

**Teacher educators' perceptions about possibilities and challenges of the merger between
Namibian Higher Education institutions for improving teacher education**

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in the

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

**UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE**

at the

UNIVERSITY OF THE WESTERN CAPE

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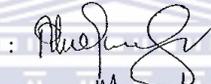
2015

DECLARATION

I, PAULINA NDAHAMBELELA VATUVA GWAA-UUGWANGA, of the Faculty of Education of the University of the Western Cape, declare that the copy of this thesis submitted by me on January 2015 is original. It has not previously been submitted for evaluation at another university or department and is not being submitted concurrently for any other degree. It is the result of my own efforts through the professional guidance of my supervisor whose name and signature appear below.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to the following who in various ways contributed immensely towards the successful completion of this study:

God the Almighty, 'Kalunga ka Nangobe, Kanakusha na Nakupenduka, na Nakuningina kwEtango who gave me the strength and courage to persist until the end of this work.

My family and mostly my dearest parents, Shiliva and Mukwaluvala Helena Vatuva. Dad, you followed this process from its initial stage to the end. I admired the wisdom that made you to do that without having trotted the same road. Mom, this work is the fruit of the seed of education you planted in me as a teacher. I also thank my two sisters Kandeshi and Loide for their unbounded support throughout this journey.

Nicky, my lovely husband, you have a strong admirable faith. I could have given up a long time back was it not for your immense moral support. All our children, you are heroes and heroines. I remain indebted to you for my continuous absence from your lives, especially my children for not being there when you needed me for your own studies. 'Kalunga' will surely keep me for a while to payback, though perhaps not in full.

Dr. Thandi Moira Ngcobo, my Doctoral Supervisor, I appreciate the effort you put into this work from the beginning to the end through sternness and quality supervision. Special thanks go to Brian Carlson for his professional language editing. Also I would like to say thanks to Dr Neethe Ravjee for opening up my mind to a wide range of theories about research.

I owe a debt to my participant teacher educators in the five merging institutions who took time out of their busy schedules to take part in interviews.

The University of Namibia funded my studies and should be applauded. In particular, my seniors, Prof Lazarus Hangula, the Vice Chancellor, and Professor Osmund Mwandemele, the Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic & Research Affairs, are thanked for their great words of encouragement every time.

The study was not going to be completed if it was not for the support I got from staff members at UNAM, Oshakati Campus, mostly members of management who took turns to act when I was

away with fieldwork. Elly, the Administrative Secretary to the Campus Director, you are an angel. You went beyond your normal duties to provide technical assistance for this work. The same goes to Hilka Iitula. May God bless you too.

My academic friend, Anna Ashipala-Hako, who found me on this journey - now a Doctor - and with whom I shared the good and bad. You are very caring. Thanks for being a great pillar of strength.

Finally, this thesis is dedicated to my late brother, Hafeni, who passed away exactly a year before this work was completed and without whom there were no school day memories. So long, brother, so long.



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of the teacher educators about the merger between the University of Namibia and Namibia's former Colleges of Education with regards to the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education. The focus of the study differed from the various merger studies in that theirs has mainly been on technical issues of mergers to interpret merger capacity to improve change. Of importance about this focus is that the views of teacher educators were deemed important because of their 'agency' in the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality. The grounded theory of Strauss and Corbin of 1998 framed the study. The key question of the study was: what are the perceptions of teacher educators about the merger of the former colleges of education with the University of Namibia's and the capacity to improve teacher education quality in the country?" A case study methodology was employed in which semi-structured questions were used to collect data. In addition, the study also employed observations and document analysis as sources of data.

The key finding of the study was that all the participants' perceptions were that the merger has the capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. The core of this finding serves as evidence of the complexities of mergers, particularly in terms of how participants perceive the merger's capability of improving quality. Firstly, the perceptions related to the contexts in which the participant teacher educators found themselves. Furthermore, the perceptions appeared to be associated with various contextual needs experienced by participants in the various institutions. The study analysis further suggested that the needs related to issues associated with input, process and output. These findings laid the ground for an emergent theory for understanding of teacher educators' perceptions about the mergers. A conclusion drawn from the above findings were that the Maslow Hierarchy of Need Theory (with its biological/physiological needs, safety needs, belongingness and love, esteem needs, and self-actualization) provide better understanding of perceptions about mergers.

KEYWORDS

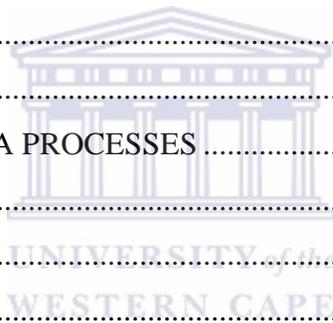
Mergers, perceptions, quality teacher education, University of Namibia, Grounded Theory.



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACTE	Advisory Committee on Teacher Education
BETD	Basic Education Teachers Diploma
CA	Continuous Assessment
CCE	Caprivi College of Education
CEQUAM	Centre for Education and Quality Management
COST	College of Out of School Training
EFA	Education for All
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Implementation Program
FG	Focus Group
GT	Grounded Theory
HACE	Historically Advantaged College of Education
HDCE	Historically Disadvantaged Colleges of education
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HF	Historical Faculty
HoC	Head of Campus
HPC	Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
IUM	International University of Management
KE	Knowledge Economy
KMC	Katima Mulilo Campus
LPTC	Lower Primary Teachers Certificate

NEC	National Education Certificate
NHEC	National Higher Education Certificate
NPC	National Primary Certificate
OCE	Ongwediva College of Education
PTC	Primary Teachers Certificate
QTE	Quality Teacher Education
SACMEC	Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education Quality
SMTM	Senior Management Team Member
SWAPO	South West African People Organization
TE	Teacher Education
TEQ	Teacher Education Quality
TLIU	Teaching and Learning Improvement Unit
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIN	United Nation Institute
WEC	Windhoek College of Education

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Quality teacher education remains a big challenge for all countries, especially developing countries (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005). At the epicentre of this challenge is the concern among authors on teacher education that poor quality in teacher education results in low learner academic performance (Hargreaves and Lo; EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005; Marope, 2005). As a result, many developing countries have undertaken various education reforms to prepare teachers and to develop their in-service teachers to meet the educational needs and demands of their countries and that of the 21st century (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2005; Ijaiya, Alabi & Fasasi, 2010). Similarly, education policies in Namibia regarding teacher education specifically have been reformed with the aim to redress the country's education challenges associated with the colonial system of education's inequalities and fragmentation. Yet despite the post-independence in 1990 reforms, the quality of education in Namibia, as claimed in many government and international reports, is said to be still lagging behind that of other developing and developed countries mainly based on learners' poor performance in schools (Makuwa, 2006). Indicative of the poor performance has been the Namibian poor scores in tests such as SACMEC 1 & 2 in reading and mathematics on the SACMEC analysis of Grade 6 learners regionally (see *Appendix 1* for reading and mathematics scores per country). The criteria which inform this claim include the scoring below the average of all the scores of learners in all fourteen countries in SACMEQ II. The average score of all learners was 500 and the standard deviation was 100.

Indeed, even the results for SACMEC for teachers for 2005/2006 were also not at all impressive for Namibia. The results for teachers in reading and in mathematics are provided in *Appendix 2*. Similarly, the general performance of Grade 10 nationally has not been impressive either. On average, since 1993 the percentage of learners qualifying for admission to Grade 11 has increased only from 37% to 54% for 2011 (The Ministry of Education Press Release, 2011). Although there has been an increase in learners proceeding to grade 11, the concern is about the 46% of learners who did not qualify to proceed to Grade 11.

In addition to the above claims, the Namibian public questioned the ability of the colleges of education, which operated under the Namibian Ministry of Education, to produce teachers with appropriate skills and knowledge as well as attitudes for providing education that is suitable for preparing a Namibian nation for economic improvement appropriate manpower to meet the country's economic needs by 2030 and beyond (Marope, 2005). These criticisms prompted the government through the Ministry of Education to commission studies aimed at investigating the quality of the teacher education in order to enable wider reforms aimed at improving quality education. Such studies included The *Ten-Year Plan for Educator Development and Support in Namibia* by Coombe, Bennell and Uugwanga (1998), the World Bank Report by Marope (2005) and others. These studies highlighted issues that confirmed the doubts about the quality of teacher education in the country, particular in relation to the then colleges of education.

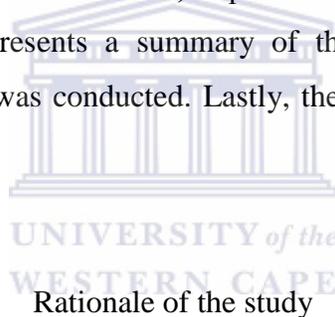
Issues highlighted in the studies were inadequate and inappropriate content, inappropriate methodologies and poor supervision of teaching and learning. The concerns about these issues culminated in the establishment of the Strategic Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP) of 2006 which aimed at “improving the sector quality in order to meet the national needs of Knowledge Economy (KE) in accordance with Vision 2030” (ETSIP, 2006).

The Strategic Plan for the Education and Training Improvement Programme-ETSIP recommended the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education - ACTE - to be responsible for improving teacher education quality. Through ACTE, a consultative team was established under the leadership of Dr Wendy Crebbin in 2007 to investigate various models of teacher education reforms. The Crebbin consultancy report recommended various models (see *Appendix 3, List of Recommendations*) which ACTE submitted to Cabinet for scrutiny and decision-making. Of the recommendations, Recommendation 1.2.1 that stipulates that “the four colleges of education be merged with the Faculty of Education in the University of Namibia” (Crebbin *et al.*, 2007) received the cabinet's support as the most appropriate teacher education reform to improving the quality of teacher education in Namibia.

In view of the above, a merger of the colleges of education with the University of Namibia was

enacted by Cabinet in 2009 with the hope that it would help improve the quality of teacher education in the country, as stipulated in the Cabinet Action No. 18/29/09/09/011 (UNAM Annual Report, 2010). The merger itself took effect in April 2010. Even though the official purpose of the merger was to improve teacher education, it is not known whether such a view was shared by all academic staff involved in the merger. Thus, this study explored the perceptions of the teacher educators about the merger between the University of Namibia and Namibia's former Colleges of Education with regards to the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education. The views of teacher educators were deemed important because of their 'agency' in the merger and their capacity to improve teacher education quality.

The remainder of this chapter introduces the study by providing the rationale, purpose - including the key questions of the study - and the historical contexts deemed to be critical to understanding teacher education in Namibia and, in particular, teacher educators' perceptions in this regard. The chapter also presents a summary of the theoretical frameworks and the methodology by which the study was conducted. Lastly, the chapter provides an outline of the thesis.



The need to conduct this study was prompted by various aspects. The first of these aspects was the view that, as institutions are made up of people, they carry psychological dimensions which are often referred to as "people factors" and which need to be given attention during any restructuring or reform process (Hay & Fourie, 2002; Martin & Samels, 1994). However, indications are that people involved in change, including mergers, do not always get the attention they need. Fuelling this view was my past experience as a former teacher educator in one of the former colleges of education for many years and a Vice Rector in one of them and currently one of the Directors of the satellite campuses at the University of Namibia. Those experiences exposed me to reforms which were often undertaken without subjectively involving those who were supposed to implement them and also exposed me to how this tendency sometimes impacted negatively on implementation and intended outcomes.

In addition, researchers such as Buono, Bowditch and Lewis, (1985) and Martin & Samels (1994) have observed that earlier studies on mergers have focused on technical issues and completely ignored the importance of the experiences of those involved with mergers. Of importance regarding the people factor in mergers is that, like all changes, mergers are complex and often affect the people involved in them differently (Fullan, 2009). Marope & Weeks' (1996) view on the matter is that:

The lecturers are very crucial to change. They are the ones on the ground. They are the ones who deliver the curriculum on a daily basis; they are in direct contact with consumers of the curriculum - the students. Their input is therefore important as they have first-hand experience of conditions in colleges. (p. 82).

Advocates of the importance of 'people factors' for understanding worker participation in mergers argue that merger scars remain even after the processes are concluded and declared by policy drivers to have been successful (Hay & Fourie 2002; Goldman & Van Tonder, 2006). The importance of the study, therefore, is that it contributes to the development of better understanding about employee perceptions regarding higher education mergers, particularly that of the University of Namibia.



In addition to the above, it is not commonly understood how teacher educators understand quality teacher education in general and specifically in relation to the Namibian context. The study therefore sought to explore, in depth, how teacher educators understood quality teacher education and their beliefs about the mergers' potential to improve quality.

In summary, the study was prompted by the researcher's interest to understand how teacher educators perceive the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education in Namibia with a hope that such an understanding will contribute to a general understanding of mergers in higher education. It is hoped the study will contribute to the body of knowledge that informs related policies, practices and further studies in this area. As a result, the outcomes of this study will be made available in the form of a PhD thesis for public consumption and reference in the libraries of the University of the Western Cape and the University of Namibia. In addition, opportunities to

disseminate the study outcomes through journal articles and conference papers to discuss the topics from the thesis will be strived for.

The purpose of the study

As can be ascertained from the above presentation, the purpose of the study was to contribute towards the development of better understandings about the perceptions of teacher educators regarding the merger between former colleges of education and the University of Namibia and its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in the country.

The key questions

Thus, the key question in the study was: What are the perceptions of teacher educators about the merger of the former colleges of education with the University of Namibia's and the capacity to improve teacher education quality in the country?

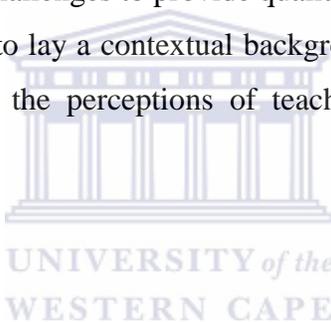
These following sub-questions helped address the above key question:

1. How do teacher educators in the merging institutions conceptualise "teacher education quality"?
2. To what degree do the teacher educators perceive the merger as having the potential to improve teacher education quality in Namibia?
3. What merger aspects do the teacher educators perceive as posing challenges to the improvement of the quality of teacher education in Namibia?
4. What theory emerges in this study to contribute towards the development of better understanding about participants' perceptions about institutional mergers' capacity to achieve their proposed outcomes?

Historical context

Teacher education is part of the larger history of education in Namibia which can be traced back to the feudal Namibian society's effective, for the time, but informal and traditional education system (Angula, 1999). The above system came to be replaced by the formal education of the missionaries when they introduced schooling as their evangelical by-product in the 1800s (*Ibid*) and later introduced teacher education when the need arose.

This section captures the historical review of the education system of feudal Namibian education, the missionary teacher education and the colonial teacher education under the German and South African apartheid government and then the SWAPO teacher education plans for the independent Namibia. It ends with discussion about the post-colonial teacher education system, its effort to redress the past and its perceived challenges to provide quality teacher education. The purpose of providing the historical context is to lay a contextual background against which the merger was instituted and also against which the perceptions of teacher educators in the study can be understood.



The feudal education system

Even though formal education was not practised in the pre-colonial Namibia, informal education existed for the purpose of preparing young people for responsible adulthood in the whole of Africa (Olasunkanmi and Mabel, 2012), including Namibia (Amukugo, 1994). As part of this system the young people learned specific skills such as farming, fishing, cooking, weaving baskets and bedding mats, making hides for clothes and panning gold from family and non-family adults. Education and training at this time was done mainly along gender perceived roles whereby adult men taught boys while women taught girls. The transfer of such skills, though informally done, formed a significant base for the day-to-day sustainable socio-economic life of the African society of the pre-colonial Namibia (Amukugo, 1994). However, due to the informal system of education, there were no formal teacher educators to teach the future 'teachers'.

Missionary education and teacher Education

The above informal but seemingly successful feudal and semi-feudal education system was replaced by the formal missionary education mainly from European societies in the 1800s. When missionaries embarked on establishing schools for Africans, the main aim was to spread the gospel of Christianity and schooling was just a by-product meant to make indigenous people cooperative with the missionaries (Ellis, 1984; Amukugo, 1994; Cohen, 1994). As a result, it seems not much thought was given to the quality of education or to those who provided the education until the 1950s. Nambala (1987) states that the first teacher training college was established by the Rhenish Society in the south at Otjimbingwe and was called Augustineum. Another teacher training college was established by the Finish in the early 1950s in the former Owamboland¹ at one of their mission bases at Oniipa, followed by the female teachers' seminary at Okahao in Ongandjera. At Odibo, in the eastern part of former Ovamboland, a formal teacher training seminary was founded in 1962. As with other missionaries, the Catholic missionaries established schools and began to experience challenges of too many schools and very few teachers which led to the establishment of the teacher training colleges under the Roman Catholic Church such as the Dobra Teacher Training College near Windhoek in the 1970s. The next section details how the dynamics of the South African apartheid government made an entrance into the teacher education and determined the type of teacher education that existed before independence and the legacy that it left behind.

Colonial education and teacher education

The history of teacher education in Namibia cannot be told outside the political arena and the dynamic of politics of each period (Nambala, 1987). It would, therefore, be difficult to understand the mergers in teacher education, including related teacher educators' perceptions, without understanding the contexts that prevailed during the apartheid era stretching from 1948 when the South African Nationalist party came to power until 1990 when Namibia became independent. Within the context of apartheid, Verwoerd, who was the South African Prime Minister and the architect of the apartheid policy, appointed the Eiselen Commission of 1952 which recommended that the quality of education for the natives should be inferior to that of the

¹Owamboland the area to the northern part of the country currently represented by the four political regions of Oshana, Omusati, Oshana, Oshana and Oshikoto regions and was historically known as a war zone area during the liberation for independence.

whites and other racial groups. Verwoerd's objectives for native education were clear when he declared that:

When I have control of the Native Education, I will reform it so that natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them. People who believe in equality are not desirable teachers for the Native Education, Native Education should train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, and according to the sphere in which they live (Verwoerd quoted in Amukugo, 1994, p. 108).

This objective was carried out through the historical Bantu Education Act of 1953 and its legacy up to 1990 and beyond when Namibia became independent (Amukugo, 1994; Cohen, 1994; Kalaway, 2002). The so-called tertiary teacher training programme under the South African apartheid government was offered by a range of institutions along racial lines. Each institution operated independently and offered its own teacher education programmes with different requirements, scope, duration, organization structures and focus. Such a segregated and fragmented teacher training approach disadvantaged small ethnic groups whose capacity and expertise to govern teacher education institutions were poor (Angula, 1999). Consequently, the quality of teacher qualifications in the country varied from one administration to the other. Some administrations were very resourceful, competent and so provided qualifications of high quality, particularly those which were administered directly from the central government in the south and central part of Namibia, whilst others produced qualifications of unsatisfactory quality education as was thought to be the case regarding those under the homeland administrations in the far north and north east of the country (Mendelsohn, 1997). Many of such qualifications were categorized as under qualifications after independence (Benell, Coombe and Uugwanga, 1998).

Apart from the teacher training programmes provided by the South African (SA) apartheid government, one of the organisations which fought for Namibian independence, the South West Africa People Organization (SWAPO), also provided teacher education opportunities for Namibians in exile. Two such initiatives were the Integrated Teacher Training Programme funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the United Nations Institute for Namibia (UNIN) (Ellis, 1984).

Post-independence education and teacher education

In years following the SWAPO government ascendancy to power, debates about the link between quality teacher education and the general quality of education were widespread, as conveyed in publications by authors such as Angula (1999) and Nyambe & Mayumbelo (1999). For example, Angula (1999) stated in a media conference that the major issue confronting education for all in Namibia is improvement of quality education and teacher education in particular. The first efforts to improve the quality of education were the formulation of the policies as highlighted in the Education Reform Policy of “Education for All” with its four fundamental principles of: “Access, Quality, Equity, and Democracy” (Ministry of Education Sport and Culture, 1991). The SWAPO motives for teacher education in the independent Namibia are captured by Angula (as stated in Zeichner, 2001):

Perhaps the most important challenge in improving the quality of our education system is to ensure that teachers are well prepared for the major responsibilities they carry. More than anything, it is the teacher who structures the learning environment. It is them who keep the learning exciting and satisfying or alternatively who make schooling a pain to be endured. It is essential, therefore, that we help teachers to develop experiences and skills that will enable them stimulate learning through pre-service and in-service training (p. 18).

As a result of the perceived shortcomings in the previous teacher education system, the Ministry of Education after independence introduced teacher education reforms. One of the reforms related to the introduction of a national qualification called Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) in 1994 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995; Swart, 1994). The BETD trained teachers for Grades 1 to 10 (Swart, 1996). Advocates of the BETD perceived the program as providing well trained teachers, capable of understanding pedagogical issues, empowering student teachers and teacher educators with critical enquiry skills and effective decision making powers (Mayumbelo & Nyambe, 1999, p. 71). However, in spite of some pockets of perceived success in the BETD such as the introduction of a democratic learner-centred approach in the classroom and the building of a strong relationship between school and community (Zeigner, 2006) the program was generally criticized for poor quality and for being associated with poor

academic performance in Namibian schools, particularly with reference to, among others, that the BETD was all about group work; it was perceived low on content; and focussed too much on methodology (Dahlestrom, 2002). This implied that the BETD was not training the quality teachers who the schools needed to provide quality education in Namibia.

The Namibian government continued to implement policies aimed at various reforms to redress the past. Currently, examples of government policies in this respect include Vision 2030, and the National Development Plan 1-3, and the Education and Training Sector Implementation Plan (ETSIP), all of which recommended quality teacher training as a vehicle to general quality education, improved human resources and economic growth (Marope, 2005; ETSIP, 2007; Bennell, Coombe & Uugwanga, 1998). According to ETSIP (2007), all research done on the state of teacher education in Colleges of Education indicated that the enhancement of the status of colleges and a change in institutional governance are prerequisites for improvement in the quality of the output of colleges.

Unlike the colleges of education, the University of Namibia, Faculty of Education, was mandated to prepare teachers for the senior secondary education phase. This mandate was also perceived by many as having the potential for promoting quality teacher education (Crebbin *et al.*, 2007; Marope, 2005). However, the implication of having two different teacher education systems in Namibia was perceived negatively as it was not in the interest of uniting the education system to address quality education issues (Marope, 2005).

In response to concerns raised above by various interested parties about the quality of teacher education in the country, as indicated on page 3 above under the introduction section, the Namibian National Council on Higher Education (through the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education –ACTE), then initiated a consultative process in 2007 whose purpose was to review teacher education. It was hoped the outcome would translate into a major teacher education restructuring towards improving the quality of teacher education in the country. From that consultancy a merger between the colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education was one of the restructuring models recommended to Cabinet (ACTE, 2009). The bill to merge the former colleges and UNAM's Faculty of Education was approved in January 2010 (University World News, 2010).

The merger resulted in a multi-campus model consisting of campuses that are several kilometres away from each other and from the University of Namibia's main campus in Windhoek. The model of the merger was viewed as a suitable move by some scholars, including Moses Magadza (2013) in an interview with University World News. Teacher education reform in Namibia has clearly taken a path followed only by a few countries in Africa such as South Africa and Zimbabwe and Botswana to a certain extent. The last colleges of education in the last two countries operate on a strong affiliation to the universities. The practice of doing away with independent colleges of education followed a global trend which aimed to consolidate the whole teacher preparation in the universities (South African CHE, 2000) or have teaching colleges affiliated to universities' Faculty of Education (University World News, 2010) for better quality. As indicated in the purpose section on page 3 above, the focus of this study was to investigate how teacher educators involved in the Namibian merger perceived the extent to which teacher education quality was improving as a result of the merger.

Theoretical framework

The study was framed by Grounded Theory. This section provides a summary of the theory and also provides a brief summary of the considerations that informed its adoption in this study. A more detailed discussion about this aspect of the study is provided in the next chapter.

Grounded Theory

Although many studies about mergers in the field of higher education have been undertaken (Sayed & Jansen, 2008; Mfusi, 2004; Hay, Fourie & Hay, 2002; Arnold & Stoffile, 2013), there does not seem to be sufficient evidence from existing studies to develop a theory about mergers. The purpose of this study is to make a contribution towards increasing the evidence base for the development of a theory of educational mergers.

As a result, many of the studies in this area are descriptive (Goedegebuure, 2002). In the absence of adequate theoretical frameworks about mergers, the search for a framework in this study involved a review of theories about change and institutional management in general. This journey exposed me to the Complexity and the Contingency theories, both of which brought

about a realisation that, similar to all changes, mergers are complex and relate to contexts and that they therefore may not always be readily explained in terms of existing theories. As a result, the view was that my research in this field of study needed to, amongst other things, focus on the generation of a theory that could contribute to the development of explanations about various aspects of mergers.

The Complexity Theory rationalizes that institutional changes such as mergers are by their nature dynamic and non-linear in process. Complexity Theory maintains that various circumstances in mergers develop into a complex undertaking (Styhre, 2002; Amagoh, 2008; Mason, 2007). Furthermore, Mason (2007) was of the view that the complexity of changes [such as mergers] relates to context, as propounded by the Contingency Theory. What this meant was that findings in this study about teacher educators' perceptions about the merger would probably be based on the contextual variables as they emerged from different cases. Furthermore, these theories see organizational change, such as mergers, as complex political interactions which may include conflicts, contestation, compromises and flexibilities (Chetty, 2006). The emphasis in Contingency Theories, therefore, calls for contextual flexibility instead of universal explanations (Klein and Meyers, 1999).



The above two theories (Complexity and Contingency theories) informed my decision to adopt a Grounded Theory approach in this study primarily because of their common reference to the importance of contexts, including historical factors, for investigating people's perceptions about mergers (Mason, 2007; Klein & Myers, 1999). The view was that the Namibian merger was distinct due to unique contextual factors and that the perceptions would also be contextually unique to Namibia. Thus, while keeping the two theories in mind, the researcher also used the grounded theory approach in search of a theory that would better explain the perceptions of Namibian teacher educators about the capacity of the merger to lead to improved quality teacher education. Furthermore, the view was that perceptions are better explained in an inductive manner as opposed to deductive approaches. This is because perceptions relate to subjective meanings and can be complex as they differ from one person to another and from one group to another depending on personal experiences and group context (Otara, 2011).

Methodology

The study employed qualitative methods to investigate the perceptions of teacher educators who were involved in the merger between the ex-colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education. The study followed a case study design in this regard. What was originally designed to be a single case of the Namibian merger, emerged at the analysis stage as constituting three unique cases comprising the three historically black colleges in the north and north eastern part of Namibia, the historically advantaged former college in Khomasdal, Windhoek, and the historical Faculty of Education at the main campus of the University of Namibia. Yin (2003) in describing a case study refers to the importance of establishing the boundaries of the case in focus. On that basis, the three sub-cases emerged as unique boundaries mainly demarcated by historical circumstances and to a certain extent by geographical locations. A more detailed discussion about the methodology is provided in Chapter 4.

Thesis structure

Ten chapters constitute this thesis. The chapter presents the background of the thesis. The second chapter is the literature review. The third chapter is about the theoretical and key conceptual frameworks. The fourth is about the methodology undertaken to conduct the study. Further the fifth to the seventh comprise the findings of the study. Chapter 8 provides the discussions of findings while chapter 9 is about the generated theory. The last chapter provides the summary, conclusions and recommendations in the study.

