

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the design and methods used to conduct the investigation into the provisioning of equity and quality of education among nomadic communities living in a developing country context. The research takes a broad view on the phenomenon of education provisioning to nomadic communities and its actual outcomes beyond the classroom perspective. The chapter offers an outline of the research design, the approach to data collection, and the methods employed for data collection. The researcher also indicates how he analysed the data and the steps taken to ensure trustworthiness and credibility. He also indicates the steps taken to adhere to ethical requirements in the research.

From the researcher's experience with and knowledge of the Himba and Zemba people based on his work as an education planner in the Ministry of Education, he realised that many of the decisions taken in the past regarding the provisioning of education to these people were based on anecdotal evidence and limited research into the lifestyles of life these people. He realised that there was tension between culture and education, and that the provisioning of education to nomadic groups in Namibia had never been an easy task. Based on this, he knew that he had to spend time with the Himba and Zemba people to gain greater insight into their way of life, and at the same time he had to talk to the educators and education officials involved with the education of these people in order to understand the subject better.

The research took the form of an ethnographic study with the aim of understanding whether the mobile school programme has succeeded in bringing quality, universal education to marginalised nomadic people in the north west of Namibia. The research was based on a detailed case study of the mobile school programme created to bring basic education to the Himba and Zemba people in the Kunene region. The researcher spent five weeks living and interacting with the Himba and Zemba people in order to study their culture and to observe the education being offered.

During this time he conducted extensive conversational interviews (Denzin, 1997) with the Himba people (parents and community leaders), the teachers and education officials, as well as other role players (i.e. Regional Officials and higher ranking education officials).

In the research an attempt was made to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings and 'definitions of the situation' presented by the participants (Wainwright, 1997) and to reveal the subjective beliefs of those studied. Jorgensen (1989) states that for qualitative researchers, the subjective beliefs of the people being studied have explanatory primacy over the theoretical knowledge of the researcher; thus he suggests:

While the researcher may have a theoretical interest in being there, exactly what concepts are important, how they are or are not related, and what, therefore, is problematic should remain open and subject to refinement and definition based on what the researcher is able to uncover and observe' (Jorgensen, 1989:18).

The researcher set out to understand how the Himba and Zemba communities make sense of the Namibian government's effort to promote equitable access to good quality schooling by means of the mobile school programme. He was actively seeking to see education provisioning through the eyes of the indigenous people and how they construct reality so that he could juxtapose it with the policy intent of the state. The study therefore adopted an in-depth qualitative approach with typical ethnographic elements, following the precedent of some other important studies of different ethnographers (Spradley, 1979; Schensul *et al.*, 1999; Riemier, 2008; Krätli, 2009).

Creswell (1998) describes the qualitative approach as a multi-method approach which involves data collection and an interpretive naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This study attempted to portray the daily experiences of educators and of the nomadic community in the Kunene region, in terms of challenges posed by the mobile school programme regarding equity and quality in education, as well as the real impact of the policy intent.

In addition, the researcher sought to find out whether the initiatives put in place by developing countries like Namibia to enhance EFA among vulnerable groups such as nomadic pastoralists have been successful. The success and limitations of the mobile school programme in the developing world context are examined and discussed in order

to build on the strengths and improve the shortcomings, while at the same time identifying new ways to reach the 'unreached' communities.

4.2. Research design

According to the literature (Downes & Rock, 1986; Spradley, 1979; Fetterman, 1998; Wainwright, 1997) the main intention of the ethnographer is to describe cross-cultural variations in social behaviour and beliefs. Downes and Rock (1986) reiterate that the primary imperative for any ethnographic research is to catalogue and describe a particular worldview without imposing external theoretical scheme. Furthermore, the literature describes the ethnographic method as the philosophical orientation supporting a research study (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999).

Fetterman (1989) provides an overview of four perspectives of ethnography; classical, systematic, interpretive/hermeneutic, and critical. Ethnographic research is usually holistic, and founded on the idea that humans are best understood in the fullest possible context, including the place where they live, the improvements they have made, and how they are making a living (Fetterman, 1989).

Following the work of Murtagh (2007:194) the research design used in this study can best be described as 'critically quasi-ethnographic'. The principal characteristic that leads the researcher to describe it as such is its ethnographic stance. The term 'quasi' is attributed to the time-scale of the study and the number of mobile school units visited for data collection, and the term 'critical' refers to the notion of adopting strategic and collaborative elements to the study.

Ethnography may be described as the organised study of other groups of people and is commonly associated with anthropological studies of other cultures. Spradley (1979:5) relates the ethnographic approach to the study of particular groups within society and describes an ethnographic approach as one which describes a culture, referring to the term culture as, '...the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behaviour'. Such an approach involves the ethnographer participating in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, and asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Spradley, 1979: 1). The researcher spent five weeks living with the people being studied, and succeeded in

obtaining rich descriptive data of the people, their culture, the mobile units and the education provisioning challenges faced.

Furthermore, Lambert and Wiebel (1990:1) assert that ethnographic research methods are appropriate for ‘...topics about which little is known, primarily because ethnography is by its nature fundamental and exploratory, preparing the way for more rigorous studies that strive for precision and quantification’. For this research study it was important to understand Himba and Zemba culture and the provisioning of education to these migratory communities; both topics about which very little is known, thus fitting the typical descriptions of an ethnographic study.

One of the important considerations in ethnographic research is avoiding imposing a theoretical framework of meanings and definitions on those being studied. This concern originates from the anthropological study of low technology tribal cultures in the third world, where the intention is mainly to describe cross-cultural variations in social behaviour and beliefs before they disappear (Wainwright, 1997). Methodologically, this entails detailed observation and interaction by the researcher, in order to see the world ‘through the eyes’ of the people being studied. What is important in terms of ethnography is the purpose of the use of participants. In this study they were used as a means of learning as opposed to merely studying them (Spradley, 1979). As Downes and Rock (1986) indicate, the primary imperative for such research is to catalogue and describe a particular worldview without imposing an external theoretical schema.

In this research, the design integrates the main research question to research aims, objective, the literature, methodology, methods and techniques, and the setting of the research study as recommended by Creswell (1998). It is from the aim research topic that the specific research questions and the subsequent data collecting instruments have been developed. As stated earlier, this was a qualitative study and the research plan was based on three broad strategies of data collection i.e. documentation, semi-structured interviews, semi-observations, limited to the mobile unit teachers, nomadic learners and Himba and Zemba lifestyles only in their ‘natural settings’, and gaining a deep understanding of the education equity and quality in Namibia pertaining to the mobile school programme in relation to EFA. Therefore an ethnographic approach, as described here, seemed the most appropriate method of gathering rich empirical data.

