

The Black Sash: Assessment of a South African Political Interest Group

Marece Wenhold

Assignment presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Philosophy in Political Management at the University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Professor Fanie Cloete



December 2005

Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:.....

Date:.....

Abstract

This research report is an assessment of a South African political interest group. The interest group under investigation is the Black Sash (a non-governmental human-rights organization). The Black Sash is an organization with a rich heritage which dates back to 1955. The year 2005 commemorated the organization's 50th jubilee. This event together, with the contemporary relevance of the Millennium Development Goals, contributes to the significance of the case study under investigation. The research report explains how the organization forms part of the interest group society as it started out as a pressure group and then altered itself into becoming a civil society organization during the 1990s.

This research report is divided into three equally important parts which jointly contribute to an opinion on whether interest groups of the 21st century are maintaining the status quo or not. The first part is on theory, the second on description and the third on analysis. The part on theory gives a substantial synopsis of the current stance of literature on various facets of the operation of interest groups. The part on description gives a descriptive summary of the history and current characteristics of the Black Sash. The part on analysis investigates the development of the Black Sash until now with a focus on significant drivers of change.

This research report found that the Black Sash – as representative of a 21st century interest group – is not maintaining the status quo. The available theory on interest groups is not sufficient to conduct impact assessments and might be presented as a reason for the serious lack of impact assessments at present. This finding implicates that the current available theory is in need of modification. Areas which lack theorizing in total, as well as areas which need further study are specifically revealed. A recommendation is put forward that new explanations and even a new vocabulary are required in these specified areas. A contribution such as the supplementation of existing theory on interest groups will enable impact assessments which will alter the way in which the relationship between these groups and public policy are understood.

Opsomming

Hierdie navorsingsverslag is 'n ontleding van 'n Suid-Afrikaanse politieke belangegroep. Die belangegroep wat ondersoek word, is die Black Sash ('n nie-regerings- menseregte-organisasie). Die Black Sash is 'n organisasie met 'n ryk geskiedenis wat terugdateer na 1955. Die organisasie herdenk sy 50^{ste} bestaansjaar in 2005. Dié gebeurtenis, tesame met die toepaslike aktualiteit van die Millennium-ontwikkelingsdoelwitte dra by tot die belang van die gevallestudie wat ondersoek word. Die navorsingsverslag verduidelik hoe die organisasie deel vorm van die belangegroepgemeenskap deurdat dit begin het as 'n drukgroep waarna dit omvorm is in 'n burgerlike gemeenskapssorgaan gedurende die 1990's.

Die navorsingsverslag is verdeel in drie ewe belangrike dele wat gesamentlik bydra tot 'n opinie oor of belangegroepe van die 21^{ste} eeu die status quo handhaaf al dan nie. Die eerste deel handel oor teorie, die tweede deel oor beskrywing en die derde deel oor analise. Die deel oor teorie gee 'n omvattende opsomming van die huidige stand van literatuur oor verskeie fasette van die werkinge van belangegroepe. Die deel oor beskrywing gee 'n beskrywende opsomming van die geskiedenis en huidige kenmerke van die Black Sash. Die deel oor analise ondersoek die ontwikkeling van die Black Sash tot nou met 'n fokus op die belangrikste agente van verandering.

Die navorsingsverslag het bevind dat die Black Sash – as verteenwoordiger van 'n 21ste eeuse belangegroep – nie die status quo handhaaf nie. Die beskikbare teorie oor belangegroepe is nie genoegsaam om impak-ontledings uit te voer nie en kan aangevoer word as 'n rede vir die ernstige tekort aan impak-ontledings op die oomblik. Hierdie bevinding impliseer dat die huidige beskikbare teorie aangepas moet word. Areas met 'n totale gebrek aan teoretisering sowel as dele wat verdere studie benodig, word spesifiek onthul. 'n Aanbeveling word gemaak dat nuwe verduidelikings en dalk 'n nuwe woordeskat benodig word in die gespesifiseerde areas. 'n Bydrae soos die aanvulling van bestaande teorie oor belangegroepe sal impak-ontledings moontlik maak. Dit sal die manier wysig waarvolgens die verhouding tussen hierdie groepe en openbare beleid verstaan word.

Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to thank the many people who made this thesis possible.

- I thank my supervisor, Prof Fanie Cloete, for his guidance, advice and high standards of excellence.
- I would like to acknowledge the assistance from the Black Sash without which this study would not have been successful.
- Many thanks to my grandmother, Doris Wenhold – the presence of her prayers were a necessary element to the success of this effort.
- I wish to thank my entire extended family for helping to take my mind off work from time to time. Especially I am obliged to my mother's husband, Robert Denton, who has been a great source of strength all through this work.
- I would like to thank my sister, Charlene Wenhold, who provided me with laughter and motivation.
- I am grateful to all my friends for your care and attention.
- Lastly, and most importantly, I wish to thank my parents. They raised me, supported me, taught me and loved me. To my mother and deceased father (Linda and Peter Wenhold) I dedicate this research assignment.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	3
INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY.....	3
1.1 BACKGROUND	3
<i>1.1.1 Importance of the study.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>1.1.2 Relevance of the study.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>1.1.3 Contextualization of the study.....</i>	<i>6</i>
1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND RESEARCH QUESTION.....	7
1.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	9
1.4 OUTLINE OF STUDY	10
CHAPTER 2	12
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INTEREST GROUPS.....	12
2.1 INTRODUCTION.....	12
2.2 TYPE OF GROUP.....	13
<i>2.2.1 Theories of interest group organizations</i>	<i>13</i>
2.2.1.1 Truman’s Social and Disturbance Theory	13
2.2.1.2 Olson’s By-Product Theory on Political Interest Groups	13
2.2.1.3 Salisbury’s Exchange Theory: Group Entrepreneurs as Small Business People	14
2.2.1.4 Expanded Version of Exchange Theory: Dominant but less Parsimonious	15
2.2.1.5 Commitment Theory	15
<i>2.2.2 Interest group organizations in the realm between government and society.....</i>	<i>16</i>
2.2.2.1. The classification of interest groups.....	16
2.2.2.2 The functioning of interest group organizations.....	19
2.2.2.3 The maintenance of interest group organizations	21
2.3 TYPE OF ACTION.....	21
2.3.1 <i>Advocacy as the basis of action</i>	<i>21</i>
2.3.2 <i>The direct and indirect nature of action.....</i>	<i>23</i>
2.3.2.1 Direct methods	23
2.3.2.2 Indirect methods.....	24
2.3.3 <i>The influence of donor relations on action</i>	<i>24</i>
2.3.4 <i>Contemporary influences on action</i>	<i>24</i>
2.4 RESPONSE FROM GOVERNMENT	25
2.4.1 <i>Increasing role of the state in facilitating interest group organizations.....</i>	<i>25</i>
2.4.2 <i>Relationship between groups and government.....</i>	<i>25</i>
2.5 EFFECT AND INFLUENCE OF INTEREST GROUP ORGANIZATIONS.....	26
2.5.1 <i>Effects of interest group organizations through the lens of functions.....</i>	<i>28</i>
2.5.2 <i>Factors which influence the impact of interest group organizations</i>	<i>29</i>
2.5.3 <i>Factors determining the effectiveness of interest group organizations.....</i>	<i>30</i>
2.6 CRITICISM	31
2.6.1 <i>Models of group politics</i>	<i>31</i>
2.6.2 <i>Grounds for criticism against interest group organizations.....</i>	<i>32</i>
2.7 EVALUATION	32
CHAPTER 3	35
DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY AND CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BLACK SASH	35
3.1 INTRODUCTION.....	35
3.2 THE EARLY YEARS: PERSISTENCE AND PROTEST (1951 – 1975)	35
3.2.1 <i>Opposition to the Senate Act (1951 – 1956)</i>	<i>35</i>
3.2.2 <i>Compromise with various shades of opinion within the organization (1956 – 1959).....</i>	<i>38</i>
3.2.3 <i>Total opposition to Apartheid (1959 – 1975).....</i>	<i>40</i>
3.3 THE RISE OF RESISTANCE (1975 – 1990).....	42
3.4 PARTNER IN BUILDING A NEW SOCIETY (1990 –)	48

3.5 EVALUATION	52
CHAPTER 4	54
ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLACK SASH UNTIL NOW INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT DRIVERS OF CHANGE	54
4.1 INTRODUCTION.....	54
4.2 ANALYSIS OF THE BLACK SASH AS PART OF THE INTEREST GROUP SOCIETY	54
4.2.1 <i>Observations about the Black Sash from a group point of view</i>	54
4.2.2 <i>Relevance of the theory to the Black Sash as a group</i>	58
4.3 THE POLITICAL STRATEGY BEHIND THE ACTION OF THE BLACK SASH	61
4.3.1 <i>Observations about the Black Sash from an action point of view</i>	61
4.3.2 <i>Relevance of the theory for the actions of the Black Sash</i>	64
4.4 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BLACK SASH AND THE GOVERNMENT	66
4.4.1 <i>Observations about the relationship between the Black Sash and the government</i>	66
4.4.2 <i>Relevance of the theory in terms of the relationship between the Black Sash and the government</i>	67
4.5 THE EFFECTS AND INFLUENCE WHICH THE BLACK SASH EXERTS	68
4.5.1 <i>OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF THE BLACK SASH</i>	68
4.5.2 <i>Relevance of the theory in terms of the impact of the Black Sash</i>	70
4.6 THE BLACK SASH FROM A CRITICAL PERSPECTIVE.....	71
4.6.1 <i>Observations about the criticisms on the Black Sash</i>	71
4.6.2 <i>Relevance of the theory in terms of the criticisms on the Black Sash</i>	72
4.7 EVALUATION	73
CHAPTER 5	76
CONCLUSION	76
5.1 MOST IMPORTANT FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	76
5.2 FINDINGS IN TERMS OF THE LITERATURE UNDER REVIEW	79
5.3 SURPRISE FINDINGS AND POSSIBLE REASONS THEREFORE	81
5.4 LARGER RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH STUDY AS WELL ASPECTS THAT NEED FURTHER RESEARCH	82
5.5 POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH STUDY	84
REFERENCES	86

INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This introductory chapter will contextualize the research problem. The overall aims of the research will also be explained as well as the manner in which the aims took shape in the rest of the report. Specific research objectives are formulated through the specification of key research questions. A summary of the methodology that was followed in order to address the research problem will also be given.

1.1 Background

Napoleon Bonaparte coined the expression ‘Ten thousand who speak make more noise than ten thousand who are silent’. Having had the opportunity to serve an internship at one of the longest-standing human rights organizations in South Africa the Black Sash – there is no better way to set the scene for the intended research study than with the aforementioned quotation.

The Black Sash is a South African organization with a loaded narration which clearly displays different organizational features before and after 1994. Founded in 1955 out of outrage over a constitutional issue, the Black Sash spent its first 40 years in resistance to apartheid and its unjust laws. The last decade of the 20th century brought the organization back to constitutional issues once more, as it celebrated the prospect of a Bill of Rights and argued for the right to administrative justice to be included.

The exposure during the internship to the work of the Black Sash led to the belief that Bonaparte’s words constitute the core of what interest group politics revolve around. In other words, the internship provided the opportunity to observe a phenomenon which led to the development of this research study. The phenomenon clearly revealed that individuals who commit themselves to the kind of alignments called interest groups live for the realization of a definite cause. They strive towards the conclusion because, even though the existence of their organization makes a difference only as a part of the whole of the interest group society and not independently, it nonetheless makes a difference.

With this experience as basis and origin, further questions arose regarding the functioning of interest groups in the 21st century. The understanding that groups exist for a certain cause, despite all kinds of adversities and with frequently no definite impact on public policy, raised speculation as to whether the hypotheses/postulations put forward by contemporary literature regarding the interest group society – are in fact valid in practice.

Is it really the case that the motivation behind an interest group is always borne and sustained by a certain passion? Is it a necessity that this passion is shared by all members and staff at all times? Do people join organizations based on the collective struggle of like-minded colleagues? These types of questions initiated this specific research study and are responsible for the route this study took. During further initial investigation it was interesting to note that the literature on the interest group society revealed exactly these contradictory thoughts – questions in terms of the footing of interest groups in the 21st century.

Two important points need to be made in order to clarify why this study is being approached from the viewpoint of interest group organizations and not from the viewpoint of non-governmental organizations (NGOs):

1. Although the Black Sash of today is a registered NGO it can be classified as part of the interest group society through its nature of first being conceived as a pressure group, where after it established itself as a civil society organization. The analysis of this research study will therefore be done against the background of interest groups, as it is an all-encompassing term which includes pressure groups and civil society organizations (CSOs). CSOs in this regard include community-based organizations, NGOs and non-profit organizations. This point will be elaborated upon extensively later in the study.
2. This research study is not an impact assessment, because the basis for impact assessments demands a sound theoretical foundation. However, given that the theory on the phenomenon of interest groups is a well established field, it will be useful to see whether the study will be able to live up to the requirements necessary for conducting impact assessments.

1.1.1 Importance of the study

The reason for this study will consequently be to act in response to a wide-ranging array of concerns, disputes and persistent conjecture that the civil society sector of the world, and for the purpose of this research proposal specifically South Africa, is in dire need of change: Professional norms and standards are needed to show results and to impact via assessment of significant policies, programmes or projects.

Such a study of the relation between the way in which the theory describes the manner in which interest groups operate, as opposed to the way in which they actually operate, will contribute to the field of impact assessment as it will shed light on the relevance of benchmarks against which such evaluative studies can be conducted.

The South African Civicus Index Project (Camay and Gordon, 2001), published by the Co-operative for Research and Education (CORE) and the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), clearly states that the fundamental problem in attempting to review the South African civil society is the severe lack of measurement, both quantitative and qualitative, of the impact of these CSOs.

In combination with the outcry for action in the field of impact assessment, a great deal has also been written about related topics which unexpectedly collaborate to further the aim of this study. These loaded themes centre primarily around the relationships between the government and the civil society sector in both pre-and post-apartheid eras, and the unique changes and challenges that have faced this sector since 1994 (Heinrich, 2001; Habib and Taylor, 1999).

The majority of the aforementioned writings propose that there is an evident need for improved data and information on the activities of the players in the dynamic field of civil society. Impact assessments are required to inform policymakers and other stakeholders on which actions have been effective in achieving a given goal, and which less so.

This research study will shed light on the effectiveness of existing yardsticks for measurement purposes and will thus contribute significantly towards conducting effective impact assessments. This research study is furthermore justified by a statement that was made a long time ago in the influential work of Douglas R. Arnold (1982), that the field of interest group studies has been ‘theory

rich and data poor' and characterized by relatively few empirical studies of interest groups as organizations.

1.1.2 Relevance of the study

In broad terms it can be stated that the research study will investigate the status of interest groups in the 21st century by means of a case study. In terms of relevance, it is necessary to say something about the need for impact assessments and the core business of today's interest groups. Theorists agree that the measuring of advocacy and lobbying is a muddled and complex process. According to them, the nature of this activity constitutes the reason for the lack of readily available impact assessments.

The aforementioned predicament may therefore be resolved through a research study such as this, which will give an up-to-date account of the operational status of the available standards of measurement. The above therefore constitutes the relevance and rationale behind this research in the sense of either proving or disproving the relevance of existing theory on interest groups and their relationship with the policy process.

1.1.3 Contextualization of the study

The specific time period in which this investigation takes place needs to be mentioned. This year sees the fiftieth anniversary of the Black Sash. The jubilee celebrations of the Black Sash unavoidably bring the organization to yet another crossroads in terms of future reflections. This study may contribute to the manner in which the group portrays itself on the way forward. It may also assist in more effective annual strategic planning sessions.

Another event in terms of time in the field of NGOs is the great emphasis currently being placed on such organizations in relation to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At the 57th Annual NGO Conference held in New York in 2004, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, made the following statement in that regard.

He said that NGOs were the potential leaders of the MDG campaigns needed in every country. He emphasized that success depended in great part on the degree to which the individuals and groups, which make up civil society, mobilized around this mission. He added that if these minimal goals

were not achieved by 2015, hundreds of millions of people looking for assistance and solidarity would have been failed.

He lastly stated that: "...we will have doomed another generation of children to lives of deprivation and insecurity. Not least, we will have lost a major battle in the struggle for human rights, for multilateralism, for development assistance, and for inclusive, equitable development in a rapidly globalizing world. There is a growing, if fragile, consensus that we have reached a historic moment at which we have the means to end extreme poverty around the world" (WFUNA, 2004).

The 50th celebration of the Black Sash, together with the MDGs, as a result contextualizes the undertaking of this research study within a framework of relevance.

1.2 Research problem and research question

The first part of this introductory chapter set the scene for the systematic unpacking of the research problem and the research question. The overall aim of the study will be an attempt to assess a supposition made by Tierney (1992) which states that the safest guess in terms of future predictions on interest groups is that it will look a lot like the status quo.

The question Tierney offered in this regard is how much of the same will still have the same effect on the political system, and at what point will more of the same require new explanations and maybe even a new vocabulary? In other words: do interest groups of the 21st century still reflect the characteristics that the current literature on the interest-group society puts forward?

In order to present a position on whether interest groups nowadays are maintaining the status quo or not, one necessarily needs to make use of a case study that to some extent reveals the situation in this field. In this regard, Eckstein (1960:15) rightfully points out that it must be kept in mind that case studies never 'prove' anything; their purpose is to illustrate generalizations that are established in other ways, or to direct attention to such generalizations.

