

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

A sound research in social science is guided by different theories to produce scientific knowledge of the social world. Theories, otherwise known as principles, have been adopted for this study to help analyze the facts about the phenomena being investigated. The objective is to establish the truth posited in theory and, using facts, to prove the reality – what presents the phenomenon in the real world. Reality is the intended results usually based on phenomenological conception of object (being world) and consciousness (perceived world). Phenomenology, the study of relationship between the object and the consciousness, is the philosophical grounding, which was applied in this research. Depending on what the research is intended to achieve, the causal theory – cause and effect relationship – of independent variable and the dependent variable or phenomena can be introduced to the study. The understanding is that when the researcher employs any of these patterns, it is referred to as methodology of research that might have links in historical perspectives or even have effect in the daily experience.

Methodology conceptions are broad and interfaced with narrowly styled methods of collecting data. As outlined in the Introduction Chapter, this normative study is using techniques such as participatory observation, focused group discussions or semi-structured/questionnaire interviews and informal face-to-face interviews, and analyzing data for factual information. Facts are presented in the data collected using methods that are supportive to the research topic and the research question. Within methods, the researcher identifies relevant techniques of issue identification, sampling, and data coding for primary data, and accessing documental sources of secondary data.

This chapter is dedicated to the methodology of the study. A single case study has been adopted for the research for the purpose of studying the effects of reform on cadre appointments in the Central Public Service of Namibia. Qualitative research methods were used in collecting data, which is different from quantitative data as defined in the sections below. Important aspects of the research design are also discussed these sections.

The methodology inducts the study with fundamental philosophical conceptions for better articulation of research methods. Conceptual analysis presented as a generic method in this research implicitly sought to understand the reform of public service in philosophical terms. The reform process was observed and experienced as it takes place in the natural setting, but knowledge of the conception behind the reform was still needed. It became apparent that the knowledge should basically come from philosophical groundwork of research methods (Wilson, 2007).

Public Service appointments conversely need further elaboration beyond concept definition and terms explanation, hence, the investigation on real life experience to collect and analyse primary data. Methodology is, therefore, the domain for scientific application of theory, approaches, and methods useful for the analysis of data in this research study.

2.2 METHODS

Methods adopted had to be clearly explained to avoid ambiguity. The author is cautious about detailed dialogue but also conscious of implications if the methods are not clearly stated. The methods are scientific bases for collecting and analysing data. As methodological constructs, methods of research are systematic but vary with investigations in natural science and social science. It was, therefore, important to identify the methods before conducting the research from the classified:

- Experimental research method which is common in Natural Science;

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- Normative research method which is applied in Social Science; and,
- Historical research method which is used in researching historical events

2.2.1 Experimental Research Method

The experimental research method is popular with natural science where the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable can be controlled (Kumssa in Ngau and Kumssa, 2004:7). Experimental research characteristics quantify the results and are measurable in quantitative methods, hence, the identification with quantitative research typology. Scientists conduct natural science tests and experiments using this method.

2.2.2 Historical Research Method

This method is used to collect existing data on past events and analyse such information to learn about the causes, effect, and trends as might be reflected in the phenomena (Kumssa in Ngau and Kumssa, 2004:7). An example of historical research is the conduct of situational analysis for planning purposes in organisation and management studies. This research method can quantify measurable outcomes and generalize the relationship between variables or lead to outcomes that cannot be measured or generalized. It means that quantitative and qualitative evaluations can be combined in a historical method. Relative to this case study was the Wages and Salary Commission (WASCOM) 1995 study on the historical causes of the burgeoning Public Service after independence and the predicted future trends in public expenditures on wages for public employees. The historical method could take the WASCOM investigations back to the stage of integration of former homelands administrations employees into the mainstream public service structures as recognized causes of higher public expenditures on public personnel. This finding might have entailed a situational analysis on current state of public service and a prediction on future trends. Quantitative methods would simply apply because the type of data collected could have been subjected to measurement and generalization. Nonetheless, where qualitative data occurred that may not be subjected to such generalization and measurement despite its validity and combination to add meaning to

the study, empirical methods would apply. To achieve this difficult combination, the researchers might have adopted a multiple cases studies.

Kumssa explained that normative research is applied in social science where the control of independent variable in human behaviour is not possible, leading to analysis of causal and effect relationship (Ngau and Kumssa, 2004:7). Placed in context, normative research can be applied to the study of appointments in the public service.