A pure ethnographer may argue that the length of time for this study could not be described as sufficient. Jeffrey and Troman (2004) indicate that ethnographic studies are considered to take the form of a 12-month 'sustained' period of data gathering. The length of time spent gathering data for the study, however, took place over five weeks, but it is important to note that the researcher was born and raised in the northern part of Namibia and had served in education provision for many years. The researcher thus had an already established insider perspective on the people and their education, and the five weeks were sufficient to hone and sharpen his knowledge and understanding. Thus, if the setting is defined as the Kunene region (where the Himba and Zemba people reside), then, the study meets the ethnographic criterion (Bryman, 2004).

In describing the approach of the study, the researcher uses the term 'critical'. It is important to distinguish the use of the term as used in this study and as used in association with critical theory. In critical theory, as pointed out by Murtagh (2007:2), the ends and means of practice are rationally interrogated by the researcher, and thus '...practice is ultimately answerable to reason and evidence, with the aim of emancipating educators or researchers from the distortion of hegemonic ideology'. Critical theory often claims that educational researchers can stand apart from their educational values and intentions through the deployment of reason (Tripp, 1992). This was not assumed in this study, as the use of the term 'critical' in this study is justified more by its resemblance to practice.

Lather (1986) argues that there is no 'neutral research', and in social research methodology there is a need for a form of 'critical ethnography', which she terms 'research as praxis'. Research as praxis allows one to understand educational provisioning in context. For Lather (1986), this understanding is 'emancipatory knowledge'. The critical aspect of this study is the intention to raise to consciousness the values, or 'good', embedded within a practice, such that the practice may then be available to question and critical scrutiny; ultimately with a view to improve it. In other words, the researcher's intention of the critical approach was not only to add to the 'body of knowledge' about education provisioning to nomadic and pastoralist people, but to impact on the policy development process so that it results in equity and quality in education for these groups.

Unlike a solely traditional ethnographic study, the aim was to move insight into praxis, away from the acquisition of knowledge to a form of a dialogue between praxis and policy implementation. The activating agent is the emerging peer-like partnership between the researcher as the ethnographer and the participants (Murtagh, 2007).

Ethnography research typically refers to fieldwork (alternatively, participant-observation) conducted by a single investigator who 'lives with and lives like' those who are studied, usually for a certain period, even a year or more (Van Maanen, 1996). Ethnography literally means 'a portrait of a people'; it is a written description of a particular group or culture - the customs, beliefs, and behaviour, based on information collected through field-study (Harris & Johnson, 2000). Fetterman (1998) defines ethnography as the art and social science describing a group people or culture. It relies heavily on up-close, personal experience and possible participation, not just observation, by researchers trained in the art of ethnography. These ethnographers often work in multidisciplinary teams. The ethnographic focal point may include intensive language and culture learning, intensive study of a single field or domain, and a blend of historical, observational, and interview methods.

According to Massey (1998) and Fetterman (1998), ethnography has its roots in the fields of social anthropology and sociology. It is a method of observing human interactions in social settings and activities, involving participating, observing and describing how people from particular cultural groups respond to the situations they find themselves in. The method describes the observation of people in their cultural context. Massey (1998) defines culture as being '...made up of certain values, practices, relationships and identifications'.

Ethnographic research is a means of tapping local points of view, households and community 'funds of knowledge' (Moll & Greenberg, 1990); a means of identifying significant categories of human experience 'up close and personal'. The method widens top down views and enriches the enquiry process, taps both bottom-up insights and perspectives of powerful policy-makers 'at the top', and generates new analytical insights by engaging in interactive, team exploration of often subtle arenas of human difference and similarity. Through such findings ethnographers may inform others of their findings with an attempt to derive, for example, policy decisions or instructional innovations from such an analysis.

Present-day practitioners conduct ethnographies in organisations and communities of all kinds, including the study of schooling, public health, rural and urban development, consumers and consumer goods, and/or any human arena. While particularly suited to exploratory research, ethnography draws on a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, moving from 'learning' to 'testing' (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999) while research problems, perspectives, and theories emerge and shift. According to LeCompte and Schensul (1999), the tools of ethnography are designed for discovery, and the primary modes for the collection used by ethnographers are eyes and ears. LeCompte and Schensul (1999) posit that there is a difference between ethnography and other social and behavioural sciences, since ethnographic researchers cannot control what happens in their field situation. This is because data collections are conducted in the field settings where the researcher enters as an 'invited guest'.

The researcher conducted a study of a particular culture through close observation, listening, reading, and interpretation. During the fieldwork the researcher learnt how to recognise attributes that make up a culture, and how to describe it to others. Culture, however, has many attributes and definitions, but usually consists of origins, values, roles, and material items associated with a particular group of people. Ethnographic research has enabled the researcher to fully describe a variety of aspects and norms of nomadic groups like the Himba and Zemba to enhance his understanding of the nomadic people and their culture.

During the field study, an attempt was made to obtain in-depth understanding of the complex social structures within the Himba and Zemba communities, and assess the impact of the mobile school programme on this group. In this study qualitative research methodologies with ethnographic elements were combined in order to provide credible data and comparative results.

The rationale for choosing a qualitative approach with ethnographic elements was based on the nature and the underlying purpose and objective of the study. By employing the ethnographic research method, the researcher was able to obtain a holistic picture and a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by nomadic communities in developing countries like Namibia. The method provided a much more comprehensive perspective by focusing on the phenomenological reality of nomadic community in the Kunene region in particular, and their behaviour and its effects in a natural setting (Borg *et al.*, 1993:206). By observing the actual behaviour of individuals in their natural setting, it enabled the researcher to gain a much deeper and richer understanding of the

behaviour of the Himba and Zemba communities.

As a methodology, ethnography is not far removed from the sort of approach that one uses in everyday life to make sense of one's surroundings. According to Hammersley (1990), it is a less specialised and less technically sophisticated method than approaches like the experiment or the social survey, although all social research methods have multiple approaches to viewing the ways in which human beings gain information about their world.

