand-in-hand with quality. So, if we find a quality white candidate who fits the bill, we will appoint them because quality is also very important for us (Thabiso, black male, executive administrator).

A closer look at the comment by Thabiso, a black male executive, reveals that he embraces the views of white male executive administrators. In his comment, Thabiso reiterates the need to adhere to standards. By virtue of his qualifications and position he has met the white male standard. This makes him, an 'insider' in the dominant group (Iverson, 2007). Thabiso's comments also reveal the tensions in how administrators interpret the race and gender equity policy in regards to the hiring of non-white candidates. Ramphela (2008) argues that the dominant group tends to be preoccupied with maintaining standards in higher education, professional appointments and

management promotions. She adds that the dominant group is defensive of standards and views any suggestions of change in the systemic profiles of students and staff as a proxy for lowering standards. As a result, the dominant group insists that any new entrants would have to prove that they are worthy of inclusion in the established culture and are not a threat to the traditional standards (Ramphele, 2008).

The notion that “blackness” has a “contaminating influence” is entrenched in the views of members of the dominant group who use their view to justify the right to exclude some, constitute others as outsiders, and treat others as “intruders who have been granted special permission to be there” (Ladson-Billing & Tate, 1995, p.60). Patrick and Thabiso’s comments demonstrate how quality is used as a mechanism to exclude non-whites. What is inappropriate or illogical or deceptive (pick one – I think you need to be more assertive here) about the dominant group’s reaction and defense of standards is their expectation that members of the non-dominant group conform to the standards or criteria of quality that were set using whiteness as a norm, even though social conditions in apartheid South Africa precluded many of them from earning these credentials. Alvesson & Billing, (1992) argue that, gender equity policies are “identified with the provision of opportunities for the fulfillment of the individual’s needs, as long as this fulfillment coexists with and, especially, improves organizational performance” (p.433). The dominant group’s narratives on the pursuit of quality at MU reveal that they are prepared to identify opportunities for suitably qualified individuals as long as such opportunities co-exist with and do not jeopardize the university’s reputation.

People from the designated groups as outsiders and victims

Another mindset evident in the interview data advocates for color-blindness, race-neutrality, objectivity, individuality and equal opportunity while at the same time using these to “camouflage the self-interest, power and privilege of the dominant groups” (Villalpando, 2003, p. 623).

When it comes to diversity initiatives, people of color and minorities are situated as outsiders and victims (Iverson, 2007, Hill-Collins, 1989). At the MU, this outsider status is typified by Magriet’s observation about being outside the communication network.

You know, at the old URU, we used to have lots of discussions of various policies at Senate, faculty and dean’s committee ranks. That is where I could make an input. These new policies about equity bursaries and appointments, I was never formally informed about it. I heard about it because I attended a cocktail party. I was talking to the head of personnel at that stage and he told me about it, sort of like informally over a glass of wine. We were talking about it and somehow it came up. So that’s how I found out about it [equity bursaries and positions]. I think to a large extent this is still the tendency, you know top management decides and they just let us know (Magriet, white female, middle administrator).

Her comment illustrates that even though some women have moved up the career ladder and secured prominent leadership positions within the academic enterprise, they remain outsiders by virtue of their gender. While they have attained the insider status due to their occupational positions, they are not privy to informal and covert information that old boys’ networks distribute. This makes non-whites and women “Outsiders Within” (Collins, 1986) who remain on the margins of higher education institutions. For Collins and Black feminists, this Outsider status is not a disadvantage rather it provides a unique insight and perspective that, if used appropriately, “can be the impetus for excitement and creativity within one’s career, as well as benefit to one’s employing organization, academic community and the world at large (Thomas, Mack, Williams and Perkins, 1999,

p.51). To the extent that we can understand the ways in which women and non-whites experience marginality, we can begin to seek practical ways through which to promote an inclusive and affirming academic community.

Hettie's comment is evidence that non-executive white female administrators are positioned as outsiders, especially by white women executive officers. She says,

I'm talking as a white person, that's what I mean by we are on the receiving end. It is explicitly stated in this race and gender equity policy that it is not for whites and I understand that. I know on the cognitive rank I understand that but when you read it in terms of an emotional rank it does hurt you (Hettie, white female administrators).

Hettie situates junior white females as victims of the race and gender equity policies at MU. Weber's work (2008) on the status of women in higher education indicates that divergent perspectives occur when women of different social locations have different access to options, opportunities and societies' valued-rewards. By virtue of their lower rank (e.g. line vs. off-line position, professional vs. maintenance), non-executive white females hold a view of race and gender equity different from executive females whose views are that there is no time for race and gender equity.

Gender equity policies in many organizations are presented and implemented in a way that favors existing, 'acceptable' and often gendered management practices (Alvesson & Billing, 1992; Kerfoot & Whitehead, 1998; Lehman, 1996). Chantel's interview revealed her suspicions about the biases against females within predominantly white male hiring and selection panels that relegate race and gender equity to the periphery.

You know, the compositions of selection panels for senior appointments is in our statutes, so it is prescribed by the statutes of the university that are set out and negotiated over time. So, it is titles, okay? And who fills senior titles? Men! So, let's not kid ourselves, it's world-wide. So your university does not look much different from our universities. It is

the same story in business. That is why there is the gender issue. In some of the [selection panel] meetings where I've sat in, women are put at a disadvantaged position when the majority of interviewers are male. Men want the candidate to present in a particular way. And male candidates know how to play that game and women often pitch differently. You see, during these interviews, everybody had to give a vision speech. I think women often pitch it in slightly different way and men are not always happy with that. And I think some women were disadvantaged because of the way they presented themselves. So, they were often not appointed. I'm not saying there is anything wrong, in fact, I agree with how they represented themselves but I think the audience sometime, you know, the panels sometimes are hard on women (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

Her quote implies that these panels have a dominant mindset that treats women and non-whites as outsiders who are expected to present themselves in ways that are appealing to the dominant group. Hiring discrimination has been studied extensively (Neckerman & Kirschenman, 1991; Kennelly, 1998). Scholars argue that some employers are reluctant to hire non-whites or females because they (employers) are hostile towards persons from certain sex-race groups or because social dissimilarity obstructs trust (Tolbert & Oberfield, 1991). Glazer-Raymo (1999) observes that people prefer to hire people like themselves. This presents a problem for women and minorities if the search-and-selection committees, boards of trustees and the like are composed primarily of white men (Glazer-Raymo, 1999). In order to change and expand the composition of college administrators, individuals who make hiring decisions must become a focus of attention (Swoboda, 1993). If the dominant culture at MU is to change and become more inclusive, a crucial starting place will be with faculty and administrative appointments that are reflective of other cultural views.

Patrick, a white male, offers an interpretation of the situation that resembles Chantel's. He observes that non-whites must 'wait' for white males to exit the system of their own volition, acknowledging an unwillingness on the part of the dominant group to relinquish their status and power.

Clearly there's no way, that the mindset of individual white male academic managers who are currently responsible for the grooming, management, development and promotion of student and staff members from the designated groups will change?. You know, it is a generational issue some of them will never change their minds. We have to wait for them to move out of the system or to exit the system in terms of this responsibility of promoting, identifying, grooming and developing talent (Patrick, white male, executive administrator).

This comment privileges the dominant group who continue to benefit while the non-dominant group remains disadvantaged. Following the end of the apartheid system, activities were geared toward ameliorating problems related to race issues as addressed by the new Labor Relations Act of 1995, Employment Equity Act of 1998 and the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act of 2000 that were directed at curtailing discrimination and unfair labor practices in the workplace (Spierenburg & Wels, 2004). Patrick's comment is evidence of barriers created by individuals in positions of power that camouflage their self-interest in maintaining the dominant group and impede equity practices at MU. As Spierenburg and Wells (2004) note, there is evidence to suggest that "the historical context of South Africa causes every preferential system and procedure on the basis of designated racial or any other socially constructed trait to be looked upon with suspicion"(p.9).

Race, class and gender can act in multiple ways to affect the experiences of woman and minorities. This explains why there are points of convergence between views held by all females in my sample, especially in relation to their experiences of gender insensitivity in hiring practices. In the following quote, Candice reflects on ways she believes women are victimized because of the roles and responsibility they have in the family, yet another example of how women experience interlocking systems of oppression (Hill-Collins, 1990).

It is not easy to progress. If you do progress, there is one of two perceptions: she is an affirmative action candidate so they're promoting her and she's probably not even so

bright like everybody else. Or it's, someone is looking out for her and that's why she's moving. So there's little recognition for how hard it is to progress here. You need to be three times as good as the average [profane word] in the other office. And then you get only a quarter of the recognition that he is likely to get with the other challenges of being a woman with children or a partner or you have to go home and cook food which other men, not all men do. So, there are challenges that exist here for being a woman (Candice, colored female, junior administrator).

Alvesson and Billing (1992) argue that equity policies are largely ineffective in addressing inequity because individuals do not reflect on their own practices and consider alternatives to the often *taken-for-granted* norms inherent in and legitimized by established dominant discourses. Gabriella exposes the racial reality of non-whites females whose voices are silenced, opinions are suppressed and their behavior is sanctioned and sabotaged.

There are people who feel threatened within the university. They will put traps, especially if you do not 'toe the line'. And it will be so easy that they will find something. And it is always uncomfortable to be working under those conditions (Gabriella, colored female, middle administrator).

Such attitudes within the organization are related to the manner and/or context in which gender equity policies are implemented (Shaw & Penney, 2003). Often these attitudes result because there exist within organizations a very narrow view of what is considered appropriate, acceptable in terms of criticism of current and gendered organizational practices (Shaw & Penney, 2003). Hence, all other experiences that deviate from these acceptable and normalized views are marginalized.