The Black Sash will accordingly be used as a case study to demonstrate the generalizations captured in the literature on interest groups. This will be done by analysing their relevance and drawing a parallel between theory and practice. It is evident that the research question is an empirical question,

as it addresses a real-life problem. It is furthermore an evaluative question as it will put forward an opinion regarding the research question, which is whether interest groups of the 21st century are maintaining their status quo.

The specification of the key research questions will be:

- to establish whether the theory on interest groups is sufficient to conduct an impact assessment; and
- to establish if the current theory is not in need of modification.

The research objectives of thus study can as a result be seen as:

- an attempt to establish whether interest groups (by means of the case study on the Black Sash) of the 21st century still reflect the characteristics that the literature on interest group societies puts forward and whether they operate (in terms of actions) in accordance with what the literature prescribes;
- an attempt to establish whether a parallel can be drawn between theory and practice at this point in time;
- an attempt to put forward an opinion on the possible requirement of new explanations and maybe even a new vocabulary;
- an attempt to shed light upon the relationship expectations between government and interest groups, and their simultaneous influence on public policy;
- an attempt to assist the Black Sash by providing this research study as a development tool, as it can serve as an objective source of reflection on the standing and entire existence of the organization; and
- an investment in civil society – if approached from the viewpoint of the MDGs.

The attempt to answer the research questions is approached through three steps. It will be done through the combination of three angles of incidence: theory, description and analysis. The theory on interest groups will form the basis against which the Black Sash will be described and analysed. The descriptive part will focus on the core features and characteristics the Black Sash displays. The

analysis will combine the theory and the description in order to make observations about the relevance of certain theoretical arguments.

1.3 Research design and methodology

Due to the nature of the unit of analysis, i.e. the phenomenon of interest groups, this is an empirical study attempting to answer an evaluative question. Since it is an empirical study primary data are used, which in this research is the case study of the Black Sash. The case study is put into practice by analysing existing data, specifically text data by means of content analysis.

The text data under consideration are all the annual reports of the organization since 1994 as well as observations made during the internship. Because the organization underwent structural changes and only became a NGO with the advent of democracy, annual reports from earlier periods are not available. For the period before 1994, two very valuable books – both on the history of the Black Sash – are extensively consulted. The current national advocacy manager, Erika Wessels, furthermore assisted with insights into the contemporary Black Sash by filling in a feedback form.

For the purpose of continuity, an interview with a trustee of the organization was also conducted. This was Mary Burton, who succeeded Sheena Duncan as national president of the Black Sash in the late 1980s and was also a commissioner of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The interview was conducted on 3 June 2005.

The empirical data were assessed within the context of an overview of the current state of knowledge of interest groups. This research study was therefore conducted by means of qualitative research methods. It was the most practical option, given the context of the research as explained throughout this chapter. The motivation for engaging in qualitative inquiry was the following:

1. The topic under exploration presents a situation where variables for measurement cannot be easily identified for facilitating a quantitative undertaking.
2. This research asks for a comprehensive applied view of the topic to be presented. In addition it implies that this interest group should preferably be observed and studied as it is, in its everyday surroundings.

3. There are sufficient time and resources at hand to warrant widespread data collection in the field and detailed data analysis of text information.

1.4 Outline of study

This chapter presented the reasons for selecting the particular problem, the rationale for the study as well as the research problem. The remainder of this research study will consist of three broad chapters and a concluding chapter.

The next chapter will focus on the theoretical perspective on interest groups. The literature overview revealed the themes according to which the second chapter will be divided. Five themes were chosen because they presented themselves very strongly while the literature was being reviewed. The combined effort of these five themes presents a substantial explanation of the way the interest group society operates on a theoretical level.

The themes accordingly are: type of group, type of action, response from government, effect and influence and criticism. Each of these themes is subdivided in order to capture the core components responsible for the technical make-up of interest group organizations. The subheadings of each theme are a combination of factors, causes, reasons and standards.

The third chapter will provide a descriptive summary of the history and current characteristics of the Black Sash. This descriptive summary divides the Black Sash in three phases over the duration of fifty years. These three periods are representative of the phases through which the organization evolved. The first period was between 1951 and 1975 and can be described as the early years of the organization during which persistence and protest were key characteristics of its existence. The second period from 1975 to 1990 can be described as the rise of resistance. The period from 1990 onwards is the third period and also the one in which the organization currently finds itself. It can therefore be described as a time during which the Black Sash is a partner in building a new society.

The fourth chapter will be an analysis of the development of the Black Sash, including a focus on the significant drivers of change. This chapter is the culmination of the previous two chapters as it analyses on two levels. The first level records general observations as revealed through the chapter on the description of the Black Sash, while the second level takes elements of theory from the

chapter on the theoretical perspectives to see how these correlate with the current stance of operation in the interest group society. This is also done according to the themes set out above.

The concluding chapter will take the findings of all three chapters in order to put forward an opinion on the research questions and reveal the main findings. It will additionally focus on the literature under review, surprise findings and areas that need further research.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INTEREST GROUPS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will present a review of the available body of knowledge on a phenomenon which dominates and defines the field of political science, namely the interest group society. An effort will subsequently be made to establish how scholars have theorized about and conceptualized the different issues and aspects that are responsible for the constitution of the interest group society.

This chapter contributes to the research study as a whole in that it forms the theoretical basis from which the case study of the Black Sash will be conducted. Prior to introducing a definition of an interest group, it is important to emphasize that it is evident throughout the consulted literature that there is no single approach which unites the study of interest groups. Furthermore, there is consensus among most scholars that no unifying theory or set of theories exists to guide research on interest groups.

Baumgartner and Leech (1998) warn that the manner in which one defines an interest group can have important implications for one's findings. An interest group will therefore be defined as "an organized association of individuals who share common beliefs, attitudes, values or concerns, which aims to influence the policies or actions of government to benefit directly from the outcome". This definition was influenced by recent publications such as the work of Heywood (1997), Mahler (2000) and Camay and Gordon (2002).

With the definition and its boundaries now known, the themes according to which this review is structured can be introduced. In order of discussion the five themes are type of group, type of action, response from government, the effect and influence (prominence) of the group, and criticism of interest groups.

2.2 Type of group

When discussing an occurrence such as type of group, an issue that comes to mind is the question why people join such organizations. Sabatier (1992:111) describes the five most prominent theories of interest group organizations by discussing expectations regarding:

- Group formation: how do groups get organized?
- Membership: why do people join?
- Leader-member belief congruence: do group leaders mirror the policy views of members?
- The importance of politics over time.

The issue regarding organizational membership is particularly relevant to the Black Sash, as definite patterns of evolution can be observed over the life-span (of fifty years) of the organization. This is therefore one of the central issues, which will be analysed in chapter four of this research.

2.2.1 Theories of interest group organizations

2.2.1.1 Truman's Social and Disturbance Theory

This theory states that the group gets organized because of natural interaction and societal disturbances. The reason why people join is mere natural interaction of people with similar beliefs and interests. In terms of leader-member belief congruence, leaders try to reduce member dissension arising from conflicting memberships. With regard to the importance of the group's political position to both leaders and members, Sabatier states that it increases over time.

2.2.1.2 Olson's By-Product Theory on Political Interest Groups

As a complement to Olson's theory, it is interesting to note that Berry (1997:70) explains that an organizer's chance of successfully forming an interest group is determined by the benefits offered to potential members. Berry in this regard distinguishes between Olson's material benefits, purposive benefits, solidary benefits and a mix of benefits. Material benefits are the tangible rewards that individuals or companies get in return for their donations. People are said to be attracted by purposive incentives when they join organizations pursuing policy objectives that are of no direct, material benefit to them.

Sabatier (1992:103) supports this by saying that purposive benefits are the psychic or moral satisfaction from pursuing official goals related to public welfare. Solidary benefits can only complement the avowed purposive or material goals of a lobbying organization. The solidary incentive is the inducement to be part of a collective struggle with like-minded colleagues (in other words, rewards from social interaction).

Sabatier (1992:103) notes that Olson added a crucial distinction between selective and collective benefits in that selective benefits accrue only to members of the organization. Collective benefits on the other hand accrue to both members and non-members.

Olson developed *By-Product Theory* to explain the behaviour of large economic groups, but believed this analysis should apply to all large groups. Assuming that individuals operate with perfect information to maximize their self-interest, Olson argues that rational people perform benefit-cost calculations in deciding whether to participate in an interest group. That is, they will let others pay for the organization and its lobbying while they reap their share of the benefits of that lobbying (1992:102).

According to this view, the political activities of an interest group – insofar as they seek to produce legal or financial benefits available to classes of people broader than the group's membership – are a by-product of the provision for selective incentives (1992:104). This theory further postulates that leader-member belief congruence is low because of selective incentives. Lastly, the importance of the group's political position to leaders and members is also low.

2.2.1.3 Salisbury's Exchange Theory: Group Entrepreneurs as Small Business People

First, like Olson, Salisbury rejects Truman's contention that interest groups naturally arise out of the interaction of people with common interests responding to societal disruptions. Salisbury's solution to group formation is to point to individual entrepreneurs willing to bear the initial organization costs in return, not for a share of the collective benefits, but instead for a staff job with the new organization (1992:106).

Secondly, Salisbury explicitly argues that most group activity has little to do with efforts to affect public policy decisions, but is concerned rather with the internal exchange of benefits by which the

group is organized and sustained. Salisbury spends very little time on leader-member belief congruence, arguing that it is irrelevant as long as the benefits are sufficient to maintain membership. He finally notes that the importance of politics about the group's political position to leaders and members is generally low.

2.2.1.4 Expanded Version of Exchange Theory: Dominant but less Parsimonious

This version has expanded and modified Salisbury's original proposal in several important respects (1992:107). First, several studies have shown that members of most groups view contributing to collective political benefits as a more important inducement to membership than the sort of selective material and solidary benefits previously emphasized.

Secondly, Salisbury's notion of the entrepreneur has been expanded considerably. In addition, the critical role of government agencies and foundations in organizing and funding many groups has been repeatedly documented. With respect to leader-member belief congruence, scholars working within the exchange tradition have conflicting views.

Lastly, the importance of the group's political position to leaders and members depends on benefits, but is generally high. The expanded version of exchange theory can clearly account for a higher percentage of the organizational features of interest groups than the theories previously proposed by Truman, Olson and Salisbury.

2.2.1.5 Commitment Theory

This theory received its initial impetus from empirical research demonstrating that political party activists are more ideologically extreme than ordinary party members (1992:109). The commitment theory would expect a group to be organized by potential members or by entrepreneurs strongly committed to its collective political goals. Their motivation could be significant material self-interest or it could be ideological.

As for belief congruence between members and leaders, the commitment theory clearly predicts that leaders will be more committed to the group's collective purposes – more ideologically extreme – than its members because it is that commitment that makes them willing to bear the costs of going to

meetings, writing letters and all of the other mundane tasks necessary to keep the group going. To conclude, it can be said that in this theory the importance of the group's political position to leaders and members is high.

Having explained the different theories on interest group organization in reply to the question of why people join organizations, it might be useful to look at the broader picture in terms of where these organizations fit into the realm between government and society.

2.2.2 Interest group organizations in the realm between government and society

2.2.2.1. The classification of interest groups

On the subject of classification, Heywood (1997:253) starts by making an important distinction between three different types of groups that can be observed in society:

1. Communal groups: these groups are embedded in the social fabric, in the sense that membership is based on birth rather than recruitment. Examples of such groups are families, tribes, castes and ethnic groups.
2. Institutional groups: these groups are part of the machinery of government and attempt to exert influence in and through that machinery. They differ from interest groups in that they enjoy no measure of autonomy or independence. Bureaucracies and the military are the clearest examples of such groups.
3. Associational groups: these groups are formed by people who come together to pursue shared, but limited goals. Groups as associations are characterized by voluntary action and the existence of common interests, aspirations or attitudes. The most observable examples of these groups are interest or pressure groups.

As interest and pressure groups fall under the heading of associational groups, it is clear that this chapter will only focus on those aspects responsible for the make-up of the associational segment of groups. Padgett (2000:89) writes that "associational activity occupies the ground between state and society, mediating the two spheres and thereby resolving the central problematic of democratic theory: the tension between the state as the source of authority and civil society as the embodiment of popular sovereignty".

Heywood (1997:254) goes further by stating that the most common classifications of associational groups are sectional and promotional groups:

- Sectional groups exist to advance or protect the interests of their members. The sectional character is derived from the fact that they represent a section of society: workers, employers, consumers, an ethnic or religious group and so on.
- By contrast, promotional groups are set up to advance shared values, ideals or principles. These groups are therefore defined by the fact that they aim to help groups other than their own members.

Jordan and Richardson (1987:21) elaborate on the previous distinction by stating that the nature of the demands made by sectional groups is likely to be particular, and can often be conceded without public controversy. The broad class of the group goal would seem to relate to the appropriate strategy. If the topic is bargainable and divisible, it is easy to imagine it being pursued in the private worlds of group-(governmental) department relations. The promotional group on the other hand is likely to be less well funded, less well staffed and relatively unfamiliar with internal government activity, and it is likely to be media-oriented rather than access-oriented.

Heywood (1997:255) also proposes an alternative system intended for group classifications under the heading of associational groups. It is based on the status groups have in relation to government and the strategies they adopt in order to exert pressure. He distinguishes between insider and outsider groups:

- Insider groups enjoy privileged and usually institutionalized access to government through routine consultation or representation on government bodies. In many cases there is an overlap between sectional and insider classifications. Insider status, however, is not always an advantage, since it is only conferred upon groups with objectives that are broadly compatible with those of the government and have a demonstratable capacity to ensure that their members abide by agreed decisions.
- Outsider groups on the other hand are either not consulted by government or only consulted irregularly and not usually at senior level. In many cases, outsider status is an indication of weakness in that, lacking formal access to government, these groups are forced to 'go public'

in the hope of exercising indirect influence on the policy process. Ironically then, there is often an inverse relationship between the public profile of an interest group and the political influence it exerts.

Eckstein's (1960:22) classification discerns two polar extremes, consultations and negotiations, granting that most concrete relations involve both to some extent.

- Consultations occur when the views of the organization are solicited and taken into account but not considered to be in any sense decisive.
- Negotiations take place when a governmental body makes a decision hinge upon the actual approval of organizations interested in it, giving organizations a veto over the decision.

The reason why it is necessary at this point to explain how pressure groups and CSOs are integrated into the aforementioned theory is because there will only be reference to the Black Sash as an interest group, with the understanding that it is in fact an all-encompassing term which acknowledges the dual nature of the organization.

An attempt will now be made to explain how pressure groups and CSOs fit into the theory regarding the interest group society. On the subject of pressure groups, Petracca (1992:5) writes that interest groups go by many names: special interests, vested interests, pressure groups, organized interests, political groups, the lobby and public interest groups. He continues that whereas it was formerly standard practice to use the term pressure group, it has given way in contemporary scholarship to the apparently more impartial interest group and organized interest.

“Pressure groups were widely used because it clarified that the activities of organized groups were designed to influence government policy”. Some scholars reserve the terms interest groups and pressure groups for membership associations and use the term organized interests for associations with individuals or organizations as members, along with politically active organizations that do not have members in the normal sense.

With regard to how CSOs form part of the interest group society, Camay and Gordon (1998:4) provide interesting insights. (It is easier to approach this particular integrative stance from an action

point of view.) They state that individuals choose to associate and join CSOs as a means of affirming their own views about society through a common identity and concretising their goals through a structure created for that purpose.

Individuals and the CSOs to which they belong choose to engage in advocacy, as they are dissatisfied with certain aspects of the society in which they live. If they find that their values and beliefs are not imitated in society, they will seek to bring about suitable change. Advocacy is thus a quest that reflects real needs of the people. The issue and its solution are chosen on the basis of these needs. The campaign is driven by these felt needs and the resultant mobilisation of support from those affected by the issue, i.e. the interest group(s).

Wilson (1992:82) lastly distinguishes between two different types of interest groups: economic and representational. This classification goes hand in hand with the theories of group organization discussed previously. Economic interest groups – briefly defined – assume that individuals would not join membership organizations because they would generally receive the benefit that the organization campaigned for whether or not they belonged to it. Representational groups on the other hand are constituted by people who participate in voluntary associations or interest groups because they believe that these groups could guard against the tyranny of the majority, by both empowering minorities and training citizens in democratic procedures.

2.2.2.2 The functioning of interest group organizations

Petracca (1992) in his influential book *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed* writes that interest groups flourish in every democracy. This is supported by Cigler and Loomis (1995:3) who state that interest groups are natural phenomena in any democratic regime.

As previously mentioned, political science scholars place groups at the heart of politics and policymaking in a complex, large and increasingly specialized government system. The interest group thus becomes an element of continuity in a changing political world.

Cigler and Loomis (1995) enhance this by quoting an important American commentator, David Truman, who drew attention to the “multiplicity of co-ordinate or nearly co-ordinate points of access to government decisions” and concluded that “the significance of these many points of access and of

the complicated texture of relationships among them is great. This diversity assures various ways for interest groups to participate in the formation of policy, and this variety is a flexible, stabilising element.”

Jordan and Richardson (1987:4) formulate the above differently by stating that group activity is so commonplace and stares us in the face so obviously that we never notice that it is there. At this point an author, who laid some of the groundwork in terms of substantiating the previous statement, deserves to be credited. Harry Eckstein (1960:151) wrote that activities of interest groups “take place within larger systems which impinge upon them and upon which they impinge”. What he meant was that interest group politics is a function of the following three main variables:

- the pattern of policy that regulates the functioning of these groups in society;
- the structure of decision-making both in government and voluntary associations; and
- the political culture of the society.