According to Riemer (2008), ethnography is notoriously eclectic in its employment of multiple methods of data collection, and ethnographers normally typically observe, conduct interviews, and scrutinise relevant archives and articles during the research study period. Geertz (1973:6) argues that because ethnographic research is local, its focus is deep rather than broad; what he called 'thick description'. By 'thick,' Geertz (1973) is referring to descriptions that include all possible meanings of an event, including meanings conferred by members of the 'culture' or community itself. The following are the three methodological principles employed in this research; naturalism, understanding and discovery.

4.2.1 Naturalism

This is the view that the aim of social research is to capture the character of naturally occurring human behaviour, and that this can only be achieved by first-hand contact, not by inferences from what people do in artificial settings like experiments or from what they say in interviews. This is the reason that the ethnographic approach was employed in this research; i.e. the natural settings were the communities and the mobile school units. The research findings provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of education provisioning to nomadic people and the actual outcomes beyond the classroom perspective. This was to ensure that the findings will be generalisable to other similar settings that have not yet been researched. Finally, the notion of naturalism implies that social events and processes should be explained in terms of their relationship with the context in which they occur.

4.2.2 Understanding

Central here is the argument made by Genzuk (1999) and Fraenkel *et al.* (1993) that human actions differ from the behaviour of physical objects, and even from that of other animals. Therefore they do not consist simply of fixed responses or even of learned responses to stimuli, but involve the interpretation of stimuli and the construction of responses.

Sometimes this argument reflects a complete rejection of the concept of causality as applicable to the social world, and an insistence on the freely constructed character of human actions and institutions. Others argue that causal relations are to be found in the social world, but that they differ from the 'mechanical' causality typical of physical phenomena. From this point of view, if one is able to explain human actions effectively one must gain an understanding of the cultural perspectives on which they are based. It is necessary and obvious that when we are studying a society that is alien that one will discover that much of what is seen and heard is puzzling. However, ethnographers (Fetterman, 1998; LeCompte & Schensul, 1999) argue that it is just as important when one is studying more familiar settings. Indeed, when a setting is familiar, the danger of misunderstanding is especially great.

Fetterman (1998) and LeCompte and Schensul (1999) argue that one cannot assume that one already knows another's perspective, even in one's own society, because particular groups and individuals develop distinctive worldviews. This is especially true in complex societies such as the nomadic groups like the Himba and Zemba people in the north west Namibia. Ethnic, occupational, and small informal groups (even individual families or school classes) develop distinctive ways of orienting themselves to the world that need to be understood if their behaviour is to be explained. Ethnographers further argue, then, that it is necessary to learn the culture of the group one is studying before one can produce valid explanations for the behaviour of its members. This is the reason for the centrality of participant observation and unstructured interviewing with the ethnographic method approach - to discover the true nature of things.

4.2.3 *Discovery*

Another feature of ethnographic thinking is a conception of the research process as inductive or discovery-based, rather than as being limited to the testing of explicit hypotheses. Ethnographers argue that if one approaches a phenomenon with a set of hypotheses, one may fail to discover the true nature of that phenomenon by being blinded by the assumptions built into the hypotheses (LeCompte & Schensul, 1999). Rather, they have a general interest in some types of social phenomena and/or in some theoretical issue or practical problem. The focus of the research is narrowed and sharpened, and perhaps even changed substantially, as it proceeds. Similarly, and in parallel, theoretical ideas that frame descriptions and explanations of what is observed are developed over the course of the research. Such ideas are regarded as a valuable outcome, and not a precondition, of research.

4.3. The researcher as the research instrument

Central to conducting ethnographic research, and more specifically, qualitative research, is the notion of the researcher as the research instrument (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Marshall & Rossman, 1995; Piantanida & Garman 1999; Patton, 2002 as cited in Stewart, 2010). The researcher is the key person in obtaining data from the respondents.

It is through the researcher's facilitative interaction that a context is created where respondents share rich data regarding their experiences and life world. It is the researcher that facilitates the flow of communication, who identifies cues, and puts the respondents at ease. It is also the researcher who is instrumental in translating and interpreting data generated from the respondents into meaningful information. In the qualitative approach method, researchers seek to understand the phenomena in the world through the study of events, actions, talking, watching, and gestures.

As Wainwright (1997) states, a qualitative researcher is an integral part of the research process – he/she becomes the research instrument. Through being the research instrument, the researcher becomes closely involved with the participants, their stories and their lives. Data are processed through the researcher, who makes decisions about what is regarded as data, how those data are collected, and finally, how the data are used. This term refers to the multiple subject positions that the researcher occupies.

The researcher as the research instrument has prompted scholars to promote what they call 'reflexivity'; a necessary tool for qualitative researchers (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2006; Patton, 2002). This 'reflexivity' acknowledges 'the importance of self-awareness, political and cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective' (Patton, 2002:64). Being reflexive then 'is to undertake an ongoing examination of what you know and how you know it' (Patton, 2002:64). Patton further states that that, 'in qualitative inquiry, the researcher is the instrument' (2002:14); therefore the credibility of qualitative research findings relies to a great extent on the researcher's knowledge and skill, as well as experience.

It is therefore important to state more about the researcher. He is a Namibian by birth and grew up in the deeper rural area northern part of Namibia, like the people in this study. As a young boy, he grew up herding goats and cattle, ensuring they didn't stray in other fields or strip the thatched huts. He was brought up in a society where livestock are only seen as the primary source of income for the people who live in the rural and semi-arid areas, like his parents.

Livestock serves as a social utility and plays an important role in the rural people's subsistence economy and livelihoods. People in the rural area depend solely on their livestock, as they are traded for cash or livestock products such as milk and butter; therefore children play an important role in this society.

As a village boy, he started his primary education only when he was 10 years old; for two reasons - first, as an African child, he grew up in a society where work in the homestead (i.e. herd livestock, working in fields, etc.) was the first priority. Formal education was not a priority, as a result he alternated herding and schooling with his brothers on a weekly basis. Secondly, it was due to long distances (seven kilometres one way) to walk between the nearest school and the village. During his my school time, he did not have enough textbooks or learning and support materials (i.e. exercise books, pens, etc.). The quality of education was very poor, as the majority of the teachers were under or unqualified; most held only a Grade 10 (formerly Standard 8) education no formal teaching experience or training. These are some of the experiences and background the researcher has in common with the communities studied in this research.

Although the researcher is not fluent in the Otjiherero language, he has sufficient knowledge to conduct an informal discussion and ask routine questions, probe and converse. His experience and background above gave him a great advantage in adapting easily and understanding the Himba and Zemba culture and customs, as well as their way of life. As he stayed in the community and interacted with the community members on a daily basis, it was a great opportunity to establish mutual trust and create good relationships with the Himba and Zemba people. Furthermore, it enabled the researcher to explore and understand, in some depth, their culture and customs, as well as their experiences and life world.