Chapter 1 introduces this study. It includes the section on the purpose, the rationale of this study, the background of teacher education in Namibia, a summary of the theoretical frameworks as well as a summary of the study methodology.

Chapter 2 provides a critical discussion of the reviewed literature.

Chapter 3 provides the theoretical framework which was adopted for the development of a better understanding about teacher educators' perceptions about the merger between UNAM and the

former Colleges of Education in this study.

Chapter 4 presents a discussion of the study research design, the organizational experiences of the data collection as well as the methods for analysis, ethical considerations and the study limitations.

Chapter 5 presents the findings pertaining to the three campuses in historically disadvantaged colleges of education.

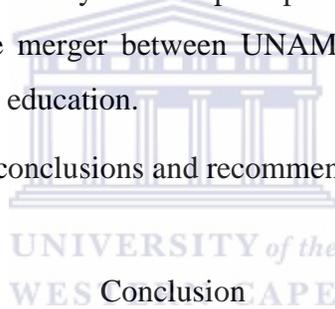
Chapter 6 presents the findings with regard to the historically advantaged college of Education.

Chapter 7 presents the findings on the historical Faculty of Education.

Chapter 8 presents a comprehensive discussion of the overall findings which emerged in the previous three chapters.

Chapter 9 presents the emergent theory on the perceptions of teacher educators about the possibilities and challenges of the merger between UNAM and the former teacher education colleges to improve quality teacher education.

Chapter 10 presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.



The chapter provided the background against which this thesis can be understood. It also gives information of what is covered in the report about the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter provides a critical discussion about emergent issues from the reviewed literature with regards to this study. Given the debates about literature reviews in studies which adopt a Grounded Theory approach, the chapter begins with an explanation about the role of the literature review in the study. The chapter then discusses the conceptualization of key concepts in the study. It ends with a critical discussion about reviewed research regarding mergers which helped identify gaps in this field of study for this study.

The role of the literature review in this study

In their founding work, 'Discovery of Grounded Theory', Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that the strength of GT is that it allows "categories to emerge naturally from the empirical data during analysis, uninhibited by extant theoretical frameworks and associated hypotheses" (p. 64). As a result, traditionally data collection in research framed by Grounded Theory was not expected to be preceded by a literature review for fear that emergent aspects from the review would contaminate the research and emergent theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Hence the authors' prescription to prospective Grounded Theory researchers was that the review be undertaken when the analysis is nearly completed in order to enable constant comparison and for emergent issues to be woven into the theory (p. 67).

However, as Grounded Theory became increasingly popular the above guidelines became debatable. Strauss in particular changed his stance significantly (Dunn, 2011) and, together with Corbin, she came to advocate an early review of relevant literature. This was one of the shifts that underpinned the split between her and Glaser (Glaser, 1998). Even with this flexibility the dilemma regarding literature review was how and when it should be conducted in a Grounded Theory study. It is thus necessary for me to explain when and why a literature review was employed in this Grounded Theory study.

The question of when to conduct the literature review remained a central concern for me and was guided by researchers like Strauss and Corbin (1990) and Dunn (2011). These researchers, in particular Dunn (2011), argue for a review of relevant studies prior to commencing primary data collection and analysis for several reasons. One such argument is that not allowing the researcher to inform him/herself about relevant literature at an early stage can reduce the researcher to a mere ‘tabula rasa’ or empty vessel in the field of study which could find her/him duplicating other studies and unknowingly not contributing to new knowledge or better understanding.

As a result of the above arguments, several motives prompted a decision to undertake a literature review in the current study not only towards the end of data analysis but also before and during data gathering. One of the purposes of the initial literature review was to help identify the gaps in research about mergers in higher education in general and in particular regarding the merger of focus. I also wished to refine the conceptual framework of this study.

The literature review undertaken towards the end of the analysis phase enabled me to compare findings in the current study with findings from previous studies. It also enabled identification of links between the findings of this study and a substantive existing theory whose adaptation serves to explain perceptions of people involved in mergers, as presented in Chapter 9.

The conceptualisation framework

In this section I discuss the complexities of the key concepts in this study, which are informed by an understanding that different people conceptualize concepts differently and that these differences may bring about differences in perceptions. The key concepts are: quality teacher education, perceptions and mergers.

As stated in the section about the role of literature in the study, one of the reasons for the literature review was to explore the different conceptualizations of the key concepts in this study in order to partly inform the analysis of the participants’ perceptions about the teacher education quality concept in the current study. In addition, the review of extant research on mergers was also to ascertain how key concepts in the study are conceptualized by various researchers and

how such conceptualization may or may not relate to the emergent theory on perceptions of people in mergers, particularly the Namibian Higher Education merger.

Teacher education quality

One of the initial purposes of the literature review was to familiarise myself with various debates about the concept of quality teacher education. Of interest in this regard was not to reach a framing conceptualisation but to establish whether the teacher educators' perceptions about quality teacher education were similar to any of the reviewed conceptualizations or completely different and whether or how the conceptualisations related to the emergent theory.

Due to universal concerns about education, my review of literature about the quality teacher education concept began with the UN. My review in this respect revealed that the UN views quality education as being crucial for societal transformation and that its capacity in this respects is thought to highly depend on the quality of teacher education (UNESCO, 2004; Moon, 2013). This understanding influenced the United Nations' call for universal quality Education for All (EFA) in 1990 (UNESCO, 1990) which was also reiterated in its Framework for Action in 2000, (UNESCO Report, 2000).

Although initially teacher education was not a focus of EFA as could be seen from its six goals for universal access to education, there has been a considerable consensus by researchers that the realization of EFA goals cannot be achieved without quality teacher education. The UNESCO Report (2004) conveyed such a belief when it maintained that achieving quality for all calls for more and better prepared teachers, as the pedagogical process rests at the heart of quality education. The understanding within the UN about quality teacher education included a wide range of input issues which included program content, learning conditions and the provisioning of education resources such as library and computer facilities (The UNESCO Report, 2004). Other ways in which international bodies such as the UN conceptualize teacher education relates to processes aimed at improving student learning outcomes through teaching methods and performance tests. As a result of the latter, the UNESCO quality evaluation has over the years been based on how different countries score on international tests. An examination of the above suggests that the UNESCO view of quality teacher education relates to input, processes and

output. The UNESCO conceptualization in relation to this study also indicates how the “perceptions, experiences and needs of those involved in teaching and learning experiences” form the bases for determining education quality, including that of aspirant teachers (UNESCO, 2004). In this respect the UNESCO urged member countries to adopt a broad perspective of quality teacher education which includes cognitive, social, creative, and emotional development (UNESCO, 2006).

In addition to the UN, international views about teacher education relate to that of the Commonwealth countries. The perspective of these countries on quality teacher education relates to a Commonwealth study on quality teacher education for quality education which led to the development of a Quality Assurance Toolkit for Teacher Education Institutions in Commonwealth Countries (Lahshmi & Rama, 2006). The following six Quality Teacher Education Indicators (QTEI) were then formulated to guide member countries in evaluating the quality of their teacher education systems: Curriculum Design and Planning; Curriculum Transaction and Evaluation; Research, Development and Extension of New Programs; Infrastructure and Learning Resources; Student Support and Progression; and Organization and Management (p. 6). In comparison with the UN perspectives on quality education, the Commonwealth indicators place more emphasis on process and input than output expectations such as student performance, professional skills and attitudes.

In addition to international bodies, various countries also take stands on what they believe comprises quality teacher education. For example, after democratization, in South African the Department of Education in this country in its National Framework for Teacher Education (2007) stated that quality teacher education relates to:

the preparation of a person to reach the threshold of competent participation in the teaching profession which involves the initial development of the basic competences and commitments characteristic of this profession ... and ... is regarded a responsibility of the Higher Education Institutions ... although it is put in the hands of the various Faculties of Education for monitoring of quality (p. 3).

In order to ensure quality standards are adhered to, this Department of Education laid down the following recommendations for quality teacher education that it should ensure that:

- students' literacy and numeracy are developed,
- it puts focus on HIV and AIDS and that the pandemic and its impacts on schooling and community life are well understood,
- it stresses pedagogy and content,
- it becomes responsive to National Curriculum policies, and, lastly,
- it focuses on how to find and use locally accessible learning resources (p. 43).

An examination of the South African approach to teacher education quality suggests that it also comprises a combination of input, process and output, although the contents are different from that of the UN and Commonwealth. In addition, the conceptualisation also relates to contextual challenges as appears to be the case regarding the focus on HIV and AIDS in the second bullet above.

The conclusion that could be drawn from the above conceptualization is that the conceptualization of quality teacher education continues to be debated. This has been attributed to the different contexts such as the continually changing societal, economic and professional demands and challenges they are facing (Moon, 2013). This argument is echoed by Sullivan (2006) who argues that economic contexts such as western versus non-western contexts have been used to determine quality education. For example, when western countries evaluate education in developing countries, tests scores on student performances and availability of resources are used to conceptualize quality as opposed to western determinants such as cognitive development in the form of contents and pedagogies, values and attitudes as outputs from learning (*Ibid*). The argument is echoed by Mingat (2003) who argues that, with regards to resources, developed countries through donor agencies are then known to infuse resources as a way to improve quality which they themselves come to manage in order to claim that they assisted to improve quality (Mingat, 2003). Mingat continues to argue that infusion in terms of money and materials has been useful but it alone cannot be used to define quality education. Mingat (2003) is of the opinion that some transformation processes on the cognitive and professional development of educators are needed to enable developing countries to improve the quality of teaching and output thereof. Although such arguments are made more in favour of

conceptualization of education quality, this study found them adaptable for teacher education too.

The conclusion above is that the conceptualisations of quality teacher education are informed by different schools of thought, hence their difference in contents in conceptualizations in relation to input, process and output. For example, all of them seem to refer to input, process and output, but, whilst the UN puts emphasis on resources in terms of equipment and materials in schools as input, the commonwealth input refers more to curriculum. The same applies to the South African conceptualisation whose input issues refer to the importance of knowledge in the form of numeracy and literacy, the understanding of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, pedagogical skills and content knowledge as well as commitments and professionalism, a combination of cognitive and pedagogical skills. Despite the differences in emphasis put on different conceptualization, especially in terms of contents in relation to input, process and output, there appears to be an agreement that quality teacher education is necessary for providing quality education.

Perceptions

In addition to teacher education quality, ‘perceptions’ was another concept that needed to be explored in the literature review because of its key position in this study. Pickens (2013) describes perceptions as the way a person interprets stimuli into something meaningful to himself or herself based on prior experiences. According to Bekeena (2009) we all see things in different ways because of who we are, the things we believe in and value as well as our different environments. In other words, we all have our own unique picture, image, understanding or interpretation of the world. Pickens (2013) further maintains that our perceptions may influence our responses and our behaviours either positively or negatively. Of particular importance about this view in relation to this study was that the teacher educators’ perceptions may also affect their participation in the merger-required teacher education activities. The view was that the perceptions would explain how the participants participated in the merger.

Similar to the above conceptualisations, scholars such as Fullan (2003) maintain that educational change such as mergers are complex in nature and result in different meanings to different people. Fullan (*Ibid*) regards the different meanings to education change as significant in

understanding why different people may perceive mergers similarly or differently. These meanings include the subjective, the objective and the general and shared meanings of change (Fullan, 2003; Van der Berg & Ros, 1999). Thus, my explorations about perceptions in this study took into consideration the possibility that the participants' perceptions could be informed by any or a combination of the different meanings individuals and groups attached to the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education.

Fullan (2009) describes the subjective meaning as the human aspects that are key components of individual participation in organizational change. Particularly, this meaning is in reference to individual questions, needs and opinions that arise among individuals in response to innovations. Objective meanings, on the other hand, refer to the actual aspects of a change such as organizational structure, technological possibilities, budgets and so forth (Fullan, 2003). According to Fullan (2003), the general meaning entails that all changes, whether imposed or voluntarily undertaken, may involve senses of loss, anxiety, fear, insecurity, lack of understanding of major objectives, confusion, struggle, etc. Failure to recognize this general meaning of change can lead to misinterpreting peoples' perceptions about change, implying the importance of shared meaning for ensuring change successes (*Ibid*). In addition, of significance about this shared meaning of change referred to by Fullan (2003) is the importance of it in understanding that such meanings can help to understand the subjective meanings of teacher educators about quality teacher education in relation to mergers which is the focus of the study.

Merger

Mergers have their origin in the corporate world (Wan, 2008). However, for various reasons, different authors do not always conceptualize the combination of companies or institutions as mergers and use different terminologies in this respect.

One of the examples of related terms is acquisition to describe instances when big institutions acquire small and weak ones for expansion purposes. Another associated term is 'incorporation' (Gitmann, 1991). The Council on Higher Education of South Africa-CHE (2004) sees incorporation as the process whereby a sub-division of one institution is incorporated into

another institution without affecting the latter's legal status. However, some authors use the concept 'incorporation' interchangeably with the term 'merger' as in the case of the Namibian merger in teacher education (University World News, 2010; Magaza, 2013). Another related term to mergers is 'consolidation' which usually refers to "the combination of two or more firms to form a completely new corporation" (Gitman, 1991, p. 799).

Another consideration about mergers relates to the various drivers of mergers. A great number of mergers take place due to a desire for economic gains or efficiency. These are referred to as 'resource dependency mergers' (Goedegebuure, 2002; Jansen, 2003). Mergers can also be done for strategic purposes such as effectiveness, governance or quality improvement.

All in all, the main goal of institutional mergers appears to be for the purpose of enhancing institutions' structural and financial strength (Botha, 2001) as well as for improving strategic efficiency and quality (Harman & Harman, 2014). It was because of the above debates that it was important to clearly state the purpose of the merger in this study, namely that of improving the quality of teacher education in Namibia, and finding out how the participants perceived the merger's capacity to achieve this purpose.

As indicated above, the purpose of reviewing the various conceptualisations about the key concepts was not to come up with the study's own conceptualization about the concepts but to explore how others conceptualized the concepts with the view that those conceptualizations may partly inform the discussion about the findings in the study. For example, the documentation of the current combination of teacher education institutions as a merger does not guarantee similar views amongst teacher educators in this institution. As a result, although such an eventuality was not part of the key questions in this study, being grounded the analysis was open to such a possibility. For example, some teacher educator participants' responses suggested that they were of the view that their experiences and expertise were not acknowledged during the merger. As a result, these participants tended to refer to the merger of focus as a take-over and some viewed it as an incorporation of former colleges by the University.

Similar to complexity theory, which suggests that events within organizations and in wider economic and social spheres cannot be predicted by simple models but will develop in a seemingly random and complex manner (Fullan, 2003; Hargreaves, 1998), the multifaceted manner in which conceptualization of key concepts in this study emerged suggests the importance of the role of context and change complexities for the generation of a theory. This is because organizations involve many actors who are interacting in complex ways and are grounded in different contexts.

Reviewed merger studies

The discussion in this section begins with research on corporate mergers, followed by studies about mergers in higher education institutions.

Corporate mergers: general findings and gaps in foci and methodologies

The reason for the review of research on corporate mergers in this study was because education institutional mergers have their roots in the corporate world. It was therefore of importance to explore whether research about corporate mergers provides lessons for research on higher education mergers.

Part of my literature review related to research about reasons for corporate mergers. This aspect of the review suggested that most corporate mergers were driven by the desire to increase productivity and profit. This practice is different from that of higher education mergers which are service oriented and are therefore not necessarily driven by profit. The implication of this difference in this study was that research on higher education institutional mergers needs to interrogate service-oriented reasons for the institutions' mergers. It was for this reason that this study focused on the quality aspect in investigating the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger of the Namibian teacher education institutions. What this suggests is that the focus on strategic issues of mergers, such as those which relate to finances and efficacy amongst corporate mergers, are at the expense of human related issues, (Pikula, 1999). For example, of the 28 studies reviewed by Yu (2013), none of them were found to focus on human experiences of mergers. The researchers in those studies rather focussed on other aspects of mergers such as

cost, marketing and diversification of products. These figures of zero out of 28 studies that all focus on technical rather than human aspects of mergers illustrate the existence of a gap in focus on human side of industrial mergers. Some researchers such as Buono (1989) and Cartwright, Cary & Cooper (1992) attribute the failure of some industrial mergers to a lack of focus on people related matters regarding the mergers.

My literature review of research about corporate mergers also related to methodologies in these studies. The review suggested that most of the studies on corporate mergers tended to be quantitative, thus suggesting a need for qualitative methodologies, especially regarding the development of better understanding about the human-related aspects of mergers such as participants' perceptions. This was one of the reasons that this study was qualitative. A more detailed discussion about this aspect of this study is provided in the next chapter.

Studies about mergers in higher education institutions

With regard to the mergers in higher education institutions (HEIs), there appear to be a similarity in research focus and findings with those in corporate mergers. This is irrespective of the fact that mergers in industry are undertaken for a different reason related to profit while HEIs are non-profit making institutions destined for human education and workforce training or preparation. The major similarity between corporate and higher education mergers lies in the assumption that the combination of institutions brings more valuable output than when institutions of similar concerns operate on their own. For example, the purpose in relation to academic performances are that HE institutions merge in order to strengthen teaching and research with the belief that merged academic institutions complement each other in terms of subject volumes, width and in-depth statuses (Yuzhuo, 2003; Kyvik, 2009; and Skodvin, 2014).

The review of the literature on studies about mergers amongst HEIs suggests that the focus has mainly related to efficiencies resulting from the mergers (Skodvin, 2014; and Harman & Harman, 2014), how mergers strengthened the governance of HEIs (Hay and Fourie, 2001), management, leadership and administration of the institutions (Sayed & Jansen, 2008); communication in mergers (Chipunza, 2010) and whether and how the mergers contributed to

improved performance in research and number of graduates (Yuzhuo, 2003; Kyvik, 2009; & Skodvin, 2014).

In addition to purpose and foci, another purpose of reviewing literature was to identify gaps in the research methodologies in other studies on HEI mergers. The review of the literature on such research revealed that the majority of the studies about mergers appear to be, similarly to the research about corporate mergers, undertaken by means of a quantitative research method. This was viewed to be limiting to developing better understanding about mergers in that it does not allow for a generation of a thick description of perceptions. It was partly for this reason that the research design for this study adopted a qualitative approach with the purpose of contributing to an enriched understanding about the perceptions of participants.

All in all, the number of researches on mergers in higher education reviewed in this study reveal a limitation on research on human aspects of mergers despite views suggesting that human factors are crucial to the success of mergers. (Hay and Fourie, 2000; Kyvik, 2009; Arnolds, Stofile and Lilla, 2013). The literature suggested not just an absence of focus on human aspects in merger studies as well as the tendency to focus on quantitative methods but also the absence of a substantive theoretical framework on understanding peoples' perceptions in mergers in general and in particular the merger in focus. As already indicated, these circumstances prompted the adoption of a Grounded Theory as a framework for the development of better understanding in the field of this study.

Conclusion

Literature on mergers both in corporate and in higher education is abundant. Whilst research on corporate mergers was found to focus on improved profit, studies on mergers in HE were found to focus on efficiency, governance and administration (Arnolds *et al.*, 2013; Kruss, 2009; Harman, 2008), leadership, academic and research strengthening (Chetty, 2010) and communication in mergers (Chipunza, 2010). Western mergers were found to be mainly about economy of scales, improving quality standards and so on (Skodvin, 2014; Ohman, 2011; Curri,

2002). This information helped identify the gap in research in terms of human aspects of mergers and the need to gain an understanding of the peoples' perceptions and their subjective meaning of how they viewed the merger that drove this study in relation to its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology that helped generate the desired understanding in this study.



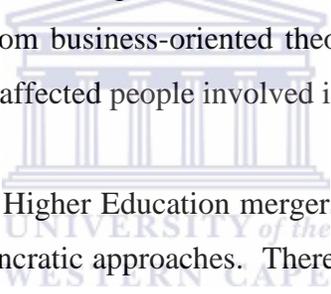
CHAPTER 3

THE COMPLEXITY OF MERGERS: A GROUNDED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of this study, namely the Grounded Theory (GT) and also provides an explanation about how its adoption was informed by views about the complexities of change which often relate to change contingencies. The discussion in this respect begins with Complexity Theory which is followed by Contingency Theory. The discussion then ends with the GT as a methodological framework in the study.

As indicated in the preceding chapter, my search for a theoretical framework revealed a scarcity of well-developed theories regarding higher education mergers. Eastman and Lang (2001) state that generally the scarcity of theories on higher education mergers often find higher education mergers being mainly examined from business-oriented theories and on technical issues rather than on aspects about how mergers affected people involved in them. Wan (2008) argues that:



In general, the literature on Higher Education mergers is characterized by a large degree of fragmentation and idiosyncratic approaches. There is a serious lack of theoretical and conceptual tools in higher education literature to help us examine the merger behaviours of the certain institutions... this leaves us with a gap. A need exists to study mergers in higher education in order to build conceptual models for future study as well as to identify shortage and protocols for reaction (p. 32).

It was partly in response to this call that the study was framed by a grounded theoretical framework for studying perceptions of teacher educators involved in the merger under focus. As indicated in the previous chapter, the decision to adopt GT as a framework in this study also involved a journey which exposed me to the complexity and contingency of education change, including that which relates to mergers. Both the complexity and contingency theories were viewed as incomplete on their own to frame the study on perceptions of teacher educators about the merger possibilities and challenges for improving the quality of teacher education in

Namibia. The following sections describe the complexity and contingency theories and explain how the theories served as building blocks for the adoption of the Grounded Theory.

The complexities of change

The classic and scientific management theories such as system theories view organizational management including the management of change in a linear, objective and logical way (Pugh, 1990; Styhre, 2002; Amagoh, 2008). Modern management theories critique such rationalistic theories in that they fail to acknowledge the complexity of organization and of change. Thus, modern management theories propose Complexity Theory as an alternative for framing research and management of institutions in times of change.

According to Mason (2007) Complexity Theory especially in education views systems as being made up of many variables that interconnect. Furthermore, the subscribers to the Complexity Theory maintain that unsystematic events in organizations tend to resolve into a complicated form rather than a simple one. Such complicated forms are often manifested through informal structures or communications (Pugh, 2012). In addition, Styhre (2002) argues that behaviour in complex systems is determined not by strategic decision-making but by whether it is 'fit for purpose' or not (Price, 2004). What this suggests is the need to be mindful of individuals' perceptions regarding change as their behaviour during the change may not always be determined by rational consideration but by what is 'fit for purpose' for them. Furthermore, Hargreaves (1998) maintains that people's emotional responses to change encourage autonomous behaviours which are a characteristic of a complex system such as a university, consisting of people with different values, academic backgrounds and historical backgrounds. Such autonomous behaviour is a result of a subjective meaning that individuals give to a specific change and has often been found to interfere with the plans and objectives of organizational change (Price, 2004; Mason, 2007; Otara 2011).

In view of the above elucidations, Fullan (2003a) calls for the acknowledgement of complexity of change, including knowledge of context, as one of the conditions for understanding peoples' perceptions about change. It was for the above reasons that the Complexity Theory paved the way for the adoption of a GT framework in this study. The view was that inducted data enables

the development of better understanding about perceptions of people involved in a merger. Thus, the beauty of the Complexity Theory in this study was that it provided a starting point for analysing complex systems (Mason, 2007) such as mergers. Its flexibility, for example, was useful in beginning to understand emotions and perceptions during change because in any organizational change people's focus on individual survival is likely to be emotional.

The contingencies of perceptions

As indicated in the introduction, the Contingency Theory also paved the way towards the adoption of a Grounded Theory in this study. The assumptions of the Contingency Theory subscribers are that what happens in organizations is contingent upon the environment (Pugh, 1999). This is because rather than being closed or mechanic in nature, organizations are subjected to a variety of environmental factors, both externally and internally (Ibid). The above makes it crucial for decisions to be mostly based on whether they are relevant or appropriate for specific circumstances such as the perceptions of affected individuals in that context. In other words, organisational decision-making needs to be 'situational'. The most common words associated with contingency philosophy are 'it depends' (Nutt, 2001) "... a match of approach to situation improves the prospect of success" (Ibid, p. 1).

At the core of Contingency Theories also are criticism of classical management theories such as Webster's Bureaucracy and Taylor's Scientific Management Theory for not being flexible and not considering complexities associated with environmental contingencies (Augustine, 2013; Daft, 2005). Thus with regard to this study, the view related to the possibility that perceptions about the merger would not necessarily be similar to those in other countries or for that matter be uniform, both within or across the merging campuses.

Various studies about mergers illustrate the appropriateness of the Contingency Theory for investigating mergers (Jansen, 2003 and Schoole, 2006). For example, the work by Schoole (2006) points out how various factors or contingencies of organizations influence behaviours and perceptions. Schoole gave examples of size, environment, technology, etc. as some of the contingencies that influence perceptions and behaviours of employees. According to Jansen (2003) mergers can independently unfold in a completely different way irrespective of legal and

pre-planned objectives depending on contingent factors outside and inside the organization. Such contingent factors include strong traditions of stakeholders, politics in which institutional identifications are racially fractured, financial inequality and historical differences (Ibid). Based on the reviewed research, a possibility therefore existed that teacher educators' perceptions would differ according to current and historical contexts of the various campuses.

The importance of the above two theories as a starting point in this study lay in their common reference to the importance of contexts or environment factors that might inform people's perceptions within the complexities of mergers (Jansen, 2003). However, the theories were not viewed as being adequate on their own for investigating the perceptions of participants and also would not provide suitable explanations about the perceptions because perceptions are subjective in nature. In addition, it was deemed appropriate at this level of study to contribute towards the development of theories in the field of mergers. As a result, none of the two theoretical frameworks were, therefore, adopted to frame the study on their own. This view then led to the conclusion that Grounded Theory was the most suitable tool for developing a better understanding about the perceptions of teacher educators regarding the merger's possibilities and challenges for improving the quality of teacher education in the country.

The grounded theoretical approach

The purpose of the grounded theoretical approach in this study was that it offered a lens which enables an inductive generation of a theory which, in the case of this study, was about the teacher participants' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education. The emphasis on inductive theory discovery methodology distinguishes Grounded Theory from other approaches (Glaser & Strauss, 2012) as it allows the researcher to develop a theoretical account of the general features of the topic while simultaneously grounding the account in empirical generation of data.

Glaser and Strauss developed the theory in 1967 and it became a widely used approach in qualitative research and has been adapted to many social fields, including education, where it has been excellently used in studies such as mentoring teachers, mainstreaming, classroom disciplines as well as education leadership from which practitioners can take examples

(Charmaz, 2006). For example, Ngcobo (2005) adopted the GT approach when exploring the relation between school culture, leadership and performance in two historically disadvantaged African township secondary schools of varying academic performance. Ngcobo's adoption of the GT approach enabled the generation of a theory about a school leadership and school culture that many struggling schools may adopt in their attempt to facilitate the formation of school cultures which are associated with good academic performance in schools of similar contexts. Similarly, this study focused on gathering data about teacher educators' perceptions in a merger context and inductively generated a theory on how perceptions in that particular situation or in similar circumstances can be better understood. The link between context and the Grounded Theory is emphasized by Glaser and Strauss (1967 in Straus and Corbin, 1990). Consistent with the GT, a predominantly inductive and to a certain extent deductive data analysis enabled the identification of categories from which a theory was generated about the participants' perceptions.