2.2.3 Normative Research Method

A normative research method has been adopted for the research. The method responds to the research question formulated in conjunction with the statement of research in Chapter one on the background of study. Adopting normative research method does not contradict with the formative deterministic orientation of the study. The purpose of having both models is to collect and analyze the relevant data and integrating such data as a part of the research focus in a case study. Depending on conclusions drawn from the interpretation of data into information, it is established whether or not a cause and effect relationship exists between independent variables and dependent variables. This relationship is systematically explained using the Grounded Theory that is generalization about the phenomena, which is empirically tested for consistency or inaccuracy (Ngau and Kumssa, 2004:8).

The Multiple-methods application necessitated a delimitation of published sources and field survey sources to qualitative data, which is information that describes the quality of a phenomenon under investigation using affirmative terms such as good, and yes, or non-affirmative terms, bad and no, for the analysis of the collected data (Ngau and Kumssa, 2004:8).

2.3 QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TYPOLOGIES

Research approaches in quantitative and qualitative domains differ in ways of application. Ngau and Kumssa (2004); Mugenda and Mugenda (2003); Frankfort-Nachmias and Nachmias, (1996) held that:

Quantitative research produces quantifiable and numerical data, deductive in nature and deals directly with operationalization, the manipulation of empirical variables, prediction and testing. [Other issues being] emphasis on methodology; procedure; and statistical measures of validity.

[Q]ualitative research is limited to producing data in the form of statements or words rather than numbers... [But] deductive in nature and uses field research methods, primary case studies and participant observations within natural settings (Ngau and Kumssa,2004:6-7).

2.3.1 Quantitative Research Typology

Quantitative evaluation as presented in Mouton (2001:137-139), namely: the world of *everyday life* (pragmatic interest) and lay knowledge; the world of *science* (epistemic interest) and scientific research; and, the world of *meta-science* (critical interest), is linked philosophically to realism and positivism meta-sciences. As a methodological approach, quantitative paradigm (structured) is applied in the real world to reflect the everyday life of an outsider (real-life objective). Quantitative paradigm (outcome focusing) is not being applied to this research as qualitative paradigm (descriptive oriented) is in use, and thus the two cannot by choice be mixed without confusing the mode of reasoning. For this reason, it is logical to choose the qualitative methods for data collection and analysis.

2.3.2 Qualitative Research Typology

The design chosen for this research study follows Mouton's (2001:146) classification framework on dimensional typology relevant to qualitative evaluation of the empirical data. The aim is to "describe and evaluate" reform programmes in the Public Service

setting. It requires adaptation to descriptive methodological approaches peculiar to empirical research. Thus, in essence, it entails that the multi-model should be adopted to reflect the political and organisational (business) perspectives of the case study. The typology on qualitative evaluation approach (*Appendix 1*) presents Mouton's definition and detailed characteristics of the qualitative ('naturalistic') evaluation approaches, and the qualitative (ethnographic) research case study model (*Appendix 2*).

A comparison of major qualitative approaches is also presented with *Advantages and Disadvantages* categorically stated (*Appendix 3*). Since inductive and a-theoretical modes of reasoning are partially dealt with in this Chapter, the rest of the contents of the typology referred to are discussed according to their importance in the sections below.

2.3.2.1 Qualitative Research Approaches

A set of qualitative approaches has been identified as applicable and adopted from Rogelberg for different dimensions throughout the research (*Appendix 1*). The magnitude of qualitative application (*Appendix 3*) is presented with a brief discussion on strengths and weaknesses in the following paragraphs.

- Ethnographic Research
- Action Research
- Case Studies

a) Ethnographic Research

Ethnography is learning about groups of people usually in small numbers and one social setting (Rogelberg, 2002:111). Cultural theory is commonly used to explain phenomena in sociological studies (*Appendix 3*). Participant observation is the key technique besides several general applications in this method. Although ethnographic approach has little effect on this research in comparison to the case study approach, it nevertheless holds an answer to the non-explained phenomenon of previously disadvantaged citizens seeking public service employment. Race-relations among stratified social groups were

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highlighted in Chapter one, and documentary evidence still proves that until independence ethnic grouping continued to overburden the size of the lower ranks of the “government” service. Strength of the ethnographic approach is its characteristic to study the social interactions of members of a society, and cultural values as affecting their daily life practice. Nonetheless, its methodical relevance in sociology does not necessarily enhance a holistic approach desired for this case study.

b) Action Research

Action Research approach is defined in Brewerton and Millward (2002:13) as essentially a problem solving process, appropriate to any situation where any specific knowledge is required to address a specific problem or when a new approach is to be introduced into an old system. Applying the Action Research Model in a given research process would enhance the improvement of research participants’ situation over a long time (2002:13).