As an education planner, the researcher was not only involved with the distribution of national educational resources, but also with policy analysis and the implementation of policy at the national level. The researcher had a good understanding of the Namibian education system, which also enabled him to access all the official documents relevant to the implementation of education policies and programmes at the national and regional level.

To further enhance the richness and depth of the data obtained, the researcher was accompanied by one of the mobile school's Head's of Department (HoD) during the five week stay in the community, who also acted as an interpreter when necessary. This person was a Himba by birth, grew up in the Kunene Region, herded goats and cattle as a boy, and had to face the same adversities as the other educators and learners. The close relationship established gave the researcher an even deeper insight into the group. If there were language problems, the researcher used the interpreter. The HoD's main task, however, was to act as a guide to find the mobile units in an area without road signs or established roads. In addition, the researcher's study leader joined the researcher for a week to validate the data collected and to ensure that the data were saturated (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983).

4.4. Entering the field

Prior to the field study, the researcher telephoned the Ondao Mobile School principal to inform him of the research study with the intention of seeking his formal permission. The researcher also informed him that permissions had been granted by the Permanent Secretary of Education and the Kunene Regional Director of Education. After the researcher explained the nature of the research study, he also requested the principal to

forward the details of all mobile units; i.e. mobile unit name, cluster name, enrolment, grades, number of teachers per unit, their movements and how often, distances from his office and the type to classroom structure at each unit. The principal was agreeable, and asked the researcher to confirm one week before the day of arrival in Opuwo.

The researcher decided to conduct the fieldwork and interviews in the first school term (January-April) as this is the rainy season when most of the mobile units operate in their original locations. It is also the season when the nomadic Himba and Zemba people return to their fixed location; i.e. the 'Onganda' and where the 'Holy Fire' hut is; an important symbol in Himba and Zemba community life. (This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5). Choosing the first school term thus enabled the researcher to visit all selected mobile units and meet teachers, learners, and community members in their original locations, as this allowed the researcher to study their culture and customs.

The researcher also agreed that the study leader would visit the area in mid-June (2nd school term) for data validation purposes. The researcher chose the second school term for this purpose because this is the term that the school and teachers in conventional schools are more settled than in first term. For example, in the first school term, schools (including mobile units) are generally busy with admissions and other administrative work, and the nomadic learners are searching for places in either the mobile units or the conventional schools.

Further, this is the time when some of studied groups begin to move away from the waterholes in search for grazing as the dry season settles in. It was important for this study to experience first-hand the movement of a mobile unit. Therefore the researcher left the region at the start of May and returned with the study leader in mid-June. The second fieldwork visit in the second term also helped to validate the data from the first school term, in terms of enrolment, and to ensure that the data were saturated.

The researcher arrived in Opuwo on 5th April 2010, as agreed with the principal, and went straight to his office to confirm arrival. The researcher discussed the field study programme and also managed to secure dates for an interview with the four HoDs and two the Inspectors of Education. The principal had no objection to the programme, and presented the researcher with a formal letter authorising him to enter into the mobile units and conduct the research.

This letter was used extensively during the field study, especially when for introductions to mobile unit teachers. The principal also released one of the Himba speaking HoDs from his duties to accompany the researcher during the field study to act as a guide, and to introduce me to the mobile unit teachers, community members and leaders.

4.5. Ethical considerations

Before the field study commenced, approval and/or permission were obtained from the Permanent Secretary of Education (Annexure E), Director of Education for Kunene region (Annexure F), and the Ondaio Mobile School Principal (Annexure G) to conduct a study in the Kunene region focusing on the provisioning of education for nomadic pastoralists.

The researcher meticulously followed all procedures to obtain informed consent from each participant in the study. Prior to data collection, all participants were briefed to ensure that they understood that they would be observed and interviewed, both informally and formally. Everyone who participated in the study signed a letter of consent. The researcher also assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality.

According to Drew *et al.* (1996:43), although ethical considerations have received a great attention in recent years, each researcher is accountable for the ethical behaviour while conducting their investigations. Rayner (2008) cautions researchers that there are many ethical issues that need to be considered within social research, but not every ethical issue can be addressed; otherwise research findings would be unreliable and of no use. In this study every attempt was made to identify the main ethical considerations and to take necessary precautions in order to conduct the research ethically.

During this study all participants were treated with respect and dignity. In this regard, a number of key principles were adhered to (Strydom, 2002:64). The ethical principles applied to the research during, before, and after data collection are the following:

- Direct informed consent was obtained from all participants, as well as permission from all relevant authorities prior to data collection (Annexures E, F, G, I and J). The researcher made sure that all participants understood that their participation in the study was voluntary, and that they had the right

to withdraw at anytime without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way. During the data collection all participants were properly informed of the purpose of the research study, and had a full understanding of the procedures to be used in the study. The participants who agree to take part in the study signed a letter of consent.

- Privacy, confidentiality, and anonymity were assured. Although the confidentiality and anonymity concepts are sometimes mistakenly used as synonyms, they have quite distinct meanings. Confidentiality is an active attempt to remove from the research records any element that might indicate the subjects' identities. Anonymity refers to subjects remaining nameless. According to De Vaus (1985), the confidentiality of the data is a key factor when exploring ethical issues affecting research, as this could determine whether or not a participant was harmed. At the beginning of the data collection, all participants were informed that anonymity was essential to the study, and no instrument, including the media, would be used without their consent as this would be a violation of their privacy. In cases where people appear in photos included in this study, the participants had agreed to their photo being taken and included as part of the study.

4.6. Research sampling and site

Ploeg (1999:2) claims that sampling refers to the process of selecting what to study. The researcher made sampling decisions for the explicit purpose of obtaining the richest possible source of information for the study. Ploeg (1999) indicates that qualitative research usually involves smaller sample sizes and that sampling is normally flexible. In this study, a multi-method approach was used to collect data. The use of a multi-method approach helped the researcher deal with the complexities of studying the provisioning of education to the Himba and Zemba nomadic communities. The geographical area of the research was limited to the Kunene region, which has 40 primary schools (including the Ondao Mobile School) and 15 secondary schools.

At the time of this study there were 45 mobile school units throughout the Kunene region, but this is seen as one school - the Ondao Mobile School. The 45 units are divided into four clusters (Okangwati, Opuwo, Ehomba and Far West). A cluster is

made up of 11 to 12 mobile units, each headed by a Head of Department, who is based at the Ondao Mobile School in Opuwo (Annexure L).