He explains that these three variables subsequently affect the following four attributes:

1. the form of interest group politics: the channels of action (bureaucracy, assembly, political parties, courts, mass media etc) on which the group concentrates;
2. the intensity of interest group politics: the fervour and persistence with which the group pursues its political objective as well as the relative importance of political activities in its affairs;
3. the scope of interest group politics: the number and variety of groups engaged in politics; and
4. the effectiveness of interest group politics (further elaboration on this point to follow).

The structure Eckstein put forward will be implemented when trying to contextualize the Black Sash as an interest group which undertakes a certain line of activities because it is a product of the interplay of certain societal disturbances. In chapter four the challenge will therefore be to identify these responsible factors. Now that the functioning of interest groups – in terms of where they assimilate into the wider scheme of society and politics – has been demonstrated, a last step can be taken to further broaden the first theme.

2.2.2.3 The maintenance of interest group organizations

In terms of the aspect of the preservation of interest group organizations, all organizations must maintain themselves by raising money on an ongoing basis so that they may continue to operate (Berry, 1997:81).

Interest group funds come from a variety of sources and different types of groups vary substantially in their dependence on dues. The following funding sources supplement dues as interest group income:

1. Foundations: citizen groups, which receive the smallest part of their money from members, are the biggest beneficiaries of foundation grants among all types of lobbies.
2. Fees and publications: money derived from publications, conferences and training institutes is a common source of interest group income.
3. Wealthy patrons: leaders of organizations know that they can substantially increase the group's activities if they can add large individual donations to the sum they raise through regular membership fees. Furthermore, for groups with little or no membership support, large donations from wealthy patrons may be their lifeblood.
4. Government grants.

2.3 Type of action

2.3.1 *Advocacy as the basis of action*

Groups classically employ different strategies and tactics when pursuing a legislative objective. They choose from among a repertoire of (direct or indirect) tactics – some specialize while others use multiple techniques. The subsequent discussion of the second theme is consequently an indication of techniques and tactics used by interest groups and must of necessity be seen against the background of the phenomenon of advocacy. A definition of advocacy will elucidate why this term forms the platform for a discussion of types of action.

Camay and Gordon (2002:5) define advocacy as an “organized effort together with other like-minded groups or individuals for systematic change to government policy. Advocacy consequently seeks to involve citizens to use their influence to persuade others to change their previous position to one which is consistent with the advocating citizen's views.”

In 1998, Camay and Gordon likewise noted that one of the many facets of advocacy is that it reflects the needs of an interest group, in that advocacy is in this sense a pursuit which reflects the real needs of the people. They go further by stating that the methods used in advocacy may vary enormously, even in the context of a single campaign and that the methods chosen will depend upon:

- the issue at hand;
- the strategic objectives;
- the message to be communicated;
- the stakeholders targeted;
- the relevant structures and processes involved;
- the time-frame available;
- the resources available;
- the capacity of the advocacy organizations and their allies; and
- the overall cultural, social, political and economic context.

Other crucial determinants of a group's political strategy are the nature of the group as well as the resources at its disposal. These resources include:

- public sympathy for the group and its goals;
- the size of its membership or activist base;
- its financial strength and organizational capabilities;
- its ability to use sanctions that in some way inconvenience or disrupt government; and
- the personal or institutional links it may have to political parties or government bodies (Heywood, 1997; Cigler and Loomis, 1995).

Berry (1997:90) writes that for interest groups the law of resources is that "on any given day, any given group will have more relevant issues before it than it can possibly handle". The most difficult decisions to be taken are how to allocate the resources to the different issues on the organization's agenda.

A number of central points about decision-making by interest groups appear in this account:

- Leaders of interest groups are continually deliberating on how to allocate their resources.
- Some issues matter so sincerely to the organization that they get unquestionable preference.
- The timeliness of issues makes planning particularly hard (interest groups do not direct their own destiny because they cannot control the political agenda).
- It is much easier for an interest group to take on a new issue than to drop a current one (just because a new issue vital to the group arises, other issues do not become trivial).

These generalizations describe the dynamics of resource allocation (Berry, 1997:92). It is thus evident that the specific tools and techniques that an interest group could utilize depend on its resources, the policies it advocates and the context in which a group is acting. Before giving an overview of the methods (direct and indirect) a group might utilize, it is worthwhile to re-emphasize that the methods used are shaped by the channel of access through which the influence is exerted.

When analysing the Black Sash as an interest group organization, the focus will of necessity be on the organization's advocacy efforts, while recognizing that its choices of action are the product of resource allocation.

2.3.2 The direct and indirect nature of action

2.3.2.1 Direct methods

The first direct technique that comes to mind is lobbying. Lobbying is only one part of advocacy and is one of the most important direct techniques a group can use. Lobbying can be defined as “an organized attempt by an individual, an organization or group of individuals and/or organization's to influence on behalf of a particular interest all the stakeholders involved in preparing and passing legislation” (Camay and Gordon, 2002:3).

Lobbying is conducted through a variety of role players including parliament, companies, local government and legal system. Berry (1997:162) reminds us that with limited organizational resources, lobbyists must develop advocacy plans with great care. Lobbyists' work is complicated by the ideological differences often found between themselves and those they wish to influence. Other

direct techniques include public protest (strikes, boycotts, civil disobedience etc), litigation and infiltration (trying to place group members in policy-making bodies).

2.3.2.2 Indirect methods

Indirect techniques, on the other hand, are of another nature and entail publicity, leaflets, advertisements, petitions, providing research, letter writing and public relations campaigns (Camay and Gordon, 1998; Berry, 1997). When the organization feels that the media are not giving sufficient coverage to an issue or are unsympathetic to its point of view, it may decide to initiate a public relations campaign by bringing home to the reader/viewer/listener the negative consequences if the action it is advocating is not taken.

2.3.3 *The influence of donor relations on action*

The types of action that interest groups undertake are also a function of donor relations. Thus far the focus has been on techniques and tactics, but a theme like types of action reaches much further. Camay and Gordon (1998:33) state that relations are complicated by the implication of power that accompanies control over financial resources.

Donors may have implicit political agendas as well as explicit programme agendas. They may offer only conditional funding which can compromise the organization's own priorities. Because donors also want to be identified with success rather than failure, they may try to control the programmes they fund. Organizations must be firm about their own principles and policies in the face of donor pressure and they must be fully aware of donor agendas.

2.3.4 *Contemporary influences on action*

Petracca (1992:19) argues that what is new about interest group activity is its breadth and magnitude, enhanced by new communication technologies. All groups, even previously active ones, are now doing more. The effect is therefore multiplicative; with more organizations each doing more, the result is an explosion in the amount of organized interest activity. Studies show that interest group activity was mostly aimed at preserving the link with legislators known to support the group's position and mobilizing them.

Petracca (1992:22) makes it clear that the search for information, rather than the search for influence, represents one of the most profound changes in interest group activity. Information is of central importance in the policy process: it is both a resource to influence others and essential for the determination of sensible and appropriate political behaviour.

The literature review thus far gives an indication of the substantial volume of literature available on the first two themes. By contrast, not much has been written about the themes to follow, and opinions also are not homogeneous.

2.4 Response from government

2.4.1 Increasing role of the state in facilitating interest group organizations

On the topic of the response of government, Peterson (1992:226) in his article *Interest Mobilization and the Presidency*, writes about the role of the state in shaping and facilitating the formation of interest groups. He argues that one can observe three general developments in this regard:

- The first development concerns government's influence over the budget and design of governmental agenda to lessen the feasibility of organizations perceived to be at odds with government's objectives.
- The second is that chief executives have directed government benefits and actions towards interest groups whose political orientations are compatible with their own.
- The third concerns both governments' formal and informal methods of communication with interest organizations to help achieve its own programme goals.

2.4.2 Relationship between groups and government

Petracca (1992:17) argues that the landscape of the interest group system was also changed by the emergence of relationships between groups and government. The metaphor of sub-governments or iron triangles has long been used to describe the symbiotic relationship that exists among interest groups, legislators and agency bureaucrats.

Baumgartner and Leech (1998:122) go further by saying that the relationships between legislators, bureaucrats and interest group representatives are portrayed as generally friendly and involving frequent contact among a relatively small group of players. Influence is achieved not by lobbying

enemies, but by insulating the policy subsystem as a whole. Autonomy from political interference is the sign of a powerful subsystem and of powerful interest groups.

Jordan and Richardson (1987:11) write that it must be acknowledged that the prominence given to groups is based on the belief that groups have a substantial impact on policy actions and that group activity permits democratic responses from government. They continue that interest group theory stems from empirical studies of how decisions are taken and refer to Truman, who indicated that research is hardly necessary to uncover the group phenomenon in that the “fairly observant citizen sees various groups slugging it out with one another in pursuit of advantages from the government”.

Groups, however, pay attention to parliament – inspire questions, give evidence before committees, brief members of parliament – because even where actual legislative change is not in sight, the groups can hope to put matters on the political agenda, stimulate interest in their problems and establish their reputation and credibility as expert sources of views in their field. Parliament can be helpful in climate setting, even where immediate and direct legislative benefits cannot be seen.

This theme, too, will be analysed in chapter four by looking into the nature of the relationship between the government and the Black Sash. Light will be shed on how the government sees the role of the Black Sash as an interest group organization and how the organization consequently responds to this expectation.

In this literature review, the effect and the influence (prominence) of interest groups will be discussed concurrently. Although each theme represents a unique stance, it stems from the same origin.

2.5 Effect and influence of interest group organizations

Baumgartner and Leech (1998:12) write that there are two basic reasons for the existence of large areas of unexplored territory in the study of organized interests:

- The first is simply that new research questions have been posed at such a rate that scholars have not yet organized research projects to solve them.

- The second is that some important puzzles have not been solved, and scholars have not found the best way to approach these issues.

These two reasons serve as the basis for stating that the literature on influence is an interesting example of avoidance based on the recognition that previous studies had mostly generated more smoke than fire. Despite the above statement, Hojnacki and Kimball (1998:780) clarify the issue of effect and influence by pointing out that interest groups have two primary tasks once their issue is added to the political agenda.

The first is to expand the size of their supportive coalition and the second to try to shape the content of the bill as it is drafted in committee. They therefore predict that interest groups will focus on their allies when a bill is in committee, expanding to opponents and fence sitters as their resources allow when the bill reaches the floor.

Eckstein (1960:155) put it that group influence is enlarged by anything that restricts the influence on policy-making of anything else. Among other things, he said that the influence of groups is enhanced by the lack of any wide public interest in an area of policy, simply because such lack of interest – apart from minimizing group competition – tends to neutralize some of the more important centres of influence that compete with private groups.

Tierney (1992:203) proposes the following principal techniques of influence:

- influencing the electoral process;
- shaping opinions and mobilising grassroots pressure;
- making the case directly (direct lobbying offers organized interests the clearest opportunity for presenting the substantive and political merits of their benefits); and
- entrepreneurial lobbying.

Regarding the last technique, he states that all organized interest groups are engaged in policy entrepreneurship to the extent that they invest their resources (money, staff, energy, information and reputation for credibility) toward achieving policies they favour.

2.5.1 Effects of interest group organizations through the lens of functions

Concerning these themes, Petracca (1992:347) in his article *The Rediscovery of Interest Group Politic*”, makes a few general remarks in terms of the functions of interest groups. By considering these functions it will be possible to form an idea of the possible effects the groups may have. He initially asserts that interest groups are not external to political life in a free society but that they are its bounty, and then continues as follows:

1. Interest groups perform important functions for their individual members and clients, the well-being of the political community as well as the process of government policy-making.
2. Interest groups create opportunities for political participation whereby individuals learn the skills necessary to be effective citizens.
3. They educate their individual members and the general public about policy issues through the various outreach, mobilization, publicity and campaign activities.
4. To the benefit of the political community, interest groups provide an important outlet for the expression of concerns and frustrations by the individual, assist the individual in identifying with the political system and link group members with broader community values.
5. Interest groups make significant contributions to the formal process of government policymaking, they help shape the agenda of issues that will receive serious attention by government officials and serve as watchdogs during the implementation of public policy.

In support of the above, Jeffrey Berry (1997:7) in his book *The Interest Group Society*, articulates that interest groups play diverse roles:

- First and foremost, they act to represent their constituents before government. For many people, interest groups are the most important mechanism by which their views are presented to government.
- Interest groups also afford people the opportunity to participate in the political process.
- Interest groups educate the public about political issues. With their advocacy efforts, publications and publicity campaigns, interest groups can make people better aware of both policy problems and proposed solutions.
- An inherent trait of interest groups is that they present only their side of an issue to the public, offering facts and interpretations most favourable to their position.

- A related activity is agenda building. Beyond educating people about the sides of an issue, interest groups are frequently responsible for bringing the issue to light in the first place. Agenda building turns problems into issues, which become part of the body of policy questions that government feels it must deal with.
- Finally, interest groups are involved in programme monitoring. Lobbies closely follow programmes affecting their constituents and will often try to draw attention to shortcomings through such tactics as issuing evaluative reports and contacting people in the media.

Mahler (2000:145) put forward that interest groups play a very important role in the political arena. They serve as important linkage mechanisms because they are very effective communicators of segments of public opinion. Because interest groups generally have limited scope, they are able to communicate their collective opinion more effectively than can individuals. All things considered, one can deduce that the argument for interest-group utility suggests that political (formal, constitutional, legislative) representatives simply cannot represent all of their constituents. It stands to reason that on any given issue regarding which a legislator takes a position, it is almost inevitable that he or she will alienate some group.

2.5.2 Factors that influence the impact of interest group organizations

Bearing in mind the aforementioned functions that Petracca (1992), Berry (1997) and Mahler (2000) put forward, it can be deduced that there will be factors which influence the makeup and operating techniques of interest groups and impact on the public policy of interest group systems. Thomas and Hrebenar (1992:162) differentiate eight such factors:

1. State policy domain: the policy priorities of a state will determine which groups are most influential;
2. Centralization/Decentralization of spending: this refers to the money spent by central governments as opposed to local governments;
3. Political attitudes: political culture particularly affects the level of integration and professionalism of the policymaking process;

4. Level of integration/fragmentation of the policy process: the strength of political parties, independent boards and commissions etc influences the number of alternatives available to groups; better integration decreases the options while more fragmentation increases them;
5. Level of professionalism of government: determines the degree to which public officials need group resources and information;
6. Level of socio-economic development: increased socio-economic diversity will tend to generate a more assorted (better organized/more assertive??) and competitive group system;
7. Extensiveness and enforcement of public disclosure laws: increased public access to information about lobbying activities influences lobbying methods, affecting the power of certain groups and lobbyists;
8. Level of campaign costs and sources of support: as group funding increases, so does group access and power.

2.5.3 Factors that determine the effectiveness of interest group organizations

In the beginning of the literature review, when the first theme was being discussed, mention was made of the effectiveness of interest groups. It is now discussed in more detail. It was again Eckstein (1960) who wrote that the factors determining the effectiveness of pressure groups might be classified according to three facets.

- First, the attributes of the groups themselves. That includes their physical resources, the possession of a journal/newspaper, the prestige of the group, the size of the group, their organizational cohesiveness, and the internal political and administrative skills of leaders.
- Secondly, the attributes of the activities of the government, but specifically the patterns of policies that regulates the functioning of these groups.
- Lastly, the attributes of the governmental decision-making structure.

It is clear from the literature reviewed that there is much to conclude and infer about the relative influence of interest groups. The evaluations of the influence of interest groups vary throughout the century and Petracca (1992) writes that the discourse in terms of characterizing the degree of interest group influence on government policy has evolved just about every decade since 1900.

Baumgartner and Leech (1998:37) write that one recent approach to the concept of influence is to specify the conditions under which lobbyists would be influential under a set of assumptions concerning the information they control, the information government decision makers would like to have and the behaviour of rival interests. Having said that, it is time to move to the final theme of this chapter, which is criticism of the interest group society.

2.6 Criticism

2.6.1 Models of group politics

Criticism of interest groups must be seen within specific models of group politics. These models will enable one to identify specific bases against which the criticism is directed. Heywood (1997) and Mahler (2000) similarly describe interest group politics by means of pluralism and corporatism.

Pluralist theories offer the most positive image of group politics. They stress the capacity of groups to both defend the individual from government and promote democratic responsiveness. The core theme of pluralism is that political power is fragmented and widely dispersed (Heywood, 1997:257). The idea of pluralism suggests that “multiple competing elites (including interest groups) determine public policy through bargaining and compromise” (Mahler, 2000:141). According to what is called pluralist theory, interest groups could be called advantage groups: people join them because they perceive that it is to their advantage to do so.

Another group of theories regarding political interaction among groups of individuals involves corporatism. Heywood (1997:257) puts forward that corporatist models of group politics are a social theory that emphasizes the privileged position certain groups enjoy in relation to government, enabling them to influence the formulation and implementation of public policy.

There are two faces of corporatism. First, authoritarian corporatism is an ideology closely associated with Italian Fascism (Heywood, 1997:257). Secondly, liberal corporatism / neo-corporatism emphasizes the characteristics of the interest associations entering a relationship with the state apparatus and the nature of this relationship (Mahler, 2000:142).