The research for empirical evidence takes the Organisational Development (OD) approach that empowers members to participate in ‘issue definition’ and plan action for improving the functioning of their organisation. A number of issues were put into consideration before adopting qualitative methods of empirical studies to determine the level of technical competency and its management in the Public Service of Namibia. One particular reason for identifying *Action Research* is that there is a close but parallel relationship between the methodological application of the qualitative paradigm and participatory technique.

This method is applied to identify the problem involving members of the organisation (in other words consultation) whereupon the information collected is communicated (fed back) to members for action plans to solve the problem (Wiley, 2003:4). Action research, therefore, is a tool in the application of the Organization Development (OD) Theory to research processes. The OD is the “application of the scientific method of fact-finding to practical problems requiring action solutions” in any organisation as may be “required”

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by permanent members (Wiley, 2003:4). OD process is supposedly an element of Action Research that empowers staff-members to initiate change in consultation with an outside expert for the effective functioning of their organisation. Wiley's (2003:1) view the OD approach is empowering members of the organisation to:

[I]dentify and solve their own problems...distinguished from *expert* consulting ...OD-Action research is an ideal instrument for consultants...to hybrid[ize] abstract *research* with [internal] *action* to solve problems...

Thus, Action Research is a model for improving the organizations. Wiley, (2003:1) defined OD as sub-activity of *Action Research*, “a time-honoured procedure for systematically improving organizations”. In practice, the *model* has the following values:

- [A]ction research is an essential tool for behavioral scientists who are conducting organizational-improvement interventions.
- In their classic... [definition,] ‘the basic intervention model that runs through most organization development effort’.

The OD entails the internal survey to unearth institutional-level rather than individual job-level motives leading to explaining public service appointments phenomenon. When adopted for practical experimentation, the OD approach minimizes the stressful experience of dealing with suspicious unforthcoming officials and removes mistrust among members. Understanding “steps of the action research” entails a better view of the organization's future opportunities and advantages crucial for strategic planning, implementation and evaluation. We are not going into debates based on this classification as we have already focused on Organization Development (OD). Therefore, beginning with the dialogue in Chapters three and four, the researcher in examining secondary data literature, reinforces the choice of Grounded Theory as the basic theory for understanding Public Service appointments based on merit system and cadre-principles, which are in contradiction with competency-management approaches.

In a case study, *action research* that is synonymous with OD would help to deduce merit-based appointments as the basis for enhancing efficiency and professionalism. In applying qualitative research approaches one could choose to empower the insider or participant by using techniques that are non-quantitative but “collaborative and

participatory [in] nature” (*Appendix 1*). Action research (OD) is partially useful to guide empirical research for evidence on organizational sub-units that might not fit in with this study.

c) Case Study

Case study approaches can be applied in many contexts as a qualitative method. Tellis (1997:3) observes that: Case study incorporates the views of the ‘actors’ in the case under study. Case study can be “single-case design [or] multiple-case design – replicating the pattern matching [of cases] rather than [issues] sampling logic” (Tellis, 1997:4). Rogelberg (2002:110) recognizes that in the study of organization the object is a single or several organizations, an organizational sub-unit, or a particular organizational practice such as selection, the latter being the focus of this study. Tellis (1997:3) further contributed that: The Case Study Method satisfies the fundamental doctrine of qualitative methods, being describing, understanding and explaining.

Rogelberg (2002) and Stake (1995) distinguished three types of Case Study: intrinsic case studies focus on understanding and describing the uniqueness of a particular case; instrumental case studies [that] are concerned with understanding substantive issues for their potential to advance theory; and Yin’s (1984) collective case studies are distinguished by their choice of multiple cases for instrumental purposes. These multiple-models are useful for addressing problems in service oriented organizations.

A single case study on appointments in the central government emphatically presents the design type fundamentally considered for this research. For these very purposes, this chapter was composed to design and present a research typology for scientific explanation of the competency gap in the existing bureaucracy.

2.4 THEORETICAL GROUNDING

In defining the theoretical grounding for the research, the researcher adopts the theory that is approximate to reality – true facts of the phenomena being investigated. To come up with accurate information, a survey of sources such as library data bases and internet has to be conducted using a Literature Review and information validation technique. Based on facts as presented in the empirical data, the researcher justifies the choice of theory to articulate the scientific analysis of the findings.