To achieve my main objective and answer the research questions, the researcher selected a purposive sample of seven mobile units from the 45. Babbie (1992) asserts that purposive sampling allows the researcher to select the sample on the basis of his or her own judgement and knowledge of the population. The researcher in this study therefore believes that the selected sample provided the information required to answer the research question.

Because of the vastness of the region, the researcher had to use convenience sampling in selecting those units within a 150 kilometres radius from the Ondao School offices in Opuwo. Even so, the closest unit was still a half day's drive from Opuwo, and this was due to the dreadful roads. The seven mobile units selected resembled a typical mobile unit in terms of size, level of resourcing, teacher provisioning, and other variables such as the absence of a public transport system or reliable communication system.

Table 4.1 (p103) provides an overview of the total number of mobile units, learners and teachers. The table illustrates that only 22% of mobile school units go up to Grade 7, 49% only up to Grade 4, while 29% merely offer Grades 1 and 2.

Further criteria were used for selecting the seven mobile school units. The unit needed to cater for one of the cultural groups (Himba or Zemba), be housed in temporary facilities such as tents, should have moved location at least once in the year preceding the investigation, and should not be situated in any proclaimed town or village.

Table 4.1 Number of mobile units and the grades offered

	Grade 1-2	Grade 1-4	Grade 1-7	Total
Number of mobile units	13	22	10	45
Enrolment per grades	522	818	865	2 205
Number of teacher per grades	14	27	28	69

Source: 2009 Ondao mobile school report

In terms of research costs, the number of the sample was determined by budget constraints and time. Mobile units are scattered all over Kunene region, and there was no budget to reach more than seven mobile units.

At the time of selecting the sampling, five mobile units were closed for various reasons, such as the community had moved to a different location, teachers had transferred to conventional schools, or learners had stopped attending classes because there was no food in the school feeding scheme. These schools had to be excluded from the sample so that the seven selected were all operational at the start of the fieldwork. One of the selected schools became non-operational towards the end of the study when the community left the area.

A total of 116 participants were interviewed; and the number comprised 50 nomadic parents and community leaders, 45 nomadic learners, 11 mobile school teachers, 5 Ondao School Management personnel (four HoDs and one mobile school principal), and the following officials: Deputy Director of Education for Kunene Region, Senior Education Officer, Inspector of Education responsible for the implementation of education activities in the Kunene region, and the Executive Director of Hizejitiwa Indigenous People's Organisation (HIPO) (who was a former principal of the Ondao Mobile School).

Snowball sampling for the selection of the community members was used to identify participants (parents and community leaders). For example, parents with children enrolled in the mobile schools were reached through their children. Parents referred the researcher to other parents or community members. This has enabled the researcher to obtain a broad spectrum of inputs and ensured the saturation of data, especially as far as the provisioning of education and equity in nomadic communities is concerned.

Another criterion used for the selection of the community members and leaders was the accessibility of their households or villages. Because of the detailed interactions required, it was ideal that they should be easily assessable within the community. This criterion narrowed the selection of community members and leaders to those living in close proximity to the mobile unit.

An additional criterion of community members was that they must be able to provide insight into and articulate their experiences of education policy and equal opportunity in terms of educational provisioning. This enabled the researcher to obtain in depth information to build an understanding of the experiences of nomadic community members when it comes to equity and equal education opportunities in their communities.

Table 4.2 summarises the number of mobile units visited during the field study. The table indicates the number of learners per grade and per unit, number of teachers per unit, and average learner: teacher ratios per mobile unit.

Table 4.2 Enrolment rate of seven mobile units participated in this study - 2010.

Mobile Unit Name	Number of learners per grade				Total number of learners	Teacher	Learner: teacher ratios
	1	2	3	4			
Grade	1	2	3	4			
Etoto West	43	16	18	10	87	3	29.0
Otjirumbu	11	6			17	1	17.0
Okondjombo	21	5	6		32	1	32.0
Okapembabu	14	14	14		42	2	21.0
Otutati	32	28	12		74	2	37.0
Okapara	12	11	8		31	1	31.0
Okaupaue	16	7			23	1	23.0
TOTAL	149	87	58	10	304	11	27.0

Learners interviewed were selected randomly with the help of mobile teachers from six out of seven visited mobile units, three per grade (an average of nine learners per mobile school unit). The nine learners were brought together at one place (tent or under a tree) to talk to them about their lived experiences and the education they receive at their units.

At the seventh mobile unit, only a teacher was interviewed, and the researcher was told that learners, parents, community members and learners had moved to a new location in search of grazing for their animals.

4.7. Data collection

Creswell (1998) describes data collection as a series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer the research question. The key tools of data collection in this study consist of a wide range of written and oral source material, interviews, field-notes and observational data; all used to understand and describe as fully and as richly as possible what the studied communities' experiences, expectations and aspirations of the formal quality education are. This methods approach was used to accomplish the research goals, which require diverse information from diverse stakeholders. The use of different data collecting methods helps my research to deal with the complexities studying Himba and Zemba lifestyles and education equity and quality for nomads. The complexity comes from the mismatch of the nature of Himba and Zemba nomads and pastoralists who are regularly shifting in search of water and grass for their animals and their rigid orientation of equity and quality in the formal education.

According to Creswell (2002), to develop a clear formulation of a problem theoretically, requires multiple conceptual frameworks and data sources: document analysis, interviews, and observation. In this study, the researcher employed a process of triangulation which involves the collection and cross checking of data from multiple sources at different points in time, and through the use of multiple but integrated methods (Creswell, 2002). According to Creswell (2002), triangulation entails using more than one method or data on the study of a social phenomena resulting in greater confidence in provide convergence of themes. The researcher chose to use the three data collation methods (document analysis, interviews and observation) as overarching techniques in this enquiry.

4.7.1 Documentation

In preparation for the study, the researcher consulted a range of primary and secondary sources; academic/research papers, policy statements, legislation and regulations, Ministry of Education's annual reports and census statistics (EMIS), relevant opinion

pieces, and correspondence and minutes of meetings related to education matters. The purpose of this review was to help develop a clear understanding of the complexities of provisioning education to nomadic pastoralist groups, as well as with the policy intention of equal and quality education in a developing country context.