2.6.2 Grounds for criticism of interest group organizations

Finally, Heywood provides the following five arguments against interest groups, which necessarily constitute grounds for criticism:

- They entrench political inequality by strengthening the voice of the wealthy and privileged – those who have access to financial, educational, organizational or other resources.
- They are socially and politically divisive, in that they are concerned with the particular, not the general, and press forward minority interests against those of society as a whole.
- They exercise non-legitimate power, in that their leaders, unlike politicians, are not openly held responsible and their influence bypasses the representative process.
- They tend to make the policy process closed and more secretive by exerting influence through negotiations and deals that are in no way subject to public scrutiny.
- They make societies unmanageable, in that they create a range of vested interests that are able to block government initiatives and make policy practicable.

As it is relatively difficult to identify the grounds on which interest group organizations get criticized, the above work of Heywood will be implemented as a framework against which to contextualize an assessment of the criticisms of the Black Sash.

2.7 Evaluation

The structure of this chapter was presented in line with certain common themes. These were type of group, type of action, response from government, effect and influence (prominence) of groups and criticism of interest group organizations.

A definition of an interest group, influenced by the work of several scholars, was set out at the beginning of the chapter. This definition set the scene for the beginning of a comprehensive discussion of the five themes.

The first theme – type of group – was divided into two main parts. The first part explored five prominent theories of interest group organizations. These theories endeavoured to explain why people join such organizations. The theories primarily addressed four issues: group formation, membership, leader-member belief congruence and the importance of politics over time.

The Black Sash will be analysed against these criteria in chapter four. The second part of the first theme was subdivided into three parts. These were the classification of interest group organizations, the functioning of interest group organizations and the maintenance of interest group organizations. The chief characteristic of this theme was the attempt to explain the link between pressure groups, interest groups and CSOs, as it is an important enabling factor for analysing the Black Sash in chapter four.

The second theme – type of action – was divided into four smaller parts, as plenty of facets make up such a bold theme. These parts were advocacy as the basis of action, the direct and indirect nature of action, the influence of donor relations on action and lastly contemporary influences on action. The aim of this theme was to bring across the complex interplay of forces that determine the manner in which interest group organizations can pursue their political strategy.

The third theme – response from government – was divided into two parts. The first revolved around the issue of the increasing role of the state in facilitating interest group organizations, and the second around the relationship between groups and government. This theme attempted to describe the environment in which group-government relations play off against each other on a daily basis. It also emphasized that the dynamic nature thereof is one of constant change.

The fourth theme – effects and influence (prominence) of groups – gave a substantial overview of a whole spectrum of positions from which the theme could be approached. This theme was therefore divided into three parts, the first being the effects which interest group organizations will have from the viewpoint of their supposed functions.

The second part consisted of factors which may possibly influence the potential impact interest group organizations may have, and the last part focused on factors which determined the effectiveness of interest groups. In order to make a judgement on the prominence of an interest group organization like the Black Sash in chapter four, the functions as well as the factors need to be taken into consideration.

The topic of the last theme was criticism of interest group organizations and was divided into two parts, one covering models of group politics and the other grounds for criticism. These grounds will

form a useful framework against which the criticism of the Black Sash can be categorized in chapter four.

The themes presented throughout this chapter constitute the theoretical basis on which the case study of the Black Sash will be undertaken. The next chapter will thus be a description of the history and current characteristics of the Black Sash.

To conclude: this chapter sets clear parameters for interest group organizations, and although the literature review did not cover the entire setting of the interest group society, it is adequate to propose the stance to be taken on the research question.

Chapter 3

DESCRIPTIVE SUMMARY OF THE HISTORY AND CURRENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BLACK SASH

3.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a description of the history and current characteristics of a human rights organization in South Africa – the Black Sash. Because it is an organization with a loaded narration, it is necessary to view the organization over specific time periods. The unfolding of the Black Sash runs parallel with the political recitation of South Africa and can therefore not be separated from the political history of South Africa.

This chapter has been divided into three main sections in order to describe the role and activities of the Black Sash during three eras of fundamental political significance. The first period can roughly be seen as the time between 1951 and 1975. These were the early years of the organization during which persistence and protest were key characteristics of its existence.

The early years can further be subdivided into three short interludes, each signifying a definite phase of the organization. The second period of the Black Sash was between 1975 and 1990 and can be described as the rise of resistance. The last period started in 1990 and can be portrayed as a phase during which the organization was, and still is, a partner in building a new society.

3.2 The Early Years: Persistence and Protest (1951 – 1975)

3.2.1 Opposition to the Senate Act (1951 – 1956)

On 19 May 1955 six women decided over tea to oppose the Senate Bill. This gathering signified the birth of The Women's Defence of the Constitution League. The Senate Bill was brought before Parliament with the intention to pack the Senate with government supporters to secure the passing of the Separate Representation of Voters Act (1951), which would remove Coloured voters from the common voters' roll.

The League demonstrated its fury to do something about the Senate Act by organizing a mass meeting in Johannesburg and a vigil at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. They mobilized 20 000

women throughout the country to oppose the Bill and organized a convoy to Cape Town. A black sash signifying the death of the Constitution was draped over a symbolic replica of the Constitution. This emblem gave the organization its name, the Black Sash. The members held protest stands, each wearing a black sash. The Senate Act was, however, passed.

The Senate Act, which sparked the formation of the group, brought to an end the constitutional struggle that extended back to the drafting of the Act of Union – the South Africa Act of 1910. The Senate Act was a troubled negotiation of the political aspirations of non-whites which satisfied neither English-speakers nor Afrikaners. The Act was for that reason “a kind of Armageddon for both sides: for Afrikaners, it embodied a celebrated victory of rightful, long-delayed dominion. For English-speakers, it represented the negation and rape of the Constitution” (Michelman, 1975:25).

The activities of the first days of the group’s existence were the result of this deeply felt need to do something about the Senate Act, which represented a critical and decisive transition in the national life. Michelman writes that publicity flowed from their activity and it was not limited to South African coverage. A foreign newspaper carried a picture of the women marching, with the caption, ‘The Political Crisis in South Africa: Women Marching through the Streets of Johannesburg on 25th May to Demonstrate against the Senate Bill’ – noting that these were women of significant merit (1975:34).

The English-language press reported how ministers used back entrances of public buildings, went the wrong way in one-way streets, jumped fences and surrounded themselves with bodyguards to avoid Black Sash demonstrators. The Black Sash turned up at the dedications of hospitals, bridges and schools, turning what were to have been festive and even triumphant occasions for the ministers and their families into tense, embarrassing affairs (Michelman, 1975:51).

The Black Sash newsletter, *Sash*, was published for the first time. It was registered at the General Post Office as a newspaper and was published almost monthly until the end of 1959. From May 1969 it developed into a quarterly magazine. From May 1989 until May 1995, *Sash* was published three times a year.

With reference to the organization's name – the first edition of *Sash* (January, 1956) stated “it is an honourable name. The newsletter will try to uphold their ideals.” The principles of policy the organization agreed upon were also published in this edition. The principles stated:

1. The League is a pressure group, to be used for the restoration and encouragement of political morality and the preservation of Constitutional Government.
2. The League wants to make people realize their personal responsibilities in a democracy.
3. The League wishes to inform its members on political matters.
4. The League wishes to draw two sections of the European population together.
5. The League is a bilingual group and wishes to encourage bilingualism.
6. The League wishes to disseminate news about its activities.

The first edition of the *Sash* also contained the official dedication of the organization which affirmed:

“In pride and humbleness we declare our devotion to the land of South Africa, we dedicate ourselves to the service of our country, we re-affirm our loyalty to the contract of Union which brought us together. We pledge ourselves to uphold the ideals by which our Union was inspired, of mutual trust and forbearance, of sanctity of word, of courage for the future, and of peace and justice for all persons and peoples. We pledge ourselves to resist any diminishment of these, confident that this duty is required of us, and that history and our children will defend us. So help God, in Whose strength we trust”.

The first constitution of the organization opened membership to all women who were citizens of South Africa irrespective of their party membership. The appeal of the organization extended to Afrikaner women as well as English-speakers. Women were welcomed regardless of their political affiliations. The Constitution, at least temporarily, bypassed the issue of non-white participation by limiting membership to citizens who could vote.

The Group Areas Act was passed in 1950, five years before the formation of the Black Sash. As early as 1956, the Black Sash started to protest against the implementation of this Act and against the almost annual amendments to the Act.

“This Act provided for the establishment of racial ghettos. It cut across property rights, arbitrarily displacing and destroying entire settled communities of Africans, Coloureds, and Indians at the pleasure of the Government.” (Michelman, 1975:93).

The Black Sash campaigned against both the spirit of the law and the individual removals under its provisions. With its traditional protest stands featuring posters and pamphlets, with letters to the press and government officials, the organization cited the inequities of the law and the social and economic hardships they laid on both groups and individuals (Michelman, 1975:93).

3.2.2 Compromise among various shades of opinion within the organization (1956 – 1959)

This period represents the second of three phases in the development of the Black Sash: the phase when the Senate Act could no longer be relied on to give momentum and direction to the resistance against authoritarian government. However, the organization was not yet ready to completely turn in opposition to white supremacy by taking an adamant stand against all the political and legal expressions of apartheid.

This period was characterized by indecision over involving the membership fully in a fight for which many of them had no bearing, or forcing them into a liberal, humanitarian position on the race issue that neither the official opposition, the United Party, which most of them supported, nor the majority of white South Africans were willing to accept (Michelman, 1975:62).

During this phase of its existence the organization thus agreed that its reach was wider than its first narrow dedication to constitutionalism and that its antagonism extended to the results as well as the methods of authoritarianism. The major decision during this period of the organization was accordingly that it would continue to exist and search for new political issues for moral complaint.

The course of change during this stage of the Black Sash was both irregular and gradual. Some of the women started with the liberal views that others achieved only after agonizing and conscientious self-education. “Black Sash policy was, from the beginning, the result of some compromise among competing ideas and philosophies. The Black Sash was never a monolithic organization with a pervasive or cohesive point of view” (Michelman, 1975:62).

The organization was still looking for a political role that could be a magnet for Afrikaners as well as English-speakers, white supremacists as well as liberals. This responsibility required that the Black Sash choose issues for investigation and protest which would not segregate the membership and this meant avoiding racial issues. The leadership had to find a novel set of issues and a new area of activity for the Black Sash, which would allow the members to keep their sense of moral steadiness without moving the organization too far ahead of conformist thinking (Michelman, 1975:63).

During this time, the Black Sash initiated national protests against racial job reservation as well as amendments to existing legislation that entrenched the doctrine of apartheid. The arrest and imprisonment of African women for pass offences in the Cape moreover prompted the establishment of the Bail Fund. The Bail Fund was first established in the Cape in 1958 by a grant given to the Black Sash as an interest-free private loan to be used to assist women arrested for pass law offences. Black Sash volunteers at the Bail Fund Office in Athlone, near Langa and Nyanga, found themselves intervening with government authorities on behalf of all kinds of petitioners.

This convinced the Black Sash that a wider service for Africans was needed – the establishment of Black Sash advice offices in major cities around South Africa was consequently the outcome of this felt need. The Athlone Advice Office, which started as the Bail Fund Office, was the first advice office established by Black Sash volunteers in Cape Town and a member of the African National Congress (ANC) Women's League became its first employee (Michelman, 1975:114).

The Black Sash joined the campaign against the Farm Labour Scheme under which petty offenders could be sent to work in rural areas without a court trial. This scheme was an offshoot of the pass system and deserves mention during this period of the organization as it dramatized the human cost of the system and also provides a clear example of a sustained Black Sash protest campaign which, rare among Black Sash efforts, enjoyed some measure of success.

The organization during this period also protested against the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government Bill, which provided for the Bantustans; the Group Areas Act proclamations; the banning and banishment of individuals as well as forced removals (The Golden Jubilee Report, 2005:10).

3.2.3 Total opposition to Apartheid (1959 – 1975)

Once the Black Sash turned its complete energies against the apartheid system, it investigated and protested against all the laws passed since 1948 designed either to reinstate racial separation or to contain opposition to it. In so doing, it became a multi-faceted organization, far more complex than its founders had planned it to be. Its focus included the work of legal scholars, social workers and practical advisers.

“South African life had become a tangle of legal regulations and the Black Sash protests kept them before the public eye, no matter how unwilling the public eye was to focus on them. This kind of careful analysis and explanation of the meaning and the effect of these laws has been a major achievement of the Black Sash” (Michelman, 1975:92).

This last period of the early years was, with regard to the political climate of the country, characterized by ghastly events with severe repercussions. In 1960, sixty-nine people were shot dead in Sharpeville and South Africa’s first State of Emergency was declared. The Unlawful Organizations Act was passed and the ANC, the Pan African Congress (PAC) and other organizations were banned and South Africa became a Republic in 1961.

The organization’s unavailing but continuing campaign against the pass laws began in 1957 when the government first began to implement its announced intention to extend compulsory passes to women. “Pass laws were not the original creation of the Nationalist government, although they may be the greatest source of African resentment towards that government. Pass laws were promulgated as early as 1797 in the Cape to control the influx of natives across the frontiers and into towns and to control vagrancy and crime” (Michelman, 1975:100).

To illustrate to the public that the pass laws were neither compulsory nor consistent, but that new conditions made new approaches mandatory, the Black Sash produced a pamphlet, *A Historical Survey of the Pass Laws*, detailing the historical evolution of these laws. The Black Sash also objected to the introduction of Christian National Education in white schools, which called for separate schools for English- and Afrikaans-speaking children and which taught all race groups Afrikaner Nationalist views of history, geography and government as well as the religious views of the Dutch Reformed Church (Spink, 1991:49).

The Black Sash, along with the liberal establishment, organized wide and vigorous protests against this Act's harsh and arbitrary provisions. Vigils were held in all regions. In joint action with the National Council for Women, the Black Sash drew up a memorandum for submission to the Minister of Justice, listing the humanitarian and legal objections to the law (Michelman, 1975:146).

Widespread poverty was of grave concern to the Black Sash at this point of its existence. During this time, the South African Institute of Race Relations also partnered with the Black Sash in running Cape Town's Athlone Advice Office. Black Sash advice offices were also opened in Johannesburg and Durban. In 1963 a United Nations resolution condemned apartheid and urged the release of political prisoners.

Another big development was the Transkei Constitution Bill which marked the beginning of the homelands policy. Shortly before the Status of Transkei Act gave independence to Transkei, the Black Sash compiled a memorandum which was sent to the Transkei leader, Chief Matanzima, explaining the organization's anxiety with regard to the future of the homeland in the event of its becoming independent. Nevertheless Transkei did opt to become independent, Bophuthatswana followed in 1977, Venda in 1979 and, regardless of written substantiation submitted by the Black Sash to the Quail commission looking into agricultural and economic conditions in Ciskei prior to its independence, so too did Ciskei in 1981 (Spink, 1991:114).

In 1963, the Black Sash opened its membership to all adult women permanently resident in South Africa. A year later, in 1964, the Rivonia Trial judgment took place: Nelson Mandela and the other leaders of Umkhonto we Sizwe were sentenced to life imprisonment. The Black Sash continued to protest against apartheid, as legislation that segregated entertainment, sport and the beaches were passed. There were ongoing protests against Group Area proclamations in the Cape Peninsula. In 1966 Prime Minister HF Verwoerd was assassinated and replaced by BJ Vorster and unlimited detention with authorization was introduced.

The Black Sash drafted a Charter for Women in 1971 and demanded the extension of rights to all South African women. The Charter had confined its concern almost exclusively to the private sphere of women's existence, although the wider implications were implicitly there. "The Charter reflected the kind of feminism which some saw as failing sufficiently to challenge the exploitative aspects of

the economic system within which it demands equal rights, rather than an inclusive type of feminism which linked women's issues with other political questions and concerns" (Spink, 1991:251).

The Black Sash had persisted in seeking lawful non-violent strategies to achieve its ends. Until 1973 Black Sash women had stood in group protests against each new infringement of human rights with the same degree of determination and dignity as they had in first protesting against the Senate Act. When the Riotous Assembly Act of that year determined that more than one person standing together could constitute a riotous assembly, the organization stood for the last time in many years in a group protest outside Parliament, protesting about the right to protest. Thereafter, they stood alone.

Because of this Act, they gave up handing out leaflets or disseminating information during stands; they applied as required to the magistrates for permission to protest and submitted their carefully chosen slogans for advance inspection. Stands became very organized. It became Black Sash practice for protesters standing alone to have a support person located within view, ready to divert unwelcome attention (Spink, 1991:262).

When in 1974 the Fundraising Act was passed, the Black Sash opted not to seek registration as a fund-raising organization because of the official scrutiny such registration entailed. This meant it was not able to obtain money from the South African public. Prior to that it had had a list of donors, many of whom were husbands of members and/or leaders in the business community, who could be depended upon to provide contributions of between ten and one hundred rand a year.

When the Fund-Raising Act was passed a new category of membership, that of associate members, was established, which entitled men the privilege of continuing to give the Black Sash money. They were allowed to attend and speak at certain meetings, but they were not allowed to vote. In effect they were granted taxation without representation (Spink, 1991:237).

3.3 The Rise of Resistance (1975 – 1990)

For twenty years the Black Sash had survived as a political group, continuing to assess the practical wisdom and moral principles of the Nationalist government. Starting with the issue of constitutionality, which most of its followers only poorly understood, the organization developed a

continuous movement of public education, examining the legality and morality of the laws, and the administrative and judicial system (Michelman, 1975:24).

In 1975, the Pietermaritzburg Advice Office opened in an office shared with the Federation of South African Trade Unions. The organization during this time operated in seven regions and the people who came seeking the advice these offices gave free of charge reflected different local concerns, problems and deficiencies. Regional differences arose out of the politics that informed or directed the region's policy (Spink, 1991:74).