Theory frameworks for study include: Organization Theory (organization behaviour), Organization Development Theory (functioning improvement / organisational change), Grounded Theory (meaning-making and experiences process) and Contingency Theory (organisation environment) help to explain organisational behaviour. Wide ranges of applied research models are informed by these theories in many meaningful ways. Given the multitude of conceptual frameworks that may result from this mix, it would be conceivable to hybrid between the Organisation Theory of which Organization Development is a sub-division and the Grounded Theory and Contingency Theory. Thus, the theoretical perspectives would be expanded.

2.4.1 Organization Theory

The *Organization Theory*: Taylor and Anderson (2000) have looked at the application of the Organisational Theory and Behaviour in a case study. They extended theorizing to organisational metaphors arguing that:

Each metaphor presents an advantage way of looking at organisations, depending upon the circumstances surrounding the particular organization's situation...view Organization as organism...in relation to its environment. As the environment changes, the organization responds and adjusts to a new equilibrium point.

The *Organization Development Theory* proponents have advanced the Action Research as a radical approach on transformation of institutions. Action Research could be applied to study a specific public service issue as a subset of the Organisation Theory. Since this research would particularly look at the pragmatic approach to the management of government business as a form of democratic governance, this approach should perhaps serve as the departing point. Moreover, moving away from incremental change that only improves performance rather than enhancing the institutional reform entails adopting a system approach in broader terms. That is when organization culture would be considered as an aspect fostering competency development. Conceptual frameworks may be difficult to define as the research problem extends deep into the structures and culture of the institution.

2.4.2 Contingency Theory

The *Contingency Theory* is concerned adoption responding to the operational environment. Taylor and Anderson construed that:

...Contingency Theory is a practical outgrowth of the organism metaphor...brain [metaphor, meaning] capacity to learn...and to anticipate change and self-organise through innovation...cultural metaphor [that] examines the aspects of organisational culture...[literally] 'shared reality' of the members: norms, values, expectations, and beliefs.

Fusion between Organisation Theory and Contingency Theory would possibly set off a hybrid that could constitute the analysis of findings. Grounding contrasting theories as a hybrid could pose a problem of generalizing the relationship between the variables. Given generalizability as a vital stage in quantitative research, theory choice should carefully try to remove ambiguity obvious in the analysis based on unscrupulous grounding.

2.4.3 Grounded Theory

The *Grounded Theory* is a sociological qualitative research method that results in substantive theories that explain action in context (Rogelberg, 2002:113). The grounded theory is linked to Chassell's *Critical Incident Technique* (CIT) study and contribution in

Symon and Chassell (1998:52,54-55), firstly, to investigate the impact of culture on entrepreneurial/managerial behavior; secondly, for transcribing and coding of interviews, and thirdly, for analyzing the data (1998:60):

[T]he researcher may have developed or adopted a conceptual framework, which he/she wishes to test in the field. Grounded theory assumes, on the whole, that the researcher abandons preconceptions and, through the process of analysis, builds up an explanatory framework through conceptualization of the data...extant conceptual framework [nonetheless]...suggests a set of preconceived categories – a coding framework for which evidence may be sought in the data.

Locke (2001) and Blumer (1976) believe that the grounded theory approach is based on symbolic interactionism's pragmatic conceptions that:

[E]ach and every aspect of inquiry process must be subjected to a test of the empirical world and has to be validated through such a test ...The kind of issues appropriate for study are those that are relevant and problematic in the social situation studied (Locke, 2001:25).

This methodological approach of grounded theory is useful to the research process. The researcher will still find a realistic solution to the problem as grounded theory is identified with data interpretation in case studies. Because there is a possibility of empirically testing and validating the findings, the adoption on these bases, is justified. Thus, the choice was not merely impromptu but an objective decision to provide a relevant theoretical grounding for the research. In the end, only a realist approach would remain synonymous with this research, as the flexibility in the application of grounded theory allows further postulation without contradiction. Other theories under the spotlight could not provide a stable theoretical grounding for the research.

2.6 RESEARCH APPROACH

Discussing a number of approaches isolates and eventually eliminates the characteristics that cannot work in tandem with the chosen theory. Grounded theory applies to almost any kind of environment in the organization making the choice of approaches more complex and challenging. Several approaches are looked at in this section to examine their validity for the research but only one emerges reliable for research purposes.

Symon and Chassell's (1999) have advanced the *Life Histories* Research Method useful in the application of qualitative methods. The Life History technique, upon which the questionnaire was partially built, implies that, because individual lives move through changing history and organisational structures, culture and societies, they can provide an understanding of the change process within organizations and their environmental settings (Symon and Cassell, 1999:12). The model allows checking the validity of research explanations imbedded in assumptions and theoretical frameworks against meanings of real life experience through the scrutiny of organisational members.