The focus was mainly on the Namibian mobile school programme for the Himba and Zemba community in the north west of Namibia, but also draws on valuable lessons gained from experiences with other nomadic groups in the developing country context. This was discussed in Chapters 2 and 3 of this thesis, and was used as a basis for juxtaposing the findings of the field-study.

4.7.2 Interviewing

The interview is usually a 'two persons or more conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific of obtaining research relevant information and focused by her/him on context, specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation' (Cohen & Marion, 1989:307). The research interview, however, is not a conversation between equal partners because the researcher defines and controls the situation. In qualitative research, Gillham (2000) refers to the interview as a data collection instrument to enable the interviewer to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena.

This study employed a qualitative approach with ethnographic elements as the basic design, and the data collection techniques, like interviewing, had to meet the criteria for such an approach. In this study, the semi-structured interview was employed and questions used to solicit data were prepared in advance. Rafoth (2001) emphasises that it is not advisable to go into an interview without a clear purpose; one's interviewee is likely to leave the session dissatisfied or frustrated. The interviews aimed at developing a peer- like partnership. .

In an ethnographic study, an essential element of the peer-like partnership created between researcher and participant is what is termed the 'ethnographic interview'. According to Spradley (1979), the manner in which an ethnographic interview is conducted has a great effect on the depth and accuracy of findings. People who feel comfortable, safe, and valued are more forthcoming than those who are treated merely as sources of information. Spradley (1979) draws an analogy between the ethnographic

interviews with other 'speech events' such as the friendly conversation. Although the two are similar in form, the ethnographic interview is more directed in purpose. Spradley (1979) claims that the ethnographic interview includes the following three important elements: explicit purpose, ethnographic explanations, and ethnographic questions.

- There is an explicit purpose that comes from the ethnographer - The *explicit purpose* and the initial ethnographic explanations were conveyed to the participants during the opening statement and introduction, where the researcher explained the nature and purpose of the research and invited them to participate. Following this, informed consent was negotiated.
- Additional *explanations* were given where needed or to keep the informant on track.
- Most of the interview comprised the *ethnographic interview questions*. Three types of ethnographic questions were used:
 - descriptive (what do you do all day at the school?),
 - structured (domains, paradigms, attributes, relations, items),
 - contrast (what's the difference between the grazing used for goats and cattle?)
- Asymmetrical turn taking rather than sharing.
- Repeating and restating (also known as active listening).
- Expressing interest.
- Expressing ignorance.
- Encouragement to expand rather than abbreviate responses.
- Incorporating informants' terms without mocking.

- Use of hypothetical (e.g., 'If we were standing in the bar now, what would it be like?')

Haynie (2003) points out that an effective ethnographic interview should begin as a friendly conversation and then change into its purposeful elements while establishing rapport along the way. Although Patton (as cited in Gunzik, 1999) indicates that there is no one right way of interviewing, no single correct format that is appropriate for all situations, and no single way of wording questions that will always work, the particular evaluation situation, the needs of the interviewee, and the personal style of the interviewer all come together to create a unique situation for each interview. Therein lay the challenge of depth interviewing: situational responsiveness and sensitivity to get the best data possible.

During the interviews, participants were invited to narrate their experiences with the Ondao mobile school programme and the education provided. The interviews focused on participants' experiences, expectations and aspirations for the mobile school units and the education provided. A field journal was kept to record notes immediately following the interviews. The intention was to identify the challenges posed by the Namibian Government's equity-driven education policies and their complexity in terms of educational provisioning in the Kunene region.

The semi-structured questions were designed to cover the main themes contained in the research questions, in terms of the challenges facing the nomads' community in a developing country context regarding the provision of formal education and access to equity and quality education. In addition, the research questions were designed to access the level of understanding of policy awareness among nomadic parents, community leaders and mobile school teachers, their perceptions of formal education, and suggestions as to how education should be provided to the community.

The interviews were conducted in both English and Otjiherero/Zemba, depending on the choice of the participant in order to obtain trustworthiness and validity of data. All interviews were tape recorded, and later transcribed. Field notes were used to make note of emotions, gestures, and other verbal and non-verbal details which might not be captured by tape recorder. Participants were interviewed at the place of their convenience (i.e. their offices, mobile units, homestead, gardens or during the herding of animals).

The following interviews were conducted (interviews are grouped in terms of participants):

- *Interview A:* Teachers in the selected mobile school units (on average three teachers per unit). The questions probed their experience of teaching in a mobile school, their academic and professional qualifications, number of learners, grades and the variables that could influence learning. The questions probed the availability of various types of learning. Teachers were also asked to provide information on the frequency of the supervisory visits by the principals and HoD. Teachers were also given the opportunity to mention issues that caused poor learner performance and hampered quality education in the mobile school units.
- *Interview B:* The community members and leaders at targeted mobile school units in the Kunene region. The questions were specifically designed to gather information regarding the family or community structure, income sources, type of dwelling, food and nutritional status of homestead or communities, their commitment to formal education, and their concerns with education. The questions also asked the parents about their level of participation in schools activities, as well as their aspirations for the education of their children.
- The communities and community leaders were requested to be open and freely tell their stories regarding the implementation of education policies in terms of the equitable distribution of education resources and equal opportunities. A total of 50 nomadic community members (on average seven members per village) were interviewed in each community.
- During the field study, it was learnt that the Himba and Zemba people are accustomed to open group discussion, and as a result it was difficult to interview parents, community leaders or members alone, as others just joined in the process. As a result, in most cases, the researcher conducted group interviews. This was a great asset as it assisted tremendously when learning about their culture and customs. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning

that although the Himbas and Zembas have a lot in common, and live in one village under one headman/headwoman, their homesteads are always separate. You will find a Himba group in one part of the village and the Zemba in another. Due to this set up, in most cases each group or community was interviewed separately.

- *Interview C:* Learners from the seven selected mobile school were interviewed. These dealt with their experience of schooling, their situation at home in terms of access to school, the commitment of their parents in encouraging them, their attitude towards schools and homework given by the teachers, as well as their ability regarding the completion thereof and their access to learning materials.
- *Interview D:* Educators managing the Ondao mobile school this include the Regional Education Director, Inspector Of Education, Region Education Planners, Ondao mobile school management (Principal and HoDs), who are charged with the responsibility of making sure that all children, including those from marginalised communities in Kunene region, have equal opportunities to formal education. The educators were asked about their experiences of managing Ondao mobile school, the challenges and opportunities, and the strengths and weakness of the programme.