The Black Sash during this era studied the working conditions of farm labourers and hire-purchase transactions. Then, in 1976, the Soweto uprising marked the beginning of a period of major protest. The issue of compulsory teaching in the Afrikaans language sparked off the Soweto riots and set off a nationwide wave of violence; it turned out to be a crucial year for South Africa.

Spink (1991:242) writes that there was a certain irony in the fact that, as an aftermath to the 1976 riots, another women's organization entitled Women for Peace was formed. This organization represented another broad-based attempt to unite women across the entire political and colour spectrum in the common cause of working for peace. The Black Sash at that time found itself viewed with suspicion because of its political image. Although the two organizations were working towards the same end, the militant image of the Black Sash alienated it from a number of women's organizations and societies.

The Pretoria Advice Office opened in 1977, the year Steve Biko was killed in detention and the Black Consciousness organizations were banned. The Black Sash also gave evidence at the Cillie Commission of Inquiry into the 1976 riots and monitored its hearings. High levels of unemployment brought more cases of socio-economic need to the advice offices at the time when PW Botha became prime minister in 1978. He initiated discussions on a new constitutional framework. The Black Sash rejected the tricameral proposals and supported universal adult suffrage.

The Riekert and Wiehahn commissions on labour legislation and the utilization of manpower, respectively, resulted in some relief for the small percentage of urban black people who had acquired

rights to be in the 'white' areas. For the majority, the pass laws were applied with increasing stringency. Case numbers at the Black Sash advice offices soared.

The Internal Security Act provided for unlimited detention without authorization. This Act was used for the arrest of suspected political agitators and to prohibit anti-government activities, which the Black Sash regarded as part of the normal democratic process. "As far as it was concerned the Internal Security Act cast the net as wide as to include as criminal and subversive conduct regarded as perfectly legitimate and lawful in normal societies. It provided the authorities with a useful device to prosecute selectively with no effective safeguards. The Black Sash took the view that this led to criminalizing of legitimate opposition, as courts of law effectively neutralized opponents who were awaiting trial" (Spink, 1991:138).

In 1983, PW Botha established the tricameral parliament, which excluded black South Africans, in the face of implacable opposition, and the United Democratic Front was established. The Black Sash during this time also called for an end to conscription. This led to the formation of the End Conscription Campaign, thus sidestepping the fact that it was a criminal offence to incite or encourage young men to refuse to do national service. The Black Sash believed that the conflict in South Africa was primarily a political rather than a military one.

It also believed that when the South African army was called upon to fight the organized forces of the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Angola and Namibia, and those whom the government was telling them were Cubans and Russians, the obligation to fight was in reality based purely on a political conflict in Southern Africa which divided the people of the region against one another. In such circumstances they felt it was vital that individuals were granted the freedom of conscience to choose whether they wished to engage in armed conflict or not (Spink, 1991:218).

The Black Sash organized a national campaign to mark the 70th anniversary of the 1913 Land Act. The Land Act, as the legislative basis for forced removals, was a focus of ongoing attention for the Black Sash throughout the country. In 1983, the Black Sash held a special week of protest against forced removals. The campaign was spearheaded in the Transvaal region, where a five-day vigil was organized with a photographic display. Throughout the vigil, one Black Sash member fasted on a daily cup of tea and a slice of dry bread. This she had discovered was more or less all that some of

the people of the rural community of Dreifontein had been able to eat while purchasing the title of their land many years previously (Spink, 1991:105).

In 1985, townships were in turmoil and school, consumer and rent boycotts were widespread. The government declared a State of Emergency, giving its agents almost unlimited powers to search and arrest people. Over 10 000 people were detained, hundreds of them were children under the age of sixteen.

The Advice Office Trust was established in 1989 to raise and administer funds for the service work of the Black Sash. The regions continued to raise money for their own administration through membership subscriptions and morning markets, bazaars, sales of cakes, books and rummage, and other similar events. During this time the Black Sash employed just fewer than forty people throughout the country and found itself administering an annual budget of close to a million rand. It was a difficult transition from being an entirely voluntary body to one facing up to the need for paid and professional service.

By the mid-eighties, although the Black Sash was still not an organization which appealed to those of student age, the average age of Sash members was much younger than it had been in the early years. It included single parents and divorcees. It was still inclined to consist mostly of English-speaking liberals with some very real expectations drawn from a traditionally conservative constituency.

There was a small and quite vocal feminist grouping in all regions of the Black Sash. There were lesbians who found in the Black Sash one of the few homes available for people with lesbian political agendas in a country where opposition organizations were politically directed against racialism. The Black Sash provided them with a means of entering mainline resistance and a platform which far surpassed their numerical size.

The leadership of the organization was adamant that “what one outsider had described as the ‘influx of radical lesbians’ had not posed a problem for the organization” (Spink, 1991:249). It is clear that groupings such as lesbians and feminists within the organization could only have become power groups if they had real supporters.

Regarding of funding, the Black Sash received money from foreign embassies (principally British, American, French and Spanish), from the Ford Foundation and from one or two other big international foundations. There were those inside the Black Sash who were uncomfortable with the idea of the larger portion of the funding coming from abroad through embassies and foreign foundations, those who felt it appalling that it was needed to look to organizations outside South Africa to subsidize the work, and others who were unhappy about the Black Sash taking, for instance, American money when American money was also being used to finance UNITA in Angola and various other CIA projects (Spink, 1991:239).

“Offset against this standpoint was the harsh reality that without foreign funding, the scope of Black Sash work would be substantially reduced, and the view that there was in any case no such thing as ‘clean money’, that the organization should not become too ensnared in other ideological issues provided it was satisfied that the money was being given for the purposes for which the Black Sash was using it and that there were no unacceptable strings attached to it” (Spink, 1991:239). The question of from whom the Black Sash would or would not take money remained a subject for debate in which the question of independence to maintain its integrity was vital.

In 1986, the pass laws were abolished when the Abolition of the Influx Control Act was passed. By this time the Black Sash was able to speak out with great authority based on the experience it gained in the advice offices. Through its advice office work the Black Sash could keep a unique finger on the pulse of what was happening in the black communities even when the restrictions on the media denied such information to other parties.

The advice offices dealt with the problems of individuals, and if it was found that a particular problem was common to a great many people then the people themselves were encouraged to take up that problem as a community issue. The advice offices could thus mobilize and conscientise both those who worked in them and the people who came for assistance. The information the organization gained by this means became the basis for various strategies employed to force the government to act, strategies in which the critical ingredient was public knowledge (Spink, 1991:79).

The initial steps were invariably to inform the public of carefully substantiated facts of which, in segregated South African society, it might otherwise be totally unaware, and so to raise public

concern about a particular grievance. Deputations and appeals were made to cabinet ministers. The Black Sash supplied information to opposition members of parliament who raised questions in the House on the strength of it. Other options included taking legal advice and testing the real parameters of the law in the courts, negotiation with the authorities, public meetings and the provision of practical support to people in whatever course of action they themselves had chosen (Spink, 1991:79).

State repression was increasingly violent and the number of people in detention soared. Several Black Sash members were detained. Some, held in solitary confinement, were restricted or deported upon their release. An important feature of the Black Sash was that it publicly listed the people who had died in detention. It became regular Black Sash practice for the names of those who died in detention to be read aloud at the beginning of monthly general meetings and at their annual national conferences, followed by a minute's silence as a poignant reminder of the continuing need for the organization's existence.

The Black Sash was awarded the Prize for Freedom by Liberal International and the E Phillips Randolph Institute Prize in recognition of the work of Molly Blackburn (a member of the Black Sash), who had died in a car accident on 28 December 1985. She had won widespread acclaim and trust because of her courage and determination to defend the underdog with little regard for her own safety.

The Black Sash decided that civil disobedience was an appropriate last-resort strategy for non-violent action against apartheid. Two Black Sash members chained themselves to the railings of parliament in protest against the death of a child, Johannes Spogter, in detention. Both women were subsequently fined R50.

The question of the appropriateness of civil disobedience was not a new one for the Black Sash in 1986. It was another issue on which members were not totally united. Although bound by its constitution to non-violent methods of opposition, the organization was actually bound to lawful action. The Black Sash did not believe that it could bind its members to enter into civil disobedience.

The Black Sash thus committed itself to supporting wholeheartedly any member who, in conscience, had made a decision to obey the law and at the same time gave unquestioning support to members who, individually or as a group, decided on a principled course of action which involved breaking it (Spink, 1991:263).

Despite the sporadic raising of the question of male membership, the Black Sash had resolutely reserved full membership for women. There were those who felt that the unique female nature and atmosphere of the organization should be preserved and that there was something particularly adamant about female resistance and protest. 'Strike the woman, you strike a rock' was the wording on one Black Sash poster celebrating Women's Day on 9 August 1987.

There were also those within the Black Sash who, in an atypical display of insecurity, expressed the fear that if men were allowed to join they would take over the leadership of the organization and, perhaps most significantly of all, those who felt that as women they had space in which to function that was denied to men. At the same time, there were also those who felt that such a stand was in itself sexist, who were uneasy with a policy of accepting masculine support in all kinds of ways and yet denying men full membership (Spink, 1991:252).

FW de Klerk became President in 1989 and negotiations for the transition began. Black Sash members attended conferences in Harare, Lusaka, Amsterdam, Paris and Moscow where they met with members of the ANC in exile. Violence in Natal escalated with thousands killed and displaced. The Black Sash sought to understand the violence by analysing how local grievances combined with broader political struggles.

3.4 Partner in Building a New Society (1990 –)

In 1990, President De Klerk unbanned political organizations, lifted the State of Emergency, released Nelson Mandela and other political prisoners and suspended executions. The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) was formed to negotiate the end of apartheid and the beginning of a new South Africa. By this time, the Black Sash – in defining its relationships with other anti-apartheid bodies – had witnessed the justification of its own decision to temper its desire to demonstrate commitment to unity with, and support for, the organizations representing the majority

of the people. Rather, it insisted on its right to speak freely and to voice dissent (The Golden Jubilee Report, 2005:80).

The period since February 1990 has been a time of transition during which the shape and values of the future society have been debated and negotiated. Many of the old structures of our society were broken down, reshaped and refocused, and new structures have been emerging in their place. Legislation Watch (LegiWatch) was formed by Black Sash volunteers in order to keep abreast of the constitutional negotiations at CODESA and the many bills being rushed through Parliament.

The Black Sash furthermore published research that revealed the dehumanization of the elderly and the disabled, and the inequities and inefficiencies of South Africa's segregated welfare system (The Golden Jubilee Report, 2005:80).

In 1991, violence was pervasive. The Black Sash was involved with others in trying to resolve the taxi war in the Cape; in protesting against the corrupt and unjust regime in Bophuthatswana and was actively involved with released political prisoners and returning exiles.

The Black Sash during this time looked ahead to reconstruction in terms of a new Constitution and a Bill of Rights, campaigning for human rights. It also lobbied for the inclusion of socio-economic rights and the right to administrative justice in the Bill of Rights. The just and equitable distribution of land, the adoption of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the implementation of an effective and affordable social welfare system were issues high on the organization's agenda.

In 1993, multiparty negotiations started. The murder of Chris Hani threatened negotiations but the ANC and the government reached agreement on a Government of National Unity with a Transitional Executive Council. An election date was set and the Black Sash was very engaged in voter education, concentrating on rural and female voters. Most of the cases the advice offices dealt with arose from poverty, homelessness and unemployment. The Black Sash focused its work on social assistance and legislation. Black Sash members gave evidence at the Goldstone Commission of Enquiry into violent conflict in Crossroads, Cape Town and continued to monitor conflict areas. The End Conscription Campaign was disbanded.

After South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994, the Government of National Unity was installed and Nelson Mandela was inaugurated as the country's new president. The Black Sash members also hung up the sashes they had worn defiantly for so long. The challenges to the fledging democracy required a new response and so, in 1995, in an act of courage and far-sightedness, Sash members decided to entrust the name of the Black Sash to the Advice Office Trust – which became the Black Sash Trust – and to mandate the trustees to take forward the work of the Black Sash in a restructured organization without a membership base. They became a national NGO staffed by professionals and a number of volunteers, committed to their new slogan 'Making human rights real' (The Golden Jubilee Report, 2005:15).

In 1995, while the Black Sash together with the whole country concentrated on transition, the Constitutional Court ruled that the death penalty was unconstitutional. The organization made a submission on the legislation that led to the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Black Sash during this time was also awarded the Danish Peace Foundation's Peace Price. In 1996, South Africa's celebrated Constitution, with a well-established Bill of rights, was adopted and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission commenced its work.

The government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was replaced by the Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR), which has a far greater focus on long-term economic growth than social spending. The Black Sash focused its campaigns for the entrenchment of citizens' constitutional social and economic rights. The Social Assistance Act was passed and the Black Sash monitored its implementation.

In 1997, a new Criminal Law abolished the death penalty, and the principles of Batho Pele were gazetted, describing how national and provincial government should deliver social services to the public. The Department of Social Development began an extensive review of social grants. The Black Sash was invited to participate in a technical task team with the Ministry of Welfare to examine a strategy for people with disabilities and contributed substantially to the policy process.

The Black Sash's three-year national programme focused on the realization of six social security goals: efficient administration, honest bureaucracy, intersectoral co-operation, an adequate budget, comprehensive legislation and educated beneficiaries (The Golden Jubilee Report, 2005:90). In

1998, the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was presented to Nelson Mandela while there was continued frustration with government's incapacity to deliver essential services. The Minister of Welfare challenged the Black Sash to provide proof of the department's inadequacy: some 4000 cases were handed over for investigation.

Debt and money-lending was a key area of focus for the Black Sash, whose concern moved beyond the individual borrower to the underlying structural issues of poverty and the socio-economic impact of the money-lending industry. 'Access to credit for the Poor' was launched as a national Black Sash project, and explored the impact of money-lending businesses in rural and urban areas.

In 1999, administrative efficiency remained a challenge. The grant review process aimed at limiting fraud, resulted in many genuine grant applicants being rejected and many entitled parents were not receiving their child-support grants. The Black Sash worked to increase the take-up rate of the grant. During that year, the trustees also articulated the set of values, distilled from forty years of work, to guide the organization as it faced the challenges of professionalizing its staff, structures and practices. These values are justice, dignity, the affirmation of women, integrity, non-violence, rigor, independence and courage.

The Justice and Women programme helped thousands of women to obtain maintenance grants and gain domestic violence interdicts, and the Promotion of Access to Justice Act was passed in 2000. In 2000, the Black Sash concentrated on seeing the Constitution practically applied, the practical management of democracy, and teaching ordinary people how to access their entitlements. The organization focused on the problem areas of budget, policy and delivery, and looked for solutions in partnership with their clients, the NGO community and the government (The Golden Jubilee Report 2005:95).

The Black Sash partnered with other civil society organizations to establish the Open Democracy Advice Centre and the Black Sash's formal paralegal training course celebrated its tenth anniversary. During 2001, Regulation 11 of the Social Assistance Act, which limited back pay of social benefits to three months, was overturned after extensive lobbying by the Black Sash and others. The Black Sash in addition initiated an NGO committee on reparations, which advocated for the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations.

In 2002, the Black Sash co-ordinated the coalition for the Basic Income Grant Campaign after the publication of the government's Taylor Report compiled by the Committee of Enquiry into Comprehensive Social Security. With 11, 8 million people falling outside the social-assistance net, the Black Sash vigorously promoted the introduction of a basic income grant as recommended by the Taylor Report. A basic income grant was placed on the national political agenda and gained wider publicity at community level. The Black Sash advocated the implementation of the Promotion of Administrative Justice Act and undertook countrywide information briefings.

In 2003 the Black Sash monitored local Department of Home Affairs offices to track service delivery. The Black Sash currently lobbies for credit law review and advocates that, comprehensive legislation be developed. The organization also continues to monitor the Children's Bill, while the campaign for a basic income grant continues.

The organization, in its present form, continues to focus on four key areas of work based on its historic strengths and experience, and grounded in its values. These key areas are social security, administrative justice, consumer rights and citizenship. The Black Sash believes that these provide the foundation for a society based on human rights, social and economic justice and inclusive democracy. All campaigns are selected to fit within these key focal areas.

3.5 Evaluation

This chapter described the history of the Black Sash and the contemporary characteristics of the organization. It is evident throughout the three periods that the Black Sash repeatedly found itself at some kind of cross-roads as to the way forward.

The description of the first period (1951 – 1975) covered the origins of the organization and highlighted the fact that the Black Sash was formerly known as the Women's Defence of the Constitution League. Reasons for the name-change were discussed. The organization's original opposition to the Senate Act was noted and also how the women came to the realization that they needed to extend and widen their activity base. Through compromise, the various shades of opinion within the organization were accommodated, and an unopposed decision was taken that the Black Sash would focus its strategy in total opposition to the ruling ideology of apartheid.

The second period (1975 – 1990) can generally be seen as a time during which the organization survived as a political group for nearly twenty years and found itself in the midst of huge political turmoil and unrest. The organization dealt with many issues and had to make important decisions about its future existence as it approached the third phase of its development. In retrospect, it is evident that the second phase was characterized by a number of events which served as a very valuable learning-curve for the organization.

The last period, which started in the early nineties, was a crucial time for the organization, given the political realities of the country at the time. The organization was faced with conflicting?? choices as to whether they had reached their initial goals or whether there still was a role for them to play. It is evident throughout the activities described during this period, that the advice offices played an enormous role in the decision to continue.