This interaction brings us closer to the Action Research Approach where organisation members are empowered participants in the solution of the identified problem. Thus, the choice of the Life History technique, to start with, provides an option to see whether the statement of research resonates with and informs the senior civil servant participants' own understanding of their subjective experience (1999:12).

The self-administering questionnaire was designed to search for the background and experience of participants and the profile of the organisations they have served or are continuously serving. Again this brings the research to the point of empowerment evaluation discussed in a separate paragraph below.

2.5.1 Empowerment Evaluation

This qualitative evaluation is based on *interpretive meta-theories* that are fundamental in Fetterman's (2001) work as presented in a book reviewed by Peters (2003). The resulting critique reflects a lack of rigor in the methodology, and thus, is believed to be less effective. Fetterman's writing appears again in the book review by Wild, who pointed out that empowerment evaluation can empower the client system, referring to programmes being evaluated for funding. This conclusion brought to light the limited extent of the empowerment evaluation particularly where "larger structural issues that limit the extent

of self-determination” apply (Wild’s Book Review of Fetterman, Kaftarian and Wanderman, 1996: xi and 411). In comparison, our purposes are quite different from empowerment evaluation for a community or social project. Nevertheless, larger structures such as institutions lend themselves to the qualitative evaluation in as much as Action Research and Organisational Analysis Approaches empower their members to participate. Scriven (1997) regards early definitions of empowerment evaluation as those that are:

[P]erfectly consistent with the use of evaluation as a tool by those with power, to require that programs being evaluated foster self-determination in those being served by the program without in any way involving the program staff in the evaluation.

Self-determination is a conceptual description of emancipation of empowered programme participants to do the evaluation of their programme requirements and needs with outsider evaluators only acting as consultants. Adopting this conception demands efforts to involve junior ranked officials to provide adequate evidence that could reflect their experience with the transformation of the public service. The definition may leave out self-determination for the time being to allow the validation of empowerment evaluation at a rather larger structural issue level such as the OPM. Alternatively, the ambiguity that comes with the limited conception of self-determination would complicate the empirical evaluation to the point of rejecting the outcome of the action research. Self-determination will be discussed under *structured interviews* as part of explanation for why the technique takes different conceptual approaches to collect and eventually evaluate the empirical data.

A new definition, which Scriven considers generically relevant, was identified in his book review of Fetterman’s writing on the subject. The review suggests that: Empowerment evaluation ‘is designed to help people to help themselves and improve their program using a form of evaluation and reflection. Program participants could conduct their own evaluations and typically act as facilitators. [Thus,] an outside evaluator often serves as a coach or additional facilitator’. This definition supports the methods adopted for the collection of qualitative data but lacks the accuracy to generate

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information be integrated in the analysis. The questionnaire technique is important for contacting the participants who are scattered in various departments of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), which is the central institution of governance.

Empowerment in this particular case study resonates with the culture and practices of the organisation or institution. If bureaucracy were ostensibly pervasive in the institution, then the behavior of organization members would be influenced accordingly. The applicability of empowerment evaluation, therefore, would enhance chances of access to the unit of analysis. The participants have a greater degree of self-determination in deciding what answers to give and which questions to respond to. Thus, induced freewill to reflect on their life history, *critical incidents* (experiences) with change in organisation environment, and structural transformation processes constitute an empowerment evaluation.

Empowerment evaluation is related to an empirical study based on implementation process as a method. This method is not entirely process evaluation focused, but is also partly qualitative in nature and has an element of empowerment evaluation. Keen and Packwood (1995) suggested that ethnography only comes in at the policy analysis level, seeking to explain the impact of intervention. Keen and Packwood (1995) further observed is that:

Empirical evaluative studies are concerned with placing a value on an intervention or policy change, they typically involve forming judgments ... about the appropriateness of an intervention for those concerned about whether their inputs and processes justify the outputs and outcomes of interventions.

If the case study method was adopted with the critical incident as a specific analytical technique, having in mind the “political and institutional setting” of the Public Service Reform, it would then help to determine whether an emphasis on a particular technique may have implications for the political process (Hogwood and Gunn, 1996:6). The issue definition and problem identification stages for this research, composed in the statement of the research problem, are the starting point for political debate, which is the

appropriate form of analysis (1986:6). Therefore, the implementation stage and the evaluation stage of the policy process serve as frameworks for qualitative judgment in this analysis (Hogwood and Gunn, 1986:4-6).