People from the designated groups as ‘the disadvantaged’

According to Iverson (2008, ¶23), the discourse on disadvantage is embodied in diversity plans that depict people of color as at risk before entering higher education institutions as well as while members of the university. Narratives of individuals that hold these views will characterize non-whites within the university as inadequately educated-at risk for educational failure and advancement among other things. Jeffrey exemplifies this perspective in the following quote,

First of all, you got to understand that non-whites in this country did not have the educational facilities that most whites had in the past. This essentially puts them at a disadvantage especially where today they are required to have certain important skills. In the early eighties, my faculty was the first one to employ black people as lecturers and administrators. I was also the first to have a large number of black students and we reached out even to students from the rural communities in this country. We recognized that their lack of exposure to math education and their math skills were prohibiting them to get access to good tertiary education. Where we saw the ability and potential, we gave people a chance. So, the recognition of prior learning is a very important aspect of our recruitment in my faculty. And so over the years we’ve seen people grow and thrive because they’ve had the support they needed to succeed (Jeffrey, colored female, junior administrator).

In South Africa, this portrayal is also echoed in government documents such as the National Plan for Higher Education that situates people of color as the ‘designated groups’, ‘under-prepared’ or ‘historically disadvantaged’ before entering the university (DoE, 1997). This discourse positions people of color as vulnerable and at risk both within and outside of the university and at the same as dependent on the university to compensate for their deficiencies.

According to Iverson (2007), constructing the problem as deficit focuses on the identification of an individual’s deficiency, like under-preparedness or lack of skills, and the need to develop services to compensate for deficiencies such as professional development, leadership, academic support etc. Hence, deficit theory contends that an

individual's poor performance is rooted in that individual's alleged cognitive and motivational deficits whilst institutional structures and inadequate schooling that exclude, segregate these individuals from learning are exculpatory (Valencia, 1997). The underlying assumption is that people of color need to "change to conform to this already effective and equitable system" (Yosso, 2005, p.75). Framed in this way, the playing field should be leveled for those people of color to acquire the necessary skills, education and resources, risk will be reduced, and "people of color will be more likely to succeed in higher education" (Iverson, 2007, p.597). This discursive framing fails to critically examine the factors within the system that perpetuates deficit thinking and continues to reproduce educational inequalities (Garcia & Guerra, 2004). Deficit thinking is more than just blaming the victim it also encompasses the use of power to limit access and opportunity. When extrapolated to the South African context, it involves ignoring racial segregation of people of color and assuming that people from the designated groups perform poorly or do not meet educational standards on the job and as learners as a result of their cognitive and motivation deficit rather than because of the exclusionary, degrading institutional structures and mediocre education that was imposed upon them by the apartheid regime.

Deficit thinking is an explanation of disadvantage that blames the victim (Menhaca, 1997; Yosso, 2002; Garcia & Guerra, 2004) and it is also a form of oppression- that is, "a cruel and unjust use of authority and power to keep a group of people in their place" (Valencia, 1997, p.3). A comment such as the one made by Candice highlights the disadvantage that continues to be experienced by people from the designated group who were victims of an inferior education policy under apartheid.

After we merged, management hired an outside consulting firm to reorganize this place.

You know that was tough because in order to be “Matched and Placed” after the merger, we had to do these series of tests and most of them were mathematical. I think I did well in the social skills and aptitude tests. I am not good with numbers and so many of us were anxious about that. I can do basic arithmetic because that is what I learned in school in those days but for me those tests reminded me of how Bantu education sabotaged my learning. Because I mean here I am trying to keep my job and I already have a Masters degree but still some foreign test is being used to decide whether I should keep my current position or be demoted. Ag, in the end, a white lady was appointed to my current position even though she had no experience in the job! In fact, I had to teach her what I had been doing for the past six years and accept her as my boss. I moved out of my office into this smaller one and she retained even my furniture because she was now the Director. She had a Doctorate and came from the former URU, I suppose she did well in the tests so I have had to accept that but it is hard (Candice, white male, executive administrator).

The legacy of apartheid left gross distortions in the enrollment and employment patterns of South Africa’s higher education institutions (Ramphela, 2008). Specifically, the staff profiles in most higher education institutions reflect the glaring inequalities in race and gender (Ramphela, 2008). The current pattern of intake and output at South African universities only serve to increase the proportion of whites qualifying for leadership positions at the expense of blacks (Gerwel, 1992). To date, a majority of individuals who occupy positions of authority at work have a vested interest in maintaining their hegemony over such positions and do so by excluding candidates who differ from them in racial and gender identity. These exclusion tactics allow for both “conscious and unconscious acts of discrimination” (Smith, 2002, p.521).

Despite having had access to the same educational opportunities as white males during the apartheid, white women were underrepresented in senior positions owing partly to biases of the male-dominated culture of these institutions (Ramphela, 2008). In post-apartheid South Africa, White males have a lot to lose by promoting these policies as redress threatens white male power and privilege. To retain their power, position and privilege, white males have promoted and advanced the status of white women. This way, white males insulate their position which remains unchanged and unchallenged. In this

case, the interests of white males and females converge resulting in the banding together of a dominant group (white males) and white females. White women, are no longer excluded as before but are co-opted and appraised to serve a greater interest- maintaining the status quo.

Discourses on disadvantage constitute people of color as victims and focus attention on their needs, challenges, fears and inability to remain safe (Allan, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1998). An incident related by Tsakani shows how non-whites are constituted as at-risk victims.

I asked for advice from our campus labor relations lady regards challenging the decision of my new position after the “Match and Place” process. You know, I wanted an investigation into the decision because I know I should have got a higher position. The lady simply said to me, don’t do it. She was scared for me, imagine, a whole Labor Relations person! I mean she said I should stop challenging how they apply these gender equity policies especially in our department. And then that’s where I just stopped (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

The findings show that non-whites administrators are reflecting critically on how the structures that are meant to assist employees are used to sanction behavior, heighten a sense of risk among employees and sustain unjust labor practices. Tsakani, like other non-white administrators, is interrogating how the black Labor Relations Officer uses her position to threaten and influence Tsakani’s behavior. In doing so, the non-dominant group exposes the advantage that some of their colleagues have and how such advantage is used to oppress members of them.

By definition, non-dominant group members fall outside the norms and expectation of mainstream organizational groups (Calvert and Ramsey, 1996). Their language, interests and concerns are different and do not fit the assumptions and values of the dominant group. This results in non-dominant group members being blamed for their

inability to ‘fit’ into standards based on whiteness (Calvert and Ramsey, 1996). Gert’s comments about why members of the designated groups do not fit in because of their economic and social backgrounds, depicts blacks as disadvantaged before entering academe.

It is all very well saying that you are a dedicated researcher and a dedicated teacher, but the economic reality is that, you’ve got to pay a bond and support a family. And quite often, especially in the African culture it is the extended family which puts extra pressure on the person who is here. Unlike us [whites], they don’t have the luxury of wealthy parents who can assist them in the buy of the first house for instance. It is an economic reality and what is happening now to quiet a large extent if you look at the number of researchers and I’m talking specifically about Africans researchers at institutions, a very large proportion are from other African countries. They are not South African even at this institution we’ve got quiet a number of non-white researchers from either Southern African Developing Countries or from as far north as West and East Africa (Gert, white male, middle administrator).

Gert recognizes the cumulative advantage that members of the dominant group have had as a result of their race however, he blames the family networks of qualified blacks for the university’s inability to retain latter in academe. Framed this way and coupled with the ensuing competition for skilled black labor brought to bear by mergers, the institution is absolved from taking blame for not uncompromisingly seeking ways to retain qualified blacks.

People from the designated groups as a commodity

Individuals with this mindset tend to hold a view of the merger that objectifies people of color as valuable property and assumes that the institution needs this property to enhance its reputation, improve its image in society and gain competitive advantage over rival institutions. The exchange value of the diverse individual is apparent in how individuals describe the relationship between diversity and institutional reputation, status,

and ultimate standing in the market.

We are not doing so bad. What we are trying to do is, when we recruit black academics and remember the policy says (70%) that sort of thing. Then we have to have some sort of strategy where we pay black academics more than we do white academics because if you don't do that you simply won't attract the black academics and then your institutional reputation suffers. We have a clear approach that we have to treat black academics differently from others for this reason if we are serious about meeting our equity targets then we have to have a different approach (Theuns, white males, executive administrator).

Theun's comment illustrates the exchange value attached to employing non-whites. His comment highlights a link that administrators make between the individual (commodity) and the university's status, reputation and standing in the labor market. Put this way, the university that acquires the commodity in exchange for an enhanced status, reputation or greater "purchasing power" (Iverson, 2007).

The NPHE document characterizes the South African higher education sector as an environment of "intensified competitive climate" which "has been fuelled by the emergence of a private higher education market" (DoE, 2001, p.7). In response to this external pressure, public MU documents state that it is actively recruiting academic staff of exceptional merit who will add value to MU's pursuit of its strategic objectives' respect for diversity (MU Annual Report, 2006). To illustrate, the MEC stated in a university council report that,

"in our current robust economic environment, where top academics, and in particular, the limited pool of black academics, who constitute only 40% of the total national academic pool, are being headhunted with few scruples by our peers, the private sector, government departments and state owned enterprises, MU urgently requires a policy to proactively recruit new top academic talent and to retain its own top academic talent in order to successfully execute its strategy and achieve its vision" (Vice-Chancellor's Report, 2007, p11).

On the MU website, the revised mission of the institution lists ten priorities three of which are to "build a reputable brand, maximize its intellectual capital and conduct

internationally competitive research” (Author, 2008). Furthermore, the MEC states that many academics have particular knowledge, skills and competencies that have a readily determinable *commercial value* outside of the institution. This is another example of how suitably qualified non-whites, as a commodity, are discursively described as an economic value. This exchange value is evident in Nicollette’s comments about how MU links its recruitment and retention strategy with consequent financial gains.

If we take into account especially the external environment, there is a war for talent anyway. There’s a huge imperative at societal rank for equity and redress which makes it a competitive labor market. And which makes it very difficult to attract very talented top rank academics to the institution. Universities like Prescott, Western, and Sterling are currently investing a lot of money in new academic staff positions. I don’t how they are financing it but they have established new positions and everybody is hunting after black and female candidates (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

Nicollette’s comment suggests that administrators are aware of the competition facing their institutions especially as it relates to the compensation and retention of people from the designated groups at South African universities. The fact that this competition is multi-dimensional, as in among institutions of higher education, between institutions of higher education and the public sector, overseas employers and the public sector of South Africa, suggests that in order to retain “valued” people from the designated groups, the MU has to meet the level of compensation offered to the latter by its competitors. The notion of interest convergence is apparent in Nicollette’s comment. The university opens its doors to suitably qualified blacks and in exchange, the university enhances its reputation as a result of employing talented individuals whose professional output is valued. Framed this way, there is a win-win relationship between the institution and the individual.