The next chapter will analyse how the Black Sash as an interest group organization fits into the theoretical scheme set out in chapter two. The analysis in chapter four, which will be based on the case study of the Black Sash, will only be representative of one case only, but it must be seen as one step in the direction of attempting to submit an opinion on the research question.

Chapter 4

ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BLACK SASH UNTIL THE PRESENT, INCLUDING SIGNIFICANT DRIVERS OF CHANGE

4.1 Introduction

The second chapter dealt with theoretical perspectives on interest groups, while the third chapter was a description of the Black Sash as an interest group over the entire span of its existence. This chapter will analyse and assess whether the Black Sash as an interest group is maintaining the status quo or not. This chapter will thus be an analysis of the organization as part of the interest group society, with a focus on the relevance of the theory concerned.

Analysis will occur on two levels. The first level will be to record certain general observations as revealed in chapter three. The second level will be to apply the conclusions of chapter two to the case study to see how it correlates with the current stage of operations in the interest group society. In other words, is the theory still relevant or is it in need of review?

Five main themes will be used. They are type of group, type of action, response from government, the impact of the group and criticism of the group. As mentioned in chapter one, an interview with Mrs Mary Burton was conducted in order to gain some important insights without which a thorough analysis of the Black Sash as an interest group would not have been possible.

4.2 Analysis of the Black Sash as part of the interest group society

4.2.1 Observations about the Black Sash from a group point of view

The previous chapter divided the Black Sash into three main periods in order to describe the different issues the organization dealt with during certain times of the political calendar of South Africa. This fragmentation of phases also served as a record of the unique characteristics, which accompanied the organization during each distinct period.

To start with, it must be repeated that the Black Sash was born out of a concern for equality and justice for all and the sanctity of the Constitution. The organization had a name change. It was at first known as The Women's Defence of the Constitution League, because the women – during their

protests – always wore black sashes which signified the death of the Constitution. The name change was thus to be expected because for every one person who knew who the League was, ten people knew who the women with the sashes were. The name of the organization has remained the Black Sash until today.

Secondly, the principles (as set out in the previous chapter), which the then Women's Defence of the Constitution League put forward right from the start, were strongly politically oriented. As can be noted in the vision and mission statement of the present Black Sash, this focus has persisted. Since the founding of the organization in 1955, the members have focused their attention on laws and how they affect the daily lives of ordinary people. This overtly political role has arguably become less relevant in the post-apartheid era.

The challenge has been to find a new role and legitimacy in the new South Africa. Burton argues that "...gradually – without it being a political theoretical debate – the awareness of the fact that the inequities of the South African system were economic got more and more visible. The Black Sash in its later years can clearly be positioned in a social-democrat framework. The force of circumstance has pushed the organization away from a more traditional liberal perspective...".

The Black Sash has always been driven by a passion for rights, particularly the rights denied to disadvantaged and poor people. The source of this passion is the everyday injustices witnessed by the seven advice offices across the country (Black Sash Annual Report, 1996).

Thirdly, considering the dynamics of an issue like the above, one realizes how difficult the organization's repositioning on all kinds of aspects must have been. Clearly, the organizational transition from anti-apartheid protest to being part of building the new democracy has not been easy.

Prior to 1994, the Black Sash was a part of the liberal establishment, which was concerned with social organizations aimed at moral influence rather than political power (Michelman, 1975:9). Michelman underlines that the protest movement was small, weak and ineffective, and to call it an 'establishment' is paradoxical since the term commonly implies a seat of power and influence. Nevertheless, decimated and threatened as it was, there was a liberal establishment, a kind of interlocking directorate of organizations and individuals who served the liberal cause. They co-

operated with one another in organizing protests. They swelled one another's membership lists, served on each other's committees, and underwrote each other's expenses – "they took in one another's washing" (Michelman, 1975:9).

The aforementioned point is of particular significance for this part of the analysis, in relation to the evolution of the Black Sash as an interest group from being a pressure group to being an NGO. The unbanning of the liberation movements in 1990 and the first democratic general election in 1994 were watershed events that profoundly altered the political terrain in South Africa. These events heralded the restructuring of the South African society and forced South Africans to re-examine their roles in the new environment.

Burton elaborates on the transition during the nineties by saying that some members "...certainly felt that our goals had been achieved and that we were now not going to be needed any more...". It is clear that if the organization was only a political protest movement it would have closed, but because of the advice offices and the patent need for them, they knew that their work was still needed. It is easy to deduce that the political environment and policies that surrounded an organization like the Black Sash differed greatly before and after 1994. The contemporary Black Sash that transformed into a professional NGO in 1995 finds itself in a very different country to the one that saw the birth of the organization in 1955.

There is much in place, for example a Constitution that guarantees the right to dignity and institutions such as the Human Rights Commission and the Constitutional Court (set up to promote and protect rights) (Golden Jubilee Report, 2005).

The fourth observation revolves around the issue of membership. For an organization like the Black Sash, not only has the political environment changed, but so have the resources and funds at their disposal. Fifty years ago the Black Sash was an organization whose work was done by volunteer members and whose funds were all raised from and by those members. Today it is an organization most of whose staff are fully active in their personal careers and therefore have limited time available.

In order to meet these challenges the Black Sash has been seeking over the past several years to establish what they wish to achieve, what resources are available to them, and how they should organize themselves in order to achieve their aims. In 1993 they wrote a new vision statement and revised their aims in order to clarify the focus of their work. Objectives were derived from these aims and are worked towards by means of annual strategic planning sessions.

When examining the resources available to them, they reaffirmed the fact that it is the combined skills and efforts of the committed staff and volunteers that have made the work of the Black Sash distinct. Merging the separate structures of a membership-based, volunteer-driven organization and a largely professional advice office-based service organization proved more difficult than they had anticipated.

Burton highlights that in the early days it was much easier to receive financial resources for the advice office work, which was clearly doing good work, than for the advocacy work, which was seen as much more political. She stresses that one of the strengths of the format of the old Black Sash was that its members raised some money themselves.

In consideration of the motive why people wanted to be and currently want to be associated with the Black Sash, Burton states that a continuous factor is surely the companionship of people who share ideas. She verifies this by saying that "...past members miss a vehicle through which they can express their concerns about society..." and that the people who come forward now to hold up the Black Sash are a different kind of people. "It is not easy to assess what prompts them to get involve."

The issue of membership must also be seen against the reality that before 1994 the Black Sash had been sustained and led by its volunteer membership. Volunteers, after 1994, continued to be active in the organization as associates, while the task of giving direction and management was undertaken by a team of staff members.

The last observation is in terms of inter-sectoral co-operation, a field in which the Black Sash can claim considerable success. Considering the number and variety of groups within which the Black Sash contextualizes itself today, it is interesting to note that although the Black Sash is an independent organization, it networks closely with a number of other groups and organizations

engaged in similar work and campaigns. By networking with local community organizations and NGOs on the one hand and with international groupings and organizations on the other, crucial issues are raised and campaigns enjoy broader support (Black Sash Annual Report, 1993).

A concluding remark, before commenting on the relevance of the theory, is in relation to the driver of change from a group perspective. The point can be made that the narrative of the Black Sash can not be seen in isolation of the political sequence of events of South Africa. The end of apartheid and the advent of democracy are certainly the single most important driver of change that lead to the transformation of the organizational structure of the Black Sash.

4.2.2 Relevance of the theory to the Black Sash as a group

When looking at the definition of an interest group (as set out in chapter two), it is evident that the Black Sash meets the requirements and falls within the limits of the criteria to qualify as an interest group. There is, however, a problem. It can be argued that if a definition is a statement of the meaning of a word or word group, it appears as if the general definition of interest groups as presented is somewhat narrow. That means that a more inclusive definition might help to facilitate the manifestation of contemporary interest groups.

While examining the Black Sash from a group perspective, certain clear-cut features of the organization came to the fore, which by their very nature are arguably common traits of all interest groups. These traits are so common and predictable to the make-up of interest group organizations that their mere occurrence justifies their inclusion in the definition of interest groups. This particular observation raises a question in respect of the conceivably archaic nature of the existing definitions of interest groups.

The relevant features of the prior statement regarding common traits are:

- The organization's specific reason for existence. Without falling prey to simplification, it can be stated that all groups come into life for a specific reason. The reason for existence is thus a validated criterion for defining an interesting group, as it will reveal why a group came to life as well as the manner in which it came to life.

- The principles of the organization. Each organization, which can be categorized as part of the interest group society, surely has some set of principles which captures the essence of that which the group stands for.
- The political role of the organization. The majority of interest groups play a certain role in society which is mostly of a political nature. The degree and intensity of the political role may be microscopic, but it will nonetheless be sufficient to be regarded as a political role of some sort.
- The motive of the group. That passion for a specific purpose or value, which is the driving force behind the activity of the group, is an important part of the clarification and perception of the foundation of a group.

The study of the Black Sash as an interest group in general highlighted the possibility of putting forward a thought about the expansion of the essential elements that the definition of a present-day interest group should contain. A definition which contains the fundamentals needed to technically qualify as an interest group in the 21st century will contribute substantially to the field of interest group politics by way of raising new questions.

In an attempt to place the Black Sash in a particular framework in terms of the theories of interest group organizations, the questions posed in chapter two needs to be further expanded. Consider Sabatier's (1992:100) questions which serve as a platform for the diverse stances each theory represents.

1. How do political interest groups get organized? Who bears the organization costs and why?
2. Why do people join an organization that promotes political concerns? What percentages of people who share a political belief actually join an interest group that seeks to promote that belief?
3. How important are the group's political positions to its leaders and members?
4. What implications does this have for the extent of belief congruence between members and leaders within a group?

Question one above proves to be relevant in the present-day attempts at theorizing about interest groups. Group formation is in fact a crucial starting point for theorizing about the existence of interest groups.

The second question, however, raises a problem with respect to the different theories and their viewpoints on membership. The problem which comes to mind relates to the momentous question of why people join organizations. Is this feature an indication of whether an organization is an interest group or not?

This research study entirely rejects the idea that an interest group is only an interest group provided that it revolves around membership. The case study of the Black Sash discloses that it was once a membership-based organization with volunteers. Later it underwent structural changes and became an organisation that could no longer be joined. This feature therefore not prohibits the Black Sash from being a part of the interest group society.

The third question presents a problem particularly relevant to the interest group society of today. The issue of leader-member belief congruence is a very valuable design to capture an essential part of the operation of interest groups. Its implication should, however, be expanded to incorporate the fine distinction of leader-staff belief congruence as well.

Organizations today are confronted by the issue of whether group leaders reflect the policy views of their staff members and vice versa. Leader-staff belief congruence does not imply that an activist-type personality is a prerequisite for being recruited as a staff member for a specific interest group organization.

The leader-staff belief congruence links directly to question four, which deliberates the importance of politics over time. This question does not need any further clarification as it remains highly relevant. A last point in terms of theories will be an attempt to place the Black Sash within the boundaries of one of the five proposed theories Sabatier discusses. There is not one specific theory which completely fits the characteristics of the Black Sash. A new theory can in fact be created embodying features from each of the existing theories. Such a theory would be a perfect fit for the Black Sash. For the time being, Truman's Social and Disturbance theory gets the closest.

Mention will now be made of variables that influence the functioning of interest group politics. The case study of the Black Sash with regard to these variables proves that the pattern of policy which regulated and currently regulates the group, together with the political culture which surrounded it over the years until today, has a direct link with the form, intensity and scope of its core business.

4.3 The political strategy behind the action of the Black Sash

4.3.1 Observations about the Black Sash from an action point of view

In terms of type of action, it has been shown how the organization differed before and after 1994. Four general observations can be made in this regard.

The first issue can broadly be seen as the functions of the Black Sash. In the early days, the Black Sash funds and personnel were thinly spread among the desperate needs of Africans, and rapidly became a service organization that its founders had not envisaged. The leadership during the second phase of the organization's existence (1975 – 1990) saw the need for a triple function which made large demonstrations no longer the central activity. They described these functions in their periodic retrospective summations.

- The first function was “to maintain a bridge, however small, of sympathy and understanding between the various racial groups in our country”.
- The second function, was “to mitigate, to some extent, the inhuman effects of the implementation of the policy of apartheid”, to help Africans to deal with the complicated laws which restrict and control their whole lives.
- The third function involved the concern for the rule of law, which was at the basis of the founding of the Black Sash: “to keep a watching brief on the steady advance of official tyranny in our public affairs” (Michelman, 1975:88).

In 1994, under the new government, the Black Sash found that while many welcome changes had taken place, a great deal remained the same. From all the regions, reports confirmed that the difficulties confronting the poorest sector had not disappeared. Unemployment, lack of housing, inadequate systems and insufficient government funds for the delivery of social benefits, together with the harsh reality of living in situations of violence and crime, still made life intolerable for much

of the population. The caseloads and the queues of people waiting for advice at the various advice offices continued to grow (Black Sash Annual Report, 1994).

The second comprehensive observation deals with the methods the organization pursued. The literature reveals that the Black Sash was first conceived as an organization of pressure and protest. Up to a certain point in the continuation of the organization, protest remained one of its major activities. Specifically the years 1969 – 1973, saw the Black Sash standing with placards in silent protest against issues like forced removals, the break-up of African family life, conditions in the homelands, bus apartheid, migrant labour, African wages, the loss of the Coloured municipal franchise, all forms of punishment without trial, censorship, thought control, restrictions of university autonomy, deaths in detention, passport removals, the right to dual action, and the right to protest (Michelman, 1975:189).

These protesting women with the sashes were the targets of tomatoes, eggs, tennis-balls and ink, to say nothing of the telescopic lenses on the cameras of the Security Police. The literature reveals that catcalls, sneers, and physical attacks were not uncommon during those days. Signs of approval and support for their actions were the exception.

The Black Sash campaign against the Group Areas Act, for example, clearly illustrates how its protests developed beyond a simple commentary on political injustice. While the women did not abandoned statements of moral indignation, they created practical programmes, both to delay the effects of the law where possible and to help the victims of it. While it exhaustively probed every legal angle, the Black Sash also provided direct aid to those evicted under the Act.

Before 1994, analysis and lobbying in the field of legislation had been the role mainly of the voluntary members. Their activism, of course, has been formed by the information brought to the advice offices by people directly affected by such legislation. Until the advent of democracy, the voice of the Black Sash had been one of almost constant protest, which made this organization unpopular with legislators (Black Sash Annual Report, 1993).

The third observation reveals something about the manner in which the Black Sash approaches advocacy at present, which it does in several ways.

- The organization lobbies national, provincial and local government on creating new policy and amending existing policy.
- It monitors policy implementation at all levels, voicing problems in implementation and service delivery and recommending solutions.
- It raises awareness within government, among networking partners and in the community (Black Sash Annual Report, 2003).

The work of the contemporary Black Sash is organized into three programmes:

- paralegal casework/advice;
- outreach, monitoring and rights education; and
- advocacy at a provincial and national level.

The unique strength of the organization lies in its capacity to make the connection between the problems experienced by individuals and the systemic problems arising from government policies or programmes (Black Sash Annual Report, 2000).

The organization furthermore engages government with its research findings, especially in areas where it does not have the capacity to do the work itself. A recent example is the lobbying around the Children's Bill, when the Black Sash was involved with various aspects of children's access to social assistance and security (Golden Jubilee Report, 2005).

The last observation revolves around funding. In more recent times one of the major causes for anxiety has been insecurity about future funding. During the second half of 1994 it became apparent that many donors, who had in the past supported the organizations working to bring apartheid to an end were channelling their funding directly to the new government's Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (Black Sash Annual Report, 1994).

Burton discloses that "...up till now, the organization has been largely dependent on international funding. The international community has been incredibly supportive of South Africa. The time has come, however, that South Africa should support their own civil society. We need to convince

individuals and the corporate world that it is important to have an independent voice like the Black Sash. Independence and integrity are the things we have to offer to the corporate world...”.

Finally, mention should be made of the types of action which the Black Sash, as a driver of change, incorporated as part of its political strategy. The actions which had the most significant impact can once again not be seen in isolation from the political landscape of South Africa. The rise of civil society has thus been a major influence strengthening the development of the action agenda of the Black Sash over the years.

4.3.2 Relevance of the theory for the actions of the Black Sash

The beginning of chapter two made it clear that the methods chosen to use in advocacy depend upon several factors which – as revealed through the case study of the Black Sash – are all highly relevant. It is true that the political strategy of a group is in practice a function of the nature of the group as well as the resources at its disposal.

A lot has been written on the dynamics of resource allocation, when it comes to deciding which issues should appear on the organizational agenda. Something, which on the contrary, is not particularly evident throughout the literature on the determinants of a group’s political strategy, is the huge role which the absence of resources, especially (skilled) human resources, plays at any given time in the lifecycle of an interest group. The case study of the Black Sash highlighted this issue specifically.

The reason for such a lack of resources in the organization will perceptibly be a result of financial constraints. As seen in retrospect, this disables the organization’s political strategy to a great extent. It is not clear why there is no reference to this in the literature. This vagueness is a good illustration of the complexities of theorizing about interest groups.

It is true that the functioning of interest groups is continually dependent on a whole range of variables. Due to the nature of these variables the political strategy of interest groups can hardly ever be attributed to a single set of constant factors, which can serve as a type of list of supposed determinants. There is thus a need for theory on the role of especially human resources in the confirmation of an organization’s political strategy.