While the GT was of great value to this study, as presented above, as with any framework the GT framework also has its critics. Critics of grounded theory have mainly focused on its misunderstood status as theory or method. In addition, some critics are of the view that GT offers too many terminologies which may be confusing and overlapping and may lead the researcher to lose track of the overall picture which is emerging (Allan, 2003). I avoided these pitfalls by undertaking a broader reading of terminology and this has provided me with a broader understanding of the terminologies before undertaking the fieldwork.

Perhaps the most popular of the criticisms lies in the notion of relying on data at the expense of the existing theories and paying less attention to literature (Kelle, 2005; Dunn 2008). In addressing these criticisms I ensured that my decision about why grounded theory was suitable for my research was well informed. The extant theories were not suitable for the study. In the case of this study, an explanation has been made already why this study undertook a review of literature before the data collection even when Glaser suggested otherwise. I took a discrete approach to the literature review and the decision has been helpful in familiarizing me with the sphere of mergers in higher education though with caution not to pre-empt conclusions from emerging data.

The Grounded Theory analysis process adopted in this study is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the theoretical framework, together with the building blocks that led to the adoption of Grounded Theory as a lens through which I developed better understanding about the perceptions of teacher educators who were involved in the Namibian merger between teacher education institutions. The next chapter discusses the research design and methodology that helped generate the desired understanding in this study.



CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA PROCESSES

Introduction

The current chapter discusses the research paradigms and the design and methodology of the study. As already explained, the purpose of the study was to contribute to the development of a better understanding of teacher educators' perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. The chapter begins with a broad discussion of paradigmatic considerations in the study. The second section of the chapter relates to research design which includes the research approach, data collection techniques analysis method. The penultimate section is about the researcher's data gathering journey and where the experiences of this journey are outlined. The chapter ends with discussions on trustworthiness, ethics considerations and the limitations of the study.

Interpretative paradigm

The interpretive approach framed this study which seeks to develop a better understanding of the way participants perceive the process of the merger through their subjective meaning of the merger. Advocates of the interpretative approach believe that attempts to investigate the perceptions of people must find a means to access their internal beliefs and knowledge in order to develop an understanding of the world from their own viewpoint (Lincoln & Guba, 1990).

Interpretative also refers to the assumption that we cannot separate ourselves from what we know, implying that who we are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world. Furthermore, according Guba and Lincoln (1994) the interpretative paradigm relates to the importance of the context or situation and time. All of these aspects about this paradigm were viewed as being suitable for investigating the perceptions of teacher educators about the merger regarding teacher education quality, particularly because the study was about the participants' views or inner or subjective worlds. This consideration was therefore of particular importance in the study when taking into consideration that it related to participants' own meanings (Fullan, 2003) about the merger of focus in this study. Thus, the understanding of participants' meanings was valuable and useful for understanding their

perceptions about the merger of former Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia. Moreover, the interpretive paradigm enabled me to access the participants' multiple and divergent realities especially when considering that even the participants in the same social setting had different perceptions (Cantrell, 1993; Fullan, 2003). Furthermore, the interpretive paradigm and its hermeneutic way of using understanding of participants of their social, and historical contexts relates more to grounded theory which calls for inductive data to inform the subject of study instead of relying on existing theories that allow for misinterpretations of participants' experiences and meanings.

Research design

Babbie & Mouton (2001) in explaining the research design concept uses the metaphor of a "construction plan" (p. 55) which is a requirement for a building construction. In Mouton's metaphor, the design or plan informs the method to be used to construct a building. Equally, in this research, a research design informs the methodology that was used to meet the study purpose (Cresswell, 2003). In the section that follows, the discussion of the research design includes sub-sections about the study approach, paradigm, method, population and the samples, data gathering techniques as well as methods used to analyse data.

Qualitative approach

In this study, efforts to contribute toward the development of a better understanding about Namibia teacher educator perceptions about the merger between former colleges of education and the University of Namibia regarding the merger's potential to improve teacher education quality were undertaken by means of a qualitative methodology. The approach helped to provide in-depth insight into and understanding of the teacher educators' perceptions (Merriam, 2009). It also enabled me to explore how the participants viewed and interpreted their own experiences and what values they attached to their world as it related to the merger of focus (Cohen, 2006). The qualitative approach was also selected as the most suitable approach for exploring the perceptions of teacher educators at UNAM about the merger because it was deemed to be useful

in discovering different meanings they may have attached to the merger (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000).

Furthermore, the qualitative approach enabled the researching of the complex educational change presented by a merger in relation to people's feelings, attitudes and prejudices which inform perceptions which can only be understood by way of employing qualitative approaches to research such as case studies (Merriam, 2009) and Grounded Theory (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). In addition, the qualitative approach enabled me to generate thick descriptions from participants' interpretations and commentaries (Merriam, 2009) as well as factual information about the merger. Of value about thick descriptions in this study is that they enabled in-depth understanding about the complexities of the participants' perceptions about the merger.

Case study method

The nature of the research questions and the interpretative paradigm which underpins this study called for a richness of data. In response to such a call the study adopted a case study design which Yin (2005) and Stake (2005) maintain allows for the generation of thick and rich data in the sense that it involves data collection through various techniques such as interviews, observations and document gathering for analysis and for generating a theory in studies which are framed by GT which applied to this study. In addition to thick data, the case study enabled an in-depth understanding of the complexities of mergers which could only be better understood by investigating how participants experienced the merger in their naturalistic context, which is their workplace. As in the words of Gillham (2000), asking 'what' and 'why' in the case study can enable one to "get under the skin" (p. 11).

Furthermore, this method was deemed to be suitable for this study as it enables better understanding of the phenomenon being studied by studying it in its real life contexts and boundaries (Miles & Hubberman, 1994). Originally, the boundaries in this study related to Namibia. Although the initial view was that the boundary related to the country, on analysis three cases emerged within this case, each with findings which were found to be associated with

its own unique historical context and regional geographical boundaries rather than just those of the country.

The three unique cases that emerged from the analysis were: historically disadvantaged colleges of education (HDCE) comprising the three former colleges of education in the north and north-eastern part of Namibia; the historically advantaged college of education (HACE); and the historical Faculty of Education (HFE) at the main campus of the University of Namibia (see the Namibian map with the University of Namibia Faculty of Education campuses on p. 36 below).

Santos & Eisenhardt, (2004) inform that the cases can be adjusted during a study as categories make it clearer which cases extend the emerging insights (*Ibid*). Similarly, in this case the analysis suggested that the Namibian case fell into three sub-cases in relation to the perceptions of teacher educators about the merger.

Apart from its qualitative nature the case study methodology is also recommended for its capacity to explore contemporary phenomenon which the University of Namibia merger with former colleges of education was deemed to be of such a nature. Eisenhardt (1989, pp. 548-549) says that case studies are:

Particularly well suited to new research areas or research areas for which exiting theory seems inadequate. This type of work is highly complementary to incremental theory building from normal science research.

Study population and sample selection

The population of this research included all the teacher educators at all the campuses including the four located in former colleges of education and the one located in the main campus irrespective of their titles and positions. The teacher educators were regarded as information rich in this case in the sense that they are the driving forces in teacher education with regards to the proposed improvement of quality teacher education (Slick, 1995) through the merger.

In the map, the symbol of a cone  stands for the historically advantaged college of education in Khomasdal Windhoek, whilst the symbol of star  represents the locations of the historically disadvantaged colleges of education found in the north central and north eastern part of Namibia. On the other hand, the symbol of a circle  stands for the historical Faculty of Education on the Windhoek campus.

As in most studies involving a large population, it was not realistic to generate data from all the teacher educators in the targeted population. As Mouton and Prozesky (2001, p. 100) affirmed, “we are almost never able to study all members of the population that interest us”. The purposive sampling technique was used for the selection of participants in positions of authority which included all heads of campuses and their deputies. Purposive sampling, also known as selective or subjective sampling, was helpful in ensuring that the respondents who, by virtue of their positions were deemed to be ‘rich’ for the generation of in-depth data (Merriam, 2009) from a management perspective, participated in the study. Thus during the time of the data collection the heads of the former colleges who were called ‘Deputy Deans’, an interim title as the merger process was still not finalized, were purposefully selected for a one-on-one interview. The view was that such positions of authority may influence the way the heads of the institutions perceived the merger and their capacity to improve quality teacher education differently from the rest of the teacher educators.

Apart from purposive sampling, the sample selection also related to convenience and availability of the targeted groups as was the case with focus groups comprising teacher educators not in positions of authority. According to Kroeber (2010) a convenient sample can be explained as the way in which the researcher selects the samples according to their availability in terms of time, distance or even cost. A more detailed explanation of the one-on-one and focus group techniques used in this study is provided in the following section.

Data gathering techniques

In order to understand teacher educators effectively I used multiple sources of data collection, as suggested by Yin (2005) and Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Liao (2004), as this is central to the in-depth understanding that case study methods provide. Thus, although the predominant techniques employed in this study were semi-structured interviews, observations and document analysis were also employed for data generation.

Semi-structured interviews

Interviews as described by Stake (1995) are verbal exchange of words between the interviewer and an interviewee and are an important tool in any qualitative research. Each interview focussed mainly on three sections, the participants' understanding of quality teacher education, perceptions on whether the merger had the capacity to improve the quality of teacher education or not, and also about the merger-related challenges regarding the improvement of the quality. Interviews helped to discover and portray multiple views of the case (*Ibid*). Similarly, they were found very useful in the case of this study as they helped to generate insight into who the participants were and what made them say what they said or perceive what they perceived and the way they perceived it. I was able to elicit opinions and attitudes as well as beliefs of the participants through interacting with them, something that I could not have obtained with any other data collection technique.

In order to get as much information as possible about the participants' perceptions, I used semi-structured interviews which I found to be helpful and different from structured interviews. By using semi-structured interviews I was able to work flexibly with my questions unlike in the structured interviews where questions are structured in such a way that each participant is asked to respond to the same questions with no probing (While and Barriwall, 1994).

Although guiding questions were prepared to guide the researcher to cover the discussions in line with the research questions (see *Appendix 4*), the schedule was not strictly followed within the open ended questioning which was guided by the responses of the participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The technique provided more flexibility enabling probing and more

clarification about the responses without bias (Stake, 1995) as opposed to structured questions used in other research.

In addition, the semi-structured interviews enabled me to not just follow the conversation but also to observe non-verbal responses such as gestures, smiles, frowns and so on which can be very informative about the responses to the questions (Steward *et al.*, 2007, p. 42). For example, when participants were asked to describe how they perceived the Namibian merger as being capable of improving quality teacher education, the general descriptions were presented with a great sense of satisfaction and smiling faces, most especially by teacher educators from historically disadvantaged colleges of education when referring to physical improvements, job conditions etc., all of which were suggestive that the participants' perceptions about the merger were indeed positive. For example:

...and just to tell you the implementation so far is good ...I mean things are changing for better, we have computers and we no longer share computers in the departments.... Our offices are coolyou can see we have air conditioners (pointing to one in the boardroom) and(another one interjected and said) salary package is good {whole room broke in laughter} (Participants 1 and 2 at focus group with HDCE).

The semi-structured interviews involved both one-on-one and focus groups encounters.

The one-on-one interviews

As already indicated above, the semi-structured, one-on-one interviews were conducted with the heads of the merged institutions (Refer to *Appendix 4*). The suitability of the one-on-one interviews related to confidentiality and freedom of speech of the participant being interviewed. Further, the purpose of the one-on-one was to strengthen reliability on the data as it enabled triangulating of the information collected from other semi-structured interviews such as the focus groups even within the same institution.

Having the heads of the merging institutions interviewed separately from the rest of the other teacher educators, therefore, allowed for more freedom of expression and openness in the way perceptions were shared with the researcher. Thus, it is believed that individual interviews allow

people to be free to disclose aspects of themselves, their thoughts, their feelings and to share their values more than they would do in the company of others (Whitehead, 2012; Creswell, 2007).

Focus group interviews

The focus group interviews were conducted after data had been generated from the one-on-one interviews. Two sets of focus group (*Appendix 5*) interviews were held with teacher educators at all merging institutions with the exception of one where only one focus group was conducted following several attempts to compile a focus group comprising teacher educators. One of the focus group interviews was held with teacher educators who were not in positions of authority while the second focus group was held with teacher educators who were in positions of authority such as Heads of Departments (HODs), Departmental Coordinators and also with former Vice Rectors of the former colleges. The number of participants in each focus group varied between six to eight persons who were invited to participate in not more than one and half hour discussions.

Focus group interviews offered an opportunity to 'triangulate' on the data generated earlier by means of one-on-one interviews for comparability, discrepancy and agreement. For example, at one stage I found myself making follow-ups when interviewing participants in the focus group comprising teacher educators in positions of authority and asked, "*Do you think this might be the same perception amongst teacher educators under your supervision about the merger's capability to improve the quality of TE?*"

Another advantage of the focus group interviews was that participants in focus groups were able to hear other participants' responses and could make additional comments which consequently allowed for more in-depth understanding of their perceptions about the merger. Such an in-depth understanding could not have been achieved in one-on-one interviews because here they could comment on each other's experiences and could also express their different opinions. Thus, the focus group interviews allowed for more interaction, not just with the researcher but also for more input among participants (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Robson, 2002). I therefore

conducted focus group discussions with the understanding that focus groups are good at capturing group perceptions about the merger in a manner that other techniques such as one-on-one interviews could not do.

Having two separate focus group interviews with teacher educators at different levels allowed for freedom and openness of expression during discussions by preventing feelings of intimidation and insecurity. It also helped to prevent the possibility of the teacher educators who were not in positions of authority to feel intimidated by those who were in positions of authority. Thus, the practice of separating those participants in positions of authority from those who are not in the interviews guarded against inhibition naturally prevalent in the presence of supervisors (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In addition, my view was that teacher educators in positions of authority would have slightly different responsibilities in the implementation of the merger apart from the teaching and this might have influenced the way they might have perceived the merger differently from those not in positions of authority.

Lastly, the semi-structured interviews were tape-recorded and, where this was not possible, detailed notes were taken. Interviews were transcribed by the researcher and together these documents form part of the data storage in the form of a CD-ROM and printed files locked away in filing cabinets at my office for a period of ten years. This could serve as future backup when the need for more relevant information arises and is also needed for more reliability of the data. UNAM standard protocols for archives allows for lifelong storage.

Observations

In addition to semi-structured interviews, observations were one of the data collection techniques adopted for the study. Observations in this study were unstructured. The appropriateness of observation for this study lay in the advocacy of several authors for the technique regarding case studies. Yin (2011) in supporting multiple sources of data in making case studies robust recommends observations of participants for more insight into the case due to their potential to enrich data. Furthermore, the appropriateness of the observations, as maintained by Stavros & Westberg (2009), is that they are appropriate in studying attitudes and moods that can inform how people may feel about a specific phenomenon.

All in all, the observations enabled me to take notes about institutional aspects that conveyed the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger. For example, the five working days' spent on each campus provided an opportunity to observe the following aspects at the merging institutions: the way in which teacher educators responded to the merger during the transitional period to become a UNAM campus in the form of enthusiasm, morale and frustrations as well as communication modes. For example, at two of the five campuses, I was allowed to sit in staff meetings, one of which was for individuals in management positions where the Deputy Dean insisted I stay after my focus group discussion with them. My observation at a staff meeting at one of the campuses was about the uncertainties on certain practices following the merger such as entering of student marks on a UNAM system. The greatest frustrations of the merger I observed in this meeting were when a whole BETD class appeared on the UNAM data system without continuous assessment which made it impossible to accept any examination marks obtained. This suggest how mergers generally are complex and how they may cause confusions as systems change. Even though in my capacity as a researcher I was just supposed to observe how participants behaved within the new context, I felt obliged to intervene in order to clarify how a UNAM system cannot accept marks without a CA mark allocated, a situation no one seemed to have explained to the former colleges teacher educators.

In a study where contexts emerged to be a powerful pointer to perception underpinnings, the observations provided insight into differences and similarities between contexts. The background information provided at the beginning of each case in the next three chapters conveys the value of the observation process in highlighting the differences between the sub-cases and how that might have influenced the participant teacher educators' perceptions differently. Thus, the observations enhanced the richness of the data and helped confirm the complexities and contingencies of change regarding perceptions.

Document analysis

In addition to observation and interviews, all participants were asked to provide me with documents which related to the merger including the consultancy report on the teacher education reform. Such documents included meetings held to inform teacher educators about the merger decision, minutes of the merger committees, and some correspondence between specific colleges and the Ministry of Education concerning merger issues (see *Appendix 6, 7 and 8*). These secondary sources provided insight into the data generated from semi-structured interviews during the data analysis (Bryman, 2004).

My data generation journey

This section of the thesis describes my experiences during the data generation journey, as well as challenges I faced and strategies I adopted to overcome the challenges regarding the pre-arrangements, access to and the reception I received from the merging institutions. Exposure to data gathering journeys by others may contribute to the development of better understanding of strategies and potential challenges that subsequent PhD scholars may take into consideration when embarking on similar exercises. The data generation journey extended over six months and provided a starting point, together with the initial literature review, for contributing towards the development of a better understanding of perceptions of teacher educators on the merger.

Gaining access to the merging institutions

The initial data collection activities started immediately after the university's Senate Ethical Clearance Committee had approved my application for ethics clearance (*Appendix 9*) I immediately started to request permission to conduct research with teacher educators in the merging campuses - now under the Faculty of Education - from the UNAM's Pro-Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research (see *Appendix 10*) and from the Dean of the Faculty of Education (*Appendix 11*). Various e-mails were sent to Directors of Campuses who were then referred to as Acting Deputy Deans (*Appendix 12 a, b, and c*). All the interviews took place in 2011, except in the two Windhoek located campuses which were conducted in 2012 because of the challenges in finalizing appointments.

Before the interviews I visited each merging campus once for one to two days depending on the distance between the merging institution and the campus where I work. During these visits, heads of institutions were informed about the nature and importance of the study and how their participation and that of the teaching staff in the interviews would help achieve the aims of the study. The preparedness of the heads of merging institutions to participate in the study influenced the degree to which their colleagues participated willingly. I gave an overview of the interviews to the heads of merging campuses to share with the teacher educators but bearing in mind that teacher educators were overwhelmed with lots of changes associated with the merger; I requested that, where possible, interviews be conducted in the afternoon. I also promised that each interview would not go beyond an hour and thirty minutes.

The visits to the campuses helped to capture the different environments and vibes at merging institutions. They created in me a picture of what to expect during data collection regarding the culture, collegiality and structures to be observed when I came for the interviews. The visits also instilled sensitivity in me with regard to handling different institutions as well as controlling my naivety in the sense that not everyone might be keen to participate in the study.

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During my preliminary visit, one of the strategies I used was to acquaint myself with the targeted participants whenever it was possible. I always tried to appear relaxed and not to be in a hurry. When possible, I sat in the staffrooms for the period of my stay as many merging institutions did not have offices for individual teacher educators. This arrangement enabled me to initiate informal talks with old colleagues, most of whom I had taught and/or served on similar committees under the Ministry of Education when I was still in teacher education colleges. Such moments of sharing old stories paved the way for my return visit for the data collection through interviews. I am of the view that this acquaintance could not have been the same if access requests were done by e-mails or phone calls.

Reception by merging campuses

Even after I had paid personal visits to the merging campuses and obtained permission from them to conduct the study, there were some hiccups regarding the way I was received by some institutions.

After the preliminary visits were concluded a schedule of visits was drawn up. I experienced moments that required patience and tolerance from me during this section of my journey. One example was at Institution A, which I visited first for access request. I was told the team I was supposed to interview was leaving for Windhoek for some post-merger meetings about moderation of marks. Within the confusion of what to take along in terms of assessment materials and evidence and what to expect from the moderators, only a few teacher educators were prepared to share a minute to talk to me. I decided to come back another time when the atmosphere was a bit calm. I visited Institution B after the head had assured me it was fine to come for interviews. The journey took off, lasting for hours due to a long distance between this particular campus and Institution A. I was told on arrival at Institution B that the Acting Deputy Dean was heading for the airport due to a very urgent call from the main campus in Windhoek, presumably concerning the merger. I again did not try to insist on an interview but instead settled for another appointment which indeed worked out well on my return visit.

Another example related to my repeated attempts to secure appointments to explain the purpose of my study and make arrangements for appointments for certain institutions such as Institution C. My frustrations related to the reasons that these institutions provided for not giving me an appointment as the reasons appeared not fundamental and ranged from inappropriate timing as teacher educators were busy with their own proposals for their master's degree, or were busy supervising students on school-based studies or those ones available had little experience on the current merger. Such delaying tactics implied unpreparedness to be interviewed or to allow teacher educators to be interviewed. There were times when I wanted to scrap this institution from my samples. I persisted, however, due to ethical convictions that my study, even though it does not require generalization, would not be complete without the input from all merging institutions. Hence Institution C was interviewed last and the time span from those interviewed first was longer. The possibility of poor continuity existed but was mitigated by re-reading of previous notes from other institutions.

The visits at *Institutions D and E* were successful as by this time I had learned how to manoeuvre and to arrange before I got to the institutions. The best way to work better was to use Campus

Secretaries and not Acting Deans who seemed to be overwhelmed by merger events to remember any prior arrangement. Five, instead of the six initially planned, interviews - which lasted for 50 to 60 minutes - were conducted with heads of institutions. The planned sixth interviewee declined to be interviewed maintaining that “*the merger had just begun and therefore there was nothing to talk about*”.

Organizing focus groups

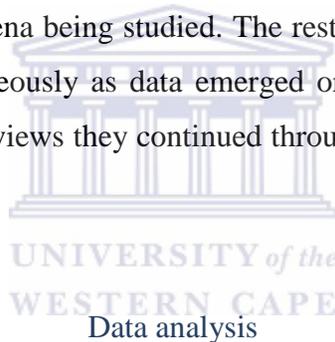
Even though arranging the one-on-one interviews did not present much of a challenge, I found the organisation of focus groups challenging. At *Institution A*, I was given a secretary by the head to assist with reminding teacher educators of the interview and the arranging of the venue. At one focus group interview all teacher educators who were free came to participate. I was overwhelmed by the good attendance but realized later that the group included administrative staff, including librarian assistants and the secretary herself. I could only attribute this to lack of time to read memos and the curiosity that probably drives many employees in mergers. In the interest of creating a good atmosphere for a focus group, I had to apologetically clarify whom I expected and for instance why only teacher educators were needed and requested others to excuse us.

An almost a similar scenario occurred in *Institution B* where teacher educators were allegedly not informed about what the meeting was about and one teacher educator almost walked out with some allies claiming they ought to have been told that this was a research interview. Eventually, this particular focus group turned out to be the best focus group interview I recorded for this study because the group was more open than the other groups.

But perhaps the most challenging part of the journey was the one for *Institution C*, the last institution in which I carried out interviews. After several attempts to set up appointment and nearly giving up, I managed to have an appointment arranged. Instead of the usually planned two semi-structured focus groups and a one-on-one semi-structured interview with the Head of the Campus, I could only secure one focus group and a one-on-one interview due to several reasons ranging from lecturers supervising students on practice teaching, marking or busy with

their own study proposals. Although the formal data collection process ended with this campus, data collection continued informally whenever I encountered a person deemed to be information rich about the merger in any of the merging institutions. This undertaking was in line with asking questions till data is saturated. (Mason, 2011). One of the advantages of qualitative research is its flexibility in sampling which enables researchers to take advantage of chain referral often referred to as ‘snowballing’ in order to maximise the in-depth understanding and generation of thick descriptions (Copes & Miller, 2015). In this way I was, therefore, able to engage with certain people who were not part of the initially selected sample but whom fellow participants recommended could be relevant resource people.

In summary, data generation began with semi structured interviews followed by focus groups. The decision to begin with interviews was to get more information about the subjective views of the participants about the phenomena being studied. The rest of the data generation journey was not linear and took place spontaneously as data emerged or the need called for noting. As a result whilst began doing the interviews they continued throughout. The same applied regarding document collection.



The data analysis was conducted by means of the Grounded Theory (GT) strategy and therefore was inductive (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) However, GT also involves deductive statements from inductive data which was also part of the analysis in this study which helped identify relationships that connected categories during the final stage of developing the theory. In particular, the analysis was done following the GT stages stipulated in Strauss and Corbin (1990). It was on-going and began at data gathering and was also undertaken throughout the study. The analysis of interview transcripts was accompanied by document analysis, observations and literature review. The literature provided insight into how certain categories could be interpreted.

All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed before analysis. Where audio recording equipment was not reliable, as in the case at *Institution B* where the tape recorder started to jam

and made funny noise during the interview, the researcher took notes as an alternative to capture data during interviews.

Coding

My first engagement with raw data started when, after reading through it, I started to give labels to meaningful data in the form of concepts. Labelling data, meaning giving concepts codes, was not an easy exercise either, maybe due to my lack of experience and challenges of the English language. Thus, during open coding I started the first interpretation leading to generating a theory. For example, the most common question I asked whenever I saw an indication of a concept that may lead to a perception was ‘*What might this be saying?*’ I also asked ‘*Who might be the person or people saying this?*’ and ‘*From where might this concept come from?*’ There was so much data which all appeared to be relevant to the study and, as a result, it all needed to be given names or what is referred to as ‘labels’. Throughout the data analysis questioning continued and more new codes continued to emerge. By way of questioning, properties and categories were starting to emerge. Questions helped in the interpretation of the emergent category and its relevance to study.

I was already able to get from this stage that certain concepts suggested similarities whilst others suggested contradictions. These similarities between concepts were drawn and categories were formed as themes or variables which made sense of what the participants were saying (Dick, 2005). This happened when data was examined closely. Thus each event that was noted in the textual data was labelled as a concept that could lead to the identification of a category. I also found the above process challenging, perhaps due to my lack of experience. As advised by Strauss and Corbin (1990), I continued to ask questions about the data even when concepts emerged to point to one specific theme. For example I asked:

What is it that is being said?

Who else saw or mentioned a code related to this?

Does it still say something even if it is not supported by anyone else?

Is it a surprise?

Is the concept in *contrast* with what others said before about it?

What is it supposed to give meaning to?

What does *literature* say about it?

Generating categories and themes

From the open coding concepts with similar characteristics were given a label that suggested a category or related perception. As Bryant (2004) suggests, open coding forms the basis from where concepts later may emerge into categories (Kriflik, 2002). Thus I put emerging codes into families or concepts that talk to the same information as categories. The consolidating of codes into categories made data workable as they allowed me to decide how the codes relate to each other. For example, in data collected about the challenges facing teacher educators in the merger of focus, a distressed teacher educator explained about inappropriate allocation of subjects by exclaiming: “*It does not mean if I am a Silozi speaking person, I can teach Silozi, this is a total compromise of quality!*” Another teacher in a different group responded to a related situation by saying, “*it could be of quality if teacher educators teach within their specializations*”. Noting that both teacher educators complained about inappropriate subject placement, I then assigned these codes under one category which was suggestive of perceptions that *inappropriate subject allocation* due to staffing considerations posed challenges for improving the quality of teacher education in the country during the merger.