Critical race scholars argue that racism is embedded in representations of people of color as commodities, “objectified as property” (Ladson-Billing & Tate, 1995, p.53). The university benefits from the acquisition of this commodity because the strategic use of the commodity gives the university a competitive edge in the market. Diversity has been identified in the higher education literature as a major factor associated with the positive performance of higher education systems (van Vucht, 2007). Birnbaum (1983) argues that the increase of diversity of institutions is an important strategy to: meet the needs of students; the labor market; provide social mobility; meet the political needs of interest groups; and permit the crucial combination of elite and mass education and create opportunities for innovation.

## **7.2 Power Theoretical perspective**

You have two groups here, those who want change but minimal change and they block you at every turn. Then there are the people who want radical change, the non-whites in this place. Unfortunately the non-whites here don't have the political consciousness it takes to create pressure. They are busy trying to keep their jobs at all costs because bread and butter issues are primary for them (Jayashree, Indian female, junior administrator).

Members of groups often constitute their view of the world from different perspectives and realities and it is impossible to understand these differences without looking at power relations (Calvert and Ramsey, 1996). Power enables racism, silencing voices of people from the non-dominant groups and maintaining the status quo (Hill-Collins, 1990, Iverson, 2007). If one group has power vis-à-vis others, that groups' views predominate and a complex set of dynamics is “created between the groups that can be accounted for by their different views alone” (Calvert And Ramsey, 1996, p. 468).

Jayashree's comment reveals tensions between interests groups that want minimal versus radical change. The same comment suggests that non-whites are passively

accepting a subordinate role and that they do not act in ways that challenge power dynamics or inequity on campus. Jayashree's comment also constructs non-whites as powerless, lacking agency and too preoccupied with trying to survive. Put this way, non-whites are enabling the processes by which the dominant culture imposes its privilege and maintains its dominant position.

Mergers are characterized by contradictory pressures to maintain the status quo and implement change. For public institutions, the tension concerns the wish to meet external political needs versus the desire to maintain traditional academic interests (Skodvin, 1999). In the case of MU, maintaining the status quo would result in all partner institutions continuing to operate as separate individual institutions with separate missions and visions and little effort expended to reconcile and consolidate institutional goals and culture. This would defeat the rationale for the government mandated merger, where racial and gender equity are principal goals. The fact that the National Plan does not clearly lay out a strategy for how institutions should pursue racial and gender equity leaves the task of interpreting and translating this strategy to individual institutions. Hence, the tensions that Jayashree exposes in her comment exemplify how different stakeholder groups within the institutions reinterpret and vie for their interests and retain the resources they hold dear.

According to Bengsston, (1992) cultural dominance is accentuated when the dominant institution's financial strength, institutional reputation, market potential, structure or dominant executive management team has been established prior to the merger. Under such conditions, the culturally dominant institution will most likely want the weaker partner to assimilate rather than form an alliance of equals. Prior to the

merger, the former URU was the larger institution, it had financial stability, its research output and academic reputation surpassed that of its partner, Trinity Tech.

During her interview, Chantel articulated her view that there is an interest group of Afrikaner white males who want to continue retaining their power.

There were a lot of black people of the old URU who thought the merger was the beginning of a process of dismantling the last bastion of apartheid as it were. We thought it would bring in new blood, new ideas and new ways of doing things. Basically, we expected a new and diverse leadership in terms of race and gender from both institutions. I think that was the expectation on Trinity tech and the VU campuses as well. Instead, we got the same old management and clearly, power was located here [at the former URU campus]. The notion of the big brother the baaskaap<sup>32</sup> is so obvious. So it is clearly a case of we'll bring you in, make sure you behave and don't rock the boat (Chantel, colored female, middle administrator).

Chantel's use of baaskaap as a metaphor captures her view of continuing white power at MU. A considerable amount of research has been devoted to how language shapes current realities and molds emerging ones (McMillan & Cheney, 1996; Morgan, 1997, 2001; Mukherjee & Rahman, 2002; Oswick, Keenoy & Grant, 2003). Although much of the influence of metaphor is subtle, it has powerful effects on our thinking and behavior (Kaplan, 1990, 1992; Watson, 1995; Shotter & Cunliffe, 2003). Metaphors are a key element through which social reality is constructed and maintained (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). They act as a compass, which serves to orient us and are "linguistic steering devices that guide both thinking and actions" (Hart, 2003, p.33). Chantel uses the metaphor baaskaap to craft a potent counter-narrative of the experiences of non-whites within the newly merged institution. The baaskaap, or boss-ship as it were, conjures images of a sea voyage and a vessel which non-whites board. As they board this vessel

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<sup>32</sup> Baaskaap is a concept that was heavily promoted during Apartheid South Africa mainly by radical Afrikaners and the ruling National Party in order to arouse negative sentiments against black South Africans. The term literally translates from Afrikaans to English as "boss-ship", but a more applicable transliteration is "domination", which is reflective of the idea that "the white man must always be boss".

they are expected to ensure that their own weight is not felt and to sail in the vessel's established path. Chantel aptly describes the voyage by stating, "we'll bring you in, make sure you behave and don't rock the boat". Applied to this case, Chantel's counter-narrative communicates that non-whites are expected to adjust themselves to a new institution where racism and white male privilege persist.

The potential for political action in merging organizations is very high (Pablo, 1994; Bastien & Van de Ven, 1986). Although the official account of the merger (in Chapter 5) indicated that there was negotiation and collaboration in the initial phases of the merger, Tsakani's comments suggest this does not fit with her experience.

Things are just not going right. I'm telling you this is a take-over. Initially, it was supposed to be a merger and here already it is becoming clear that it is a take-over. If you look in the first [management] tier, it is all URU staff holding senior positions. Trinity Tech existed since 1927 and there was nothing wrong with the institution and its leadership. So, you want to tell me that with us coming from Trinity Tech we don't have the necessary skills and knowledge to hold those positions? I doubt it! I seriously doubt it! (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

Specifically, Tsakani's comment suggests that the URU was a powerful partner whose leaders have managerial control post-merger. Pfeffer (1992) argues that when resources are scarce or when there is disagreement on decisions, means and goals uncertainty arises in organizations and people are forced to exercise power. Furthermore, these conditions become magnified when two organizations with dissimilar cultures and business processes unite. While mergers of institutions or units of approximate size may create something new, those of institutions or units with substantially different size almost always involve the absorption and transformation of the smaller by the larger. Furthermore, involuntary mergers, which are created largely by governments, have

characteristics of a corporate take-over or acquisition (Lang, 2003). Tsakani's perception of what happened at MU is consistent with such an explanation of events.

Post-merger union representatives have no power to influence decisions made at employee selection panels due to their new role as observers. Consequently, it makes sense that non-whites feel powerless. The experiences of non-dominant group members and middle administrators such as Jerome, who are union representatives on selection panels, demonstrate the various ways in which the dominant group shut out and exclude the voices of dissent. He states,

When it comes to policy making here, especially those equity issues, I wish they [management] involved us [unions], but they do not. Yes, we are invited into the monthly meetings but we don't have much influence on the agenda (Jerome, colored male, middle administrator).

While middle administrators often provide the necessary information for decisions and are held responsible for the outcomes of such decisions, they are rarely involved in the actual decision-making (Jonhsrud & Rosser, 1999). According to Bugeja (1993) midlevel administrators lack tenure and so can be fired when they criticize the academy or take a contentious stand on issues. Middle administrators also feel that their participation in decision-making is irrelevant (Henkin & Persson, 1992) and often report that they feel unappreciated, even though they are educated and work in demanding areas (Rhoades, 1995; Johnsrud & Rosser, 1996).

The fact that whites did not perceive themselves to be powerless in ways described by Jerome and other members of the designated groups is perhaps a function of

white privilege<sup>33</sup>. McIntosh (1989) likens white privilege to a “weightless knapsack of special provisions, maps, passports, codebooks, visas, clothes, tools and blank checks” (p.10). This package of “unearned” and “unacknowledged” assets results from and reinforces the dominant status of whites while at the same time oppressing non-whites (Donnelly, Cook, Ausdale & Foley, 2005, p. 7). Armed with this knapsack of resources, whites at MU navigate the academic and administrative environments with ease; have access to powerful decision-making structures and social networks which non-whites do not have access to. Hence, the experience of white middle administrators at MU differs on accounts of intergroup dynamics, institutional climate etc. In their view, there is no chilly climate at MU.

Individuals in organizations use their access to social networks, previous power positions, formal (legal) structure; authority; trading favors; possession of knowledge; resources; political skills to leverage power and bring about intended change in behavior and organizational outcomes (Mehta and Hirschheim, 2004). Susan’s description of policy making at MU is a good example of how an executive administrator uses her position, political skill (maneuvering and negotiating), social networks (external contacts), authority and formal structures to influence the priorities and goals that must be pursued.

I have a person she’s a retired white lady who is on contract with me and she drives the process. She used to work at the former URU, she is now retired. She is the coordinator for me and she works just on policies. So she gets a group together and they look at their brief and the timeline. If I need a policy and I want it approved by senate by the end of the year, then timelines are tight. And the task team then drafts the policy, the policy comes to me. Then, I will decide whether the draft must serve at the management executive committee, whether it is necessary, whether it is contentious (Susan, white

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<sup>33</sup> White privilege is a system of advantage resulting from a legacy of racism and benefiting individuals and groups based on the notions of Whiteness. Whiteness intersects with other forms of privilege, including gender, class, phenotype, accent, language, sexuality, immigrant status, and surname (Tatum, 1997; Leonardo, 2004; Carbado, 2002).

female, executive administrator).