There is not much to conclude about the proposed theory of the direct and indirect methods groups may use in their advocacy efforts. It is in fact quite significant to note the relevance of all the forms of direct and indirect methods over the existence of the Black Sash. As shown in the observations above, it is clear that the Black Sash maintained and is still maintaining a healthy balance between direct and indirect methods of influence.

It is, however, interesting to note that the Black Sash has always viewed protest and the right to criticize as essential elements of the democratic process. The organization has therefore felt it necessary to record its objections in a manner that can be clearly seen and understood. It has striven to find ways and means of making its protests more effective and meaningful, but has had to operate within the strict and narrow limitations imposed by the law (Michelman, 1975:189). Means of making its advocacy efforts more effective and meaningful is something the contemporary Black Sash strives towards. Literature on means to achieve more effectiveness in advocacy is minimal and in need of more theorizing.

With regard to contemporary influences on the types of action a group undertakes, one would like to believe that an organization like the Black Sash – with a particularly loaded history of action over the years – would display signs that the changes in communications technology had had an impact on their political strategy over the years. It is, however, not easy to deduce in what way an individual group benefits from the influx of technology.

On the whole, a great increase in the amount of organized activity due to technology can be observed, but the way in which it influences each organization's individual action agenda is not obviously apparent. The case of the Black Sash revealed that the search for information instead of influence is of central importance, but in practice the one can not be perceived without the other.

The above statement in actual fact revealed a paradox in terms of the case study of the Black Sash. It can safely be said that in order to have influence, one needs to have information. Something which altered the landscape of access to information is the vast increase in the development of information and communication technologies over the past decade. Conversely, it is not clear what the increased access to information about an activity such as lobbying, for instance, has meant for the Black Sash.

The available theory on contemporary influences with regard to the types of action that interest groups incorporate, does not reveal substantial benchmarks against which one would, for example, be able say that technology indeed had a profound impact (or not) on the operations of the Black Sash. This issue of contemporary influences on the types of action organizations pursue is thus a very important concern, because it brings the interest group society as a whole the issue of whether they are indeed maintaining the status quo or not?

The question that needs to be posed is whether the theoretical databases of available direct and indirect methods, which have always been synonymous with interest groups, are still operating in the same manner since the entry of modern technology. Perhaps the time has come to review these (direct and indirect) methods by analysing the impact technology has had on each specific method in order to rewrite the way forward. This may even entail a complete new vocabulary.

4.4 Relationship between the Black Sash and the government

4.4.1 Observations about the relationship between the Black Sash and the government

On this topic only one general observation can be made. An instance occurred during the late nineties in which a cabinet minister said that their specific department needed partners to help resolve problems around the skills base, customer service, the design and application of technological systems and innovative thinking.

The government department accordingly challenged the Black Sash to be clear about whether it wanted to work in partnership with the government, or take on an adversarial role. The organization was thus challenged to find a balance in its relationship with government. No longer was an adversarial role sufficient and it often found itself working in partnership with them on one issue, while confronting them on another.

It is clear that on every level the Black Sash experienced tension between its partner and watchdog roles. Some officials expressed their desire for the Black Sash to do away with its watchdog role and rather show more support or sympathy. However, the organization still saw the need for a mechanism with which to hold government accountable. Just as the staff of the Black Sash constantly explores their own accountability to their constituencies and the poor, they believe the government must be challenged to make its commitment clear and be called to account for its

promises. In line with other civil society structures, the organization keeps a healthy critical distance from government in order to see clearly what needs to be done and communicate this in its work with them (Golden Jubilee Report, 2005).

One last remark on the observation of the relationship between the government and the Black Sash: An attempt should also be made to identify the driver of change in the unfolding of this relationship. On the other hand, the relationship itself does not stipulate such a basic cause. One can yet again attribute the dynamics of this relationship to the end of apartheid and the advent of democracy.

4.4.2 Relevance of the theory in terms of the relationship between the Black Sash and the government

It is interesting to note how the government sees the role of the Black Sash and how the organisation, as an interest group, responds to government's expectations. It is all the more interesting because the general role of the state in facilitating interest group organizations is not easily definable in the South African context.

Literature reveals that definite observations in terms of the role of government can effortlessly be made in more mature democracies. This statement, by implication, indicates that there is not an abundance of theory available on how the state shapes and facilitates the formation of interest groups in South Africa.

Theory that considers the boundaries between interest groups and government regarding the partner and watchdog roles will be a welcome contribution to the field of interest group societies. At the beginning of the 21st century such decisions are ever more a reality for these groups. Even if actual legislative changes are not the issue, these groups want to establish their reputation and credibility as expert sources of views in their field.

It is clear that even though the government, to a certain extent, expects groups to make a choice in terms of their relation to government, they seem to welcome the occasional confrontation, as they realize that these groups communicate from their experiences at grass-root level. This is especially true of the Black Sash. What is evident through the case study of the Black Sash is that it cannot be claimed that government's formal and informal methods of communication with interest

organizations are intended to achieve their (government's) own representative goals. This issue again reveals the dichotomy between partner and watchdog roles, though this time it is on the side of government.

On the contrary, without taking a broad view, it is evident that government places strong emphasis on their belief that groups have a substantial impact on policy outputs and that group activity allows for democratic responsiveness from the side of the government. In summary, one can conclude that there is scope to establish a new set of rules for this dynamic interplay between the co-operation of government and interest groups, as well as the reason behind these choices. The consequence of these actions in terms of the bigger picture should also be revealed.

4.5 The effects and influence that the Black Sash exerts

4.5.1 Observations about the impact of the Black Sash

It is understandable that it is near impossible to note all the achievements of the Black Sash over the entire span of its existence. Four observations can, however, be made quite easily. The first three are applicable to the Black Sash before 1990 and the last after 1990.

The first observation concerns the issue of morality. It is safe to say that the early Black Sash's dreams of triumphant leadership by moral persuasion and its early assumptions about the effectiveness, even the irresistibility, of determined women in politics were all repudiated by the results of the first five years.

The Black Sash had achieved neither a wide public following nor any political or moral leverage against the government. The organization's methods of political protest and public education had been unable to influence the government to revoke or amend even a single law. Its campaigns had, on occasion, influenced the government to delay implementation (Michelman, 1975:84).

The second observation revolves around the occurrence of public support. The occasional failure of public support had a quixotic effect on the early Black Sash and on the strength of its failures it widened its activities into an intensified stand against apartheid. The Black Sash had decided for liberalism in a society where the philosophy of liberalism had few admirers and where liberal was most often a term of abuse (Michelman, 1975:86).

Spink (1991) accordingly wrote that the organization could count an impressive list of failures, for seldom, if ever, had its protests actually managed to stop the passage of legislation destructive to human rights. The mere survival over all these years in a political climate inimical to human rights and dissent is not an inconsiderable achievement in itself.

The third very important observation about the impact of the Black Sash is publicity. That is something which flowed from the earlier activities of the organization. The women of the early days who aspired to form a constitution for a national movement were prominent people: lawyers, historians, social economists, civic office holders and business executives.

Throughout its history the Black Sash has sought publicity, not for itself but for the causes it has espoused. In the period before 1975, for instance, it published innumerable letters and articles in the press – on human rights, beach apartheid, African education, African taxation, drugs, cabinet responsibility, police raids, solitary confinement, deaths in detention, the removal of Coloured councillors from the Cape Town City Council – in addition to those published in support of the campaigns already mentioned (Michelman, 1975:191).

These women were always newsworthy socially but they had an even stronger appeal for the press. “Newspapers issued daily bulletins, in picture form and in print; cartoons were drawn and leaders were written; headlines and posters ‘told the world’ of the swelling tide of anger sweeping through the women of South Africa. The publicity was not limited to South African coverage” (Michelman, 1975:34).

Spink goes further by writing that “...Helen Suzman, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Black Sash, had commented on how the quiet persistence of the Black Sash, its nagging, had had its effects over the years: ‘There was a time, I remember, when the very mention of the Black Sash used to send the then Minister of Bantu Administration and Development into a paroxysm of sibilant rage. He used to hiss “Black Sash” as if it were a nest of vipers. These days the reaction is less violent, far more resigned, and indeed almost conciliatory. Concessions are sometimes made or at least promised’. What Black Sash women themselves would probably regard as the highest accolade of all, however, came from a Nationalist junior cabinet minister. ‘We hate them,’ he said. ‘They are our consciences’...” (Spink, 1991:309).

The last observation involves the issue of training. It is noteworthy to say that the Black Sash has proved itself to be an excellent training ground, and somewhat of a springboard for people to launch their careers. Volunteers find they are able to enter the job market relatively easily once they have spent some months with the organization. They are able to produce a CV and references, and have experience of office routines, work reviews and an understanding of how organizations work.

In conclusion, it is not unproblematic to discern what the driver of change was in terms of the impact the Black Sash exerted. Given the aforementioned observations, publicity and public support seem to be important indicators of possible trends. Publicity comes down to the methods and techniques of the political strategy of the organization. That can evidently be linked to the unexplored territory of the impact of contemporary technological influences. Public support in all its dimensions can once again be associated with the rise of civil society.

4.5.2 Relevance of the theory in terms of the impact of the Black Sash

Chapter two made the point that the literature on influence has mostly “generated more smoke than fire”, indicating that this is a facet of interest group theory that does not provide clear-cut standards of what the sources of influence are and what not. The case study of the Black Sash to a certain extent contradicted the supposition of a literature deficiency in terms of effect and influence. It seems as if the available theory embraces the fundamental nature of what an interest group organization should do to have an effect of some sort.

The hypothesis of chapter two, which states that one may form an idea of the effects groups have by looking at the functions they fulfil, is proven correct through the case study. The Black Sash arguably reaches most of its effects through its practical aid, training and outreach activities and its accredited paralegal training. The organization furthermore indeed serves as a good training ground. All these factors contribute to the effect the organization has in the wider context. One aspect, which can serve as a manifestation of the effect the group exerted, is the publicity it generated. This relates to something which deserves closer attention at this point, namely benchmarks for the demonstration of effect.

A related aspect which warrants consideration is the effect of moral influence. The importance and effect of moral influence have been neglected. A further important aspect which proved to be true is

that the effectiveness of a group is not by any measure determined by the acceptance of the policies it advocates by policymakers. It is in fact very rarely the case that the effect of an interest group can be isolated from the effects of other political forces.

From the viewpoint of factors which influence the impact of interest group organizations, the case study of the Black Sash clearly reveals the legitimacy of the statement that as the proportion of group funding increases, so does the power and access of the group. Another factor which, despite the supposedly huge impact of information and communication technologies, does not seem to alter the political culture is the non-appearance of extensiveness and enforcement of public disclosure laws.

It is therefore suggested that a comprehensive theory of impact for the 21st century should entail standards for access to information about up-to-date lobbying activities with the potential to influence lobbying methods significantly.

4.6 The Black Sash from a critical perspective

4.6.1 Observations about the criticisms of the Black Sash

Last of all it is valuable to look at the criticism the organization had to endure over the years, and whether there has been a remarkable shift in terms of the grounds on which the Black Sash has been criticized. In this regard only one observation was made, which is about the grounds of criticism.

Burton explains that it is not so easy to discern on what grounds the organization gets criticized today because of the current political context. However, she declares that the basic criticism of the early Black Sash was that the organization “was rocking the boat”. Other painful debate and criticism they had to undergo was in the 1980s, when there was so much violence. They were accused of criticizing only state violence and not criticizing violence that came from the liberation movement and from the left. “We were accused of having sacrificed our integrity and not being impartial – that is where the traditional liberals wrote us of”.

There is much to say about the criticism the organization had to tolerate during its early existence. However, as Burton rightly states, it is not as easy to identify the basis on which the organization gets criticized today. One can infer from the broader political framework in which the Black Sash fits that there must be criticism, as there should be of all interest groups that operate in the political

environment of today. The driver of change in terms of the criticism which the Black Sash had to endure over the years runs roughly parallel with the changing political climate of South Africa.

4.6.2 Relevance of the theory in terms of the criticism of the Black Sash

The grounds for criticism of interest group organizations mentioned in chapter two confronted this research study with a dilemma, as each one of the suggested grounds is of such an achievable nature that it in fact prompts you to look for evidence.

There is no straightforward way to determine on what grounds the organization gets criticized today, but it is easy to visualize the legitimacy of the proposed grounds on which interest group organizations might get criticized. The Black Sash is in this regard a special case as it embodies a stronghold of justice. It can therefore be analysed as a model that can be regarded as representative of thousands of humanitarian interest group organizations. It is evident from the grounds for criticism as set out in chapter two, that this is not applicable to the broad spectrum of categories of interest groups in existence at present.

This consequently pleads for a new set of theory on grounds for criticism which can be used as a measuring mechanism for reviewing groups such as human rights NGOs. The reason for this proposal is that it will be impossible to criticize a group like the Black Sash on the basis that it for instance entrenches political inequality by strengthening the voice of the poor. This type of argument would typically apply to an interest group that represents a segment of the population that for example does not have access to all kinds of resources so that political inequality will be established should its voices be strengthened.

An explanation like the above can be made for each of the grounds set out in chapter two. This is illustrative of the need for theory on the criticism today's NGOs are subjected to. An original approach for the examination of interest groups needs to be developed in order to be able to put forward criteria that can be used to assess whether groups get criticized. Such action will broaden the field of interest group politics by making the interpretation of trends possible over periods of time.

4.7 Evaluation

This chapter focused on five main themes. Each theme was firstly divided according to certain general observations about the organization as an interest group. Secondly, the case study of the Black Sash was used to qualify the relevance of some theoretical aspects in terms of being representative of the situation in the 21st century.

The first theme started by analysing the Black Sash as a group. In terms of observations the main elements which came to the fore concerned the name change of the organization, the principles of the organization and also the repositioning of the organization as an interest group. This repositioning entailed the transformation from pressure group to NGO. The other two issues that were commented upon were the membership of the organization and the field of inter-sectoral co-operation.

The part on the relevance of the theory produced four interesting findings. The first was that the definition of the constitution of interest groups of the 21st century demands a review in terms of broadening it. The second finding was in terms of the theories of group formation. It was found that membership should not be seen as a precondition for making the grade as an interest group. The Black Sash was also roughly positioned within the framework of Truman's social and disturbance theory. The last issue with regards to theories was a proposal that emphasis should not only be placed on leader-member belief congruence, but also on leader-staff belief congruence.

The driver of change that was identified from a group perspective was the political transition of South Africa. The reason for that was that the Black Sash and the work it does are parallel with the political landscape of this country.

The second major topic this chapter focused upon concerned the type of action groups follow. With regard to general observations of the Black Sash, the focus was predominantly on the functions the organization fulfilled over the years and the balance of direct and indirect methods it implemented throughout its existence. The last two important observations of the organization focused on advocacy as the core of what the Black Sash stands for and the relationship of the organization with its donors.

The relevance of the theory concerning the actions responsible for the overall political strategy of a group was also examined. It was found that despite the wealth of theory on the topic of advocacy and methods, there was not enough emphasis on the important role of (skilled) human resources and the consequential result of the lack thereof. Another major ruling that came to the fore explored the absence of theory on the impact which contemporary technology has on the construction of a group's political strategy.

The driver of change that was identified as the reason behind the alteration of influence on advocacy strategies and the ensuing techniques is the rise of civil society over the past few decades.

The third major topic of this chapter involved the relationship between government and the Black Sash. The main observation in this regard was the tension between the partner and watchdog roles experienced by the Black Sash and its continuing hesitancy around this issue. The theory on the relationship between interest groups and government proves to be insufficient in terms of its availability in the South African context. It is not clear how the state shapes and facilitates the formation of interest groups in our country. It was also found that there is scope for a new set of rules for the interplay of co-operation between government and interest groups.

The driver of change in terms of this relationship was also found in the political transformation of South Africa, embodied in the end of apartheid and the advent of democracy.

The fourth major topic of this chapter gave a dissemination of the Black Sash in terms of its impact and influence. The main observations in this regard were the issue of morality, the public support the organization enjoyed, the publicity it sought and the way in which it served as a training ground. The theory on the effect and influence which interest group organizations exert brought interesting findings to the fore. It was found that the functions these groups should perform are indeed an indication of their effect and influence.

It was furthermore found that the issue of moral influence deserves more attention in terms of the interest group society of the 21st century. A last point in terms of the relevance of the theory relates to the need for standards for access to information on the lobbying activities of interest groups.

The driver of change in terms of this topic was in addition identified as the rise of civil society and the influence of technology on political strategy.

The last major topic this chapter dealt with revolved around the criticism the Black Sash had to endure over the years and how it fits in within the political framework of the country. There was only one general observation and that was about the grounds for criticism. The theory on criticism proves to be in need of a measuring system for criticism for interest groups in the 21st century.

The driver of change in this respect was identified as the changing political climate of South Africa.

This concludes the chapter on the analysis of the Black Sash in terms of observations and the relevance of the theory. This chapter, together with chapter two and three, will consequently form the basis for the opinion which will be put forward in the next chapter. The following chapter will argue whether interest group societies of the 21st century are maintaining the status quo or not.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSION

This concluding chapter of the research report will make an effort to summarize and discuss the most important findings of the study. It will bring together findings in terms of the literature reviewed. Furthermore, the irregularities and surprise findings which came to the fore will be discussed. Reasons for the aforementioned phenomena will be put forward. Attention will also be given to the larger relevance of the study and aspects that need further research. The possible implications of this study – for either policy or practice – will in the last instance be discussed.

5.1 Most important findings of the study

This research study consisted of three main chapters, respectively theory, description and analysis.