Categories provided another level for the generation of a theory. So during the interaction with data at these levels theoretical ideas emerged as categories emerged. Each category was defined in detail by means of elaborating on its characteristics in order to outline the relationship between categories in ways that explained perceptions about the merger phenomenon and how it was perceived to relate to quality improvement of teacher education. Some of the codes formed in the previous stages of coding were grouped into larger, connected groups or themes. This was a daunting task as my supervisor continued to advise that more categories needed to be consolidated into themes with similar characteristics. She would advise, for instance, that I consolidate the categories about induction, lifelong learning and teaching and learning

workshops under one theme of ‘staff development’ (Refer to Chapters 5, 6 and 7 about findings). Such an approach required creativity and helped improve analytical skills on my part.

Constant comparison

In order to draw the findings closer to theory development I started planning for what I needed to do with emerging categories which were already suggesting some commonalities or differences. In this regard I was able to apply constant comparison in my analysis. The constant comparison method of analysis, as suggested by Glaser (1969), allows for the researcher to compare incidents applicable to emerging categories; to integrate categories and their properties, to write them down. The method puts emphasis on interpreting the categories and comparing them to make meanings as indicators were compared with other indicators from other data thereby adding to more data being coded as well as more categories being generated. For example, when a code was identified from data generated during interviews at a certain former college, data from the same question from another former college was checked to find out if it generates the same code or whether a different code was emerging. Based on the response or evidence, more notes were taken. Such notes are normally written in the margin to be used later to inform the emergent theory. For example, through comparison, data revealed that perceptions about the merger were contingent to contexts. Such coding which already provided some “theoretical sensitivity” (Strauss & Corbin, 2008) was noted in the margins (to be discussed later in Chapters 8 and 9) as part of the generated theory. Constant comparison continued until no new codes emerged, thereby pointing to data saturation.

I also found that in some instances contradictions suggested gaps about something or participant/s being misinformed. For example, in response to the key question about whether the participant believed the merger had the potential to improve quality teacher education, some participants in the HDCE condemned the continuous assessment that was predominantly used in the former colleges of education as something that did not promote QTE. Instead, they embraced the UNAM use of examinations as having potential to improve QTE. Such responses conveyed ignorance about UNAM assessment guideline which included both the continuous and summative assessment aspects.

I continued to consult reading materials and relevant literature even during the analysis in order to get more insight into categories and enhance my understanding of the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger. The review of literature during analysis allowed a theory to emerge from the data (Strauss & Corbin, 2008). The process of analysis continued until codes were saturated whereby no new codes emerged.

Memoing

The large size of the data I collected through interviews, observation and document analysis suggested the possibility that I might forget much of what emerged during the analysis to make sense of the perceptions. In order to overcome this possibility, I used memo writing by making notes in the margin, underlining and shading with marker pens the sections or issues that seemed to be important. Thus I used memoing as an act of recording reflective notes about what appeared to be emerging from the data (Gay, Ellis and Airasian, 2009). Strauss & Corbin (1998) view this activity as being the core stage of Grounded Theory analysis.

My memoing involved the theorizing write-up of ideas about substantive codes and their theoretical relationships. For example, whenever it appeared that the data was suggesting that the participants related quality teacher education to material resources such as textbooks, library and lab equipment, classroom space and computers, I wrote on the side: quality = materials or resources see. Similarly, when teacher educators maintained that QTE is depended on certain initiatives such as induction, in-service or upgrading of academic qualifications, I wrote on my margin: QTE = academic and professional development activates or = education interventions. On the other hand, when participants referred to QTE in terms of good expectations, I wrote a reminder on the margin such as QTE = what is expected from TE? Although not all of what I noted down in the margin turned out to be useful when I engaged in deeper analysis, some of the memoed notes came to be useful for identifying the seemingly emergent theory about the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to lead to improved quality teacher education. It is also at this stage of analysis that I took note of the recurring themes and discrepancies amongst the data.

Theoretical sampling

As Charmaz (1994) states, the analysis process under GT is not linear. Instead, it is done in cycles. Even in this study some responses emerged that needed clarifications as analysis continued. The GT allowed the researcher to pause and go back and forth in the interest of a deeper insight. Thus following the process of theoretical sampling which, according to Glaser and Strauss (1976 p. 62), is an iterative process that in this study, similarly, continued until I achieved theoretical saturation. Throughout the study the need arose to follow-up with some participants to get additional information and to seek more clarity in order to address issues that emerged during the data coding. One of the examples in this respect included the claim that there was no guiding document on the merger implementation which caused participants a dilemma. When such a claim was identified in the transcribed data, it made me to think about what group or sub-groups to turn to next in the generated data to qualify this claim. In this regard I turned to the heads of institutions to ask how they too felt guided within the implementation of the merger. In order to qualify the emergent claim, I also contacted relevant merger actors such as the UNAM Human Resource department requesting for any guideline policy or document regarding the merger that I could collect but to no avail. This practice of going back and forth to certain groups or individuals to refine categories became a theoretical sampling towards formulating a theory (Charmaz, 1994).

Theory development

Grounded Theory through its process which involves coding, categorizing and *memoing* implies a process of generating a theory inductively from empirical data. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), the theory does not produce “findings or facts, it produces conceptual hypothesis and is an abstraction of time, place and people” (*Ibid*). The authors further explain a theory as follows:

A theory denotes a set of well-developed categories (e.g. themes and concepts) that are systematically inter-related through statement of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explain some relevant social, psychological, educational, nursing or other

phenomenon. The statement of relationship explain who, what, when, where, why and how with what consequences an event occurs (Strauss & Corbin, 1998 p. 22).

At this stage of the data analysis about the perceptions of Namibian teacher educators regarding the merger, I was no longer sorting data but interrogating ideas which had the potential to be interpreted into a theory capable of developing a better understanding of the studied phenomenon. This, according to Strauss and Corbin (1998, p. 147), is called; 'theoretical saturation' which led to the identification of issues discussed in Chapter 8 about the findings which serve as a prelude to the discussion of the emergent theory in Chapter 9.

Trustworthiness

Maintaining trustworthiness in this research was crucial and was maintained through ensuring validity and dependability of data. Validity, explained by Creswell (2003) as the way the research conclusions reflect what the researcher said he or she is going to study, was maintained throughout this study by ensuring that I keep track of what I have claimed to be the focus of the research. This was done through having regular meetings with my supervisor who always checked the validity of the instruments used and their relevance to the key questions. For example, the processes of how data was collected and analysed as in the sections under 'data collection techniques' and 'analysis' were closely monitored.

Equally in terms of dependability, a thorough explanation on how data was collected and analysed was made in the study. The researcher kept volumes of tapes and transcripts for future auditing which is another way to ensure dependability. In particular, the employment of the multiple sources or overlapping of sources of data (Lincoln and Guba, 1990), as was employed in the study by means of one-on-one and focus groups as well as observations and document analysis, enhanced the dependability as it allowed for triangulation of findings (*Ibid*) thereby ensuring dependability of research. By way of triangulation, similarities and discrepancies of findings make the case more convincing for the reader.

Further to dependability of research, the methods of analysis of data which include the way data was transcribed and used for analysis in the study enhanced the trustworthiness of the research. Particularly the methods used to identify codes and the use of memo writing that suggested how categories and theoretical sampling emerged in the study were other standards used to ensure dependability. The emerging of categories was closely monitored by my study supervisor who time and again checked all the research activities and processes to ensure that this study was dependable.

Research ethics considerations

Punch (2009) maintains that the process of conducting research and reporting about it requires continually dealing with ethical dilemmas and multiple negotiations. Consequently, the participants were provided with documents which indicated that the study had support and permission from the affected institutions. These documents included the ethics clearance by UWC and those which served as proof of permission from the UNAM Office of the Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic and Research Affairs, the Campus heads and the Dean of Faculty.

Upon collecting the relevant documents for analysis permission was sought from relevant offices of the university, in particular the Office of the Dean of the Faculty of Education, to ensure the trustworthiness and dependability of the data.

Furthermore, the participants were assured of confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent and the right to withdraw. With regards to anonymity, participants were assured that their names will not appear in any of the research report or on any research instrument. This has made the interviews to take place openly without fear.

In terms of confidentiality, the participants' personal details and identities have been kept confidential in this report in that careful consideration was given not to use real names or share information about their work places that might have made it easy for anyone to identify them. This was particularly important when critical comments on authority emerged.

Before actual interview take off, and I had explained what was involved in the research and they the participants were asked to provide informed consent after they had verbally agreed to take part in the study. The participants then signed a consent form in accordance with the UWC Code of Ethics. This form also served as an agreement that the participants' engagement in the study was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study anytime they felt like doing so. (*See Appendix 14 a and b for a copy of the consent forms for semi-structured one-on-one interviews and for semi-structured focus group interviews*).

The study limitations

Generally, that a case study is not aimed at representation and generalization is a limiting factor in the generation of knowledge and/or development of better understanding. This is also the limitation in this study that the case of the Namibian merger may not be similar to other merger cases in higher education settings in the same country. However, the conclusions of the study and the study findings can be transferred to similar contexts and therefore contribute to further development of a better understanding of academic staff perceptions in any similar situation either regionally or globally (Punch, 2009).

Another limitation is related to the integrity of the research in terms of the timeframe for carrying out the study. Given that the study sought to interpret the perceptions of teacher educators on the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education, the study was conducted about a merger that had just been instituted, thereby implying that the discussions were informed by minimal experiences on the merger. However, the purpose of conducting the research at this stage was with the belief that initial perceptions are crucial for understanding initial and subsequent responses to the merger. In addition, the belief was that the findings in the study would provide the foundations for subsequent studies in a related field.

Conclusion

In this chapter I described the research design and process. The discussion in respect of the former related to the research paradigm, approach and data collection techniques as well as the data analysis method I employed in the study. I also provided information about the rigor, ethical considerations and limitations in this study. The discussion about the process related to fieldwork prearrangements, accessibility of the research setting, and the reception and organization of focus groups was followed by the discussion on the detailed data analysis process.

The next three chapters provide findings from the generated data about the perceptions of teacher educators regarding the merger under focus and its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. Each of the three chapters begins with a historical background and current staffing, resources, student enrolment and physical appearance of the various merging institutions. The findings about perceptions from the three former colleges located in the north, central and north eastern part of the country viewed as being disadvantaged due to a history of Bantu education legacy proved to be similar and suggested that the presentation of findings in these three historically disadvantaged former colleges of education be grouped together in one chapter. On the other hand, the generated data suggested that the other merging institutions need to be discussed in individual chapters as their experiences and perceptions were unique in comparison to the other merging institutions.

CHAPTER 5

PERCEPTIONS AND HISTORICAL DISADVANTAGE: CURRICULUM, INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN CAPITAL INPUT AND PROCESS

Introduction

As indicated in Chapter 1, the study investigated the perceptions of teacher educators in Namibia about the merger between the University of Namibia and the ex-colleges of education regarding their capacity to improve the quality of teacher education. This chapter presents findings from generated data about the teacher educators' perceptions in this regard in three historically disadvantaged colleges of education (HDCE). The presentation about the perceptions is structured along the critical questions that framed the investigation, as presented in Chapter 1. The first part of the chapter gives the historical context of the three campuses, followed by a section which presents findings about the perceptions of the participants in this context.

The context of the historical disadvantaged colleges of education

The discussion in this chapter relates to findings in the three campuses which were formerly known as Ongwediva, Rundu and Caprivi colleges of education. The establishment of these colleges of education were framed by the historical Bantu Education system emanating from the segregation laws of the apartheid South African government (Swarts, 1999). As such, these ex-colleges catered for the African racial groups and are located in the semi-urban historical homeland areas of the northern part of Namibia. One of the major characteristics of the three campuses was the poor infrastructure development and the academically and professionally under-preparedness of the teacher educators, mainly in terms of formal qualifications, as is presented in Table 1 on page 58. It is for these reasons and others such as the infrastructure and their political and history context that these three colleges in the northern part of Namibia are referred to as historically disadvantaged colleges of education.

At the time of the merger in 2010, the qualifications of staff at the Caprivi College of Education comprised two PhDs, eight Masters and 16 four year Bachelor of Education (Honours) degrees from UNAM. The UNAM's B.Ed. (Hon) degree, held by the majority of the teacher educators, comprises an Honours Degree component and is evaluated at Level 8 of the Namibian Qualification Authority (NQA). Eight (8) of the teacher educators possessed Teaching Diplomas.

The qualification of staff at Rundu included 0 PhD, 13 Masters and 16 Bachelor of Education Degrees and BA Honours while two teacher educators possessed Diplomas. Similarly, the qualifications of staff at the Ongwediva College of Education included 0 PhD, 24 Masters, 34 Bachelor of Education (Hons) and 11 Teaching Diplomas. *(See the table below for this profile).*

Table 1: 5.1 Profile of the Academic Staff at the former colleges of education at the time of the merger in 2010

(Figures are taken from a presentation by Prof R. Auala, former Dean of Faculty of Education and Chairman of the National Advisory Council on Education, at the presentation on “The Effect and Impact of the Merger of colleges of education with the Faculty of Education at the University of Namibia”, 2010).

Qualification	Rundu College of Education	Ongwediva College of Education	Caprivi College of Education
PhD	0	0	2
Masters	13	24	8
B. Ed Degree Hon	16	34	16
Diploma	2	11	8
Total	31	69	32

Table, 5.1

According to the UNAM Human Resource, all positions occupied by people without Master's degrees are referred to as Assistant Lecturers.

The Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus

The Hifikepunye Pohamba (HP) Campus was, prior 1993, known as Ongwediva College of Education (OCE) and was the first teacher training institution in Northern Namibia. The Campus is situated in the northern town of Ongwediva in Oshana Region. The campus, established in 1959, and originally referred to as Ongwediva Seminary, was first located at the missionary centre currently used by Evangelical Lutheran Seminary before it was relocated to its current location in 1975 (Nambala, 1987). The college was then renamed the Ongwediva Teacher Training College. After 1993, with the teacher education reforms after independence, the college was named as Ongwediva College of Education. With the merger, the ex-college was named after the second President of the Republic of Namibia and became known as Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus.

OCE had a student population of 928 at the time of the merger and 58 teacher educators, (UNAM Annual Report, 2012). Half, (twenty four), of the teacher educators' qualifications were below a Master's degree at the time of the merger, which therefore means that half of the staff did not qualify for a university lecturer position. UNAM requires a minimum qualification of an M.Ed. to teach at the Faculty of Education in the lecturer position. None of the teacher educators held a PhD.

Most of the teacher educators, (fifty one), were Namibians. There were 25 male teacher educators and 33 females, a significant difference in favour of females, supporting perceptions that the teaching career is a female dominated career (Coffey & Acker, 2008).

Up until close to independence, during the year 1980, the majority of the teaching staff in this college were white South African army soldiers in uniforms (Nyambe & Mayumbelo, 1999) and teachers of Asian origin, mainly Philippines and people from the Middle East, e.g. Iranians. Just before independence with the wars for liberation struggle escalating in the northern part, the white staff left the country to return to South Africa but many teacher educators of Asian origin remained and opted to become Namibian citizens, thus teaching alongside the native Namibian teacher educators. At the time of the study the academic staff comprised one white Namibian and four individuals of Asian origin, whilst the rest were African Namibian nationals.

In the past particularly before independence during the apartheid era, the institution offered several teacher training courses including: Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC), Lower Primary Teacher Certificate (LPTC), Higher Primary Teacher Certificate (NHEC) and the National Education Certificate (NEC), each of which was for a period of two years. During the apartheid era the OCE only awarded certificates. This was unlike the situation at the historical advantaged college (Windhoek) in the central part of the country, which trained teachers for diplomas for a period of three years. The reforms after independence, 1992, replaced the old programmes with a three year Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD).

At the time of the merger, the college had ten departments, which were grouped into professional and academic departments and non-academic departments. The former were comprised of the Departments of Professional Studies; Social Science; Commerce, Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science; Languages; Agriculture and Life Science and the In-Service Department for practicing teachers. The non-academic departments comprised those responsible for Hostel and Student Affairs, the Library and Administration.

During the data gathering, the major physical structures of this campus consisted of a computer room, a library, a storeroom, a science laboratory and a big assembly hall. It also comprised two dining halls, six student hostels, four blocks of tuition buildings and several recreational facilities such as a soccer field with a pavilion and a basketball, volleyball and netball fields. The campus also had several houses for teacher educators and administrative staff. It also had a teacher resource centre where professional in-service training is held by the Ministry of Education. An International Primary School was also located within the campus grounds. According to the former OCE rector who participated in the study the primary school was established in the 1980s and was historically meant to cater for the safety and educational needs of children of the college's staff members, who were not of Namibian origin. This was deemed necessary, given the military environment where the former college is located which was a war zone. There were also departmental offices shared by teacher educators in positions of authority and a common staff room for those who were not in these positions. Meetings were held in the staffroom in the absence of a boardroom. All these structures were built during the colonial period more than 50

years ago and seemed not to have been well maintained as many were in dilapidated conditions, suggesting a need for renovations or replacements with new structures.

Rundu Campus

The Rundu Campus is located in the previous Rundu College of Education (RCE). This institution was established in 1970 and was popularly known as “*die Ondewyserkollege*” (Afrikaans for ‘Teachers College’) and was initially physically located in the southern part of Rundu town where the current Dr Romanus Kampungu Secondary School stands. The teachers training college moved to where the Ministry of Education Teacher Resource Centre is today in the heart of Rundu town (Katewa, 1999) and was called Rundu College before independence. Later in 1996 it moved again to its present premises to the east of Rundu town after independence. Rundu College was renamed Rundu College of Education when it started offering the Basic Education Teachers Diploma in 1996. With the merger the former Rundu College of Education became the University of Namibia, Rundu Campus.

The student population at the time of merging with UNAM stood at 380 with 26 teacher educators (Crebbin *et al.*, 2007). Similar to the OCE, the teaching staff at RCE until independence was predominantly white South African army members (Nyambe & Mayumbelo, 1999) with the black teacher trainers mainly responsible for local languages and non-examinable subjects such as Biblical Studies and music (Coombe *et al.*, 1998). This situation changed as all white people left for South Africa after independence, and they were replaced by black staff members. Only 13 teacher educators at the Rundu Campus had Master’s degrees at the time of the merger and were therefore qualified to teach at lecturer level at the university. As was the case with Hifikepunye Pohamba Campus, none of the teacher educators held a PhD qualification. Twenty three of the teacher educators were black Namibians, 13 were male while 13 were female teacher educators, conveying an equal staff profile in terms of gender.

During apartheid, the RCE offered a National Education Certificate, NEC, similar to the one that was offered in Ongwediva Teachers College. This came to be gradually replaced by the Basic Education Teachers Diploma after independence. Similar to OCE, RCE comprised eight academic and non-academic departments before the merger. The departments comprise five

academic departments, namely: Professional Studies; Social Science, Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science; Languages, and In-Service Department for practicing teachers, and three non-academic departments for Hostel and Student Affairs, Library and Administration.

Unlike Ongwediva College of Education, Rundu had a modern campus with most of the buildings constructed soon after independence. However, similar to OCE, the researcher observed several building structures such as hostels and dining halls looking very dilapidated. The main physical structures of the former Rundu Campus consisted of classrooms, a computer room, a library, an assembly hall, a science laboratory and several houses for teacher educators. There were two blocks of hostels, one for female and one for male students. Neglected soccer and netball fields and basketball courts were the only signs of student recreation facilities.

Katima Mulilo Campus (KMC)

The Katima Mulilo Campus was prior to the merger known as Caprivi College of Education (CCE). It is situated in the north eastern part of Namibia in the town of Katima Mulilo. The ex-college changed its premises three times since its inception. The first ever teacher training college in the Zambezi region, it was established in the early 1970s where the Kizito High School stands today, hence the school is known by some as Kizito College to this day as the site used to offer both teacher training and secondary education. Later, the teacher training section was moved to the current Caprivi Senior Secondary School and became known as Caprivi Teacher Training School, training teachers for the lower primary school level and later at higher primary school level. With the teacher education reforms after independence, the Caprivi Teacher Training School was named the Caprivi College of Education and was officially opened in April 1996. With the merger, the former college was renamed as Katima Mulilo Campus in 2010.

The student population stood at around 386 while the staff complement of 24 at the time of the merger (Crebbin *et al.*, 2007). Of the 24 staff members, at least nine had Master's and two had PhDs by 2010 making it the only former college with lecturers holding PhD qualifications before the merger. Twenty two teacher educators were Namibians. Only five teacher educators were

females. The small female representation is most probably attributable to old African cultural practices of educating more males than females that might be still persistent in the region (Shilongo, 2008). All the staff members were black at this campus before the merger and at the time of this study.

In the past, the Caprivi College offered similar qualifications to those offered at Rundu and Ongwediva Teachers' Colleges. It also offered the BETD qualifications after independence before the merger. The BETD programme in the Caprivi College also comprised eight departments: Professional Studies with Education Theory and Practice and a Lower Primary component, Commerce, Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science, Languages, and Social Sciences department. There were also non-academic department such as Hostel and Student Affairs; Library and the Administration department where issues of registration and fees were handled.

Similar to the Rundu College of Education, the former Caprivi College of Education's physical structures were not as old as those of Ongwediva College of Education because they were built soon after independence. However, I observed that several buildings such as hostels were dilapidated due to some negligence. In addition to classroom blocks, physical structures consisted of student hostels, a library and a computer room. As in HPC before the merger, there were departmental offices shared by teacher educators and a common staffroom for those who do not have offices, depicting a typical high school physical structure as even meetings were held in staffrooms in the absence of boardroom.

In conclusion, the similarities in the above campuses related to being disadvantaged due to their political and historical contexts which makes them suffer the legacy in terms of infrastructure, curriculum, and professional and academic qualifications of teacher educators even at the time of the merger after independence.

Presentation of findings

Findings from the generated data on teacher educators' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality are presented in sections that correspond to the first three key critical questions of the study, as presented in Chapter 1. Emerging data in this chapter suggested that participant' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality in the HDCE predominantly related to two main themes, namely: processes and input.

Key question 1: What are the HDCE participant's' conceptualization of quality teacher education?

As indicated in Chapter 1, the main focus of the study related to the teacher educators' perceptions of the merger between the University of Namibia and the ex-colleges of education. It was therefore deemed appropriate to first ascertain the participants' understanding of the concept 'quality teacher education' before exploring their perceptions about the merger's capacity to contribute towards improved quality teacher education. The data suggested that conceptualization of quality teacher education by participants in the HDCEs predominantly placed emphasis on aspects which relate to processes and to a certain extent related to input.

Quality teacher education conceptualisation as process

The emergent findings from the generated data which suggested that the participant teacher educators in historically disadvantaged colleges of education (HDCE) primarily conceptualized quality teacher education in terms of process were related to staff, curriculum and management and leadership and resources.

Staff related conceptualisation: staff development and life-long learning

One of the findings that emerged from the data was that the participant Teacher Educators' (TE's) conceptualisation of quality teacher education related to on-going staff development mainly in terms of upgrading of academic qualifications and life-long learning. The two responses below provide examples which highlighted staff development as being linked to the TE's conceptualisation of quality teacher education.

TE 1: Quality teacher education to me includes when teacher educators' academic and also their professional development are upgraded through process of in-service or when they get opportunity to study further. You see when you enter the profession you are qualified but over the years you know, (pause) our qualifications became outdated, and so, you know, it makes a difference when opportunities are made available to study for [further] academic qualifications.

TE2: personally I also feel it is of quality when we engage in lifelong learning all the time. I mean if every one of us can consider himself or herself a learner and not just a teacher or educator. Then all of us have you know something to learn every day. Our knowledge grow as we learn from different sources. So quality teacher education to me also includes that component of lifelong learning of educators.

When probed to define 'life-long' learning at one focus group interview some of the examples given were:

TE1: ... is when a teaching staff continues to learn to expand his or her knowledge in various manners such as reading books, browsing internet and watching media such as TV and read materials especially related to his or her subject.

Another participant interjected by stating that even things that are not directly related to our subjects but contain information we need to teach in a broader manner can be considered part of life-long learning, arguing that quality teacher education is ensured when teacher educators continuously learn:

TE 1: ... making use of opportunities to equip [TEs] with skills required to teach and transfer contemporary skills to students; use information technology ... That to me contributes to quality than when ... teacher educators are satisfied with the old academic knowledge which they received some many years from their initial training.

Curriculum related process conceptualisation: research informed teaching, technology incorporating teaching methods, assessment, and quality assurance.

Particularly, the participants were of the view that quality teacher education is research informed. They believed the advantages about research based education included being abreast with

progress in the field of education, involved the generation of new knowledge and the development of innovative teaching skills. The responses that were suggestive of this theme included the following from some of the semi-structured one-on-one interviews:

TE1: To me teaching is of quality if it does not stay the same over the years. Some lecturers teach the same thing every time and are not making any effort to research and add to the body of knowledge. The teaching becomes monotonous and boring because it is not injected with new ideas from researching.

TE2: teacher educators need to undergo training in how to engage in research based teaching. We need to engage in research not just for new subject knowledge but also to know if what we do works or does not work ... is only when we can do better.

The responses which conveyed perceptions of quality teacher education as comprising research based teaching also argued that the advantage of such practices can be copied by their students so that they too can become future researchers.

Another curriculum related finding which suggested that respondents at the HDCE conceptualized teacher education quality in terms of process related to their views that teaching methods which incorporate technology contribute to quality teacher education. For example, the view was that different ICT incorporating methodologies can improve teacher education quality as student teachers are trained on how to teach using technological tools such as power points, videos and so on.

TE 1: My thinking is that nowadays teacher education quality cannot be discussed in the absence of IT. Each and every teacher educator must be able to use modern technology to teach. Also to me each and every student teacher before he or she graduates must be taught how to plan a lesson using modern technology even if they are not going to have them in their schools but some schools have them. So when we train them how to do lesson plans is also good to ask them what modern technology they use to teach a specific lesson or even how to keep proper record assessment using IT. I mean it is being integrated in teaching globally to improve quality and our system is also not to be left behind

While supporting the incorporation of ICT in the teaching process the participants also raised concerns regarding inappropriate use of IT when teaching:

TE1: I do support that as teacher educators we must really move to IT and learn how teacher education globally is improving every day. But this thing has to come within, one must be willing to learn IT and not feel forced to do so. I also think IT must be used properly because to me teaching by means of IT does not just mean leaving the students to watch TV or DVD or something and not discuss how it is related to the theme that to me is not quality teacher education at all.

Although the above responses do not address conceptualisations directly, what can be deduced from them is that the role of Information Technology, according to the participants, with regards to quality is highly valued to the extent that they view teaching without Information Technology (IT) as not comprising quality teacher education.

In addition to the above curriculum related aspects, the participant TEs also conveyed views which suggested that they conceptualized quality teacher education in terms of summative assessment. In all the focus group discussions and interviews, the teacher educators emphasised the importance of examinations for quality teacher education. Seemingly the teacher educators perceived summative evaluation as being more crucial for quality teacher education than the solely continuous assessment (CA) system adopted by the ex-colleges of education.