The judgmental techniques are largely concerned with forecasting possible future on the basis of intuitive judgments that have no additional theoretical value other than ‘soft’ qualitative statements arising from intuitive judgments (Hogwood, 1986:135-6). Keen and Packwood (1995: 2) concluded that: Case Study evaluations are valuable where broad, complex questions have to be addressed in complex circumstances. No one model is sufficient to capture all salient aspects of an intervention, and the case studies typically use multiple methods that are qualitative or quantitative. The methods that have been discussed in this chapter contribute to the collection, validation and analysis of data before reporting on the findings. The complexity of an empirical study as per Keen and Packwood requires that a case study is conducted, but other models too must be adopted for qualitative evaluation. Thus, every model cited is defined to determine their relevance to this case study research. Therefore, models in use might support the research objectives at any stage of the investigation, and judgmental techniques, in particular may be integrated in the thin layers of the analysis section.

2.5.2 Fourth Generation Evaluation Principles

Guba and Lincoln (1989) provide alternative approaches to evaluation of programmes with possible solutions to the dilemma associated with self-determination in large structures. They argue that the “Fourth Generation evaluations are never completed. They pause until a further need and opportunity arises” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:4). The OPM and O/M/A have mechanisms in place such as the ECU that monitor efficiency and evaluate on a continuous basis programs based on *Charter for Public Service in Africa* and the *Public Service Charter of Namibia*. The claims, concerns, and issues of stake holding audiences are the basis of organizing of Fourth Generation evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:4). Their methodology is the constructionist paradigm. Case studies affecting groups of people in organisational hierarchies identify stakeholders at risk in the

evaluation process; provide context; and, methodology for qualitative evaluation (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:4).

2.5.3 Nature of Empirical Evidence

The focus of empirical research involves a normative inquiry into the life history of participants, their experience with the changing environment, structural transformation, culture, and practices of their organisations. The evidence comes in narrated stories, observed events over a period of time, and documented occurrences. Documentation is basically the records kept or circulated to communicate directives, procedures, and policy guidelines that are subjective to amendments. A description that fits this type of evidence in its original form and when literally analyzed is *documental evidence (Appendix 4)*. This classification may not necessarily substitute for a literature review because the methods followed in a case study fundamentally serve to determine what particular sources are accessed with the purpose of collecting data consistent with the analysis stages. Thus, the nature of empirical evidence is pertinent to functional issues in the existing organisations, establishments and structures.

Archival and primary data collection has produced vital documental evidence that forms part of the data evaluation in Chapter four (*Appendix 4*). Additional documentation collected during the information verification interviews with the participants and the results were simultaneously subjected to empirical evaluation.

2.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

Adopted from MacMillan and Schumacher (1984), Ngau in Ngau and Kumssa (2004) held that design is the way a study is planned and contacted. A researcher must outline the title of the research, purpose and problem statement, objectives of his/her research and methods of data collection and analysis in a logically designed plan. In exception of the methods featuring in this section, other elements of the design are presented in Chapter one.

2.6.1 Data Collection

Qualitative research designs follow their characteristic of collecting statements from the subjects describing the objects of research in a peculiar manner. Instruments used in data collection essentially must reflect the validity of such designs. As the type of data being collected can not be measured, a descriptive design was adopted.

The method used to gain access to the sources involved the identification of officials in high positions of authority in the departments forming the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). A preliminary survey by telephone reached out to the Permanent Secretary, Undersecretary, Acting/Undersecretary, Director, and Deputy Director, all involved with the facilitation of policy proposals to the cabinet and policy implementation directives to the rest of the government structures namely Offices, Ministries and Agencies (O/M/A). Similar arrangements were completed for an interview with the Executive Director of the Central Governance Agency (CGA), an autonomous institution but accountable to the OPM, that is responsible for carrying out policy coordination between the central government and the parastatals. Parastatals are public corporations wholly or partially owned by the Government of Namibia. Then, to focus on decentralization as a policy tool for reform, two Chief Regional Officers, in other words *Professional Managers* of two selected Regional Councils, were also consulted.

The first phase was to deliver the letter of introduction and the questionnaire by hand, thus avoiding delays, and set up the follow-up verbal appointment one week apart. The second phase started with the confirmation of the appointment, and where necessary, adjustments were made by telephone. The contacts then took place after ascertaining that no obstacles or inconveniences might interrupt the interviews. Research ethics would be compromised if bureaucratic rigidity or personality cult were to dictate the terms of contacts with the participants.