The chapter on theory discussed theoretical perspectives on the interest group society and was presented in line with certain common themes as revealed throughout the literature. These themes were respectively: type of group, type of action, response from government, effect and influence (prominence) of groups and lastly criticism of interest group organizations. A working definition of an interest group, which was influenced by several scholars, was also set out at the beginning of the second chapter.

To elaborate more on the themes, a chief characteristic of the first theme was the attempt to explain the link between pressure groups, interest groups and CSOs. The aim of the second theme was to bring across the complex interplay of forces, which determine the manner in which interest groups can pursue their political strategy. The third theme attempted to describe the environment in which group-government relations on a daily basis play off against each other and it emphasized that the dynamic nature thereof is one of constant change.

The fourth theme, effects and influence of groups, gave a substantial overview of the whole spectrum of positions from which the specific theme can be approached. The fifth theme provided a framework against which the criticism of an organization like the Black Sash can be categorized. The chapter on description presented a descriptive summary of the history and current characteristics of

the Black Sash. This chapter was divided into three main sections in order to describe the role and activities of the organization during three different eras of fundamental political significance.

The chapter on analysis embodied the development of the Black Sash until the present, including significant drivers of change. This chapter focused on the five themes, which the theoretical chapter put forward. Each theme was firstly divided according to certain general observations about the Black Sash as an interest group. It was then further divided by means of the case study of the Black Sash to qualify the relevance of some theoretical aspects in terms of being representative of the situation which the 21st century presents this field with.

The driver of change identified from a group perspective was the political transition of South Africa. The reason for that was that the Black Sash and the work it does are parallel with the political landscape of this country. The driver of change, identified for the type of action that the Black Sash pursues, was the rise of civil society over the past few decades.

In terms of the relationship between the Black Sash and government, the driver of change was again found in the political transformation of South Africa, which is embodied in the end of apartheid and the advent of democracy. The hesitancy of the organization between the role of partner and the role of watchdog is very apparent.

In terms of the impact of the Black Sash, the driver of change was identified as the rise of civil society and the influence of technology on its political strategy. Lastly, the driver of change about criticism was identified as the changing political climate of South Africa. In other words, the grounds for criticism must again be considered in close association with the government of the day.

The above is a summary of the content of the three main chapters of the research report. However, the introductory chapter of this study put forward two research questions, which now need to be answered. The first question was to establish whether the available theory on interest groups is sufficient to conduct an impact assessment of the operations of the interest group society and the second question was to establish if the current theory is perhaps in need of supplementation.

Both these questions must be answered against the background of interest groups of the 21st century and the way in which these groups see to it in the present-day context. The first question only demands a yes/no answer, while the second question demands reasons.

In terms of the first question, this research study clearly illustrated that there are shortcomings in the theory, which will make it impossible to conduct impact assessments of contemporary interest groups.

Concerning the second question, this research study has proven that the theory is in need of supplementation. The research study proved that the theoretical basis of interest group societies, as we know it, is not entirely suitable for conducting impact assessment. The reason for that is the split between theory and practice. More specifically, the theory has not altered sufficiently in correspondence with the manner in which interest groups have evolved over the last decade.

Furthermore, in this chapter an attempt will be made to offer an opinion on Tierney's supposition, which states that the safest guess in terms of future predictions on interest groups is that it will look a lot like the status quo. In other words, as set out in the introductory chapter, how much of the same will still have the same effect on the political system? Moreover, at what point will more of the same require new explanations and maybe even a new vocabulary?

This research study demonstrated two certainties with reference to Tierney's supposition. The first is that the shortcomings in the theory, which is supposed to serve as benchmark, pose a real threat if nothing is done about it. This threat embodies itself in the universal need for impact assessments, which as a result will not be possible. The second certainty is that if the theory is enhanced, the potential positive effect of proper impact assessments will be to alter the way in which the relationship between interest groups and public policy is understood.

These two certainties thus shape the answer to Tierney's supposition. In terms of future predictions, interest groups of the 21st century will not look a lot like the status quo. It must be kept in mind that the case study of the Black Sash revealed that the current literature on interest groups does still reflect some of the characteristics that which the theory put forward, but that there are 21st century attributes that are lacking in the literature.

It is true that much of the same theory will not be sufficient to have the same effect on the political system. It is furthermore true that new explanations of certain phenomena and even a new vocabulary on several topics may be required. The areas that need innovative explanations and vocabulary will be commented upon later in this chapter.

5.2 Findings in terms of the literature under review

Regarding the theoretical perspective, a great number of parallels were drawn throughout the research study, but to conclude three main findings will receive attention.

5.2.1 One of the first questions posed in the introduction of this research study was whether the motivation behind an interest group is always borne and sustained by a certain passion. Another question was whether this passion must of necessity be shared by members and staff at all times.

The literature plainly stated that the establishment and sustainability of an interest group organization must arise from a certain passion. The case study of the Black Sash illustrated that a passion for a specific virtue, which particularly in the later years of the existence of the organization has been human rights, can be identified as the binding factor of the organization over its entire existence. In other words: an interest group is always borne and sustained by a certain passion.

5.2.2 Another issue is whether people join organizations to be part of a collective struggle with like-minded colleagues? That was certainly an issue a decade and more ago, but the people who join interest group organizations today are a different kind of people.

Never in the history of South Africa has the separation in terms of clear-cut spheres been as strong as the divide between the government, business and civil society of today. The argument can consequently be put forward that individuals today make a deliberate choice when job-hunting as to which sphere they want to serve. In other words, when deciding to serve civil society, an activist type of personality may play a crucial role.

Accordingly, the question of whether people join organizations because of the collective struggle of like-minded colleagues is in dire need of justification. An innovative approach concerning the profile and orientation of individuals serving the civil society of today will be a well-merited improvement. The case of the Black Sash did not necessarily reveal homogeneity of activist-type personalities among staff members. There was, however, a contention observed among staff that such a personality makes life easier in the working environment in which they operate.

Chapter two revealed that the issue regarding organizational membership is particularly relevant for the Black Sash, as definite patterns of evolution can be observed over the life span of the organization. This statement relates to the previous issue in that a new discourse in the literature is needed, because membership alone cannot be the prerequisite for qualifying as an interest group in the 21st century. Since the early 1990s the Black Sash can no longer be considered a membership-based organization, but it is definitely still an interest group.

The matter of leader-member belief congruence is another valuable design to capture an essential part of the operation of interest groups. The research study proved, however, that the implication of leader-member belief congruence should be expanded by incorporating the fine distinction of leader-staff belief congruence as well. Organizations today are confronted by the situation of whether group leaders reflect the policy views of their staff members and vice versa.

The next point relates to the notion of purposive and solidary benefits. The effect these benefits have on the employees of the civil society sector of today is clearly misjudged, as it is underestimated. The Black Sash revealed that the every-day context within which the employees of this organization work is one where the policy objectives they pursue are of no direct material benefit to themselves, but they nonetheless give all their energy to obtain certain policy objectives. That is where the purposive and solidary benefits of their positions come into play. This notable feature of interest group organizations offers scope for consideration.

5.2.3 A different point, which was investigated during this research study, was how the continuum of pressure groups and NGOs fits into the general scheme of interest groups. Although the available literature on interest groups makes the connection between these groups, a new discourse for interest groups should liberate itself, by making explicit room for groups (such as the Black Sash) which evolve over time from one form of group to another.

5.3 Surprise findings and possible reasons for them

In the beginning of this research study there was no apparent reason to believe that any surprise findings would come to the fore. The case study of the Black Sash proved the negative expectation wrong by presenting three results that are at variance with the current perception of interest group organizations.

5.3.1 Chapter three revealed that indirect techniques include methods which entail publicity, leaflets, advertisements, petitions, etc. When an organization consequently feels that the media are not giving sufficient coverage to an issue or are unsympathetic to its point of view, it may decide to initiate a public relations campaign by bringing home to the reader/viewer/listener the terrible consequences if the action it is advocating is not taken.

The idea of a public relations campaign with the aforementioned aim makes sense in theory, but in the case of the Black Sash it does not seem to have been put into practice. This absence of public relations campaigns is a trait of 21st century interest groups that demands further investigation, as reasons need to come to the fore why organizations do not pursue this option fully. The answer may be positioned in an interest group's relationship with government.

5.3.2 The case study of the Black Sash is illustrative of an organization that was once the object of extensive publicity. The evolution of the organization in accordance with the political transition of the country changed this dramatically. Despite the manner in which the Black Sash portrays the incidence of publicity, the available theory on interest groups seems to fail in revealing what role the issue of publicity should play in the contemporary interest group society.

5.3.3 Another interesting finding that became clear throughout the case study of the Black Sash was the virtue of moral influence. Moral influence is one of the most prominent values of especially the early Black Sash but the latter existence of the organization can still be associated with this virtue.

The value and extent of moral influence as a ground for assessing the impact of an interest group organization is very distinctly true in practice, but fails to find manifestation in the available theory on interest groups.

5.3.4 A last significant observation is the fact that the majority of major works on interest groups were all published during the early nineties of the previous century, which justifies a fresh analysis of this segment of our society.

5.4 Larger relevance of the research study and aspects that need further research

A more inclusive definition might help to facilitate the manifestation of contemporary interest groups. While examining the Black Sash from a group perspective, certain clear-cut features of the organization came to the fore, which by their nature are arguably common traits of all interest groups. Features that could be included in a new definition are the organization's specific reason for existence, the principles of the organization, the political role of the organization as well as the motive of the group.

Chapter two proposed a few principal techniques of influence. The one that seemed especially relevant in terms of the Black Sash and its advice offices was the mobilization of grassroots pressure. This point proved to be true in practice as well. In terms of impact it would be useful to know how successful the organization really is with respect to the mobilization of grassroots pressure. Further research will contribute to this occurrence by revealing how an internal audit will go about measuring this phenomenon.

On the point of the effectiveness of interest groups – chapter two stated three elements responsible for putting forward an answer. One of these elements is the attributes of the group itself. They include physical resources, the possession of a journal/newspaper, the prestige of a group, its

organizational cohesiveness and the internal political and administrative skills of leaders. All these attributes, however, proved to be relevant in practice.

In terms of interest groups of the 21st century it is necessary to make more of the changing nature of work and the consequent attributes needed to make a group of today effective.

The impact of information and communication technology, especially the internet, needs additional research. A comprehensive theory of impact for the 21st century should entail standards for access to information about up-to-date lobbying activities with the potential to significantly influence lobbying methods by means of an organization's website.

Another trend over the past decade has been that of internships offered by various interest group organizations. With reference to the above elements, which are responsible for judging the effectiveness of groups' future, research should be conducted as to how internships and internship policies contribute to the potential impact interest groups may have.

A lot has been written about the dynamics of resource allocation when it comes to making decisions about the way in which issues should appear on the organizational agenda. What is not particularly evident throughout the theoretical literature is the huge role that the absence of skilled human resources plays at any given time in the lifecycle of an interest group. The implication of such absence would benefit from further research.

In terms of criticism: the Black Sash embodies the stronghold of justice and can therefore be analysed as a model, which would be regarded as representative of thousands of humanitarian interest group organizations. A new set of theory on grounds for criticism, which can be utilized as yardsticks to review groups such as human rights NGOs, will be well received. An original approach for the examination of interest groups needs to be developed to be able to put forward criteria, which can be used to assess whether groups are criticized.

On the subject of the relationship between the government and civil society, the available literature society is based on more mature democracies than South Africa. It is therefore difficult to conclude what the stance of the relationship is at this stage.

It is, however, an area that deserves considerable attention. There is not an abundance of theory in the field of how the state shapes and facilitates the formation of interest groups in South Africa. There is scope to establish a new set of rules for this dynamic interplay between the co-operation of government and interest groups as well as the reason behind these choices.

5.5 Possible implications of research study

This research study shed light upon the effectiveness of existing yardsticks for measurement purposes and contributed towards efforts of conducting impact assessments. Furthermore, it contributed to the field of interest group studies by challenging a well-known characteristic of these groups. The characteristic is that the field of interest group politics is ‘theory rich and data poor’. The empirical case study of the Black Sash thus made a significant input in this regard.

The first chapter of this research report stated that the importance of this study is that it will act in response to a wide array of concerns, disputes and persistent conjecture that the civil society sector of the world is in need of a dawn of professional norms and standards to show results and impact via assessment of their significant policies, programmes or projects. This research study accomplished a bit by shedding light on the relevance of the benchmarks against which evaluative studies can be conducted.

It can be stated that the research objectives of this study as set out in the introductory chapter were all met. The case study of the Black Sash revealed that a parallel can indeed be drawn between theory and practice but that there are areas that are completely without theoretical foundation and areas that need further research.

- It was established that contemporary interest groups still reflect some of the characteristics the current literature put forward.
- It was established that the passion which gives birth to interest groups, is indeed the most important factor of continuation for the lasting interest group.
- It was established that the collective struggle of like-minded colleagues does not generate the same amount of support as it did a decade and more ago.
- It was established that the emphasis of contemporary interest groups should be more on leader-staff belief congruence and less so on leader-member belief congruence.

- It was established that the power of purposive and solidary benefits for employees of contemporary interest groups should not be underestimated in the 21st century.

The Black Sash made it possible to understand the lack of reasons for the absence of public relations campaigns at the moment. The Black Sash underscored the lack of theory on the role of publicity and specifically the way in which contemporary interest groups may or may not benefit from it. The Black Sash shed light on the virtue of moral influence, a characteristic of the majority of contemporary CSOs and a function of these groups that is much underestimated.

The larger relevance of this research report exemplified the need for a more inclusive definition of the makeup of an interest group. The need was furthermore expressed for the construction of theory for measurement of successful mobilization of grassroots pressure. The impact of information and communication technologies as well as the impact of the lack of skilled human resources is furthermore in need of attention. It can lastly be stated that grounds for criticism of CSOs like the Black Sash need to be theorized upon.

Finally, it is clear that the time has come to formulate new explanations and even a new vocabulary for the aforementioned deficiencies. The Black Sash, as representative of a 21st century interest group, revealed that adherence to the need for supplementation of current theory will alter the way in which the relationship between interest groups and public policy is understood.

REFERENCES

- Baumgartner, F. R & Leech, B. L., 1998. *Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and in Political Science*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Berry, J. M., 1997. *The Interest Group Society*. 3rd ed. United States: Longman.
- Black Sash, 1993. *Annual Report*.
- Black Sash, 1994-1995. *Annual Report*.
- Black Sash, 1996. *Annual Report*.
- Black Sash, 1999. *Annual Report*.
- Black Sash, 2000. *Annual Report*.
- Black Sash, 2002-2003. *Annual Report*.
- Camay, P & Gordon, A. J., 1998. *Advocacy in Southern Africa: Lessons for the Future*. Johannesburg: CORE.
- Camay, P & Gordon, A. J., 2001. Two Commas and a Full Stop: Civicus Index on Civil Society – South Africa Country Report. *Prepared by Core and IDASA for SANGOCO*.
- Camay, P & Gordon, A. J., 2002. *A Guide to Lobbying for Civil Society*. Johannesburg: CORE.
- Cigler, J. A. & Loomis, B. A., 1995. Contemporary Interest Group Politics: More than “More of the Same”. In: J. A Cigler & Loomis, B. A, eds. 4th ed. *Interest Group Politics*. Washington, D. C: CQ Press, 393-406.
- Cigler, J. A. & Loomis, B. A., 1995. Introduction: The Changing Nature of Interest Group Politics. In: J. A Cigler & Loomis, B. A, eds. 4th ed. *Interest Group Politics*. Washington, D. C: CQ Press, 1-32.
- Eckstein, H., 1960. *Pressure Group Politics*. London: Ruskin House.
- Golden Jubilee Report: 1955 – 2005. 2005. Cape Town: The Black Sash.
- Habib, A & Taylor, R., 1999. South Africa: Anti-Apartheid NGOs in Transition. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 10 (1).
- Heinrich, V. F., 2001. The Role of NGOs in Strengthening the Foundations of South African Democracy. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*, 12 (1).
- Heywood, A., 1997. *Politics*. London: Macmillan Press Limited.

- Hojnacki, M & Kimball, D. C., 1998. Organized Interests and the decision of whom to lobby in Congress. *American Political Science Review*, 92, 775-790.
- Jordan, A. G. & Richardson, J. J., 1987. *Government and Pressure Groups in Britain*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Mahler, G. S., 2000. *Comparative Politics: An Institutional and Cross-National Approach*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Michelman, C., 1975. *The Black Sash of South Africa: A case study in liberalism*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Padgett, S., 2000. *Organising Democracy in Eastern Germany: Interest Groups in Post-Communist Society*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Peterson, P. E., 1992. The Rise and Fall of Special Interest Politics. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 326-344.
- Petracca, M. P., 1992. The Rediscovery of Interest Group Politics. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 3-31.
- Sabatier, P. A., 1992. Interest Group Membership and Organization: Multiple Theories. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 99-129.
- Spink, K., 1991. *Black Sash: the beginning of a bridge in South Africa*. Great Britain: Methuen.
- The World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA). 2004. *We the Peoples: A Call to Action for the UN Millenium Declaration*. The North-South Institute.
- Thomas, C. S. & Hrebendar, R. J., 1992. Changing Patterns of Interest Group Activity: A Regional Perspective. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 150-174.
- Tierney, J. T., 1992. Organized Interests and the Nation's Capitol. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 201-220.
- Wilson, G.K., 1992. American Interest Groups in Comparative Perspective. In: M. P. Petracca, ed. *The Politics of Interest: Interest Groups Transformed*. USA: Westview Press, 80-98.