TE 1: There must be a standard examination that tests the cognitive part of the student in a subject. Something must test the content and how students understand it. The assignments and group work alone cannot just do that.

TE2. To me I think the assessment must be consistent, it must be the same. What is taught and assessed in one campus must be the same at another. Even tests and exams must be the same. They must be written at the same time and the number of assessment must be the same...

TE 3: Quality teacher education only take place when students [in all campuses] write the same examination at the end of a certain period and that internal and external moderation is made part of the quality assurance process

The integration of quality assurance emerged as another process-related perception about the quality of teacher education amongst HDCE teacher educator participants. This was mainly the case regarding responses from the teacher educators in authority positions. For example, a head of institution stated:

Head of Campus (HoC) 1: Teacher education quality is when there are quality assurance mechanisms to ensure quality. those who are charged with delivery of quality teacher education like teacher educators must ... be trained how to ensure quality ...

The theme of quality assurance also came up in the focus groups. It made me explore how they understood quality assurance. Some of the responses in this respect were:

TE1, Institution A: ..., quality is linked to the type of measures used to check if certain standards have been met. I mean like a set of criteria to be met for a question paper so that it meet standards. In the absence of an examination standard or guideline each institution will have its own assessment and quality will be difficult to determine.

TE2, Institution B: There is a need to implement the assessment policy in a well-coordinated and consistent manner and not to leave it with individual teacher educators

Another finding which suggested that the participants conceptualised quality teacher education in terms of the process of quality assurance related to responses which referred to on-going teacher education curriculum reviews. Most teacher educators, especially those in positions of authority, stated that for the teacher education to be of quality there must be the provision of on-going curriculum reviews. The following comments exemplify the responses which were suggestive of this conceptualisation:

Focus Group (FG) 1 Campus A – TE 1: I [view] curriculum reviews as a way to ensure quality teacher education and education in general, curriculum review draws in

stakeholders' perspectives. Such things are important for relevance of what we teach at the university. We cannot go on teaching outdated information which are not needed anymore by society.

Focus Group 1 at Campus A – TE 2: I kind of want to support my colleague, because there are so many changes in society especially in schools, what might be of quality today may change in future. Teacher education must be reviewed time after time to check if we are being relevant to schools and whether quality is still the same as in the past.

Focus Group 1 at HDCE Campus B– TE 1: I would like to say that quality teacher education is when there are some measures in place to ensure the curriculum is of quality because sometimes useless, outdated and unchallenging staff is taught. Curriculum review which determine that there is quality or there is a need to improve on specific areas of curriculum such as teaching or assessment of student work is necessary. And you know we teach to meet the need of the public. So the curriculum must now and then be put to test that it is still meeting the stakeholders' need especially the schoolsso schools must also be contributing to evaluate our curriculum as well as students must be asked to comment now and then and the teacher educators and so on must be satisfied.

The expression that management officials need to follow trends in other teacher education systems and keep updating the programmes was also raised during focus groups with teacher educators who are not in management positions as another quality assurance related conceptualization of quality teacher education:

Our management must be up to date, I mean able to follow new trends. Technically our institution and teacher education here are so to say out-dated, just because we are not interested to follow what is happening somewhere else or maybe we are not capable of doing that I should say.... There are new trends in teacher education,. But to me this initiative should come from top that we are able to infuse new styles and method and new technology and so on in our system of teacher education. .

The discussion above, even though was not necessarily on quality revealed the need for a progressive leadership which is proactive and able to catch up with modern trends in teacher education as part of quality conceptualization in terms of process.

Quality teacher education conceptualisation as input

Apart from the process related issues which were found to dominate the participants' conceptualization of teacher education quality, the findings also suggested that the teacher educators in the former HDCE campuses also perceived quality teacher education in terms of input. The findings that were suggestive of this inclination included responses which implied that the participants perceived quality teacher education as being linked to staff, infrastructure and materials and curriculum related inputs of quality.

Staff related input conceptualisation: formal qualifications and research capacity

The academic and professional qualifications of the teacher educators were raised across all interviews as a central point for quality teacher education. Several teacher educators alluded to this finding as follows:

TE1: If we want to talk about quality teacher education then one needs to have teacher educators who are sufficiently well qualified who meet the requirement for teaching in a teacher education institution.

TE2: I think also teacher education quality ... is made up of academic knowledge and professional skills the main point I think is that you cannot have teachers who are being qualified by someone who himself or herself is under or unqualified to teach in a college or university.

On probing, the participants maintained that suitable qualifications also refer to ability to conduct research. Some examples of responses stressing the value of suitably qualified and experienced researchers were as follow:

TE1: In trying to ... provide quality education, teacher educators' research skills must be sufficient.

TE2: Research is an instrument of teaching. It ensures new knowledge is created.

TE3: I think is important to become experienced researchers ...

TE4: I too think research is a requirement for quality because ... [it] is only how the body and depth of knowledge increase.

Resource related input conceptualisations: libraries, laboratories

Adequately resourced institutions also emerged as a component that informed the participants' conceptualisation of teacher education quality. The participants mentioned the following resources as being crucial to the quality of teacher education: up-to-date libraries and laboratories. The responses that served to suggest the teacher educators' conceptualisation of teacher education quality as being related to resources included:

TE1: When we are talking about teacher education quality we refer to the education which is well resourced to allow properly training a teacher. For example, subjects that are taught by means of special facilities such as natural sciences must be taught in fully equipped laboratories and by qualified teacher educators ... The students are well trained if they are taught within the context of sufficient teaching resources including a library which is fully equipped and computers that are available for students to access information and enhance knowledge.

The picture painted by those in positions of authority - including the heads - in terms of resources was more related to financial resources, for example:

Senior management team member – SMTM 1: *To me teacher education quality is a national issue which require everyone to contribute and should not be seen as just a responsibility of those who are directly involved. The public at large must not just sit and watch or criticized. We must all contribute to quality with whatever we can. By this I mean even the private sector can donate money or equipment and meet the government halfway to ensure our institutions that train our children's' teachers are well resourced.*

SMTM2: quality teacher education cannot take place without government having to commit itself to funding the institutions of teacher education and to provide education

materials. I think it is first and foremost the government responsibility if it wants highly qualified teachers...

Curriculum content and design

Suitable curriculum content and design also emerged to be at the centre of how teacher education quality was conceptualized by the participants. Conceptualisations in this regard included views that the suitability referred to a curriculum with depth of content and the provisioning of necessary teaching skills and professional values. In particular, the depth of curriculum was emphasized.

TE1: I must say that quality teacher education refers to how curriculum is designed and [has] depthfor teaching to be effective.

It is also a way to prepare teachers to teach and master the content of the intended field at the highest level and to develop a student teacher with a broad general education so that he or she can educate

Following numerous references to curriculum depth, further probing on the depth revealed views such as:

Being able to demonstrate a lesson with clarity; to explain difficult concepts; give sufficient knowledge; cover key concepts etc.

Other than subject content, views also related to professional and pedagogic skills as a prerequisite for teacher education quality:

TE1: Not only the subject content. The methodology we use and prepare students to use when they become teachers must be well considered and well researched. The learner-centered method for example has come to replace the out dated autocratic class room method. But how to use it teacher educators must be well trained in such a way that they apply the same when they integrate methodology into the curriculum of the teacher program. So there ought to be a balance between content and methodology.

TE2: The teaching pedagogy as a vehicle for quality teaching cannot be ignored. Our teacher education curriculum must pay attention to classroom issues. I mean practical skills. Like demonstrations of lessons while they are here at college. We call it micro teaching you see that is why that thing, the micro teaching is important, apart from school based studies. Or else our student classrooms will end up chaotic because students only know the content ...just like you are a mathematic expert but don't know how to plan a lesson, how to teach it or how to keep or attract students attention in the lesson no no no.

TE3: I too believe that quality teacher education depends on the multiple teaching approaches that we impart to our students. Student when they become teachers they have a great number of teaching approaches to choose from instead of just one or limited few. But if say such pedagogical skills are limited, teachers end up even just using a textbook to read from. Learners do not participate fully and performance become poor

The participants also conceptualised quality teacher education in terms of a curriculum which addresses the development of appropriate professional norms, standards and values, as conveyed for example in the responses below:

TE1: Teacher education, for it to be of quality, must include professionalism which makes teachers to be fully conscious of their role as true examples for learners, who are fair and respectful of parents and so on. Teacher education must prepare teachers to be able to understand acceptable society values and norms,

TE2. The way I understand quality teacher education is that it must meet the holistic societal needs. Our curriculum must include holistic skills in order to prepare teachers who are also good leaders, sport organizers and so on.

TE3:I always think teacher education is not of quality if it is not able to produce quality professionals. What do I mean? I mean teachers with good ethics, right attitudes mainly to children, self-respect to mention only some.

KQ2: What perceptions related to the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education?

Mainly, the generated data suggested that the participant teacher educators were of the opinion that the merger would help improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia mainly in terms of merger-associated improved inputs and the processes to a lesser degree.

Input improvement related perceptions

The findings that suggested that teacher educators in the HDCE campuses primarily believed the merger would help improve teacher education in terms of merger-linked inputs included views that the merger would result in improved education facilities and teaching resources, appropriate curriculum, improved admission requirements, student diversity, and suitably qualified teacher educators, as pointed out in the official documents about the merger (Crebbin, 2007).

Staff related input perceptions

Data suggested that one of the reasons the teacher educators' perceptions in these campuses were that the merger has the capacity to bring about quality teacher education was because its focus was to ensure that in the near future all teacher educators would have formal qualifications that meet minimum requirements to teach at lecturer level and thus be equipped to provide high quality teaching.

TE1 in a position of formal authority from Campus A: In the near future, the majority of our colleagues who do not meet the requirement to teach at the University level are expected to have Masters' degrees. By that they will meet the minimum requirement to teach in the B.Ed. At the moment many of us only have Masters although we are expected to have PhDs. Like now there is no single PhD at our campus.

TE2, Campus B: In teaching terms, teaching staffs needs to have met a certain minimum qualifications; therefore quality must be determined also by qualification standards of teacher educators. It is not good to allow teaching staff to have qualifications below or at the same level with the one they train for ...So what happened in order to [improve] quality teacher education is that our colleagues who did not meet requirement, ... some who have first degrees are granted with opportunity to upgrade their academic qualification.

Curriculum related input perceptions: assessment and content

The adoption of a new curriculum emerged in almost all responses from participants in all the three HEDCE campuses as being one of the factors which suggested that the teacher educators perceived the merger as having the potential to improve teacher education quality in terms of inputs. Mainly, the understanding was that the strength of the new curriculum lay in its contextually relevant content, as, for example, stated by one teacher educator participant responsible for inclusive education and who is not in a position of authority:

There is quite a difference between the inclusive education curriculum I am currently teaching and the one I used to teach as part of the Education Theory and Practice in the BETD. The course outline that I am following in the B.Ed. is relevant. It leads to more information...

In addition, the findings were that the participants believed the university curriculum would contribute to improved quality of teacher education as it covered broader content than what was offered at the former colleges of education.

TE1: We used to confine ourselves much to the syllabi, mostly using school syllabi and text books to teach. This to me could not ensure quality in terms of subject content. Now with the merger the B.Ed. curriculum require that you consult many books and also go to internet. The same thing we expect the students to do; we sent them to the library so to allow full participation in lessons. I think this is good enough to enhance quality.

Improved assessment policy and practice also emerged as part of what contributed to the curriculum-related perceptions that teacher education quality would benefit from the merger. Participants, for example, perceived the strict adherence to deadlines in the university assessment policy as a potential to improve quality in teacher education because of timely student feedback. Such a sentiment was, for example, echoed in the following statement:

I must say that things after the merger have changed. It is no longer business as usual. We are required to stick to deadlines or else even our own students can remind us on the feedback. We are instilling the same attitude in student teachers so that they too transfer this positive attitude of punctuality, strictness and adherence to professional rules and standards to their learners. The practice of deadlines in former colleges was not respected as people kept postponing responsibilities.

Another aspect which emerged from the data from interviews with heads of institutions or departments regarding the post-merger assessment policies related to their view that the required involvement of internal and external examiners would ensure a high level of question papers. As one teacher educator put it in one focus group:

The use of external moderators at university put us on our toes unlike before when only continuous assessment applied in the BETD. Also the minimum and maximum teaching load is standardized at UNAM. Our work is being assessed also based on that.

Institutional environment related input perceptions

The institutional culture which was perceived to be associated with the merger was described by teacher educators as facilitating teacher educators' and student growth necessary for improved quality teaching. The data suggested that the perceptions in this regard related, amongst other things, to a research culture. As two of the teacher educators who were of this perception elaborated in the interviews:

TE1: The merger is an opportunity for us to get serious with teaching, including planning lessons, researching about the topics before class and being critical about what you teach. When you look at the level of understanding of students and the qualifications of the teaching staff at the HF, you are challenged to put a lot of effort in what you are doing because your subject competence might be challenged.

TE2: The integration of research into teaching is a talk of the day around here. There is this atmosphere that research and teaching cannot be separated. Therefore our campuses

are now slowly becoming research campuses. Also a lot of us are already involved in proposing or research topics for our own PhDs.

Facilities related input perceptions

Promises about improved education facilities also emerged as being perceived as a promise that the merger had the potential to bring about improved quality teacher education. It also seems that the respondents' perceptions in this regard were predominantly related to inputs associated with the merger. Examples of issues raised in responses in this regard included references to finances, computer and science laboratory facilities, transport and classrooms as well as hostel buildings.

HoD1: With the new curriculum, the university will provide resources to teach to enable us to teach at the level of the degree. We are informed that the University will build computer lab for students. This will improve quality of teaching as students will have access to information and use them in their assignment which is not possible at the moment. And in teaching we are still using "chalk and talk" [referring to blackboards] to teach. This is outdated really...

Head of Department (HoD) 2: We are also expecting a consignment of staff computers. Video conference is in the pipe line. The student lab is loaded with internet.

HoD 3: once the infrastructure improves, and more resources pumped into former colleges the situation [of poor teacher education quality] will change to better.

The heads of institutions also shared some of the university plans to install video conference facilities at all three HDCE campuses. Their perception was these facilities would assist with the teaching of critical subjects like maths and sciences on campuses with shortages of qualified teachers. One teacher educator in a position of authority argued that, although these video conference facilities are not ideal teaching facilities, the arrangement would help to avoid the situation where teaching would not take place due to a shortage of qualified lecturers at HDCE as most qualified lecturers and professors are based in Windhoek more than 1000kms away.

In addition some of the respondents suggested that the participants believed the improved infrastructures and services such as transport and electronic communications in the post-merger context would contribute to the improvement of teacher education quality because they enhance operational efficiency with their ability to enhance quality teacher education. For example:

TE1: We have at our campus received new vehicle fleet to replace the old government vehicles. The communication system is made easy by the UNAM e-mail system. Before the merger we had no e-mails for the campus or ministry. Some people had individual e-mails that they were using only for individual purpose or for studies like some of us who are studying with foreign institutions. The e-mail culture at UNAM has helped to cut on the communication and on distance problem.

TE2: Also student lab is loaded with internet, making it possible for me to send them to search for information before class. It is a wonderful thing even if it is not enough. We did not have such things before, internet for student is really something good. It works for teacher training. I can communicate with my students also even when they are not on campus like when they are away for school based studies. If it stays like this teaching will really improve a lot because information is everywhere not just limited to textbooks and so on.

Financial resources related input perceptions

The participants' responses also related to financial resources which took into consideration the need to maintain and repair the old teaching equipment and facilities, actions which they believed would be forthcoming and contribute to the improvement of TE quality.

TE 1: Things here are old and really need attention

Other examples in this respect from heads of different institutions were:

HoI3 1: The government under the merger promised the former colleges a huge budget that will help to bring us [former colleges] at the level of the university”.

Head 2: *With the money we are promised, the college will be renovated and dilapidated structures will become new to host the new programs.*

Student related input perceptions

Part of the perceptions that the merger would bring about better quality teacher education related to the view that the merger would bring with it improved admission requirements which could lead to quality intakes for quality teachers. Data suggested that the teacher educators' perception in this regard was related to the adoption of the university admission policy requirement of 25 points in five subjects in grade 12 examination results with a minimum of a C in English. These points are higher than those of the former colleges of education admission requirements of 24 points in six subjects with a D in English in Grade 12 examination results.

TE1: I believe in the adage that says garbage in garbage out. If you put poor students in the program, definitely we are going to produce poor teachers. You know and vice versa. The high the points of our new intake the better teachers are expected. You must always reap what you sow. The quality of our intake has changed from 24 points in six subject to 25 in five subjects; you know even the requirement for English has changed to higher. It is my hope that teachers that we will produce will not likely to be low in English proficiency as it is the case today.

TE2: Unam has higher admission criteria. Of course it will not accommodate people with low points because many of our children are from poor school background. There are schools in rural areas that may not even produce one students who meet requirement to go to UNAM for a degree. But the reason why we have those schools you know is because of those low level teachers who joined teaching with poor academic background. This thing [taking students in teacher education with low academic points] will soon come to the end, teachers will be better qualified because their entry level was higher. The quality of the education is in a teacher you know....

Teacher educators also believed the transparent coordination of the admission process by the Office of the Registrar in accordance with the UNAM admission policy had the potential to ensure the required quality admissions. This view was conveyed, amongst others, in the following comment by one of the teacher educators in a position of official authority:

The fact that at University you either make it or do not, there are no negotiations for admission when a student does not meet requirement as even students believed to be disadvantaged have to compete by their grade 12 credentials or otherwise if they look potential they are given an opportunity to prove it via foundation programs...

In addition to higher academic minimum requirements, those in positions of authority also appeared to believe that the merger would bring together students from all walks of life under one teacher education program. Their belief was that this diversity had the potential to enhance quality teacher education as it would expose students from different school backgrounds to different views and also enable the English proficiency of those from disadvantaged backgrounds to improve.

TE 1: I understand that everyone is proud of his or her own culture but our students are now exposed to different cultures through interacting with other students at university. They will learn a lot of skills and also learn to respect other cultures. Students of the Faculty of Education now attend classes with students from other faculties and this has a potential to quality as opposed to when they are educated in isolation. I think they [student teachers] have potential to graduate with an open mind something that is required of a teacher. They learn how to approach knowledge differently and how knowledge is handled from different angles.

TE 2: Our students are exposed more to the open minded society that does not look at knowledge narrowly or associate it with a certain culture, religion, or politics. They are more treated as students as opposed to where they come from, rural or urban. Such an acculturation of learning gives quality as it influence the level of argument in lessons and in exams.

Process related improvement perceptions

Issues those were suggestive that the participants' perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education were, also of processes related to the post-merger introduction of staff development programs, quality assurance measures and improved support services.

Staff related perceptions about links between merger processes and quality TE

The data which suggested that the participant teacher educators' perceptions that the merger was capable of improving quality was in terms of post-merger staff development programmes. It included opportunities for improving formal qualifications as well as informal continuous professional staff development. The perceptions were that all teacher educators would then be equipped with the necessary academic knowledge and pedagogic skills linked to teacher education quality, as one of the participants stated.

I hope you are aware that staff are also given free staff development opportunity to study up to the PhD level to meet minimum requirement, we never had this golden opportunity before under the Ministry of Education.

Similar perceptions were held among the heads of institutions, for example:

Ho11: Yes of course the merger has the ability to improve quality. Among the things that will be provided for quality to improve is the opportunity for lecturers to upgrade their qualifications. They [teacher educators from former colleges] will be empowered with content and teaching skill they need to improve the quality of teaching.

In addition, the perceptions were that a number of the university divisions, such as the Multidisciplinary Centre and the Research and Publication Unit, would also contribute to improved research capacity amongst the teacher educators. Some of the phrases in the responses in this respect were, “being part of a community of learned researchers”, “talking the language of the academics” and “belonging to a group of researchers”. The statements which conveyed this perception included:

HoC3: I must say that one particular enabling factor that was almost absent with former colleges was the value of research ... The research culture that we observe here at UNAM is really enabling for quality because one learns through research and you further enrich your lessons.

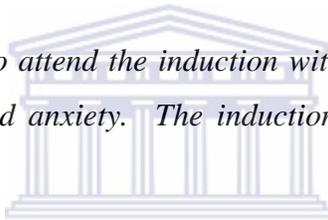
TE1: I have new interesting colleagues; they are excellent at subject teaching and have a history of research experience. A colleague of mine and I are already writing a

proposal for research funding in our department she is in Windhoek and I am here in the north, and I am also in a committee that organizes for an annual research conference to be here at our campus, I mean in terms of research things are moving really in the right direction.

Apart from staff development programs meant to upgrade qualifications and research capacities, it also emerged that teacher educators perceived induction programmes into the university Faculty of Education as enabling a smooth integration that contributes to improved teacher education capacities. For example:

TE 1: The whole idea of the induction was meant to introduce us to UNAM and most especially to the Faculty. ... We were made to understand how modules teaching are done and course materials are used. An assessment policy was also introduced.

TE2: I went to Windhoek to attend the induction with different feelings; I can say there was a fear of unknown and anxiety. The induction was reassuring and I came back motivated.



Workshops and seminars were also viewed as opportunities to enhance quality teacher education after the merger, as expressed in responses such as the following in various focus groups across the HDCEs:

TE1: We have so far attended many workshops and seminars organized by the faculty of education as a means to integrate us. Through seminars and workshops we were introduced to various practices that makes us to gradually get a sense of what and how things are done in order to really be able to provide quality as expected at UNAM. As you know is not a once thing.... It is a process really.

TE2: ... We were all asked to identify areas of curriculum we need assistance most. I was not sure as everything looked uncertain. But I ended up in planning lesson workshop held here. It was a very helpful workshop. We planned a lesson with Dr Luis (pseudo). We were given an opportunity to teach it and you know we did a power point... the workshop built my self-esteem and was confident when I came back, Also Dr Luis reassured me of support and that I can contact her every time I need to ask something.

Curriculum related process perceptions

There appeared to be a perception amongst the participants that teaching at the university focuses on developing higher order thinking skills rather than rote learning for examination purposes and that the former would improve teacher education quality:

TE1: Here at the University, students are requested to cover a large number of knowledge and to reflect on it at a higher level. They are required to understand the content and not just to know it by arguing about the facts and apply them to real situation. I think is a different think all together especially in a way assessment is done here to encourage those high level skills in students.

TE2: Teaching of content in the B.Ed. require that students examine and reason things out and that they defend what they stand for and not just follow the course syllabus blindly or text books. This way they develop critical thinking. I mean they are also not necessarily expected to agree with the teacher because they can defend their conclusions on specific matters. Also us when we mark their assessment we also flexible because you are supposed to apply all the Bloom taxonomy guide and not just look for one think you know.

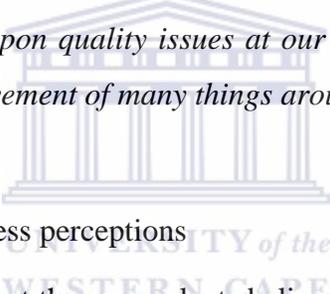
TE3: Instilling critical thinking skills in teachers is very important while they are in teacher education so that they too can transfer them into their learners and not merely to teach for the sake of preparing students to pass. At the end of the day students pass without having nothing to apply in future or one can say unable to critically argue and support their arguments. Equally, and this I think is crucial, as teacher educators also we should develop critical thinking skills for us to be able to apply it.

Respondents also conveyed perceptions that the newly introduced UNAM quality assurance policies had the potential to improve the curriculum and in so doing improve the quality of teacher education. Such a view was shared mainly by the heads of institutions and to a certain extent among the teacher educators in other positions of authority than those who were not in such positions. Responses such as the ones below conveyed this perception:

TE1: *With the appointment of quality assurance coordinator expected very soon I have hope that quality especially of the curriculum will improve. There is a lot of discrepancies in the curriculum and also lack of uniformity that we hope the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) coordinator will be able to identify those. As you know with the Ministry of Education we never had this things called quality assurance, maybe it was at the ministry but colleges we did not practice this.*

HoC1: *University wide there is the Centre for Quality and ManagementCEQUAM is to ensure quality... The centre coordinates all quality and standards of the university even the way we teach. Students can complain about poor quality at CEQUAM because the centre is supposed to work independently. This thing of quality assurance was spoken about in the Ministry but was never applied in practice...*

HoI2: *We are soon going to have a CEQUAM Coordinator to ensure that we have someone full time to look upon quality issues at our campus. I think if managed well it could lead to quality improvement of many things around here.*



Institutional efficiency related process perceptions

Various responses also suggested that the respondents believed that the merger would contribute to improved quality teacher education through the improved support services it brought along with regards to administration and infrastructure. For example, the staff expected new administrative appointments and some promotions as some job descriptions were said to have been reviewed and changed. It was believed that such appointments would help improve efficiency which has the ability to enhance quality outcomes. Some of the comments that suggested these perceptions were:

HoC1: We got additional positions on our structure. For example, we have appointed a Student Support Officer dedicated to the wellbeing of students, also the Student Counsellor for student psycho social problems. There is a Security Officer on campus to coordinate security issues. Another new position is for an Assistant Academic Officer. We are also expecting a Quality Assurance Coordinator to be appointed.

TE2: Me what I like most here [merger with UNAM] is that the structures at the University are clear. The administrators have specific duties to perform, making it less difficult for someone to consult. We are supported by different people. For example, in the library they have added a position of an assistant librarian and the person deals specific with searching information. In the IT now we have an IT technician. Before it was everyone for himself because even our people did not understand their roles as support officers. They did not fully understand their obligation towards us [teacher educators] and also those they also have so to say a role to play in making teaching and learning to be of quality. But I think with new structures, thing such as their attitudes have already started to change I think due to what I can say broader commitment to the merger.

Perceptions about the merger related challenges

In response to the question about challenges which the participants viewed as posing threats to the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education, the HDCE participant teacher educators' responses suggested that they viewed the following input and process aspects as challenges posing such threats:

Input related challenges

Data suggested that the participants were of the opinion that the challenges related mainly to inputs such as ineffective change management and leadership activities, absence of merger implementation plans, teacher educators' under-preparedness and low self-esteem.

Perceived management and leadership related challenges

Mainly, the participants were of the view that management and leadership were ineffective during the merger and that a number of issues contributed to the ineffectiveness. For example, the majority of the heads of the HDCEs perceived themselves as not well prepared to lead

through the merger as they were inundated with lots of human and technical issues related to the merger that they could not resolve due to lack of skills in change management, lack of support, poor communication skills, and the absence of any guidelines for merger implementation:

HoI1: As you know merger is a complicated thing. You deal with emotions every day. There are also many questions and fewer answers in mergers. Our people expect answers but we don't have them because me as a Rector is just in the same situation like them. I also need more information and more skills to manage this merger process. I think those in power [UNAM Management] needed to give the Rectors and their management teams some courses on change management.

HoI2: It frustrates when you are not able to answer staff questions but they assume you know but you yourself do not have any information about that particular issue of the merger. Also the staff questions and problems are not the same and no one said to us in leadership here are the most frequent questions and here is how you can approach them, let alone, say refer them to this office, so we as leaders were also frustrated.