The Department Public Service Information Technology Management (DPSITM) and Department Administration and Information Technology (DAIT), Department President's Economic Advisory Council (DPEAC) and Emergency Management Unit (EMU) were excluded to maintain consistence in the research focus. Nevertheless, in as far as specialty descriptions of these departments denote, there is a strong relevance to competency-management for a professional civil service. But the data from this source is only relevant for the analysis of professional management initiatives. The *site* that could not render itself to empirical data evaluation was thus absolutely precluded from the analysis of findings. Therefore, the demarcation was necessary to ensure that the data collection could be evaluated qualitatively.

2.6.2 Semi-Structured Interviews: Questionnaire

This method is particularly based on the Questionnaire to collect primary data targeting persons serving in high positions such as Permanent Secretaries and Senior Professional Managers in order to capture the sense making of the past and the present individual experiences (Symon and Cassell, 1999:16). The questionnaire (*Appendix 5*) constitutes the semi-structured interview that is followed up in a face-to-face contact to verify the evidence gathered. The empirical evidence being collected will help the author to better understand the Public Service reform process particularly the implementation of the Recruitment Policy and “managerialism” initiatives entailing the filling of top and senior level posts in the Central Government of Namibia. The information and data collected by means of this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and no personal particulars or details will be revealed or published.

2.6.3 Face-to-face Interviews

This research technique by design involves no Focus Group answering specific open-ended questions that intend to evaluate policy supportive programmes in the natural setting with regard to the implementation process. As the Focus Group would be composed of the *professional elite* Permanent Secretaries and Under-secretaries

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management cadre category, senior management cadre (Directors), and deputizing management cadres, group composition is not possible due to high bureaucracy at all afore-mentioned levels. The questions to be answered are those seeking to deduce evidence leading to the assumptions of the research statement and question. The second group is composed of junior public service officials in line for promotion to high posts. This group will assist in explaining the public service motivation phenomenon that attracts previously disadvantaged citizens to seek employment in the public service. The face-to-face interview technique will also assist to enlighten the researcher on how a certain breed of cadres is destined for high-ranking posts, excluding others who are equally qualified in terms of academic and Affirmative Action (AA) requisites.

Preference for the case study (*Appendix 3*) that entails peculiar semi-structured interviewing methods is imperative in this systematic collection of data to ensure research subjects – senior cadres in the Offices, Ministries and Agencies (O/M/A) targeted for empirical data on staffing and personnel development, are accessible. However, the time factor has been taken into consideration and the sampling and randomization, normally created for observation in Ethnographic Research Models, are not adopted for this research (*Appendix 3*).

The research statement and question assumptions presuppose the preference of political executives (cabinet ministers) that implicitly underpin cadreship principles and /or *merit system* values in practical appointments of public service officials. It implies that a *pragmatic approach* preferred for the Public Sector developments in Namibia, would virtually seek workable solutions to such appointments in whatever form. According to Hogwood and Gunn (1986:227), what matters to politicians “is the success or failure of a programme they committed their reputation to. Thus, it is expected that the data presentation and analysis in Chapter five should unearth quasi-patronage practices that might have caused a skills gap in the bureaucracy.

2.6.4 Documental and Textual Data

The review of documental sources explores published data informing the research. It is a method of accessing records on the issues being investigated and basically serves as a conceptual framework for the study. The sources should be relevant to the situation or issue being investigated. The researcher must focus on issues that are related to the chosen topic.

The literature study has led to sources such as libraries and special collections at the National Archives in Windhoek. The University of Namibia (UNAM) Human Resources Center/Library is the main source besides the University of Pretoria (UP) Information Services Center/Library. These sources are being revisited from time to time as may be necessary for new and additional secondary data. The review of literature and textual analysis based on the online data collection has identified new sources. A considerable number of library sources have been consulted and listed in the bibliography compiled for this study.

For speedy reference, it became imperative to list the material in subject clusters, which are history, public administration, policy and management as they appear in the Bibliography. Periodicals and newspapers have been consulted when current events produced new evidence or views essential to back up the research. These sources range from the print media, namely The Namibian, The Republikein and New Era, to name only the standard ones, to the journals that cannot be ignored amid recent transformation in state power structures. All such sources have been acknowledged although their reliability is sometimes questionable and difficult to evaluate.

2.6.5 Delimitation

Hogwood and Gun (1986:6) have argued that Policy Analysis “techniques and processes” applications demarcate political and institutional settings. For our empirical research, it became imperative that *recruitment policy* be analyzed in an institutional setting not to

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propose policy changes, as the political setting would imply, but to establish the pragmatic principles, their practicality and implications to the reform process. On these bases demarcation, therefore, defines the terrain of research and delimitation identifies sources to be consulted exclusively.