The practice of hiring external consultants to design policies is common in South African higher education and it has significant implications for the type of agenda that gets advanced and as well as the outcomes achieved. In the case of Susan, she hires an ex-URU consultant whose institutional memory may be useful in helping her to lobby for policies that protect the interests of former URU stakeholders. The majority of those designing equity policies or diversity initiatives have either been dominant group members or individuals who design these initiatives on behalf of dominant group members (Calvert and Ramsey, 1996, Iverson, 2007). For this reason, equity policies meet the needs of the dominant group (e.g diversity awareness training courses that help them understand more about the non-dominant group members) and are confined to the dominant groups' notions of what the non-dominant group needs (e.g leadership training) to make assimilation easier for the non-dominant group members (Calvert and Ramsey, 1996).

### **7.3 Merger Theoretical perspective**

You know when we came, I mean when Trinity Tech moved into the MU with the culture of questioning things. We question everything, even if it is right. If I get a bonus, if I see that there's an increase in my salary, I still ask. Why are you giving me 10% extra, you know? You must still justify it, because I still want to know if the other managers got it or not. Or maybe, you know because there is no free lunch. I believe in that. What I've realized and my experiences have taught me that there is no free lunch. You give me that 10% why? I want to know. Because one day I'll have to pay it back. But what will be the payback, I need to know. Ja, otherwise you must take your 10% back. We question the way things are done, we negotiate and agree to disagree with management, do more questioning, negotiation until everybody reaches a settlement. We are different, you know? URU is so autocratic, it is very autocratic. And as employees, you know in the structure, there's a manager, there's a subordinate, as a subordinate, you cannot question your manager. That's how they still function so it gets tense when we don't fall into line and most of the times we don't (Tsakani, black female, middle administrator).

The literature suggests that mergers between universities seldom occur without disruption (Skodvin, 1999). By definition merger implies that different cultures, norms and values meet within a framework of a new organization. As shown in Tsakani's comment, the MU merger involved the combination of institutions with different cultures, processes and leadership styles. The MU consists of cultures that are distinct in academic architectures, teaching and research philosophies and these foster tensions at multiple levels of the institutional structure.

Furthermore, mergers are not necessarily marriages between equal partners (Skodvin, 1999). Gert notes,

We heard that we were going to be merged with a Technikon. But that Valley University next door to us wouldn't be touched. The Minister of Education told us that we would have to incorporate Vermont campuses into URU. We were very upset. People were very upset. We lost a lot of good staff, they just left. We initially tried to convince the university management to resist it but they decided not. Imagine, here we were, a strong research university with superior research output merged incorporated with a so-called township high school [VU] that was under-resourced, in deep financial distress and on the verge of closing down. Then later we were with a technical school [Trinity Tech] that did little research (Gert, white male, middle administrator).

Even though he is clearly from the stronger institution, Gert laments the loss of autonomy and control over the institutional mission and academic agenda. Similar to many cross-sectoral mergers, Gert's comment reveals that the differences in academic missions and sizes caused tensions for MU. Mergers are time-consuming and often result in some negotiation and contestation about operational strategies, identities and cultural integration of institutions (Millet, 1976; Goedegebuure, 1992, Mulvey, 1993; Giffords & Dina, 2003; Lang, 2003; Karitzki & Brink, 2003; Schmid, 1995). As a new comprehensive university, MU is faced with the challenge of negotiating and resolving tensions that usually have long-term effects on the academic development of any new

institution. Such tensions are related to issues of teaching and research, competency profiles, campus identity and autonomy, and especially for MU, professional education versus academic programs.

Buono & Bowditch, (2003) have emphasized the importance of paying attention to the human side of mergers. Scholars argue that mergers fail to achieve their intended outcomes when merging organizations do not systematically plan how to build on and integrate their people and cultures (Brown, Clancy & Scholer, 2003; Schweiger & Goulet, 2000). Tshidi highlights common challenges in the merger, uncertainty and communication.

When they said we were going to merge, you think, oh molimo! I'm going to lose my job. You know those [job loss] fears were somewhat addressed but we are not yet certain (Tshidi, black female, junior administrator).

In fact some scholars have argued that uncertainty can lead to undesirable outcomes including lower organizational commitment (Schweiger & Denisi, 1991). When organizations share information related to the merger process, structures and events, uncertainty is reduced. In turn the retention of members of the organization is enhanced (Sinetar, 1981) because employees who feel that the organization has shared information with them regarding the merger exhibit higher levels of organizational commitment than those who hold contrary views (Marks & Mirvis, 1992; Cartwright & Cooper, 1993). These employees are likely to trust the organization further strengthening their willingness to support organization changes. For those employees to whom the merger is a threat, the likelihood of resistance is very high and so is their potential to sabotage rather than support the merger.

The transformation of the South African higher education system puts together stakeholders with “distinct but overlapping roles” (Ramphela, 2008, p. 196). The national government as a policy maker and key “steering agent” must make sure that the education system delivers the goals set by government; the universities deliver on government set goals through teaching, research and service; students are beneficiaries of and future investors in the higher education system as is the private sector which has a vested interest in the performance and delivery of higher education outcomes (Ramphela, 2008, p.196). As a consequence, an antagonistic relationship may be created between the stakeholders where government, a powerful controller, can be perceived to act in ways that impinge on institutional autonomy (Ramphela, 2008). At the same time, the political nature of the merger can make it impossible for an institution to deviate from government objectives because of the financial penalties that may ensue. These circumstances may lead to half-hearted redress efforts by institutions that feel the pressure to transform, but do not have the capacity to deal with radical change such as that demanded by the merger. Under such conditions and in the name of equity redress, two scenarios may develop.

In the first scenario, institutions may attract students and staff from designated groups in order to reflect population demographics while neglecting hostile campus climates that force non-whites and women out of the institutions. In the second scenario, predominantly white and merged institutions may attract and employ people from the designated groups, such as blacks and women, assign them to prominent managerial positions while restricting their influence and power to act as equals to the dominant group (white males). The findings I presented in Chapter 5 suggest that these two

scenarios happen at MU. For example, while white females have been ‘co-opted’ into senior positions, they remain powerless to influence and address the gender insensitive and racially biased hiring practices that continue to inhibit the career mobility of women and blacks at MU. Also, the management of the institution is ill-prepared to address the consequential revolving door effect and slippage of suitably qualified staff from the non-dominant groups.

Incidentally, the MU merger has resulted in a dramatic shift of the student profile where 80 percent of the students are now black but the institution has not resolved the flight of white students to other unmerged predominantly white institutions in the country. Hence, while the MU has been handsomely rewarded for turning around its student profile, the disturbing trend of white flight among students and the predominance of white males in senior posts remain largely ignored. The mergers of higher education institutions in South Africa have succeeded in respect creating a unitary as opposed to the binary system under apartheid (Jansen, Bandi, Chalufu, Lethoko, Schoole & Soobrayan, 2002). The findings in this case study especially those related to the structural diversity of MU show evidence that the equity profile has remained largely unchanged. Similar to Jansen et al (2002), I concur that simply adding together campuses to create a diverse institution weakens the staff and student equity profile under the merger. Unitary mergers create intense competition among higher education institutions (Skodvin (1999). MU findings suggest that the competition for skilled labor, especially in academic labor, has intensified since the mergers. The findings also reveal that the competition for skilled employees from the designated groups is multi-sectoral and multi-national-between universities. Given the low salaries at universities, the South African crises of skill

shortages and skills mismatch, this competition intensified (Koen, 2003; Robinson, Gedye, Mabanga & Tabane, 2005, Mabokela, 2000). Put together, these factors make the task of achieving race and gender equity challenging, as Nicollette observes,

Now the trouble comes when we have to recruit skilled black staff, there is such a shortage of them in the market and we are really recruiting from a very small pool. Then you have the added constraint that a lot of the qualified people are leaving the country to seek employment overseas. That is a real constraint (Nicollette, white female, executive administrator).

Universities not only have to recruit individuals with critical skills from the designated groups, but they must find ways to retain them as well. Gert summarized this daunting challenge as follows,

The problem that we face in transforming the staff profiles at our university has to do with the fact that all your promising young stars start off in an academic career, all bright eyed and bushy tailed. Then two, three or five years later they leave because industry is under the same pressure to transform. They've [industry] got money and they poach most of our valued staff from the designated groups. It is reality that the economic attraction, the financial base of industry is stronger than higher education. We are developing our own people but they are being lost to other higher education institutions (Gert, white male, middle administrator).

Interestingly, white administrators from the former URU saw the merger as reverse discrimination or punishment. As Jeffrey notes,

I think the rationale for the merger was political. This is not a very clever merger. excuse my putting it so bluntly. I think what the minister wanted to force people from the ex-URU to address the racial realities. Clearly they [URU] had not addressed that post-1994 (Jeffrey, white male, executive administrator).

Jansen (2003) argues that "the outcomes of mergers are contingent on the political forces initiating, shaping and sustaining the mergers" (p.11). He refers to forces that operate at the levels of government bureaucracies as well as at the institutional level. He concludes

from his study of five case studies of South African higher education institutions that despite the official account and policy claims, the motivation of government to pursue mergers had little to do with equity. Instead, it had everything to do with the reduction of costs, efficiency and control. For this reason much of the ongoing disputes between the institutions and the state centers on funding and the redistribution of resources (Jansen, 2003).

#### **7.4 Chapter summary**

When CRT frames the interpretation of findings, “whiteness” and “maleness” appear to confer privilege to a few administrators of the ‘right race and gender’ while at the same time marginalizing some administrators. Race and racism appear to be organizing principles for administrators’ perceptions and experiences within the MU. The CRT analysis in this study reveals unsettling experiences of victimization that people from the designated groups continue to endure. The Critical Race theoretical perspective locates the discussion of inequity in the realm of social inequality and the gendered nature of the MU as an organization.

As I analyzed the data using merger theories, it became apparent that employee-related issues that are inherent in any university are amplified manifold by the disruption, stress and anxiety caused by merging universities. In the case of the MU- an institution established by bringing together apartheid era black and white campuses, technikons and universities into one- magnifies conflicts of language use (Afrikaans vs English) and the disparate academic missions (vocational oriented vs research oriented). The historic context of apartheid that created the binary for both the segregation and marginalization

of campuses by race, language and geography continue to haunt merged institutions such as MU. In this research, the commentaries of administrators on their perceptions of the merger highlight simmering and unresolved tensions that can result in racial hostility among campus constituents. The fact that administrators do not feel safe to voice their problems is evidence that little is being done to address this predicament. I conclude that these problems cannot be resolved unless institutional leaders create a safe environment where the concerns raised by people of color are not perceived to be a threat to the norm but rather as an opportunity to improve relations and add value through the incorporation of marginalized groups on campus.