HoI3: You know in education those of us in leadership were not necessarily trained for leading institutional change. Some of us only became HOD during that time before the merger because of experience. Even now after the merger, new coordinators are just chosen and they were not prepared for. It is only by experiences or by subject expertise... We need specific training to empower us to lead in relation to how to monitor quality teaching and learning during the merger.

Some senior management team members at institution B also maintained that there was a lack of support and direction which, in combination with numerous responsibilities as a result of merger, were stressful to them, as in:

SMTM1: ... extra responsibilities is a problem here ...,

SMTM2: ...not knowing what is expected to be done cause stress,

SMTM3... *taking blames of things you are not aware of is honestly frustrating ... it stresses when teacher educators expect answers from my office but I too are in the same dilemma...*

Similarly, some teacher educators also maintained that their campus heads seemed not to be well equipped to assist them during the merger, especially in relation to the provisioning of information. Two of the respondents' views in this regard from the focus group interviews with teacher educators not in positions of authority were:

TE 1: *The information is in Windhoek. They are the ones who know what is next. Our leaders, those who are in the offices here were in the same boat like us. You ask this or that sometimes they just shake their shoulders, because they also are in the dark. I must say it is indeed a frustrating situation.*

TE2: *Sometimes we asked questions because we needed feedback and our Rector could not provide one so the only advice given was to write our complaints down and she will take it to the next merger meeting.*

However, those in positions of authority perceived the merger as well communicated to all through the Consultancy Report disseminated to all former colleges. This information suggested a seeming contradiction from the staff in positions without authority who claimed the merger was not well communicated to them. These contradictions suggest that there was partial communication which some of the respondents felt could hamper the merger from realizing its goals of improving quality. Phrases that were suggestive of these feelings included: *“we were not kept in the loop”*; *“only heard it from grapevines”*; *“rumours have it that ...”*; or *“it [merger] was first announced at a political rally”*.

Also related to leadership challenges was the perception that decision making was always top down even when teacher educators seemed to be affected by the decision. The view was that such a practice would impact negatively on the quality of teacher education because teacher educators who are the actors of teacher education have limited input as to how quality can be improved:

TE 1: Merger issues, I believe must be discussed at the lower level where the majority of us are because at the end of the day we are the ones affected. In fact we are the ones who are responsible with the implementation, but the decision making is of ours. Someone decides what is to be done in the merger, I mean, including in the classroom where I am the Master. And you know, we are made to believe that university is about academic freedom but where is the academic freedom in all these? Why we are not fully involved in these matters because you know what? If we talk about quality improvement in teacher education, it's us, it is us you know. But this top down decision must be controlled especially when it comes to matters related to teaching and learning.

The number of perceived leadership dilemmas associated with mergers inspired me to ask if there was any guiding document or plan to guide implementation. Responses were negative as extrapolated below:

Ho11: As far as I can remember there was none. I remember at one meeting where my staff asked the delegation from Windhoek to issue us with the merger plan of action. They promised, and I don't want to say names, to come back with a program of events that could guide the implementation. Until now nothing was on paper.

Ho12: The only document is the Crebbin Consultative Report, that's the only document, I hope you [referring to me] are in possession of that but I can also provide copy for you. So at the end everybody just try to see what works you know.

Ho1 3: You know some of us served in a merger committee that was meeting with the Ministry not necessarily to negotiate but you know there were several of those committees. We were told of the MoU between UNAM and I think Ministry of Education. So I was hoping in the absence of any guideline the MoU will guide the implementation stage. But personally I think the MoU was not honoured. It is one of those things you put down but no one go back to them. But anyway let me rather not talk about those things.

Contrarily, responses from heads of institutions (HoI) tended to be defensive as can be gathered from the following:

HoI 1: *Yes I can agree that when the information about the merger came it was sudden but all along the staff was kept informed as we always feed them back from our meetings with Ministry or with the University.*

HoI 2: *I always discuss the merger related issues with management, who are HODs of respective departments and I expect that they do the same to their staff and inform them*

In addition to perceived management and leadership capacity challenges, the perceived challenges were also associated with tenure uncertainties:

TE1: Some things affected our wellbeing and had capacity to demoralize us from delivering quality. This was mainly at the beginning of the merger. No one was sure here, what was going to really happen with us. Not even our management. Rumours were everywhere that you could be posted everywhere. People were more thinking about their future than they performance at work. Quality was affected.

TE2: The people from Windhoek main campus and from the Ministry of education keep telling us no one will lose a job. But we needed something in writing to fall back to. Among ourselves people talk about things like, like a .. But to tell the truth, the fear was in the air especially if you do not have a proper qualification. It was good in the end no one loose a job like here I am not sure about other campuses.

Staff related perceived challenges

Mainly, the challenges that were found to be associated with staff regarding the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education related to what the participants viewed as academic under-preparedness to teach post-merger allocated subjects. At the centre of this perception was that, in addition to under-preparedness, some allocation of subjects was to non-specialist teacher educators and that this had the potential of stifling the improvement of the quality of teacher education under the merger. These perceived challenges related mostly to subjects historically viewed as being difficult to teach and master, namely: mathematics, science and English. This finding emerged from comments such as the following:

TE1: I teach math and science. But now from the course outline it requires we need a high command of the subject from the first degree up to a master. I foresee it as a challenge that we have to up you with a master degree in mathematics and Science and not in math education.

TE2: We were really thrown in the deep end you know what? Because sometimes ... the course outline expects high content [knowledge] beyond professional knowledge “something ought to be done to close this gap”.

TE3: Yes, I do agree with my colleague, and I just want to add ...for example, and here I am currently teaching Local Language. I never did such a course in my training. I was given the course to teach simply because I speak the same language. I do not see quality in the whole decision, but anyway I agreed to take it.... But ... to me....capability is equal to quality teaching. But I think our management are just interested in seeing all courses allocated people to teach no matter who is teaching the course, I mean whether you qualify to teach it or not and that is not quality.

Even the teacher educators who had Masters in Education qualifications also raised challenges that related to the focus of these degrees held by the majority of teacher educators in the ex-colleges of education as these qualifications were not related to subject specialisations.

..., our Masters and I can talk on behalf of many of my colleagues here and perhaps at other colleges, our Umeo University Masters (A Swedish Umeo University provided staff development programs to teacher educators in all Namibian colleges of education as part of the Teacher Education Reform after independence)is a common qualifications here, were not focusing on subject specialization. We did more of issues of critical reflections and staff like learner centred methods. You can see these skills were good in methodology, and I am not saying they were not important. But now these are not really what the new curriculum require from many of us here as we need to have in-depth content of subject.

The participants also felt that their research skills were deficit due to the past experience of poor attention given to research in the former colleges of education which they felt needed to be sharpened if teacher education quality was to improve among the HEDCE:

TE1: I would like to have colleagues who are experienced in research in the same department. I would like to work with someone who is willing to share research skills with me....and also to be able to do research together [with researchers] and publish with them...

TE2: There is a need for training in research methods. Some of us will soon handle student research projects, but if we are not comfortable with the research yourself we will make a lot of mistakes. Myself I would not mind signing up for research methodology classes.

Perceived curriculum related challenges

Some of the participant teacher educators raised concerns which conveyed perceptions that there was under-utilization of the pedagogic skills and practices associated with the BETD qualification especially in respect of practice teaching and that this practice posed a threat to the merger's capacity to contribute to improved teacher education. Among these perceived challenges was the focus and the duration of the school based studies referred to as 'practice teaching' in the B.Ed. which was viewed to be only focusing on how to teach (classroom based only) and not doing so regarding the development of school encompassing skills:

TE1: I know we are still in the process of refining the B.Ed. primary curriculum. I think we need to retain some good things from our old program, our BETD, specifically the School Bases Studies (SBS) component. The old practice should be retained or made part of the B.Ed. primary. The UNAM practice teaching is not sufficient in terms of duration and in terms of being I think holistic or what can I say inclusive.

TE2: In the SBS students are expected to do many things including projects, action research and alike. We ask students to construct their SBS file and professional portfolio. The students teach more than 50 lessons and as lecturers we follow them at the respective schools you know to guide them and to do at least two lessons evaluations.

TE3: *To be frankly with you, I must say that the UNAM practice teaching does not give a student enough experience. Are you aware that the concept of practice teaching at the University only require lesson observation in year 3 for two weeks, and lesson presentation in year 4 for four weeks, and that research; professional portfolio was not part of the teaching practice. Are you aware? I mean this is very little comparing to the School Based studies which is soo inclusive, I mean which is very powerful you see in terms of teaching experience and professional skills and also the action research skill that have to take place...*

Certain teacher educators also felt the new B.Ed. curriculum failed to incorporate the views of teacher educators from the former colleges of education regarding lower primary teacher education despite the fact that they were more experienced in this respect than was the case with reference to the previous teacher education at the original Faculty of Education. It was felt ignoring their experiences might compromise quality as the Faculty of Education at UNAM never offered Lower Primary Education programmes before the merger.

TE1: *...! You know. It is us [former colleges] who trained primary for the entire country.*

TE2: *... There are many good practices in the old BETD that if they were brought along could improve the current B.Ed. curriculum quality. Such issues are many... So I really think we could have brought these things into our new B.Ed. Primary or in the faculty as such.*

Perceived infrastructure related challenges

Despite the excitement about promises about improved resources, it seemed infrastructure was viewed as still being inadequate in the immediate post-merger period. This situation was perceived to be the mother of all challenges in relation to improving teacher education by some participants, as stated in the examples below:

TE1: *I teach English Communication Skills. Ideally, this course is well taught in a Language Laboratory where students use self-directive learning to correct their mistake, ...that's how I learned English at the University where I was trained. But the absence of*

this teaching facility at UNAM especially at this campus and right here where the history of poor English proficiency is a serious issue will just make this difficult.

TE2: We teach using the same outdated laboratories in science. I long to see these infrastructures renovated and well equipped with new benches, new chemicals and modern technology equipment. For example, microscopes here are old, they need replacement.

Responses also related to classroom over-crowdedness aggravated by the increased numbers of students despite limited space in an attempt to address fears of teacher shortage.

TE1: There is a need for bigger classrooms. Our first intake is up to a 100. How can you squeeze these numbers in an ordinary classroom of [meant for] forty students?

SMTM: From classes to hostels students are squeezed because of high in-take.

The quality of the buildings was also an issue related to perceptions that poor infrastructure could result in low standards and poor quality of the new program as was, for example, deduced from the following response by a teacher educator in a position of authority:

As you know former colleges has been neglected in the past. The infrastructure in out former colleges are poor. They are never repaired or maintained. Over the years they are the same and cannot provide or support quality teaching. In fact we as teacher educators need teaching facilities and materials that can support our effort to provide quality teaching, but if you look at these infrastructure in which we are supposed to provide quality teacher education, truly one wonders if any teaching here can be of high quality standard.

Of main concern to heads of institutions was also a belief that the financial resources were not enough to effect quality:

HoI 1: As you know, UNAM inherited us with all our problems of lack of resources and poor facilities. Us who are in leadership are under pressure that staff cannot wait for the promised change in terms of all the dilapidated facilities and new technology. They

[staff] do not understand that we [Heads] are just in the same dilemma and our hands are cut due to insufficient budget. The budget is promised but is not at hand.

...we were told merger is well funded. Certain campuses were to receive money to improve here and there and to build and so on. Later we heard UNAM is using its own money from capital budget. No one tells you whether money was given and how much was spent. But we informed staff and students the merger is well funded by government.

Perceptions about process related challenges: centralised management

The participants' perceptions about challenges regarding the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education also appeared to revolve around management and leadership processes which include the centralization of many services.

One of the perceived management and leadership processes that the participants viewed as posing a challenge to improved teacher education under the merger related to the centralization of many services which were based in Windhoek. The perceptions were that the centralisation hampered prompt support to the HDCE campuses as they were located far away from the main campus:

HoI1: ... You see everything here is administered from main campus. Even buying a rim of papers for the photocopy machine has to be done in Windhoek, I do not know whether people there do not trust the management here or I don't know and you know if so how long is it gonna take before the trust that things can also happen here, or processed here, you see.

HoI2: In the old system we used to have our college development fund controlled at college level. But under the merger you know we cannot even handle a budget and when we ask we are told you know that someone called the budget control what does it us. Is just to inconvenient that as campus management we cannot have like a check account with some signatories.

SMTM1: It takes us more than two weeks to receive payment for a service provider. We can go on without photocopy papers or mere stationeries just because we are waiting for a purchase order from Windhoek.

SMTM2: The process of procurement is tedious. You need a requisition....we all look forward to the decentralization of administration when we as new campuses can do our own transactions, is only when we can contribute enough to quality improvement.

Conclusion

In summary, the findings generally suggested that the participants in historically disadvantaged Colleges were of the opinion that the merger had the capacity to improve the quality of education. Such perceptions related mainly to merger-related processes and to a lesser degree to inputs. However, the participants also conveyed perceptions that ineffective leadership and management, such as slow delivery of resource and inadequate finances as well as problems related to their geographical distances from the main campus where the historical faculty is situated, posed threats to improving the quality of teacher education.

Having presented in this chapter the perceptions of teacher educators at the historically disadvantaged colleges of education on the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality, the next chapter focuses on the perceptions of the teacher educators at the historically educationally advantaged college of education (HEA) in this regard.

CHAPTER 6

PERCEPTIONS AND HISTORICAL ADVANTAGE – INFRASTRUCTURE, LOCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL

Introduction

This chapter is about the findings which emerged in this study regarding the perceptions of teacher educators working in the historically Advantaged College of education (HACE) site regarding the merger between Namibia's former colleges of education and UNAM teacher educator institutions with a special focus on the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education. The HACE was historically established for the coloured racial population group whilst its teacher educator component is predominantly white. As in Chapter 5, the chapter is structured in line with the key study questions. Similarly, in order to develop an understanding about the context within which data associated with the findings was generated, the chapter begins with a brief history and the current context of the campus.

Context of the Historical Advantaged College of Education (HACE)

The Windhoek College of Education (WCE), which was the most urbanized of the colleges, was one of the four colleges of education that existed in Namibia before the merger and is situated in Khomasdal, Windhoek, in the central part of Namibia within the area which was historically meant for the coloured ethnic group. It was formerly known as the College of out of School Training (COST) for Coloureds and is where the Rehoboth community's teachers who are a section of the Coloured groups living in Rehoboth - a town on the outskirts of Windhoek to the south - used to train for primary teacher education before independence. COST is said to have offered teacher programmes of poor quality specifically designed to educate teachers only for specific skills (Swarts, 2001). These courses included the National Primary Certificate (NPC), the National Education Certificate (NEC) and the National High Education Certificate (NHEC). Their teaching approaches can be described as having been more teacher-centred than child oriented (Dahlstrom, 2002). In view of learner centred skills which promote quality education, such approaches did not promote quality teacher education.

The COST was joined with the Windhoek Teachers' College which used to be for whites in 1990. This duo, COST and the Windhoek College for whites, were administered under the

former South African National Education Department that administered all the education institutions within Windhoek and the surroundings as proclaimed under the Group Areas Act of the South African Government (Amukugo, 1994). The said merger in 1990 was a political move that resulted from the dissolution of the whites-only college in the south western part of Windhoek (Pionierspark suburb). Since then, the premises that used to be the Windhoek Teachers' College for whites are what today exist as the Main Campus of the University of Namibia (Swarts, 1996). Before independence, the Windhoek Teachers' College offered teacher training courses which were developed, evaluated and administered from South Africa (Dahlstrom, 2002). The name 'Windhoek College of Education' was given after independence in 1992 in line with the renaming of the other ex-colleges of education. The Windhoek College of Education merged with the University of Namibia and was thereafter renamed the Khomasdal Campus of the University of Namibia in 2011.

Before the merger, the Windhoek College of Education offered the Basic Education Teachers Diploma (BETD) as was the case in the HDCE. The BETD was to prepare teachers to teach at two school phases, from Grades 1 to 7 and another phase from Grades 8 to 10. According to the information collected from a PowerPoint presentation by the then Dean of Faculty, Professor R. Auala, titled "Revisiting the merger between UNAM and former colleges of education" many services were centralised (2011). Just before the merger WCE had 624 students and 55 teacher educators, which made it the second largest of the four former colleges of education in Namibia. The academic qualification profile of its teaching staff was: 0 PhD, 11 Masters, 33 B.Ed.(Hons) and 9 diplomas (Auala, 2010). (Refer to the table on Former College of Education Staff Profile on page 58).

My observations during the data gathering visits revealed that the campus facilities were different from the semi urban three campuses historically meant for the teacher education of blacks as they looked more modern. The major buildings comprised the hostels and lecturing facilities, which included a modern art centre, computer centre, a library, science laboratories, a micro-teaching demonstration room, workshops for woodwork and metal work and an IT Academy unit.

My observations also indicated that the Windhoek College of Education had a modern design and was well resourced. The college's infrastructures, teaching equipment, IT, library facilities and student facilities were well maintained. There was a superb hall and the library was well equipped. There was a media centre with audio visual equipment for teaching. There was also a fully furnished art centre where drama and music was practiced. The art centre was also furnished with a ceramic oven for baking pottery. The college science laboratories were well equipped. It also has facilities for wood and metal workshops. The student dormitories had both single and double rooms. Apart from the efficiently maintained physical facilities, the management services through which my visits were arranged appeared to be well organized.

Presentation of findings

HACE participants' conceptualization of quality teacher education

The data suggested that the teacher educator participants in the campus located in the HDCE conceptualized teacher education quality mainly in terms of output but also to a lesser degree to process and input.

Quality teacher education conceptualisation as output

The emergent findings which suggested that the teacher educators in this campus conceptualized quality teacher education predominantly in terms of output included their views that the quality of teacher education relates to the production of teachers whose academic and professional standing is globally competitive and are responsible citizens and agents of change in their communities. Such perceptions mainly related to curriculum concerns.

Curriculum related conceptualisations

Findings from the generated data suggested that participants linked quality teacher education to teachers' curriculum competences. When probed about what competent teacher education is about, references were made to being knowledgeable and possessing critical thinking skills that the teacher educators can impart to learners. The participants also highlighted the importance of teaching methodology as being related to a competent teacher educator. They kept referring to classroom skills when talking about methodological skills and to basic academic skills such as

literacy, and numerical and critical thinking skills as fundamental to teacher education quality. Below are the examples of the responses in this regard:

TE1: I think teacher education is of quality when it produces good teachers with academic and professional competencies. For example, the knowledge of subject content in a specific subject and also teachers must be competent at teaching methodology. Teaching skills they [teachers] need in classroom make them specialists in their profession. I mean to say and we know that there are many educated people with subject content but because they are not competent in teaching by way of a specific subject method they cannot be regarded quality teachers. So in short, teacher education quality is the one that ensures trained teachers have both cognitive and professional skills.

TE2: To me, the curriculum content in terms of depth is one of the things really that determines quality. The subject content must be deep enough to give student teachers confidence to handle it. This simply means as teacher educators we must be well equipped too in order to impart deep content to our students, otherwise, really our teacher education remains questionable when our students graduate with low subject content.

TE3: ... to add to all that I also personally think that the quality teacher education must be related to classroom management skills. The student teachers must walk out of the program knowledgeable about these skills. That even if you have subject knowledge and you have no skills in organizing your class, maintaining discipline, and attracting attention of your learners to listen and participate, you are still an incompetent teacher.

The participants' conceptualisation of quality teacher education also described in terms of producing professional teachers with a positive attitude towards learners rather than just focusing on imparting subject knowledge. When probed to explain what they meant by "positive attitudes towards learners", the teacher educators used phrases such as "respect learners' feelings/ideas", "refraining from swearing at learners", "refrain from corporal punishment", "applying appropriate discipline [measures]". There appeared to be a perception among the participants

that one of the reasons many teachers are unable to deliver quality education is due to their negative attitudes towards learners. A participant in the focus group maintained:

Attitudes that we encourage our students to practice such as respect of fellow people, using appropriate words and not using abusive language on the school ground as well as at home are ones we want them to impart to learners. When our teachers practice those positive attitudes towards learners and they transfer them to their learners then those learners also practice them in community towards old people and in their families, then we know teacher education is producing quality products.

Other responses were:

TE1: I think behaving professionally in the school towards learners and fellow teachers promote quality education; teacher education must also produce teachers who behave mannerly in the eyes of public also who respect learners for him or her to be respected too, who prepares lessons well, and is timely with marking feedback so that quality can clearly be seen in all aspects.

TE2: You know you cannot divorce quality teacher education from behaviour change. That's why professional behaviours must not just be a thing that applies to classroom behaviours only. Like me if I met my former student who is drunk in public or I hear that one of our product is being suspected of having all those sort of things with learners like 'love affairs' with learners for example. The first thing I ask myself is ... did we fail to inculcate enough of professional behaviours in them, ...

TE3: As we know teaching is a professional body. So, professional skills should be one of our blueprint in preparing teachers. It should be one of the ... components of the curriculum. You see professionalism start when you come to class prepared, your conducts with learners, the way you feedback and keep your things recorded and also how you present your work to your supervisor in a kind of professional way. I think the nation expects quality teacher education products who are very responsible teachers in their profession.

Repeatedly, responses also suggested that the participants viewed teacher education as of quality if it focussed on producing teachers who can be valuable, responsible and well behaving members of society. To develop better understanding about the responses and the respondents' perceptions, they were asked to describe what they meant by producing a valuable, responsible citizen. In response to the question one participant maintained valuable citizens "*are those who respect, foster and incorporate the values of the Namibian nation in their day to day lives*". Others referred to a curriculum that aims to produce teachers who are able to "*uphold the Namibian Constitution*"; "*contribute to nation building*"; and "*respond positively to the changing needs of Namibian society*".

The perception that quality is linked to the knowledge economy was also repeatedly conveyed during interviews. Some participants at this mixed focus group responded:

TE1: ... *I think without saying that ... those teachers must lead in the knowledge economy. [Pause] Our teacher education curriculum must give wider knowledge, broad ideas that can help to contribute to our economy and also to sustain it. You see knowledge is power. Our products must be empowered to change the economy and to sustain it.*

TE2: *Knowledge and development cannot be separated. Teachers must be highly knowledgeable to contribute to building a Namibian economy. We can have so much wealth in the countries in the form of minerals ne , infrastructures and so on. We can introduce so many development projects, but we must have a knowledgebase. Ignorance and lack of knowledge is dangerous. But Integrating the economy with knowledge is sustainable it. Quality education is about the multiple knowledge and skill in our teacher education.*

Another emergent output-related theme about TE quality conceptualization was that the participants believed that teacher education is of quality if it is competitive with other education systems and can produce teachers capable of teaching in any country on the globe. One particular teacher educator at the focus group stated:

And another thing, I think with globalization, we must not just educate a teacher for Namibian schools and for our classrooms only but also the time has come that a teacher who is trained in Namibia for instance must be able to participate and be employable globally as a qualified teacher. I just mean to say that we must train for the world not just for Namibia.

Also in relation to this was an argument at the focus group that teacher education was perceived to be of quality when graduating teachers can continue their studies at any university other than UNAM. Some of the responses in this regard were:

TE1: I think that other institutions must also be convinced of our quality so that they can allow our students to continue to higher degrees. Others must be able to buy in our quality so things must be transparent, from our teaching to our assessment.

TE2: What my colleagues is actually saying is that the curriculum must provide for articulation of programs especially into higher degrees. That simply mean that we must teach students who are capable of pursuing higher academic qualifications.

Quality teacher education conceptualization as process

The process related conceptualization by the HACE teacher educator participants included the views that the quality of teacher education relates to teacher educators' continuous professional development, capable management and leadership and quality assurance.

Conceptualization as a staffing related process

The participant teacher educators emphasized the importance of teacher educators' continuous professional development, for example on how ICT can be integrated into teaching and the use of research for improving quality through workshops for professional development:

TE1: To me quality teacher education is related to the continuous professional development of teacher educators in order to update them on new contents, new methodologies and new skills and technology.

Other staffing related responses were with reference to funding for attending conferences and conducting research as ways of contributing to quality teacher education:

TE1: As teacher educators we must be exposed to various teaching and research opportunities. When we are given opportunities to learn from other experienced academics our skills are strengthened. This does not guarantee quality, because quality is not for us to determine, but I mean teacher education must include this too.

TE2: We have talked about research capacity. There is a need for research activities to increase so that teacher educators can attend more conferences and develop research capacity. International conferences and also create opportunities for exchange programs for students and staff. If money is there we can send staff abroad and also invites guest professors, you come back with lots of ideas how to improve your teaching skill and your research interests boosted.

Management and leadership related process conceptualisation

Another aspect at the centre of the participants' conceptualisation of quality teacher education related to the capability of institutional leadership to oversee teacher education program offerings. At the focus group, one teacher educator who was in a position of authority mentioned how leadership was crucial to quality teacher education by pointing out that those in power, referring to Deans, Deputy Deans and HODs, must be empowered with leadership skills to competently lead their followers in delivering quality. For further understanding, the participants were probed about empowerment skills they believed were needed to lead in a teacher education environment that strives to improve quality: The following two examples of the responses in this regard were from participants in positions of authority:

TE1: How to supervise for quality is an ignored topic in leadership. So when fully supervised and well managed teacher education promise to be of quality but if those who are supposed to fully supervise the teacher education are not capable of doing it then quality is at stake.

TE2: I believe that every management member must be empowered to manage change. [be made familiar with] the indicators of quality and what quality is not.

Quality assurance related conceptualisation of quality teacher education as process

One of the conceptualizations of quality teacher education in this campus, as was the case with HDCE, related to issues of quality assurance:

TE1: Teacher education quality is when there are policies in place to monitor and control quality at the institution level so that students are aware even when they do practice teaching that there are such policies to ensure quality. They must know that there are quality standards guiding education and that individual teachers are not left alone but teachers follow policies and guidelines. For example, there are institutional quality assurance procedures for assessment such continues assessment, homework and even examinations although it must not be rigid, but be guided.

Furthermore, a teacher educator who was a senior manager understood quality assurance as follows:

TE2: There must be guidelines and measures such as student evaluation and feedback, external examiners, moderators, quality audit, curriculum review and so that an institution employ to check on quality and to improve.

Input related quality teacher education conceptualizations

To a certain extent the HACE participants' responses to the question about how they conceptualized quality teacher education also suggested they conceptualised it in terms of input which was with regards to students, staffing, the institutional environment, management and leadership, and curriculum.

Student related quality teacher education conceptualisations

Unlike participant teacher educators in HDCE who seemed to link quality teacher education in terms of student admission criteria which mainly stress academic requirements, the teacher

educators at HACE also highlighted the importance of ensuring professional suitability at admission to a teaching career. Some examples of the responses in this regard were:

TE1: Quality teacher education is also determined by the professional qualities of the students at admission. And that is as far as the admission requirement is concerned. It is always important to assess if people to be admitted are the right people for the career [teaching] or not. I personally believe not everyone can just become a teacher. I do believe that personal attitudes,maturity,communication skills,interpersonal relationship instead of just academic preparedness are some of the qualities that should be considered in order to have teacher education which is quality.