Since the research continuously requires adding new data for updating where appropriate, delimitation served to minimize chances of being dragged into meaningless research. The emphasis is to control data collection methods that differ between disciplines. Some of the research methods (eg. Qualitative and Quantitative) overlap a great deal mostly making distinguishing difficult. This Researcher avoided collecting quantitative data that is appropriate for the multiple case study models rather than a single case study. Besides that, this research did not use fieldworkers or clinical laboratory methods to obtain data. Policy documents and programmes not fully covered in Chapter three in the Literature Review have been listed (*Appendix 4*). The surplus information, which was compiled but became redundant after the evaluation, has been kept for future perusal.

2.6.6 Demarcation

Rogelberg (2002:164) defines the Focus Group Method as pre-selected groups of people participating in a facilitated discussion with the purpose of answering specific research questions that ultimately yield qualitative data for evaluation by the researcher. Nevertheless, Rogelberg further explained that the Focus Group and Interview Methods generate a general understanding of an issue or phenomenon without constituting a statistical representative survey. Basically, these research techniques are sufficient to unilaterally test the validity of empirical data collected on the basis of research question assumptions, against the real life experience as narrated by insiders.

Target groups being interviewed by questionnaire include top executives and management cadres in the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). It is imperative that data collection is extended to Chief Regional Officers (professional managers or top public

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servants) in two selected Regional Councils: Khomas and Otjozondjupa, all former Police Zone districts but transformed into second level governments implementing the Decentralization Process that is part of public service reform, as well as labor union officials in the Namibia Public Workers' Union (NAPWU) and the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW). The latter mainly involves top office bearers for their advocacy of good governance in Namibia.

A demarcation of access unit for empirical research, as a prelude to data collection, was emphasized to establish limits and designate sites. The OPM structure is relatively big but only selected departments were targeted simply because the complexity of issues requires that data sources are specific and reliable. Indiscriminate data collection would obviously compromise quality and validity thus rendering such data only worth discarding. Essentially, demarcation is about creating the boundaries within which the research took place, in this case study, Cabinet Office, Department Cabinet Secretariat and Policy Analysis (DCSPA), Efficiency and Charter Unit (ECU), Department Public Service Commission Secretariat (DPSCS), and Department Public Service Management (DPSM).

Although other government offices, ministries and agencies could equally yield as much data as required for evaluation, focusing on the OPM is critical to the demarcation of the unit of analysis. Adding selected Regional Councils serves to provide sites where the *life history technique* is applicable with successful response. Important to state here is that, in both instances appointments are recommended through the Public Service Commission for approval by the Prime Minister and Regional Councils, respectively. The unions are collective bargaining units whose interests are at stake whenever *Recruitment Policy* intervention negatively impacts their members. The WASCOM was a case in question.

Documental evidence at hand, too, is all encompassing for a data presentation and analysis using the chosen theories. The complexity of methods, approaches and techniques may render the research ineffective to produce expected results. Therefore,

demarcation sets parameters for the research. This demarcation is an integral part of Chapter four.

2.7 SUMMARY

Qualitative research methods are dynamic processes, as presented in Appendix 1 and 2, 3, applying a variety of relevant models and theories in research approaches to empirical evaluation – naturalistic and empowerment evaluations. Hogwood and Gunn, (1987: 6-7) debate that: Value laden techniques used in policy analysis frameworks may be too complex for a single or multiple-case study. Political debates can ensue typically influencing issue definition for stages of analysis. Whilst political and institutional settings would help to determine whether particular techniques are most relevant to the desired result, it is the “technical” analysis techniques that explicitly bring the actor to a structured opportunity to explore issues and how to analyse an issue (1987:6). Policy analysis framework therefore helps to understand the Recruitment Policy in both political and institutional settings of the Public Service of Namibia. A debate in political and institutional context is necessary to differentiate between, but not separate the two settings, as both address democratic governance issues.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Introducing the single-case study approach for this research required a systematically defined methodology where-after the qualitative data collection methods were explicitly highlighted. This design involved the semi-structured interview by an open-ended questionnaire (*Appendix 5*) that is sent out in accordance with the methods detailed in the methodologies. The data collected is presented and analysed in Chapter five.

Chapter two objectives are to map-out the research design adopted from a wide range of options. As a methodology chapter, it outlines scientific methodologies, the composition

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of theories, models, methods, approaches and techniques for the research. This creates the basis for the analytical frameworks crucial for meeting the research objectives.