Several important questions arise from the findings and analysis of this case study. Can mergers address race and gender equity issues? How can mergers be planned, negotiated and implemented so as to optimize the prospects for achieving the desired race and gender equity outcome? What structures, strategies and processes must be put in place to ensure race and gender equity goals are actively addresses post-merger?

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **CONCLUSIONS**

In this Chapter, I summarize and discuss the significance of the study findings. I also consider the implications of the findings for future research and practice. At the end of this chapter, I discuss methodological challenges and reflect on the limitations posed by this study.

#### **8.1 Summary of findings**

The overall goal of this study is to understand how race and gender equity goals articulated in the government National Plan for Higher Education, are manifest in Metropolitan University, an institution created by merging universities for whites and blacks that were established during the apartheid era. Mergers and other ways of combining institutions have various external and internal drivers. Within national higher education systems, the most important of these forces are pressures on the South African government to: (a) improve student access and greater differentiation in course offerings that cater to more diverse student populations (b) increase efficiency and effectiveness in order to cope with rapid and substantial increases in enrollments; (c) deal with problems of institutional fragmentation and non-viable institutions; (d) redress imbalances in the race and gender representation of staff and students; and (e) increase government control of the overall direction of the higher education systems, to ensure that institutions more directly serve national and regional economic and social objectives.

In the case I studied, the merger was not initiated from within but by the government's National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE). The high level of government involvement coupled with a tightly regulated South African higher education sector provided a closely controlled system in which mergers have happened. The South African public higher education sector relies on government funds, hence state steering mechanisms have to some degree the transformation of the sector. This involvement caused strife and antagonism between the government and post secondary institutions and the initial rejection of the merger as a means to address the goals set in the NPHE. Given this context, the merger that led to the establishment of MU has been a highly politicized one. Adding fuel to fire was the historical context of apartheid within which the merging institutions were founded. In this hostile climate, some interest groups seek and find ways to delay race and gender equity implementation while others agitate for speedy and radical change.

To identify the goals of the National Plan for Higher Education (NPHE), I conducted content analyses of official government documents. As a guiding document for mergers, the NPHE directs South African higher education institutions to establish staff and student equity targets with emphasis on programs in which black and female students are underrepresented and to develop strategies to ensure the realization of equity outcomes. Furthermore, the NPHE directs institutions to develop employment equity plans with clear targets for rectifying race and gender inequities. The NPHE document lists five key policy goals in terms of race and gender equity which are to redress past apartheid imbalances by ensuring that the student and staff profiles of universities reflect the demographic composition within the general population of South Africa; provide

equal access to higher education; ensure diversity in institutional landscape in terms of mission, organizational forms, and program differentiation; build high-level research capacity, new institutional and organizational forms; and create new institutional identities through regional collaboration between institutions (DoE, 2001, p. 12).

Initially, I talked to people named in both government and MU documents- that is government appointed personnel. Through these initial contacts, I identified and interviewed key administrators at MU asking them to elaborate the steps that they took to address race and gender equity within the context of the MU merger process. Following the NPHE, the MU Management Executive Committee (MEC) designed an employment policy plan that states 75% of all vacant positions at all levels or ranks of the occupational categories will be filled by people from the designated groups. In addition, 256 academic and administrative employment equity positions in all occupational categories were created by the MEC to be filled over a three-year period by members of the designated groups. Another 24 positions, crafted specifically for employees with disabilities, were also to be filled over a three-year period. The university has designed employment equity, diversity management and discrimination awareness programs through which 204 employees from various occupational categories have been trained. Furthermore, change management programs were designed to train 211 university managers of all occupational categories. As soon as the merger was made official, a new language policy for the MU was approved that specified three South African native languages must be the primary languages used in conjunction with English and Afrikaans to communicate campus information and news.

In Chapter 6, I demonstrate that administrators understood the goals of achieving race and gender equity as essential to the transformation of MU. In particular, administrators understood the pursuit of race and gender equity as moral, ethical and objective imperatives. However, administrators felt constrained by both external and internal factors that affected their ability to redress inequities at MU.

Nonetheless, within the first year of its existence, MU was able to establish administrative structures, policies, and practices directed at achieving racial and gender goals. The structures created at MU are the Institutional Forum and the Consultative and Problem Solving Forum (CPSF). These structures are avenues through which students, employees and the MEC can publicly debate, lobby their interests and negotiate, along with other institutional level issues, race and gender equity policies. I discovered that there is no single structure that addresses problems or solely monitors the achievement of race and gender equity at MU. Any issues arising related to race and gender equity are to be ameliorated by organizational units such as the Employee Relations Office, Trade Unions and several other select committees that were established post merger. I have discussed these select committees in Chapter 5.

Through interviews with administrators at MU, I pursued my interest in understanding the challenges that administrators encountered during the first year of the merger and how they mitigated progress toward racial and gender equity. To a large extent, dealing with the human side of a merger and the disparate institutional cultures constituted the primary internal challenge. Reconciling different governance and decision-making structures and processes were also prominent challenges. Administrators indicated that building trust and resolving conflicts consumed much of their time. The

size and relative power of the pre-cursor institutions resulted in perceptions of a ‘take over’ and left employees from the smaller campuses feeling powerless. Administrators found it difficult to develop and embrace a common approach to achieving race and gender equity goals. This was manifest by inconsistencies in the recruitment strategies, where administrators continue to prefer employing administrators who began their careers in the apartheid era rather than qualified blacks and women. It was also manifest in discriminatory hiring practices where women continue to be disregarded because they do not fit the expectations of predominantly white male hiring and selection panels.

Some administrators, primarily non-white women and men in middle and junior management positions, argue that race and gender equity is not a priority at MU. In their view, the low priority explains why progress has been slow. Furthermore, an unclear definition of equity by the Department of Education (DoE) appears to have created confusion among administrators and resulted in erratic equity interpretations and implementation strategies within MU. Others cited the hostile institutional racial climate at MU as a reason why progress toward race and gender equity was negligible. Other explanations for the lack of progress were the diminished influence of trade unions within MU and the small pool of qualified candidates from the designated groups. Administrators indicated that the challenge of finding qualified candidates is aggravated by the heightened competition that resulted from mergers. Competition for qualified academics from designated groups ensued between and among several stakeholders such as institutions of higher education, the public and private sectors and overseas employers.

Finally, I asked what impact has the merger had on racial and gender equity at MU and turned to both official documents and MU administrators for answers. The MEC

officially states that MU has not addressed race and gender equity during the first two years of the merger. Time was spent “fixing the nuts and bolts” of the new institution such as sorting out how to integrate payroll and integrating administration and institutional governance systems that were distinctly different from one another. Administrators had to concurrently address structural, policy and process issues, creating pressures that led administrators to say the implementation of race and gender equity policy was relegated to the periphery.

I found that administrators’ perceptions of progress made towards race and gender equity were shaped by their race, gender, position and previous institutional affiliation. Administrators from the designated group observe that in effect the merger had reversed gains they had made prior to the merger in their former institutions. This group of administrators also believed that mainly white women benefited from the ways white male selection panels interpreted credentials and preparation and the MEC goals. On the other hand, white male and female administrators held the view that the institution was committed to redressing the race and gender imbalances in both administrative ranks. White women in particular did not believe that they had been the primary beneficiaries of the MU’s race and gender equity policies. They intimated that they too (as a result of their gender) had been marginalized by the male dominated selection panels.

## **8.2 Methodological limitations**

The case study research method has been used for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists, in particular, have made wide use of this qualitative research method to examine contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. While this choice of research method allows one to conduct a detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events and their relationships, it lacks generalizability. Although the themes and events that unfolded in this study bear resemblance to those faced by other institutions of higher education in South Africa and abroad, this case study is unique in that it focuses on race and gender equity within the context of an institutional merger, describing how decisions about race and gender equity policy and practice were made at MU. The purpose of this study is to create an analytical case that contributes to higher education's understanding of how race and gender complicate, shape and mitigate the interpretation of goals, outcomes, events and challenges of a merger. Using critical race, feminist, power and merger theoretical frameworks, this study reveals the complex dynamics that come into play when MU administrators interpret and make decisions about how to implement race and gender equity policies and practices.

A second limitation is the snowball sampling method that uses the social networks of identified respondents to provide the researcher with an ever expanding set of potential participants, allowing a series of referrals to be made within a circle of acquaintances (Atkinson & Flint, 2001). First, the method restricts the breadth of respondents within the network and relies heavily on highly connected respondents, giving preferential treatment to these respondents. Secondly, snowball samples are biased toward the more cooperative

respondents agreeing to participate, which results in masking-where initial respondents reject others by not referring them as potential subject for a study (Heckathorn, 1997). Lastly, the snowball method overemphasizes social network cohesiveness (Griffiths, Gossop, Powis & Strang, 1993). To minimize these drawbacks, I used a combination of institutional gatekeepers and institutional references to identify respondents at the MU.

Finally, while the MU is a multi-lingual campus the interviews in this study were conducted only in English. As such, there were a few interview situations where respondents interjected Afrikaans, Zulu or Sotho in the middle of their utterances. Where possible, I have translated such utterances into English and stayed truthful to the meaning.

### **8.3 Implications and contributions to theory and practice**

The current literature on higher education mergers addresses structural, behavioral and process issues. Very few scholars address the issue of race and gender equity in the context of a merger. This research addresses that gap. Many of the events on which this research is based are embedded in political and economic circumstances that are common in most countries today. Rapidly changing higher education environments, increased competition between universities and other sectors, declining funding for public universities make adaptation an essential element of survival. Within this context, the South African government has used merger as a mechanism for reconfiguring the higher education landscape and redressing the racial and gender inequities of apartheid. A critical assumption embedded within the National Plan for Higher Education was that an extreme form of change such as the merger would result in, among other things, race and

gender equity. The lesson that can be drawn from this study is that unless careful planning happens, the reverse may happen. In the case of the MU, the lack of such directed planning may have resulted in slippage or the departure of people from the designated groups in pursuit of employment elsewhere. A merger necessitates alterations in procedures, structures and cultures of institutions that may push other equally important issues such as race and gender policies to the periphery.