The participants at this focus group interview who concurred with the above idea argued that:

TE2: Focusing solely on academic requirement such as points obtained in Grade 12, is limiting the quality of the in-takes. You know prospective students find it easy to join teaching than other careers. Most people chose teaching career due to likelihood to get jobs fast after graduation because teaching jobs in this country [Namibia] is ever in demand. Such people [with required Grade 12 points only] don't always make quality teachers. If we want to have quality, our selection criteria in teacher education must be different from other careers where only academic requirement is considered for admission.

TE3: If I am to be asked who the quality student is or who can become a good teacher, I will answer by saying it is whoever is willingly prepared to take up the profession and not who is smart enough. The higher grade pass in grade 12 should not be the only determinant criteria of a potential good teacher but the love and passion for children and for the profession to me is important.

Staffing related quality teacher education conceptualisation

As in the HDCE, teacher education quality in this campus also seemed to a certain degree to be conceptualised in terms of the teacher educators' academic and formal professional qualifications. The belief was that, when teacher educators are highly qualified in these regards, they possess suitable content knowledge, can plan teaching and learning activities innovatively, do research, and they are able to use innovative methods of teaching as well as making use of

technology. Furthermore, the participants were of the opinion that when teacher educators are well qualified they are able to balance the professional and academic skills.

TE1: The teacher educators' qualifications as well as their experience are important to quality teacher education....

In summary, participants at this campus conceptualised teacher education mainly in terms of quality product and process and to a lesser degree in terms of input. Output issues used to conceptualize quality teacher educator were curriculum which enabled quality outputs such as the one focussing on professional and related skills, including positive attitudes. Regarding process HACE conceptualised focussed more on human capital, e.g. staff development of academic and professional qualifications, management and leadership skills and funding for training rather than in terms of material resources as was the case with HDCE. Input related conceptualization included admission criteria and teacher educators' qualifications.

HACE perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education

The data suggested that participants in HACE were also of the opinion that the merger did have the capacity to improve teacher education quality in Namibia. The data suggested that the participants' views in this respect appeared to be solely related to processes.

The process related perceptions

The process related perceptions amongst the HACE participants about the merger's capacity to improve TE quality were associated with the views that this would be possible through the introduction of the post-merger processes such as continuous staff development and the development of an academically enabling environment.

Staff related improvement perceptions

The data suggested that the participants associated quality teacher education with continuous professional development for teacher educators such as workshops held within the Faculty on how to write course outlines, the implementation of the new curriculum; and workshops held by the Teaching and Learning Intensive Unit (TLIU). The respondents also listed the Centres for

Professional Development and Support and Quality Assurance and Management as units with potential to improve quality teacher education. Some of the responses that were suggestive of this finding were:

TE1: Having attended the induction seminars organized by the Faculty of Education was very helpful... Some lecturers at the Faculty took it by themselves to really explain how teaching is organized and assessed for instance. You have time to ask questions especially on the course materials.

TE2: WE also attended module specific workshops like in my department. We had a math workshop. This I think came in the wake of staff from ex-colleges complaining about how we find certain topics difficult to teach and also that you know some topics are just difficult or may be not at the level of our students. You know some of our students enter the university from poor education background, some even just entered with D symbols in math so math is not one of their favourable subject so to say. But the workshop was useful and I really hope more of this topical workshops are held you know...

In addition, the data also suggested that participants on this campus were of the opinion that the opportunities to upgrade their qualifications would also improve their research skills which they thought were crucial for quality teacher education. Examples of statements which conveyed this sentiment included:

TE1: Through staff development ... I think we are only beginning to talk about research now that most of us are doing our Masters and some are doing their PhDs and also because UNAM regard both teaching and research as requirement for a lecturer. You know we are being evaluated as efficient when we do both so the slogan "research and perish" ... and also you know teaching must be able to benefit from research.

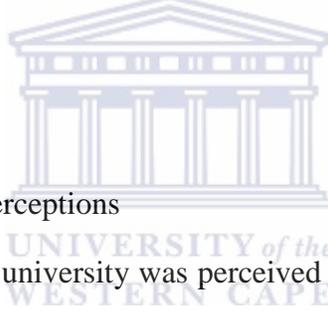
TE2: Yes we did supervise students on their action research but I cannot say many of us are well informed about research. It was just a requirement that each one of us have a group of students to supervise. It was good if we were researchers ourselves because you know there is no way you supervise a quality research if you don't have the necessary

research skills. But research is important to teaching and is important to quality because it is supposed to inform what we teach.

During focus group discussions with the teacher educators it became evident how the teacher educators valued the opportunity to learn from the existing lecturers at the Faculty in terms of research skills. A participant shared the following perception with excitement on his/her face:

The research atmosphere at UNAM is encouraging. I am involved in a research [project] with a colleague. We are together doing some research on reading at the lower primary level. It is interesting to learn from this research how learners proceed in school without them mastering literacy skills. This research is supposed to inform teacher education...

Such perceptions of the link between the post-merger processes and the post-merger improvement of QTE also related to the next theme on institutional environment related perceptions.



Institutional environment related perceptions

Overall, the research culture at the university was perceived to provide an environment which is conducive to quality improvement of teacher education as expressed in the following responses:

TE1: Every second person here talks about research as enabling teaching quality. In fact they are not just talking about it they are doing research and publishing. This spirit of wanting to research is in the air. And since we're just a few minutes distance from main campus, possibility that we work together in conducting research is ensured. One must just be motivated.

TE2: The research atmosphere at UNAM is encouraging... It is interesting to learn from this research how learners proceed in school without them mastering literacy skills. This research is supposed to inform teacher education at lower primary level.

Apart from research, the other aspects of the university environment the participants viewed as being potentially enabling for the improvement of the quality of teacher education post-merger

related to improved efficiency and academic activities made possible by access to educational resources such as computers and the well-resourced library located on the main campus.

TE1: The atmosphere here is encouraging I think is because things here are done by deadlines and the university calendar is strictly followed. We are coming from a situation where democratic education was misinterpreted to be the same as lazier fair. Everyone does what he or she wants. But now I tell you even those colleagues popularly known to be so to say lazy are working towards deadline.

The participants also believed that working in an environment where quality through the provisioning of guidelines on procedures which the merger entailed would ensure that high standards were met and would motivate the teacher educators to carry out their teaching responsibilities to the best of their capabilities as maintained by:

TE2: It is motivating to work in an environment where there are procedures and guidelines regarding quality assurance. Under the merger we are being guided by policies especially in assessment and evaluation. Yes there is academic freedom because we're not necessarily told what to teach within the module descriptors, but there is some uniformity in the faculty and in the whole university. So we feel well guided and I also trusted with quality.

TE4: I also search for answers as to why we look more serious now about teaching and about research than before. I think the fact that we believe we are teaching at the university and no longer in a college, the kind of people we teach and share modules with, the materials we use to teach and so on impact on the way we teach because we are more challenge and in that way we tend to put more effort in teaching.

HACE challenges for improved quality teacher education

Even though it appeared that the participants in this campus were generally of the opinion that the merger had the potential to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia, the data also suggested that the participants believed some challenges posed threats to the achievement of the expected improvement. These views suggested that the perceived challenges related to input and process with reference to curriculum, management and leadership.

Perceived input related challenges

The perceived challenges that emerged to be input related mainly had to do with the post-merger curriculum and included views that it comprised inappropriate teaching methodologies and time allocated to students' practice teaching.

Inappropriate teaching methodologies

Although earlier responses suggested that one of the perceived advantages of the merger related to its promotion of higher order and critical thinking skills, the responses also suggested that the participant teacher educators were of the view that the dominating lecturing approaches at the university did not promote active participation or student centeredness. For example:

TE1: You know where we come from ... Students are given freedom to participate through class activities, presentations and demonstration of lessons using specific subject contents as a way to educate a teacher. Here at UNAM the teaching is lecture based and giving more roles to a lecture to talk than to a student. I find it kind of inappropriate because the trend today is on student centred. What we train students to do at university must prepare them for the class teaching in schools where the approaches are learner-centred.

TE2: ...although to be a teacher is to have certain skills that make you a qualified teacher, under UNAM, student teachers are all taught together with other students irrespective of whether they are student teachers or not and whether such a course is relevant to the teaching career or not. Our students are lumped together with other students. I do believe being a qualified teacher is not just because of subject content but there are those professional skills that are you know ... unique to teaching.

In addition, the above perceived challenges related to confined teaching spaces, as expressed in the responses such as:

Our classrooms are quite full, so congested that one cannot even think of putting students to groups. We are coming from a learner centred background where knowledge is shared, role played and debated and you know for such approach you are supposed to be

very flexible. The set-up of chairs fixed in a lecture type or theatre... you see, already discourages someone to be innovative. I want you to go see how chairs arrangement in some of those UNAM lecture halls are... fixed... making some approaches like group discussions as completely impossible...

The findings also suggested that respondents wished student teachers could be taught separately from students enrolled for other degrees:

TE1: UNAM concentrate more on theory hence putting our students together with those who do other courses. As such, the lecturing method dominates teaching at UNAM and give very little attention to practice. But you know the field of education is also about practice skills that need to be demonstrated.

TE2: I think different about the fact that our students are taught together with Sciences.... education may be viewed as humanities. And to add more oil on the fire...they are taught by people whom themselves are not qualified teachers, I think this is completely not in line with quality improvement of teacher education, I mean when and where and who for example, will demonstrate to the students about the education disciplines, the values and skills which are only relevant to education....?

Another perception about challenges associated with the curriculum at this campus related to assessment at the university which was more examination oriented than the continuous assessment employed in the BETD. Participants at HACE were not all appreciative of the emphasis put on examination at the university as it was perceived not to test the basic competencies and continuous growth. It was believed that continuous assessment used in the former BETD was a better way of enhancing quality learning, as exemplified in the statement below by a participant who was in a position of authority:

I have already said that I do not believe that BETD was a complete failure. There were good components of BETD that can enhance quality of teacher education. Our assessment which people say is weak because it is not the same across colleges and is not based on exams and testsOurs was better organized. The current exam in UNAM is

disorganized, making one to doubt the quality. A Continuous Assessment under the learner-centred education was very supportive and reliable. It reflected the student growth and not just the reproduction of facts encouraged by the exams. In fact continuous teaching itself is a teaching tool and not just a mere assessment tool, that's my belief.

Perceptions about process related challenges

The following perceptions suggested concerns about various post-merger processes related to some curriculum and management and leadership aspects:

Perceived curriculum related challenges

As in HDCE, the length of teaching practice at UNAM which was to be adopted after the merger was perceived as a challenge to improving the quality of teacher education. Some of the concerns about the length of time for teaching practice were:

A lot of what makes a teacher to become a good teacher is learnt from practice teaching. In the BETD we called it school based studies (SBS). In SBS, the students are expected to stay longer in schools over the three years of the training. I see quality being compromised when insufficient time is spent on school based studies. I think even in the B.Ed., enough time should be spent on school based activities than on learning theory. Our teacher education through B.Ed. is more theory-driven than practice, thereby compromising the classroom skills but to me student teachers are supposed to learn on the job.

The participant teacher educator therefore suggested that teaching practice needed to be extensive to allow student teachers sufficient exposure and that the school based study model from the BETD should be adopted in the B.Ed. programme so that students also get an opportunity to do school based projects rather than just classroom teaching:

UNAM teaching practice is mainly based on teaching. It is more on the number of teaching hours or lessons and the lecturers' evaluation of lessons. SO the focus is more on subject teaching not necessarily to the whole school based environment and classroom

skills. It does not look at a holistic view of a schooling you know like aa... I mean the school, the child, the subject and teaching methods. This much, is my student work [pointing to a bunch of projects] from critical enquiry [as popularly known in the BETD]students in the BETD are evaluated also on this bases their project in school, not just the teaching. That to me reflects quality in teacher education.

Perceived management and leadership related challenges

Mainly, the participants' concerns about the merger's capacity to improve teacher education quality was about processes related to the manner in which those in management and leadership positions were managing the merger. The participants' concerns in this respect related to perceptions that the individuals in leadership and management positions seemed not to have taken into consideration the previous experiences of the staff from the former colleges, particularly their primary teacher education experiences gained over the years teaching in the BETD programme. This negligence or oversight was viewed as a challenge to improving the quality of education after the merger because those who were at the forefront of primary education were now regarded as inexperienced in teaching it. In the words of one of the teacher educators at the focus group, "*our experience in primary education is undervalued*" by the university after the merger. Further to that, one of the members of management at this campus explained:

As teacher educators from former colleges, we consider ourselves expert in primary education. Particularly, here at our College I do believe we have a lot to offer to the new curriculum in terms of training of lower primary teachers in Namibia. This is something we bring with to this merger. But UNAM doesn't value this expert. It is said they recognize it. I think they only talk about it to please us but in reality our old pedagogy for Primary Education is not well adopted in the B.Ed. curriculum. I personally feel that our own experience and expertise to contribute to quality teacher education was not valued and we feel that everything we accumulated over the years as teacher educators is thrown away.

For further understanding, participants were asked why the aspect is relevant to quality teacher education. It was argued that this was because UNAM did not offer Lower Primary Education

before the merger. This implied that only the teacher educators in the former colleges of education should develop the curriculum for lower primary school programmes.

Perceived management and leadership challenges

In addition to expertise, concerns were expressed regarding the practice which saw some of the teacher educators being allocated teaching subjects and being required to teach in phase programmes for which they were not qualified. This was seen as one of the challenges those in management positions needed to resolve.

TE1: ...and another thing, we are also sitting with people who cannot teach what they are given to teach after merger. Some are curriculum developers of subjects they have never taught. Some are also HOD's of subjects they never taught before. For instance, a person taught upper primary language. Now that person is in Lower Primary and this is a different skill. I teach Lower Primary myself but I never stood in Lower Primary class before. How I am supposed to deliver quality lessons I don't know.

TE2: I think the entire curriculum for lower primary curriculum was supposed to be the responsibility of the teacher educators from former colleges of education and that only academic leadership was needed as well as expertise in curriculum development, but probably... probably because we were only teaching in a diploma and never taught at the degree level, our expertise were not recognized and the lower primary responsibility was given to different people who never thought lower primary in their lives. We are given different subject to teach and I really feel unused because my specialization is lower primary.

Conclusion

The views of participants on campuses located in the historical educationally advantaged college of education seemed to be minimally informed by input considerations such as qualifications and resources, as opposed to those of the participants in the campuses located in historically disadvantaged colleges of education. The minimal concerns about qualifications were due to the fact that the participants' qualifications were more or less the same as those in historically

disadvantaged colleges. Instead, their concerns appeared to be more in terms of informal professional staff development than about formal upgrading of qualifications. In addition, the perceived challenges among the HACE, although also related to input and to a certain extent processes, suggested that their concerns were more on abstract education inputs related to leadership and curriculum in issues such as methodologies, subject integration with pedagogics assessment methods than tangible input such as resources and materials. In terms of the leadership processes, the perceptions seemed to focus on the inability to allocate appropriate courses to teacher educators. In addition, the perceptions on this campus were also related to teacher quality outputs which was not the case on the other three campuses.

The above findings are discussed in Chapter 8, together with those presented in the preceding and next chapters. The next chapter presents the perceptions about the merger by participants at the historical Faculty of Education.



CHAPTER 7

PERCEPTIONS AND HISTORICAL ADVANTAGE: ACADEMIA, INFRASTRUCTURE AND HUMAN CAPITAL

Introduction

This chapter presents findings about how teacher educators at the historical Faculty of Education located on the main campus of the University of Namibia perceived the merger as it relates to its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. As in the previous two chapters, the presentation of the findings is preceded by the historical background of the Faculty.

Context of the historical Faculty of Education (HFE)

The Faculty of Education is one of the oldest faculties that were established after the formation of UNAM. The old Academy for Tertiary Education which was the only tertiary institution in Namibia before independence was transformed into a university in 1992. Since its establishment in 1992 the Faculty of Education has been growing in terms of number of students and staff members as well as in terms of programs. In 2010, the Faculty of Education welcomed the consolidation of tertiary teacher education in the form of the merger between it and the former colleges of education whose purpose was to improve the quality of teacher education in the country (UNAM Forum, 2010).

Before the merger, the Faculty of Education was mandated to prepare teachers only for the senior secondary phase because other phases below that phase were the mandates of the colleges of education, as stated in the previous two chapters. As a result of the merger, the Faculty developed and implemented a new B.Ed. curriculum. The new B.Ed. Pre- and Lower to Upper Primary levels were to be taught alongside the old existing B.Ed. (Senior Secondary degree) for senior secondary school levels. All these programs were to be offered at all the post-merger five teacher education campuses of the University of Namibia.

Before the merger, more than 90% of the Faculty of Education's teaching staffs possessed a master's degree and were therefore qualified to teach at the university level in terms of the UNAM's minimum academic requirements. During the year of the merger, staffing in the

Faculty of Education comprised of three full professors, nine senior lecturers, 26 lecturers who were in those positions because they possessed master's degrees, and one employed as an assistant lecturer because s/he did not possess a master's degree (UNAM Annual Report, 2010).

Presentation of findings

As in the two preceding chapters, the presentation of findings that emerged from the data is structured according to the three key questions beginning with findings regarding the participants' conceptualization of teacher education quality. It then moves on to how the participants perceived the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia and ends with the participants' perceptions about what they viewed to be merger related challenges in improving the teacher education quality.

HF participants' conceptualization of quality teacher education

The analysis of the participants' responses on this campus suggested that their conceptualization of teacher education quality puts emphasis on teacher education processes and, to a lesser degree, on aspects of inputs.

The participants' conceptualisation of quality teacher education as process

The emergent themes suggested that participants at the HF conceptualized quality teacher education in terms of processes related to staff, curriculum, university standardisation and institutional environment.

The participants' staff related TEQ conceptualisation

Findings suggested that, similar to the other campuses, the participants in this campus also conceptualised quality teacher education, amongst other things, as being associated with on-going professional development of teacher educators as, for example, indicated in the following responses by some teacher educators who were not in positions of authority:

TE1: ... This means in order to catch up then we must agree that quality of teacher education rely on professional development through refresher seminars and workshops,

joint research activities and also through attending in-service training for teacher educators.

TE2: [for quality teacher education] Teacher educators need to use opportunities offered by the university and elsewhere, also internationally, to upgrade in different skills and knowledge.

The teacher educator participants at this campus believed that the value of ongoing professional development processes lay in improving teacher educators' in-depth understanding, teaching and assessment of curriculum content:

TE1: You see part of the poor performance in our Namibian schools is due to the fact that learners are taught by teachers who themselves are... not confident of what they teach, they sometimes skip or choose only to teach what they know well.

TE2: To me the only danger in teaching is when students are taught by unqualified teachers who do not give enough content. The system must prepare adequately trained teacher educator or otherwise the students we graduate become poor and in return their learners perform poor too...thus the root course of poor education is when this weakness spill over to learners in schools and the whole education system and then we have a nation with poor knowledge.

Another participant from a different focus group with teacher educators in positions of authority had the following to say in this regard:

TE3: The mastering of curriculum by teacher educators means a lot in term of quality. Generally speaking we need teacher educators who are up to scratch in handling curriculum topics. The teaching staff must have confidence to teach, to refer to quality materials and also to provide quality assessment.

The responses of the teacher educator participants at this campus also suggested that they believed that quality teacher education is realized when those who educate teachers keep abreast

of new knowledge and new practices in teaching through research. An example of this perception included the following from a focus group interview with teacher educators not in positions of authority:

Teacher educators must be willing to recharge their knowledge every day, renew it by always wanting to read more about the new knowledge and teaching approaches. We experience this every day that knowledge is not static. Every day there is new information. It is the responsibility of the teacher educator to keep himself or herself “abreast” with new knowledge within the context of what his or her subject. You see there is more information sources nowadays because of information technology so that sometimes even our students know much more than what we know. It is for us to strive to be up to date.

The participants at this campus also appeared to be of the view that knowledge gets easily outdated and therefore research is needed in order to create new knowledge. A direct link to research with regards to a need for quality teacher education emerged when participants regularly mentioned the need to continuously focus on building research capacity when conceptualizing quality as it appears in the following excerpt:

I think in my own experience, more and more research activities must take place. This to me does not just lead to building capacity of research among our teacher educators but also but it also adds to knowledge creation.

The participants’ curriculum related QTE conceptualisation

The importance of equipping student teachers with appropriate teaching methodologies emerged as one of the curriculum related views about quality teacher education on this campus. The responses which were suggestive of this finding included:

TE1: To me students who aspire to become quality teachers should be exposed to various teaching methodologies to teach a subject. .. Quality teacher education means the know how to ... makes learners ... want to learn from a lesson presentation because it is creative, and interesting to follow.

TE2: I strongly believe equipping student teachers with appropriate teaching methodology enhances the quality of [teacher] education.

TE3: striking the balance between subject knowledge and pedagogic knowledge, and using the content to teach methodology instead of sticking to one only, reflect quality of teacher education.

TE4: I see quality teacher education as playing a game with two balls. Even if you catch one if you drop another you still did not win. This to me is crucial to how we educate teachers. The two major components of teacher education is knowledge and skill. They all must get full attention when preparing teachers. One is subject content and ones methodology for teaching. The best way to educate a teacher lays in using the content to demonstrate how such a content can be taught. So you cannot teach methodology without subject content and you cannot teach students who are going to become teachers just about the content without linking it to a specific content. For quality they all inform each other.

As with the other campuses, the lecturers at the Faculty of Education tended to link teacher education quality to an on-going curriculum review as could be deduced from statements such as:

TE1: Teacher education is of quality when it undergoes curriculum review time and again. Curriculum review also determines if the course is still relevant or not. You know some restructuring and additional knowledge and skills can be recommended through reviews because it involves an input from relevant stakeholders. To me it is important when students are given also an opportunity to evaluate the quality and relevance of the program through a review of the teacher education program as well as members of the community because at the end it is the community itself that complain about the quality. So we cannot exclude them when we review. As a matter of fact, it is their money as tax payers and as parents who pay for education so during the review they [community and other stakeholders] have the right to ask what is taught. Here I also mean that so much of what should be taught that's the content... and how much is covered that is the quantity

like the number of modules and hours and how it is supposed to be taught be made available for stakeholders to comment.

TE2: Quality teacher education is when the curriculum is regularly reviewed to assess if the students are able to learn meaning that if the learning objectives can be achieved. Also there is quality if the curriculum review is done to determine whether the standards are put in place and there are specific requirements to be met. Quality teacher education also has to do with the relevance of the curriculum and that there is evidence that it is taught at the appropriate level you understand. That the assessment is talking to the level of a program being offered is quality that when the curriculum says something and the assessment addresses something different.

University standardisation related QTE conceptualisation

Part of the findings which suggested that the participants conceptualised teacher education quality in terms of processes was their view that quality teacher education exists mainly when all teacher education is incorporated into university level programmes rather than having part of it being independently provided by colleges of education. Some of these sentiments of university affiliation or standardisation were expressed as:

TE1: I must say the trend among Higher Education systems is to consolidate teacher education under universities. There is more quality when teacher education is affiliated or incorporated into the Faculty of Education where it can benefit from high standard practices as opposed to when it is provided in colleges where the focus is limited, and standards are perceived by public to be of low quality. So, to me the more we bring colleges of education closer or under the university the more the quality teacher education improves.

TE2: For teacher education to achieve quality it must follow trend of other teacher education in the world. Many teacher education systems such as in Zimbabwe, Botswana and SA after democratization have incorporated teacher education into university and some have found ways to affiliate them to the universities. This means even if they are not physically part of the universities, the universities are involved in the teacher education standardization in colleges of education, up to even certification of qualifications. Following that trend has quality. I mean to merge or to affiliate with the universities. This takes away many concerns,

you see, why? Because some institutions are not strong enough to respond to quality standards or to quality expectations.

The practice of benchmarking the teacher education system to other systems and institutions in the world also emerged as part of the processes that the participants associated with the provisioning of quality teacher education. For example, some participants had the following to say in this regard:

TE1: To me another way to attain teacher education quality is when we benchmark our teacher education to other systems in the world.

TE2: Quality teacher education is when what we teach has been compared other programs in order to improve our practices. To ensure we are in line with what others regards to be of quality.

Institutional environment related process

Another view about quality teacher education at this campus appeared to be in terms of variously creating a quality enabling atmosphere:

TE1: To me quality is when those who are involved in delivering quality are given an opportunity to drive the processes of quality by first understanding what quality is and what is not quality teacher education. And also by feeling free to criticise things which they do not think is of high quality in order to be improved.

TE2: Regarding quality teacher education to me teaching atmosphere must be conducive for providing quality, for example the environment must be motivating to both student and staff, supportive in terms of providing the necessary equipment, time and funding and so on for teaching and research and ...and also rewarding for recognition and promotions of those who work hard and so on.

TE3: Adding to what my colleague said I think quality must first be adopted as a culture. The institutional commitment that promise to provide quality has instilled quality culture in the teaching staff so that teachers are willing to teach and engage in research

and students are motivated to learn harder by themselves and not because they are requested to do so. Everyone in teacher education must be talking about quality.

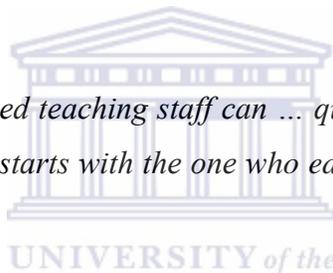
The participants' conceptualization of quality teacher education as input

Apart from process views which were found to dominate the participants' conceptualization of teacher education quality, the findings also suggested that HF teacher educators conceptualized quality teacher education in terms of input and such conceptualisations related to staff and infrastructure themes.

Staff related conceptualisation of QTE as input

As with the other campuses, findings from the HF suggested that the participants believed appropriate academic and professional qualifications of the teacher educators were crucial to teacher education quality:

TE 1: Only through qualified teaching staff can ... quality teacher education [exist] and also can we improve It all starts with the one who educates those who later will educate learners.



TE2 : The quality of teaching and learning depends mainly on teacher educators' qualifications. They must be experts in their fields. They must be well trained in pedagogic skills. This combination can result in quality teacher education.

Infrastructure related QTE conceptualization as input

The HF teacher educators also linked teacher education quality to the adequate access to information technology such as the availability of IT as the following teacher educators asserted:

TE1:IT in our teacher education institutions is the necessary tool for quality and also for efficiency nowadays.

TE2: ...: educating teachers requires a lot of use of technology. As teacher educators we cannot just rely on printed materials, but also on other materials on line and so on. This requires IT infrastructure to print the materials, to project on the screen and so on in order to offer quality teaching. I just mean to say the whole world is talking of computer based learning as being more resourceful therefore ...

Another education input related view which emerged as being participants' conceptualisation of quality teacher education related to the availability of adequate educational facilities and infrastructures such as lecturing space, teaching laboratories, research facilities, well-equipped libraries and so on. For example, a participant stated in this regard that:

I think for the government to demand quality teacher education, it must invest in teacher education. The government must see to it that the teacher education facilities are provided for adequately. The budget for books and for laboratories equipment especially in science subjects and so on must be provided for ... In other words quality teacher education requires a huge investment [on resources] from government.