The questions were designed to provide a general direction for the conversation and extract the type of correct information, with the purpose of eliciting the understanding, feeling, beliefs, opinions, and personal experiences and understandings of the concept of 'equity' in the context of educational provision in their communities and regions (Fetterman, 1989). The interviews were less formal and less interviewer-driven than the formal interview format, as Agar (1980: p50) notes, 'the best ethnographic interview is more like a conversation than a traditional interview format.'

The approach helped probe the interviewees and enter into a deeper dialogue with them (May, 1997) to understand the challenges and cultural barriers in terms of policy ideals of equity and policy implementation. This method enhanced the trustworthiness and credibility of the research as the triangulation technique allowed comparison and contrast with different views from target subjects (Creswell, 2002, 1998; Walsh, 2001).

More importantly, Creswell (2002) adds that the qualitative research approach requires a willingness and strong commitment from the researcher to spend an extensive amount of time in the field to collect data and analyse the problem, which demands time and resources. During the interviews, the ethnographic approach enabled the researcher to probe, asking for extra explanations.

As anthropologist Agar (1980:90) states, in an informal interview 'everything is negotiable and/or open for discussion. The informants can criticise a question, correct it, point out that it is sensitive, or answer in any way they want to.' In fact, what the researcher observed during the field study was that the ethnographic interview is more like a conversation than a traditional interview. The researcher probed for details, clarity and explanations (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The researcher regarded the interview as a lengthy conversation to gather information by watching and talking with people in the community. However, this informality doesn't mean the interviewer doesn't prepare for interviews.

As stated earlier, the interviewer planned questions and developed an interview protocols to ensure that the interviews flowed and questions were not forgotten. The interview, itself, however, does not necessarily follow a preset format or linear line of questioning (Ellen, 1984); it is guided instead by the talk itself, by what gets said, and what is left unsaid.

During the interviews an attempt was made to obtain an in-depth understanding of the meanings and 'definitions of the situation' presented by participants (Wainwright, 1997) and to reveal the subjective beliefs of those studied.

4.7.3 Observation field notes

Observation is a method that forms part of the research process. According to Creswell (2002), observation is a qualitative method with roots in traditional ethnographic research, where the objective is to help researchers learn the perspectives held by the study populations. The observation method I chose was semi-structured observing as an outsider. This type of observation is primarily concerned with writing about and explaining the phenomenon as observed. The aim is to gain a close and intimate familiarity with a given group of individuals and their practices through an intensive involvement with the people in their natural environment. This method, although less

structured, can provide the researcher with insights about the phenomenon being studied. I chose instructed observation method for the purpose of describing the natural setting and the phenomenon of education provisioning to Himba and Zemba people and its actual outcomes beyond the classroom perspective. The method is distinctive because the researcher approaches participants in their own environment, rather than having the participants come to the researcher. Seven mobile schools were visited over a considerable length of time and an attempt was made to describe, as far as possible, what exists and happens in these mobile school units.

During the five weeks in the field, the researcher gathered information by watching and talking with people, and by reading available reports and records. Observation was one of the main tools during the field study, as the researcher spent a good deal of time with subjects; both as non-participant and participant observer. In some cases, the researcher took part in activities in order to better understand the people, or to get firsthand experience. In some cases the researcher was a non-participant, observing what was going on in the community. Semi-nomadic lifestyle

The researcher expected to find out how the teaching and learning process occurred in the tent classrooms, or under a tree, in relation to equity and quality education in the mobile units.

During the classroom observations the main focus was on how different teachers approached their teaching lessons and how they managed multi-grade teaching. In the classroom the researcher recorded teacher language, learner and teacher interaction, and learning methods used. The initial plan was to conduct four to five classroom observations, but due to the distances, there were two to three observations per unit, albeit intermittent. After each classroom observation session, a brief discussion was held with the teacher to clarify issues that arose, and to give them an opportunity to highlight any concerns. The after-class interview usually took less than 30 minutes. This gave more credibility to such information in order to 'check and control' validity and reliability (Kidder, 1981). The classroom observation was an effective tool that helped capture classroom reality in a natural setting.

4.7.4 Field notes

Field notes are the brief words or phrases written down while at the field or site, or in a situation about which more complete notes will be written later (Hammersley, Martyn & Atkinson, 1995).

In this study, field notes were taken immediately following each interview and observation. Field notes were used to record emotions, gestures, and other verbal and non-verbal detail. The field notes included references of ideas found in books, and the day's observations. In this study, the field notes contained extremely important information that enabled the researcher to triangulate the data (interviews, observations and field notes) in order to build validity, trustworthiness and credibility into the findings.

4.8. Data analysis

An iterative data analysis process was used. As Glesne (1999:84) states:

Data analysis does not refer to a stage in the research process. Rather, it is a continuing process that should begin just as soon as the research commences. It follows then, that interviewing is not simply devoted to data acquisition.

It is also a time to consider relationships, salience, meanings, and explanations – analytic acts that not only lead to new questions, but also prepare you for the more concentrated period of analysis that follows the completion of data collection.

Similar sentiments are expressed by Merriam (1988:119):

Data collection and analysis is a simultaneous activity in qualitative research. Analysis begins in the first interview, the first observation and the first document read.

Qualitative data collection and analysis are not easily distinguishable from each other, as indicated by Thorne (2000). In ethnography, data analysis usually takes place throughout the project (Creswell, 1998). According to Creswell (1998), some analysis must take place during data collection. This implies that without it, the data collection has no direction. Data analysis is ongoing and helps fieldwork gain momentum towards useful information (Hammersley, Martyn & Atkinson, 1995).

Following the reasoning of Glesne (1999), Patton (1988), Creswell (1995) and others like Lincoln and Guba (1985), the analysis of the data for this research was an ongoing process of assessing the interviews and transcribing the data. It was beneficial to reflect about the findings while in the field as part of the analysis, although strategically the researcher left the more formal analysis until most of the data had been collected. Qualitative data analysis transforms data into findings, and no single formula or recipe exists for that transformation. Although there are guidelines, the final destination remains unique for each investigator or researcher (Patton, 2002).

Iyambo (2001) states that there are many different styles of qualitative research, and there are a variety of ways of handling and analysing data. As Nieuwenhuis (2006) indicates, qualitative data analysis is 'usually based on an interpretative philosophy', and this implies that researchers analyse the collected data in order to interpret it according to a particular philosophy.