Merging institutions with disparate cultures present complex integration challenges (Harman, 2002). These demands are particularly complicated when institutions with different academic missions are combined. In South Africa, creating comprehensive universities through cross-sectoral mergers (such as MU which combines a technikon and university) presents challenges because the term of reference (comprehensive university) is neither clearly defined nor commonly understood by the institutions involved. More research is needed in this area and should focus on defining what a comprehensive university is, how it should be managed and how the resulting academic architectures impact the administrative and governance structures of institutions.

Transforming South African higher education's inequitable system is an ongoing process and efforts to redress the racial and gender disparities at universities raises dilemmas and unresolved questions (Ramphele, 2008). Given that mergers between historically black and white institutions such as the MU result in the departure of qualified non-whites, what strategy do we pursue to retain already marginalized staff post-merger? Given the evidence of power imbalance and the homogenous leadership at merged institutions such as the MU, how do we change the status quo? In order to retain

qualified staff from the designated groups, do we incentivize the individual or the institution? If we offer financial incentives to the individuals how do we expect to retain them at institutions such as the MU, where the chilly climate is intimidating to people from the designated groups? If we give financial incentives to the institutions that aggressively pursue race and gender equity, as is currently the case in South Africa, we may attract staff from the designated groups but how do we ensure that they do not get ‘poached’ by industry which offers comparatively better pay and benefits than higher education?

The perceived tension between equity and excellence creates a serious challenge for multi-sectoral mergers (e.g, between a technikon and a university). The structural combination produces a new (amorphously defined) comprehensive institution whose purpose is to “enhance access to a wider variety of courses with different entry requirements; promote articulation and student mobility between career-focused and formative courses; expand research opportunities by linking the applied research of technikons to university research strengths; and through their increased scope and capacity, respond better to regional needs” (Parekh, 2008, ¶3). South African technikons and universities were designed to have distinctly different and not-necessarily complimentary curricula, missions, academic architectures and institutional cultures. While these distinctions may serve as a positive attribute with the potential to enhance the curriculum of a merged institution, they also present a challenge to the integration and retention of both academic and administrative staff post-merger. In particular, the present case study findings suggest conceptualizations of quality and excellence is different.

For example, academic qualifications from white universities were more 'credible' and superior -because they had an abundance of financial resources, scholarly ties with foreign and reputable academic institutions, while those from black universities were perceived as inferior- because they were under-resourced, managed poorly financially and their curriculum was stifled by apartheid laws that dictated what they could teach or not teach (Author, 2001). In addition, Technikon qualifications were perceived as 'inferior' in quality because they were light on theory and set up primarily to offer vocational education qualification as opposed to university degrees that were oriented towards research training. Hence, whiteness was equated with superiority, quality and excellence while blackness became associated with mediocrity, low standards and financial doom. These conceptions of excellence then affect how administrators react to each other post-merger, particularly as relates to MU's appraisal of women and people from the designated groups. The nature of the merger (government mandated) adds another layer of complexity to understanding how academic credentialing impacts hiring processes for institutions such as the MU.

The following unanswered questions arise: how do two staff members from such distinct academic and cultural enclaves conceive quality? How do differences in these conceptions affect decisions regarding who is retained in the merged institution or who assumes what position post-merger? What criteria do we use to evaluate administrative staff with different academic training backgrounds? Is a former technikon staff member with a National Diploma less or more qualified than a former university staff member with a Bachelor's degree? What criteria do we use to make these decisions and how do the criteria impact race and gender equity post-merger? In this study, these unresolved

questions have played themselves out through the “Match and Place” and hiring processes of the university. As a result, a range of conflicting strategies have been experienced and shared by MU administrators.

It has already been established that organizations are gendered as well as raced (Britton, 2000 & Nkomo, 1992) and if we accept this argument, then we need to consider featuring race and gender into our theoretical frameworks. Researchers need to rethink theories of the human side of mergers which, up until now, are devoid of a race or gender interpretations. When studying racially diverse institutions, we need to investigate how race influences the interpretation of organizational events and challenges. In this study, the concern was how individuals’ experiences of a merger are mitigated by their race and gender.

The application of CRT to the present case study shows that there are two accounts of reality - the dominant reality that looks ordinary and natural to most individuals and a racial reality that has been filtered, suppressed and censored. At some points these realities converge, but at other points they diverge. When we expose these realities, we create depth to our interpretation of merger processes and show the multiple forces that obscure the achievement of race and gender equity outcomes within a merged institution. CRT helps us to understand that the way problems are defined shapes of how policies are constructed and interpreted. For example, the government’s definition of people from the designated groups includes white women, even though this subgroup has benefited from better educational services under-apartheid. As a result, the implementation of race and gender equity policies at MU privileges white women and they are appointed to senior positions more than their female counterparts who had fewer

opportunities during apartheid. Hence, researchers need to consider that in the accounts of events, there is more than one reality.

The merger is a radical form of organizational change that often creates confusion, uncertainty and causes individuals to vie for resources, positions and power. The application of power theory enhances our understanding of the organizational context of the merger by exposing the otherwise imperceptible ways in which social interaction is structured, power is wielded, and privileged interests are protected in the pursuit of race and gender equity. A power theory framework exposes group dynamics within merging institutions of higher learning and how dominant groups maintain hegemony and the status quo. As I have shown in Chapter 7, it is through understanding intergroup relations that we are able to explain why certain groups fair better than others in the context of the merger and differences in interpretations of race and gender equity goals and outcomes. For example, female administrators filter their experience of MU hiring practices through their understanding of position power and gender group status and they perceive them as biased against females. The views that administrators held also differed markedly according to the position they held. Male administrators on the other hand perceive the hiring practices as fair and just. They also expect women to represent themselves in similar manner to their male counterparts. The fact that executive administrators are able to influence policy making in ways that non-executives are not currently able to- often choosing the experts they wish to involve in drafting policies- is a reflection of the positional power they hold.

Scholars have shown that mergers disrupt institutional processes, cultures and practices. The present study advances our understanding of how these disruptions

challenge the pursuit of race and gender equity goals. Institutional leaders became preoccupied with surviving the merger and stabilizing the management and academic functions and processes of the new institution. As a result, equally important goals of equity may not have been given much attention during the first year of the merger. Nonetheless, the issue of equity and redress is of concern to stakeholders within the university and perceptions that the university leadership is not placing redress at the top of their list led to disappointment among members of the institution who feel marginalized.

Coupled with the fact that there is a high level of job insecurity during a merger, there is a danger that institutions may lose valuable staff members while trying to stabilize the institution. The MU case demonstrates what merger theory asserts, namely that merger proceedings that govern how an institution plans to incorporate, achieve and implement its race and gender equity goals must be carefully planned. As I have shown with this case of the MU, an articulation of the race and gender equity implementation strategy needs to demonstrate: What specific targets are set for race and gender equity (quantity)? How these targets will be achieved (recruitment)? Which candidates will sort for the specified positions and what qualifications they must have (quality)? Who will be in charge of the implementing and monitoring progress towards race and gender equity (accountability)? When will race and gender policy implementation start (Timeframes)? Many studies have shown that mergers do resolve some problems including economic and financial, however, in the Higher Education sector we have yet to establish, if at all, mergers do in fact yield desired race and gender equity outcomes. Researchers need to consider the following questions:

- Are race and gender equity outcomes achievable through mergers in higher education?
- What forces shape or negate these outcomes?

Insights drawn from this case study may be useful to practitioners and institutions that are considering a merger in future. In particular, this research will be useful to practitioners who want to understand the challenges experienced at a South African university which resulted from a cross-sectoral merger of racially segregated campuses with different academic missions (research vs vocational training). When equity plans are not clearly articulated, personnel from the already marginalized groups can increasingly feel undervalued and they are likely to perceive they are excluded from decision-making structures. Power must be shared with minority groups in order to foster an inclusive campus environment that enables the achievement of race and gender equity.

The relative size and power of merging institutions may have a bearing on the outcomes that can be achieved through mergers. For example, in this study personnel from the smaller or weaker merger partner tend to have relatively few positions in the uppermost decisions structures of the new entity. Members of the dominant campus group must critically examine their entitlement and the privileges that accrue as a result of their group membership. In the context of the South Africa, this means that whites must cease to be defensive and confront their group membership objectively. Rather than assume that there is one way for merged organizations to function (that privileges the white group perspective), practitioners need to listen to members of the designated groups. They need to seek ways to incorporate the marginalized voices in ways the foster

inclusiveness in institutional policies, practices and structures that address race and gender equity.

The tradition of focusing on 'women' as a subgroup in organizations has resulted in gender equity being dismissed as a 'women's problem' (Shaw & Penney, 2003). Practitioners must understand that it is the organization that has a problem, not women, or the disenfranchised groups within universities (Liff & Cameron, 1997). For this reason, practitioners must ensure that gender equity policies that focus on women do not exclude others and irritate men. In order to foster a better understanding of gender equity, practitioners must avoid situating women as an explicit 'group' in gender equity discourses (Liff & Cameron, 1997). This way, organizational culture will be enhanced to challenge discourse on issues such as campus safety, child care provision and sexual harassment which are usually associated with women's problems (Mill, 1993).

In sum, practitioners need to pay more attention to the human side of a merger. By this I mean that practitioners need to resolve the intergroup conflicts and culture clashes that may result from combining institutions that are distinctly different in their missions, values, processes etc. Racism is a part everyday life, particularly within higher education institutions (Hill-Collins, 1996) and practitioners need to interrogate how institutions continue to (re)produce gendered and racialized practices that silence the voices of marginalized groups. For example, by ensuring that there is race and gender balance in the composition of selection committees, practitioners can share power, create empathy and begin to build equal opportunity in treatment for all potential candidates. Practitioners must ensure that race and gender policies are not primarily initiated and designed only by members of the dominant group. In order to foster a just and equitable

institutional environment, practitioners need to embrace the multiple voices and perspectives of all campus stakeholders.

With the merger, significant changes have happened in the last two years that have altered the composition of staff and student profiles of the country's higher education. With these changes a new set of challenges arise that affect how newly merged universities conduct business, cope with increased student enrollments, re-image and brand their academic missions, visions, incorporate their disparate cultural heritages and produce suitably qualified graduates. Several insights that will benefit US practitioners who engage in work in South Africa can be drawn from this case. In the first instance, practitioners need to understand that the merger brought about radical change that has resulted in mixed responses within many affected institutions. Hence, practitioners need to be prepared to patiently work with campus constituents who are struggling to find their bearing in a newly formed institution. There may also be those who understand the need for the merger, appreciate the 'added value' that stems from merging, who support the changes and have coped better since they have better access to resources.

Secondly, the merger necessitates collaboration and collegiality between campus constituents that were racially segregated and competed against each other at many levels. Practitioners who seek opportunities in South African need to understand these dynamics and be prepared to engage their South African counterparts in interrogating their assumptions about racial climate on campus; the status of females in both the academic and administrative ranks of the institution; and many other challenges that hinder meaningful collaboration between colleagues.

The final insight that can be drawn from this study is that white males have come under considerable criticism for the privilege they continue to enjoy within institutions of higher learning. They have specifically come under immense pressure for the role they play in advancing or slowing the ascension of people from the designated groups and women in both the academic and administrative career tracks. Very often they are defensive and over-protective of their positions within institutions, preferring to advance individuals who are perceived as less likely to interfere with the privilege that white males have enjoyed over time. Suitably qualified people from the designated groups are perceived to be both detrimental to the growth and success of an institution while at the same time they represent a threat to job security for white males. Several insights can be drawn from other countries that can enhance higher educational practices in South Africa. For example, insights from Canadian, Australian, Norwegian and British higher education institution merger research can enhance our understanding of how leaders prepare their campus constituents for the changes that are brought on by a merger.

## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A: LETTER OF PERMISSIOM TO ACCESS THE MU SITE**

Dear

My name is Miss Kaluke F.N. Mawila, a Doctoral candidate at the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education (CSHPE), University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA. I would like to ask for permission to visit your campus and interview administrators towards my dissertation.

I have chosen the Metropolitan University (MU) because it resulted from (a) a combination of institutions across sectors (technikon and university); (b) an incorporation of two medium sized universities into a large one (Vermont Scottsville and Erlington incorporated into URU); (c) a combination of institution previously segregated by race, gender and ethnicity; (d) geographically dispersed institutions which typically characterizes South African postsecondary landscape; and lastly (e) institutions which had different peripheral agencies lobbying for their interests. All these dynamics have an impact on how institutions enact race and gender equity goals articulated in the National Plan for Higher Education post-merger.

I am interested in investigating how the goals of achieving race and gender equity, as articulated in the government National Plan for Higher Education, are manifest at Metropolitan University. In particular, I would like to investigate: (a) how the goals set in the National Plan were interpreted by administrators at MU; (b) what initiatives are in place to address race and gender equity; (c) the challenges faced by administrators as they strive to achieve race and gender equity at MU. This research will also enhance MU leadership's understanding of various race and gender equity issues that need to be addressed following the merger.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours Officially,

Kaluke F.N Mawila,

[fmawila@umich.edu](mailto:fmawila@umich.edu) or 011-443-4345 or 082-834-3782

## APPENDIX B:RESEARCH TIMELINE

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Schedule</b>
Proposal Defense	Committee meeting	22 February 2007
Data Collection	Interviews	June—September 2007
Data Organizing	Data cleaning and analysis	September-December 2008
Completion	Writing, revisions, submission	Winter 2009
Graduation		Fall 2009

## **APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL**

**Project:** Manifestations of race and gender equity post-merger.

**Time of interview:**

**Date:**

**Place:**

**Interviewer:** Kaluke F.N Mawila, PhD Candidate, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

**Interviewee:**

**Position of Interviewee:**

**Brief Project description:**

*Thank you for seeing me today. I am Kaluke F.N Mawila, a doctoral candidate at CSHPE, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. This study is part of my PhD dissertation on how the race and gender equity goals as articulated in the National Plan for Higher Education are manifest at Metropolitan University (MU). The purpose of this study is to better understand:*

- How are the goals of achieving race and gender equity, as articulated in the National Plan for Higher Education, manifest at the Metropolitan University?

**Prompt 1:** Before we start, I would like you to complete two forms: informed consent and participation form. The first form details the aims of this study, whilst the second requests your permission for me to tape record this interview. Please take a moment to review the contents of each form before signing.

**Prompt 2:** Do you have questions regards the informed consent and participation forms?

**Prompt 3:** Will you sign these two forms? **If yes**, could you do so now, so we can begin the interview?

**Action:** Kaluke will note time, date and place audio recording device on table. Press record. The interview begins.

**Prompt 4:** Your name has come up in various MU public documents that focus on Institutional Planning, Effectiveness and Quality Assurance. And I am aware that before

you were in your current position, you were working at URU. I am interested in knowing a bit about your role at MU.

**Prompt 5:** I would like to confirm your current title. Is it Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategic and Institutional Planning and Implementation? Would you please briefly explain the responsibilities of your position?

**Prompt 6:** How did your position [Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategic and Institutional Planning and Implementation] come about? And how did your appointment to the MU executive administration come about?

**Prompt 7:** Prior to the merger, you were at URU, what were your responsibilities then?

**Prompt 8:** An examination of the National Plan shows that while the government articulated their expectations for redressing higher education imbalances along several dimensions such as race, gender, enrollment, financial aid, hiring and programming, they have not outlined specific strategies of how institutions are supposed to implement these goals.

**Interview Question 1:** In your portfolio as the [Deputy-Vice-Chancellor: Strategic and Institutional Planning and Implementation], what do you understand are the government's race and gender equity goals?

**Prompt 9:** When you took over as, Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Strategic and Institutional Planning and Implementation, what were the priorities that became apparent as your office worked to establish the course and direction for MU?

**Prompt 10:** The National Plan for Higher Education suggests that the governments' ultimate goal with mergers is to address inequalities and imbalances in higher education, especially those that relate to race and gender. [What I do not understand is: what is MU supposed to look like?]

**Prompt 11:** What were you as [Deputy-Vice-Chancellor: Strategic and Institutional Planning and Implementation] to do to pursue race and gender equity at MU?

**Prompt 12:** What needed to be done immediately to achieve or make progress towards these goals?

**Interview Question 2:** What race and gender equity policies and practices were developed at MU?

**Prompt 13:** An examination of MU published documents shows that quality assurance, education and degree configuration were at the forefront of the merger deliberations in the year leading to the merger and the first year of the merger. Does that mean that administrators did not actively engage in figuring out what the MU race and gender equity policy issues were going to be?

**Prompt 14:** What were some of the documents produced as a result of these policy deliberations? Were any of these documents of the MU deliberations over policy ever shared publicly with MU campus constituents? What was the purpose of sharing or not sharing these documents?

**Prompt 15:** What was the content of these documents? Was race or gender discussed in these documents?

**Prompt 16:** Specifically, what was discussed about race and gender equity?

**Prompt 17:** In your view, did the new race and gender equity policies make any difference to practices in different functional areas in the first year of the merger? If yes, how so? If no, why not?

**Interview Question 3:** What administrative structures, policies and practices were created in the first year of the merger that are directed at achieving race and gender equity at MU?

**Prompt 18:** Who was formally appointed to carry out race and gender equity policy changes and why were these particular person[s] chosen? Who are the key administrators responsible for implementing race and gender equity at MU?

**Prompt 19:** In what capacity was that person involved in their previous work on race and gender equity policy?

**Prompt 20:** What were the directives given to this person on the status of race and gender equity policies at the time their task was handed over?

**Interview Question 4:** What specific steps did key administrators at MU take to address race and gender equity and why did they proceed in this way?

**Prompt 21:** Did you consider forming any structures at MU for the enactment or implementation of race and gender equity? Did you go this route? If yes, why did you go this route. If no, then why not?

**Prompt 22:** How is compliance of race and gender equity changes and practices monitored or enforced at MU? What are the consequences for non-compliance?

**Prompt 23:** Some higher education scholars have argued that merging represents dramatic, if not volatile change, for all involved.

**Interview question 5:** From your perspective, what was most difficult in the first year of the MU merger?

**Prompt 24:** How did you get around these obstacles?

**Prompt 25:** What were the issues that resonated commonly for administrators about race and gender equity?

**Prompt 26:** Can you give an example of one event where an issue of race and gender was strongly contested?

**Prompt 27:** How did MU administrators resolve these contested issues?

**Prompt 28:** In your view, do race and gender equity policies at MU need to be refined? If so, what suggestions did you offer for improving the design and implementation of these policies?