It was noted in the data collection section of this report that multiple methods were employed; interviews, collection and analysis of various key documents, and observations; so the researcher ended up with much information to process. This required extracting the salient details that were relevant and meaningful to answer the research questions. This study used a combination of several techniques to analyse data. The purpose of using this approach was to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2006).

Analysis involved organising it, breaking it down into manageable units, and searching for patterns of similarities and differences. Before the data analysis, the researcher checked that all the raw data were collated (typing, and organising handwritten filed notes, interviews transcripts completed in the verbatim form). Data were broken down into different manageable units before being coded into units. This is described by Lincoln and Guba (1985:203) as 'single pieces of information that stand by themselves'.

After the data were coded into units, they were organised into categories of similar characteristics. At that stage of analysis, the formations of theory to answer the research questions started.

These transformations involved interpreting what the data meant, and relating these interpretations with other sources of insight about the phenomena, including findings from related research, conceptual literature, and common experience. Data analysis and interpretation are often intertwined and rely upon the researcher's logic, artistry, imagination, clarity, and knowledge of the field under study. The final research report reflects primary evidence of the phenomenon, interwoven with the researcher's reasoned interpretation of the phenomenon (Graue & Walsh, 1998).

The data analysis was to identify those themes emerging from the data that could shed light on issues of equity and quality in the education provisioning in mobile schools. The data were juxtaposed with other related studies on education provisioning for nomadic groups to identify those aspects that corroborate existing theories and findings and to highlight those aspects that are unique to the experiences, expectations and aspirations of the Himba and Zemba people of the Kunene region. Because of the semi-structured interviews, most of the categories were shaped by the questions that were asked.

In analysing the interviews of mobile teachers, regional officials and Onda mobile management, communities and nomadic learners, the researcher used verbatim transcripts of each interview. The official documents and observation notes were repeatedly read and studied. To ensure complete accuracy of the transcripts, the researcher listened to the tapes again and edited the transcripts as necessary.

The next step in the process was to begin to organise the data to facilitate the analysis. In the process of data analysis, some data were discarded so that only useful and relevant data remained. Triangulating was achieved through cross checking the different sources of information, such as interviews, documents and class observations. During the data analysis the researcher decided to follow up telephone contacts with different individuals involved in the interview to clarify and probe further any unclear answers. The study employed three analysis principles; data reduction (writing, summaries, coding, teasing out themes, making clusters and partitions, writing memos), data display (figures, graphs, tables), and conclusions (verification, explanation, casual flows and suggestions) (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10).

In Chapters 5 and 6, the researcher presents a detailed analysis of enquiry and quality among nomadic pastoralist groups in a developing country context, with reference to the mobile schools in the Kunene region.

4.9. Trustworthiness and credibility

In this study data collection in the form of ethnographic research took place on site, i.e. in the group's natural environment, and attempted to be non-manipulative of group behaviour. The purpose was to aim for objectivity, while taking into account the views of the participants.

As Drew, Hardman and Hart 1996) state, validity is crucial to the value of information obtained from an investigation; whether that study uses quantitative or qualitative methods. Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the inferences the researcher makes based on the collected data, while reliability refers to the consistency of these inferences over time (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1993). Other researchers like Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to this feature as 'trustworthiness, credibility, and authenticity'. In this study, to ensure trustworthiness, credibility and authenticity, the following were employed in this enquiry:

- Using a variety of instruments to collect data, in order to allow for the triangulation of the data in order to build validity. Triangulation through the use of multiple methods (interview, observation, notes documents analysis and journals) ensures that different forms of data support observations and perceptions to further strengthen the validity of the findings.
- Documenting the sources of remarks whenever possible, to help make sense out of comments that otherwise might seem misplaced.
- Interviewing individual participants more than once where appropriate to minimise inconsistencies.
- Describing the context in which questions were asked.

- Learning to understand, and where appropriate, speak the language of the group that participated in the study.
- Keeping extensive field notes to keep track of ideas and perceptions to validate the concepts and theories that arose.
- Using audiotapes and videotapes when possible and appropriate.

As indicated earlier, data collection and analysis are continuous iterative process. This enabled the researcher to verify his understanding and interpretation of the data with the participants (member checking). This enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the research and ensures that conclusions drawn are authentic. The large number of interviews provided a rich and saturated pool of data where themes repeatedly emerged in conversations with different groups, thus reinforcing the credibility of the data.

4.10. Limitations

According to Drew *et al.* (1996), ethnographic research, like all research, is not without its limitations. It is highly dependent on the particular researcher's observations, interviews and documentations, and as numerical data are rarely provided, we need to use the criteria for trustworthiness and credibility of the researcher's findings. Fraenkel *et al.* (1993:393) note that in some cases, because only a single situation or culture of a group is observed, generalisability is almost non-existent. Equally, it was difficult to obtain statistics related to nomadic populations, as neither the Census nor the Education Management Information System (EMIS) of developing countries (including Namibia) are able to provide figures or describe the provision of education for nomadic groups. The researcher was aware of these limitations and conscious effortd were made to ensure that the findings are valid and credible.

The researcher would like to make it clear that this study is not attempt to focus on the issue of policy failure, but rather on the relationship between what was intended to be policy and what is in fact being implemented. Therefore, the study first determined and analysed the concept of equity and equal education opportunity with reference to education policies in Namibia, such as the 2000 National Policy Options for Educationally Marginalised Children. The researcher focused on the originators'

perceptions and intentions in terms of the ideological notion of Education for All.

The potential of researcher bias is acknowledged. Measures were taken to minimize these (such as member checking and the use of reflexivity) and involving the study leader in validating the data obtained. As Molale (2004:23) indicates, 'bias is a concept which may cut across all types of research methodologies including ethnographic study; however, this does not necessarily mean subjectivity as a factor in the research should be allowed to persist.' In this regard, every endeavour was made to keep these to a minimum.

4.11. Summary

This chapter described the data collection strategies and measures taken to ensure the information generated was a fair representation of the Himba and Zemba communities, nomadic learners, mobile teachers, and education officials overseeing the implementation of education policies and programmes in the Kunene region. The chapter described the research design and the various research instruments used to collect data from seven mobile units, teachers and learners in these units, community members where these units are situated, as well as the Regional Officials and Ondao Mobile Management. Ethnographic studies were outlined in detail, including methods used for data collection analysis and interpretation.

This chapter also explained how validity was established. Limitations of the study were also identified. The chapter further outlined the study's approach to trustworthiness in order to render the results acceptable to other researchers and readers. In the next two chapters the data obtained and analysed in terms of the methodological considerations are presented.