**CONCLUDING REMARKS:** *We have now reached the end of our interview. Thank you for agreeing to share your insights with me. In a few days, I will be transcribing the content of our conversation. I would like to have an opportunity to clarify any comments, ideas that remain unclear from our interview. Would you be willing to have me contact you regards clarifying things? We can do this via telephone or email or fax. Please let me know how you prefer to do this.*

**Action:** Kaluke switches off audio recorder. Interview ends.

**APPENDIX D: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Race</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Current Position</b>	<b>Institution</b>
Jayashree	Indian	Female	Junior Administrator	URU
Jeffrey	White	Male	Executive Administrator	Trinity Tech
Chantel	Colored	Female	Middle Administrator	Trinity Tech
Tsakani	Black	Female	Middle Administrator	Trinity Tech
Patrick	White	Male	Executive Administrator	Trinity Tech
Nicollette	White	Female	Executive Administrator	URU
Theuns	White	Male	Executive Administrator	URU
Brian	White	Male	Middle Administrator	URU
Gert	White	Male	Middle Administrator	URU
Tshidi	Black	Female	Junior Administrator	VU Scottsville
Thabiso	Black	Male	Executive Administrator	VU Scottsville
Ruendree	Indian	Female	Junior Administrator	URU
Susan	White	Female	Executive Administrator	URU
Hettie	White	Female	Junior Administrator	URU
Magriet	White	Female	Middle Administrator	URU
Gabriella	Colored	Female	Middle Administrator	URU
Anelie	White	Female	Executive Administrator	URU
Jerome	Colored	Male	Middle Administrator	Trinity Tech
Savita	Indian	Female	Executive Administrator	Public Sector
Candice	Colored	Female	Junior Administrator	Trinity Tech

## **APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**Title: Manifestations of race and gender equity post-merger.**

### **Introduction**

In this interview, you will be asked about your interpretation of the Metropolitan University's policies and practices that have been put in place pursuant to the National Plan for Higher Education 2001. You can expect this interview to last 1 hour. This interview is part of a Doctoral degree dissertation project on the merger of the Metropolitan University. Miss Kaluke F.N Mawila, a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Michigan, will conduct it.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to better understand: how the goals of achieving race and gender equity, as articulated in the government National Plan for Higher Education, are manifest in the Metropolitan University. In particular, I would like to investigate: (a) how the goals set in the National Plan were interpreted by administrators at MU; (b) what initiatives are in place to address race and gender equity; (c) the challenges faced by administrators as the progress towards achieving race and gender equity at MU. I am also interested in examining the race and gender equity policies at MU, how these policies and practices are implemented.

### **Voluntary Participation and Confidentiality**

Your participation in this interview is entirely voluntary. In other words, you are not required to participate in the interview, or you may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. **Any information you provide is completely confidential**, and your name and institution will not be shared with anyone for any reason. The tapes and any transcriptions of these tapes will be stored password protected laptop in a locked cabinet in a secured office of the primary investigator at the University of Michigan. Only the primary investigator will have access to the password protected laptop and locked cabinet. Your identity will be kept confidential in all documentation. There will be no identifiers directly linking the tapes and transcripts.

I believe that your participation in this project will result in several benefits, to you individually and to the broader society as well. The issue of mergers and their use to reform the South African higher education landscape is a hotly debated topic in the public arena and in popular media. However, my review of the literature demonstrates that very few studies have been carried out to gather administrator's views. My project will provide administrators with an opportunity to make their voices heard and give them a sense of agency. A number of myths exist on how administrators value and or prioritize in regards mergers, these do not specifically include studies of institutions that are different in terms of size, resources and are geographically dispersed. My study will fill this void, thus providing increased knowledge about the issue to the public at large. To this end, the data you provide in this interview will be used for future research.

### **Conditions of Participation**

The risks associated with your participation are moderate in that the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the proposed research is not greater than that ordinarily encountered in daily life. If you request to be withdrawn at any point, you will immediately be permitted to do so. Any withdrawal requests will result in the participant's audiotaped conversations and transcripts being destroyed by the primary investigator. Unless requested, however, you will not be excluded from the sample by interviewer after commencing participation. If you have further questions, you may ask your interviewer. I have read the above statements, and I agree to participate in the interview.

Signature: Date:

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Consent Form (continued)....

With your permission, the researcher plans to audiotape the complete interview. Your agreement to the audiotaping is also completely voluntary, and any time during the interview, you may ask the recording to be stopped. I have read the above statements and I agree that the interview may be audiotaped and transcribed.

Signature:Date:

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If you have any questions about your rights in participating in this research project, please contact the University of Michigan Institutional Review Board, 540 East Liberty Street, Suite 202, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 (phone: 091-734-936-0933; email: [irbhsbs@umich.edu](mailto:irbhsbs@umich.edu)). Please refer to application [HUM00011053].

For questions regarding this study, contact Kaluke F.N Mawila, PhD Candidate, Room 2117, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, 610 East University Avenue, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 (phone: 091-084-084-5892; email: [fmawila@umich.edu](mailto:fmawila@umich.edu)). For questions regarding this study, contact my Academic Advisor, Dr Janet Lawrence, Room 2117, Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education, 610 East University Avenue, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 (phone: 091-734-647-1977; email: [janlaw@umich.edu](mailto:janlaw@umich.edu)).

## **APPENDIX F: INITIAL LIST OF THEMES**

### *People issue themes*

Trust vs mistrust  
Power, intimidation  
Communication  
Culture clash, complacency  
Institutional symbols  
Loyalty, religion and language  
Stress, job loss fears, betrayal  
Punishment, retribution, anger

### *Policy themes*

Frozen demographics  
Pipeline issues  
Agency  
Transparency  
Statutes  
Protocol  
Role players

### *Gender equity themes*

Gender insensitivity  
Gender bias  
Preferential treatment  
Management is all male  
Old boy's networks

### *Operational Process issue themes*

Duplication  
Non-compliance  
Implementation & practices  
Priorities-HR all themes mainly, recruitment, hiring  
Efficiency  
Effectiveness  
Quality  
Meritocracy

### *Race equity themes*

Discrimination  
Privilege  
White brain drain  
Racism

Human Resources process themes

Match and Place process  
Revitalization Plan  
Renewal and Integration  
Remuneration overhaul  
Harmonization of conditions of service  
External consultants-Accenture  
Recruitment and hiring practices  
Branding campaign

Organizational Structure themes

Governance  
Identity  
Culture  
Climate  
Diversity  
Social Networks- unions, committees  
Physical planning  
Logistics-space, transportation  
Geography-location of campuses

Labor Market themes

Skills mismatch  
Skills Exodus  
Competition for skilled candidates  
Low salaries  
Scarce Skills,

Societal themes that impact race and gender transformation

- Presidential succession debate
- Soccer World Cup 2010
- Crime surge
- National Education strike in primary/secondary sectors-on salaries
- National Oil Industry strike-on salaries
- Students demand percentage increase in their grades
- President fires Deputy Health Minister (women)
- Media publishes health record of Minister of health-controversy ensues on her liver transplant
- National Trade Union president (COSATU) embezzles R500, 000 donation from a businessman
- Education Minister embroiled in a corruption scandal
- Academics debate Employment Equity legislation
- UJ workers go on strike demanding 12% salary increase

- HIV/AIDs surge
- Unemployment is at 80% for youth aged between 18-35
- School violence increases nationally-minister declares that drugs abuse is an aggravating factor

Convergent theme by administrators

- UJ Policies are not paper rarely practiced
- UJ Policy making is the exclusive right of top bosses
- No consultation on policy issues priorities
- White females benefit the most
- No support for women at UJ
- No support for non-whites at UJ
- Racism in rampant
- TWR, Vista and ERC viewed as inferior merger/incorporation partners
- Blacks are at the bottom of everything
- Policies unrealistic
- Merger is a mistake
- Merger was used by minister to impose blacks on whites
- Merger saved inferior partners
- Merger dilutes academic and research strength of ex-RAU

Divergent themes by administrators

- No policy on race and gender at UJ
- No communication
- Afrikaners don't want to change
- Management pretentious about equity goals
- Student demographics are transformed
- Management has top down approach
- Definitions of equity

## APPENDIX G: MATRIX OF BROAD CONSTRUCTS

Construct	Abbreviations	Definitions
Institutional Commitment to equity	ComEq	Administrators' comments regarding the institution's commitment to equity on their respective campuses.
Administrators' role	Role	Descriptions of administrator's role within university and/or division/office that may include hiring, selection, employing new staff.
Leadership	Leader	Comments regarding the leadership of administrators/academics, VC, management etc. This may include visibility, actions, initiatives, comments etc.
Reaction to the construct "race equity"	React-RE	Cognitive and affective reactions to the researcher's introduction of the concept "race equity". May not be apparent in all discussions. This construct is at a higher level of inference than many others.
Reaction to the construct "gender equity"	React-GE	Cognitive and affective reactions to the researcher's introduction of the concept "gender equity". May not be apparent in all discussions. This construct is at a higher level of inference than many others.
Definitions of Equity	Define Equity	Implicit definitions of equity which are apparent in administrators' responses. May not be apparent in all discussions. This construct is at a higher level of inference than many others.
Barriers for Equity	Barriers	Any comment describing barriers/impediments to achieving equity related goals and objectives set by individuals, departments, institutions or governing body.

Climate for Equity	Climate	General perceptions of the comfort, safety and opportunity to challenge inequities or unjust
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**Appendix G continued**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>Definitions</b>
Institutional Policy	Policy	Any comments regarding policies, procedures, rules, regulations and/or law that regulate how an institution conceptualizes, crafts and responds to equity
Strategies for Equity	Strategy	Any comments regarding programs, plans, approaches, schemes or tactics for administrators, students and academics. These strategies may be an events or institutionalized programs such as retention, recruitment, workshops etc.
Access Discourse	Access	Any comments that allude to attention being given to the improvement of recruitment, retention, and advancement practices to enhance entrée and representation, and create a campus culture affirming of diverse individuals (Iverson, 2007; 2008).
Disadvantaged Discourse	Disadvantage	Any descriptions of people of color as at risk before entering higher education institutions and remaining at risk once a member of the university (Iverson, 2007; 2008).
Power Discourse	Power	Any comments that describe interest group dynamics which show how decisions are influenced; course of events is changed; scarce resources are secured and control is enhanced (Schied, Carter & Howell, 2001; Pfeffer, 1992).
Marketplace Discourse	Marketplace	Any comments describing fierce competition, the need for multicultural competence and rapidly changing market conditions in the global marketplace (Iverson, 2007; 2008).

## APPENDIX H: SYNTHESIZED BROAD CONSTRUCTS

### *Events*

- Policy making
- Establishing committees
- Trade Union constitution
- Hiring
- Match and Place Process

### *Challenges*

- Change unmanaged
- Competition for Skilled labor
- Disparate Cultures
- Equity Drivers
- Frozen Demographics
- Geographic Distance
- Lack of Skills
- Location
- Low Attrition rates
- Low salaries
- No Central Equity Office
- Climate for Equity
- Skills exodus

### *Institutional Commitment to equity*

- Imperatives for equity
- Definitions of equity
- Structures
- Regulation

### *Institutional Equity Policy*

- Equity targets
- Equity regulations
- Incentives
- Diversity plan

### *Strategies for Equity*

- Designation of Task
- Objectives or Goals
- Programs
- Timeline

- Outcome

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