HF perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education

The emerging data from the HF suggested that a number of the participants believed the merger was indeed capable of improving teacher education quality in Namibia. This perception appeared to be based on views that the practice of de-linking former colleges from the university over the years had caused Namibian schools' level of teaching and learning to be regarded as uncompetitive in the region. The merger was welcomed for the various reasons presented below. The data suggested that the participants viewed the capacity of the merger to improve the quality of teacher education mainly in terms of input and in terms of processes.

Input related improvement perceptions

The findings which suggested that the participants believed in the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in the country was mainly in terms of input included the views that the merger had brought about a harmonized teacher education programme in Namibia, an empowered teacher educating force, a globally aligned curriculum, improved infrastructure in campuses located in the HDCE, and an increased teaching force.

Perceived governance and management related inputs

In both focus group discussions and the one-on-one interviews at this campus, the teacher educator participants appeared to be of the view that the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in the country included the views that the merger had brought about

harmonized teacher education governance and management in the country as opposed to the pre-merger fragmentation. The view was that the harmonization would, amongst other things, be enabling for collaborations between former colleges of education and the historical UNAM's Faculty of Education, a collaboration they believed would culminate in improved quality teacher education as institutions cross fertilize one another with diverse knowledge and skills. Responses which suggested this perception included:

TE1: teacher education is [now] governed under one roof making problems on teacher education easy to tackle.

TE2: Our interaction with colleges was very limited. It was still like the previous divide and rule of the South African colonial government, even though we were all concern about the quality of education for a Namibia child. The objective of the merger to bring the former colleges under the faculty is likely to result into the improvement of quality especially as former colleges of education adopt the system of the university. For example we here have quality mechanisms in place... The university also stand to benefit from certain good practices in former colleges such as their close relation with schools etc.

TE4: Now that teacher education institutions have merged, Namibia is likely to have one stop station for any problem related to teacher education. You see those days when people used to point fingers to each other for poor education are soon gone. Some use to say it is because UNAM does not do A B C others say no it is the colleges of education and so on and soon. Heee? So even the poor performance of learners was blamed some to us at UNAM some to colleges of education some says is the school system and so on. There is no way you could solve such a problem. We call it chicken and egg problem. I remember at one conference at the former Ongwedi College before the merger, someone start accusing the teachers about poor content. That was a fact, but who is responsible became a debate. Colleges said when they try to admit students from grade 12 there are no quality students because they were taught by UNAM products in high school who are poor teachers because they do not know how to teach although they may have content. Those professors at UNAM said they also have problems teaching students who lack basic knowledge and when they come to University they are first teaching them

the basic content they were supposed to know from grade 8-10. Hee. Such blames were more common. So, I see this chicken and egg situation nearly coming to the end. The problem of teacher education will be directed to UNAM to solved.

It became clear during interviews that the respondents from HFE were not quite happy with the fragmented governance of teacher education before the merger, because their influence as the university in what goes on in former colleges was limited. It was evident from the expression above that participants felt the merger was overdue but still useful to reclaim the past and improve teacher education quality under one governing body, the university.

Curriculum related input perceptions

There were also views from both the focus group discussions that the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in former colleges would be associated with the empowerment of teachers with knowledge and skills through the B.Ed. curriculum as opposed to the pre-merger BETD curriculum which was perceived to be less empowering in terms of its poor content. Responses which suggested this perception included:

TE1: To my opinion, BETD carried a bad reputation regarding the depth and restricted subject content, so it was criticised much by the public. The Ministry of Education want UNAM to take over the curriculum development of the teacher education to ensure all teachers in the country graduate with sufficient body of knowledge, you see, in-depth knowledge of the content is regarded reason number one why children in schools fail to perform well.

TE2: There is indeed hope that the teaching quality will improve. With the adoption of the new B.Ed. curriculum primary and you know we have just finished reviewing the old B. ED. Secondary education curriculum there is no doubt that thing like poor quality will change for better. Like the review was widely consulted. Our new Primary Education Degree is very inclusive in terms of content and skills required by a graduating teacher at that level. It can build a good foundation for a child in terms of contents and also other education principles such as psychology and pedagogies.

Another input curriculum related aspect the participants appeared to believe had the capacity to improve the quality of teacher education was through the system of student evaluation of modules at the end the semester. Even though some of the participants felt the system was too subjective and open for abuse, it seemed most were of the view that the value of teaching evaluation to quality improvement outweighed the subjectivity as, for example, was maintained below:

TE1: Student lecturer evaluation although sometimes appear to be subjective is helpful tool to the teaching staff to reflect on their teaching and to improve. I learn a lot from the feedback what my students think about my teaching and my assessment. Even some of us who taught the subject many times need to be evaluated so that we can adjust and change our old habits were we can for the sake of improving quality, but sometimes some students are not honest...

TE2: With student evaluation at the end of every semester one can work on improvement. That's not to say sometimes students are not fair in their comments you know. I now also that our students must learn how to put things properly in the evaluation without offending us [teacher educators]Some students think is about who you like, some also think it has to do with which lecturer gives more marks. I mean, that is not quality. But as I say student lecturer evaluation can help to improve quality even with our former colleges, you see.

The teacher educator participants at this campus also believed the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education was related to teacher skills that the post-merger curriculum would enable such as research competence and related outlooks. Although this may sound like an outcome, the findings suggested that the participants' perceptions were that curriculum inputs were a means to outputs, not as ends in themselves:

TE1: There is no doubt that the merger of colleges will improve the quality of teacher education as, the world over, people see the trend to merger colleges with universities as important for efficiency and for strengthening teacher education programs. I believe what is of particular importance about the university based teacher education is that university

teacher education is in the strengthened positions because the teaching can benefit from a research based curriculum.

TE3: Preparing teacher at the University has a potential to improve quality teacher education. The scope of knowledge that the university education gives is bigger than what could be expected from the college of education. Also there are many learning opportunity at the university that a teacher is likely to graduate , I mean the multiple skills and changed behaviours such as encountering with different culture, new talents and roles and responsibilities, new understanding of things because of the diverse groups of people at university campuses.

Perceptions about infrastructure and facilities related inputs

One of the findings that emerged from the interviews specifically with teacher educators who were not in positions of authority was that these participants believed the merger was improving the quality of teacher education because it was making it possible for historically disadvantaged colleges to improve their infrastructure. The following statements were made during the focus groups discussions in this regard:

TE1: We all know that before the merger, because of historical and political past conditions, former colleges especially those in remote areas were neglected, they were operating on those poor conditions. I am sure things will change soon and some have already started to change because government wants all those infrastructures improved. I heard even libraries and hostels and even recreation facilities and of course lecture rooms are in a process to be rebuilt, and renovated. A colleague who was teaching here and is now a Director of a Campus at one of those former colleges in the north was telling me they are expecting to have new computer labs for students...

TE2: Personally I am a high school product of Ongwediva College of Education and I know that in terms of infrastructure, Colleges likes Ongwediva is still the same as nearly 30 years when I attended school there. Nothing much has changed in between there even twenty years after independence. But I learned and we were briefed how the merger is gonna change a lot of infrastructure to enable the teaching and learning to be of quality.

Perceived post-merger teacher output

Apart from the perceptions about micro level management related issues presented above, the findings suggested that the participants' perceptions were also that the post-merger changes of admission policies would bring about a wider access to university and a long term solution to the teacher shortage in the country. The ETSIP (2006) claims that not having enough qualified teachers in the Namibian schools contributes to low quality education and poor performance. For example, the participants argued that, before the merger, the number of prospective students to be admitted into the former colleges was limited by the Ministry due to limited space and human resources. They also appeared to link quality to quantity in that they believed increased admission criteria and access to teacher education would increase the numbers of well qualified teachers in the country. In addition, some participants were of the view that the merger would then end the practice by the government to train teachers abroad in an attempt to improve the quality of teacher education in the country, a practice they believed was too costly and also contributed to educating teachers out of their context. These views were given by some participants in focus groups as follows:

TE1: Many students who seek to become teachers now can be admitted. Before merger, like in colleges of education, government gave colleges admission quotas which limit enrolment to a certain number. You see you could meet the criteria for becoming a teacher, and be told the college is full while country still needed more teachers. In as much as this is a quantity issue because former colleges were only taking in a limited number of students it is also a quality issue because the little number that graduate every year in our former colleges cannot fill all the positions occupied by unqualified teachers.

TE2: You see it was not long ago you know when the advertisement for teachers was run in all SADC countries due to shortage of teachers...I very much believe this shortage of qualified teachers will be a thing of the past. UNAM takes everybody who qualifies by points. After a couple of years it is expected there will be enough teachers for schools just watch how things will change.

TE3: Although not in the new future, this country will soon see an increase of highly qualified primary teachers in our school. We are coming from a background where there is a shortage of qualified teachers for primary education. I do believe primary education is a foundation for all learning. The more numbers of primary teachers increase with a degree qualification, this country education will improve.

TE4: The merger will in a long run solve the problem of teacher supply. As a country we partly depends on Zimbabwean trained teachers...all I am saying is we will soon train our own primary teachers at the University. It will take a while anyway

In addition to the outputs associated with the quality and quantity of student inputs, the data also suggested that the participants believed the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education related to outputs in terms of degree qualifications as opposed to a diploma. The participants were of the view that degree qualifications had the potential to improve the image of the teaching profession and enhance teachers' dignities which they believed would empower and motivate teachers to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities and also with high quality standards. This view was mainly argued in responses by academic staff who were not in positions of authority such as:

TE1: Many people in this country think if you only have a diploma you are not well educated. So you yourself do not feel like you are contributing much with only a degree. So if by 2015 all new teachers join schools with a degree qualifications even at early childhood level up to senior secondary school, the image of a teacher will change and quality education will [also] slowly start to improve. I am confident teachers will regain public respect and learners will respect their teachers and listen attentively in class because society value degree qualifications

TE2: In addition to the significance of the degree, I do believe that one reason behind what I must say is lack of confidence, respect and discipline of learners in our schools especially secondary school is the perceived low qualifications of teachers from our former colleges. You see I am arguing that you cannot talk about quality where there is no discipline, ee... The degree qualification is likely to enforce discipline and respect of a teacher in classrooms, because knowledge is power you know. Graduates of the university may earn

respect and instil discipline in learners. They are likely to become proud teachers because of respect.

TE3: Graduating with a degree qualification is likely to add value to a teaching profession as public see more quality in a degree than in a diploma.

Process related perceptions about the merger's capacity for improving quality TE

Findings also suggested that the participants at the HF perceived the merger as having the capacity to improve quality teacher education through process that related to improved post-merger curriculum, quality assurance policies, and strengthening of management and leadership structures.

Perceived curriculum improvements

Another perception on how the merger would improve teacher education quality related to views that it was facilitating improved curriculum processes as was deduced from the statements such as the following from participants at one of the focus group interviews:

TE1: You know also our colleagues from former colleges of education are now teaching "alongside us" [HFE teacher educators]. We share same modules and we all serve as examiners, in everything we do here we are supposed to share with our colleagues at other campuses. By doing that we build capacity of some teacher educators who were not having confidence at the beginning to teach at the university level ... It happened with me as well on my first appointment here. You think is rock science to teach here [UNAM].

TE2: Not only is research capacity improving due to merger, the merger is also likely to strengthen teaching and assessment in colleges. All of us are aware of the old story told how college curriculum was poor and shallow and how assessment was mainly based on continuous assessment bra... bra... bra... and that many a times assessments was done in groups. It was said at times and this depends on which college, the continuous assessment did not include other forms of assessment such as tests and individual assignments. Some are said were not challenging but was rather group assignments and presentations of simple topics at school level. But the stuff we tech under the B.Ed for

example are hard stuff meant to equip a teacher with sufficient content. So students must be prepared here to work hard to meet the learning objectives at the degree level.

TE3: I must say the way teaching is organized at the university is a good example of how knowledge is strengthened. The module descriptors and credit hours and assessment models are clearly stipulated. The course outlines are clear and made ready for students. This way the merger has the potential to improve the poor academic content in the former colleges. And if I may add... the supervision of the Dean, Deputy Dean and Head of Departments on teacher educators is structured. I mean we read from the consultative document and also know by our self how Former Colleges structures were weak and that proper structures did not exist, thus proper coordination of teaching and assessment could not take place. Well some of these weaknesses are being rectified by new arrangements.

The perception about the new curriculum's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education was also that the post-merger adoption of the UNAM assessment policies for teacher education would result in improved quality of teacher education with the view that the policies ensured high standards, for example by encouraging deep-level thinking. The participants were of the view that this had not been the case in the BETD assessment process in the ex-colleges of education. They argued that the old BETD assessment relied only on group assignments which were criticized for lacking higher order thinking and originality, and did not have quality assurance mechanisms such as internal or externally moderation. The strength of the UNAM assessment was also said to lie in its combination of both continuous and summative assessment aspects, as stated for example in the following responses:

TE1: I found the merger of former colleges with UNAM potential to improve quality also in terms of assessment process. The process of assessment used in the colleges prior to merge leave little to desire as far as quality control mechanisms are concern. I use to be conducted by NIED to assist with moderation of BETD. In the BETD, every lecturer is responsible for his assessments, they used to give assignments and projects and record the marks that are submitted to a certain committee in the college, but even two or three people teaching same module have different assignments and marks so the system was too much lazier faire.

TE2: ...I believe the quality of student work determine quality education. It determines how students understand curriculum and how they grow from one understanding to the other. So I believe in CA but I also believe in a summative assessment.

When asked if that is the understanding of everyone at the focus group other participants stated in support:

TE3: Yes in the BETD it is mainly formative assessment. Also, every teacher educator could decide on what assessment to give to students even though they were all going to graduate with the same qualification. I think the old learner centered education and its assessment processes was not able to meet assessment objectives. The teacher education need to show quality through a credible assessment procedures which has checks and balance and standardized control mechanism such as appointed examiners, internal moderators as well as external as we do at UNAM. So I think the old reflect poor quality.

TE4: The group assignment lack originality. You can hardly assess if the student has grown in terms of understanding and mastering the content. I don't want to say group assignments are not good or that they do not have quality. But somehow they must be supplemented by individual work and also by other types of assessment you know.

TE1: By the way, I hope you know as well that all student teachers now write same examinations across all campuses, this is a "challenging situation" to our colleagues in former colleges because they have to prepare students accordingly but it is good for "standardization" and also to ensure quality across all campus. In the past some institutions were known for having more quality than others, you see even amongst colleges themselves there were some who were known for having more quality because of the way they teach and assess what is taught but now this thing [inequalities] is under control. ... As you know when it comes to setting tests and assignments ad exams all academic staff get an opportunity to set a paper and share it with colleagues, so our colleagues from former colleges get an opportunity also to exercise their ability to set exams in a learning environment which is very supportive indeed.

TE2: There have been criticisms on the single assessment employed by former colleges. The mere use of continuous assessment and mainly group assignments.....to me leave

little to desire if one have to assess learning outcomes. To me an exam at the end of the term is the best the merger has done to improve the assessment in former colleges of education.

The responses also suggested that the participants at this campus were of the view that the merger's capacity to improve the QTE related to the curriculum's capacity for developing the TE's research capacities as they believed these capacities enabled research-informed curriculum and teaching:

TE1: I hope you know. The same research conference we are holding this week was a brain baby from one of our former colleges, Hifikepunye Pohamba (HP). So the idea of regional conferences started in the north. HP called for papers and other campuses went to present papers there. Today they are making turns each year including here at Main campus. This is good sign that ex-colleges have taken research serious and they will soon take the lead. True picture must be painted here so that it is clear both sides are learning or benefiting from each other, I think.

TE2: On the other hand, there are couple of ways in which someone can to improve research output, such as through post graduate studies and myself I think the more teacher educators complete their Masters and Ph.Ds., the more they become experienced in research.

TE3: It reminds me of something. You see I serve at the Post Graduate Committee on behalf of the Faculty of Education, the majority of the research proposals we are looking at are from our colleagues from the ex-colleges of education; some are Masters and there is a couple of PhDs as well. I mean, it is amazing in terms of the teaching and methodology ...and the way it is likely to be enriched by those research...

Part of the views about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education related to curriculum processes involving the adoption of the historical university quality assurance and management policy. Similar to participants at the other campuses, the participants appeared to be of the view that the university mechanisms for quality assurance which included the Centre for Quality Assurance and Management (CEQUAM) enabled quality monitoring and would enable the improvement of QTE in the country. The quality assurance strategies involve quality audits

in each university centre or faculty and are followed by reports which include recommendations for self-improvement:

TE1: UNAM have a newly appointed centre for quality process. This will also ensure that activities in our former college are reviewed including their governance structures and their infrastructure and ensure quality improvement... the centre [CEQUAM] will do the audit of the Faculty and we will hear more about how we are doing even under the merger that is if we are doing well according to our stakeholders in terms of quality teacher education. The good part is after the audit report the faculty will take part in the self-improvement plan order to improve quality. It is also a new system here but I believe it will benefit former colleges to reflect about their teaching and if they are of quality.

TE2: There was no system of quality assurance or monitoring in the former colleges. They could do what they want even when they appoint teaching staff, or when they teach or when they assess student's work and so on. Their curriculum and assessment was not overseen by anybody but themselves. That's why it was very difficult to accept their diploma at the university or for it to be internationally accepted. I am not saying UNAM's quality assurance is perfect, it is also new. But the fact that is there it will surely benefit the former colleges' activities to be up to standard.

The teacher educator participants at the HF also perceived institutionalized curriculum reviews as a very important tool for quality TE improvement. It was mentioned during the interview how teacher education curriculum at UNAM had undergone several reviews in order to revisit its quality and relevance. Participants believed that under the merger the quality of teacher education in former colleges would also benefit from the continuous curriculum reviews as the reviews had not been a practice in the former colleges. The following excerpts were suggestive of this finding:

TE1: I have been teaching here for the past 12 years. I think I have gone through the curriculum review twice and so far I like it. It is tedious process but it is very important for quality. It brings about changes towards improving quality. You see sometimes the materials we use are outdated, sometimes there are nice materials there which need to

replace the outdated ones. So curriculum reviews prevent us from sticking to the old staff even if it is not of quality anymore. The new methods, we also learn a lot from criticisms, especially those who are constructive from the stakeholders, the schools, the teachers unions and staff from the Ministry sometimes have constructive ideas, even our alumni.

TE2: I too like the way curriculum review also involved stakeholders, students and public. They do have good ideas and good suggestions to incorporate in the curriculum. Change have to be implemented based on those commends. We will soon here what the public have to say after we have merged with former colleges. Their input will be accommodated. I hope they will not blame us for merging or say we must de-merge anyway... [it spark laughter in the room and some were shaking their heads].

Management and leadership related process perceptions

In addition to quality assurance structures, the perceptions also appeared to be that the new leadership structures in former colleges put in place after the merger, as well as the adoption of UNAM statutory committees applicable to the former colleges, would allow for improvement of teacher education as per comments such as the following mainly from teacher educators in a senior positions:

TE1: Perhaps one major achievement is in connection with the strengthening of administration and leadership structure of the former colleges structures. The fact that the previous college structures will soon be replaced by the one similar to the university within the faculty has the potential to allow ex-colleges to provide for quality teacher education under a different leadership. I heard new positions coare being created and structure will be completely different. Also former colleges will be accorded a fully tertiary status so this will definitely contribute to quality improvement because they will run their own affairs as a campus that belongs to the university and not depended on government anymore.

TE2: Each and every former college will be a campus, fully fledge campus, each campus will have a Director to run the administration affairs. There will also be a deputy dean at every campus. If lucky enough some of the HODs will be based at the outside campuses. This even makes the academic leadership more strong.

Perceived staff related TQE contributors

The data which emerged from interview with HF participants suggested that their perceptions were that the plans to improve the teaching staff subject content knowledge, teaching methodologies and qualifications would help improve the quality of teacher education in the country. The following responses from the teacher educators in positions of authority at this campus served as examples of these perceptions:

TE1: We are aware of the public criticisms that the former colleges did not offer quality and sufficient content and methodology. Through the merger teaching staff from former colleges are being provided with clear guidelines and also support to handle content. We have encouraged departments to hold workshops specifically on course outlines and their possible content. You see there were also training workshops on methodology and so on through UNAM teaching and learning unit. We can still organize some more workshops of this nature to address particular shortage. . . .

TE2: The teacher educator from former colleges is given a staff development status for five years. They can decide to register at any institution of their choice while UNAM pays. They can then decide on which skill shortage, academic or pedagogic skills they have and upgrade themselves. So I think both professional and academic staff development is expected to bring about quality improvement in former colleges. But this will not take place over a night, you know, it will take a while but surely provision is made.

Student related process

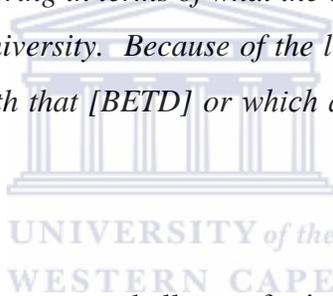
Preparing students to become teachers by issuing them with a degree instead of a diploma as well as allowing them to articulate into higher degree qualifications at the university emerged to be one of the issues the participants in this campus believed promised to improve quality teacher education. The findings suggested that the participants viewed a degree qualification as of “more quality”, of “high level” and of “empowering” than a diploma qualification as in the statements below by three of the senior management members:

TE1: I am not saying that those teachers who have a diploma are poorly trained, but our degree program at UNAM is at the level of an honours degree. It is at a level 8 of a National

Qualification, you see. The curriculum is very inclusive of theories and practises. It is taught, by people with higher qualifications some of them full professors and associate professors so in terms of knowledge it is a very heavy loaded knowledge degree comparing to a diploma. All students now will be able to walk away with a large body of knowledge from this honours degree, I think.

TE2: The focus for me is important because now a country has a bachelor on Primary Education and for me this will strengthen quality because primary education is regarded universally as the foundation of knowledge; I mean, of course things are changing for better, four years from now, for you to teach in a Namibian school whether primary or secondary it requires a degree....

TE3: A teacher after graduating can come back and do a Masters in the same Faculty. So, doing a degree is more empowering in terms of what the curriculum entails and also because students can continue at the university. Because of the low level of the BETD, for example, you cannot come to UNAM with that [BETD] or which any other University for a Master's degree. You start all over...



Historical Faculty perceptions about merger challenges for improving TEQ

As was the case with the other campuses, the participants at the HF were asked about the challenges for improving quality teacher education with reference to the merger. The purpose of this question was also to develop a better understanding about how the participants believed the challenges could be addressed to improve quality teacher education in relation to the merger. The emergent perceptions about the challenges experienced in relation to the merger appeared to be mainly input related.

Input related challenges

The participants' perceptions which suggested input related concerns seemed to concern mainly staff and leadership and management matters, as presented below:

Staff related challenges

The participants' perceptions about the challenges of the merger to achieve its goal of improved teacher education quality included increased workloads and associated stress and anxieties. Some of the concerns that were raised in relation to the workloads were associated with the expectations for the HF members to provide a lot of assistance to teacher educators from the former colleges irrespective of the members' own existing workloads. A teacher educator in a position of authority had the following to say:

TE1: Sometimes our colleagues felt we are mistreating them and have no time for them. Sometimes there is a feeling and complains that we are not supportive. But I sometimes also feel they expect too much from us as if we are also not going through the same change which is demanding and tedious, and stressful. Our colleagues just need to understand that change is burdensome, is stressful and that we too feel the same sometime but change need to take place.

TE2: The merger comes with extra responsibilities to the HOD and subject coordinators. During the implementations we all worked extra in meetings with Ministry of Education and also at the Faculty, we wrote reports and you know the merger also coincided with our curriculum review of the existing program at the Faculty. It was not easy but it needed to be done. We all were excited about this and exhausted at the same time you see.

TE3: I think the time was also not on our side, the deadline was too close and the Ministry needed this done because they needed to report back to cabinet. So there was this running up and down and back and forth from Former Colleges to the Faculty to ensure things are in place and everyone is included. I must say next time we have a merger really we need be better organized and also to allow time to do things properly.

Similarly some participant teacher educators indicated the following:

TE2: There were too many committees and sharing of information, the many meetings caused extra load, burn out and frustration that sometimes we appeared harsh to our colleagues from other campuses that we only hope they understood our situation.

TE3: I think the involvement in merger processes in a way led to the neglect of my own work, my teaching and my own students did not get enough attention. I travelled too much to colleges than teaching or doing research this year. There was always this and that to be done for the Dean or because the Ministry committer on the merger want that and that.

Management and leadership related input

The participants' perceptions about the challenges in relation to management and leadership suggested that funds budgeted for the merger were insufficient for carrying out the merger related activities and promises, as could be deduced from responses such as the one from a teacher educator in a position of authority:

We all know that merging is an expensive exercise. Very expensive, but government think we can cope without money. Even travelling to all those Former Colleges for the merger implementation purpose, eish!, is money, there is lots of money involved. The Ministry did not prepare itself to provide a merger budget to the University right at the beginning of the merger. But how do you expect the process to take place? I don't know.

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TE2: Government promised investment in merger mainly to upgrade the former colleges. Up to know, a year into the merger we are still expecting that money from government. Let me tell you what is actually happening now is that the university management has committed its budget to invest in upgrading certain facilities at some former colleges where the situation demands our intervention.

TE3: To a certain extent...there is a need for government to invest in the merger if quality is to improve. Some infrastructures especially in those former colleges in the north require an enormous budget. Government cannot expect that UNAM provide all that. After all UNAM also depends from government for its own infrastructure development. Where will UNAM get money?

Another perceived challenge to management and leadership was about time limits for carrying out the activities associated with the merger. It appeared that all the respondents irrespective of their positions were of the view that the merger process was sudden, demanding and stressful. As one participant put it, *“More time was needed to prepare for a proper planning and proper implementation of merger. But everything was rush rush...”*.

In relation to the time limitations, the participants also raised concerns about what was viewed as inadequate communication about the merger at Faculty level. The responses in this regard included the following by participants in positions of authority at this campus:

TE1: *... the way the Faculty Management handled the merger issue was not recommendable to me. There was lack of transparency, lack of communication and lack of research, planning in preparations of the merger from our side.*

TE2: *One thing is the merger took place suddenly and has not given us time to plan and prepare properly. No proper research was done except a consultation by a few people from the faculty, and the deadlines were very close. We were only told do this and do that and sometimes our own work suffered as we have students and projects to do which we felt were neglected because we had to make ourselves available for the merger and to offer an assisting hand to our colleagues from former colleges. I experienced burn out really.*

TE3: *Although I personally support the merger, the way merger was announced was not fair. Only those close to management new it was coming. Yes, we were aware of the Consultative Report when a certain Wendy Crebbin and some of our colleagues were involved in consultancy for reform. We are aware because those recommendations were shared at Faculty Board mhm?? [Looking for agreement from colleagues] But that thing was kind of like put on shelf for a while. We were not aware or think it is still coming. See many things here are recommended and they die a natural death. So to me merger really found some of us unprepared you see.*

TE4: *I think my colleagues... or let me put it this way what my colleagues want to say is that only a few people at the Faculty were fully aware. What I want to say too is that at*

the Faculty we were not quite prepared for this change, it was you know just to quick so to say.

Distance related challenges

It also emerged from the interviews that teacher educators were experiencing numerous frustrations, stress and anxiety due to the distance between campuses which ranged from 10 km to 1500 kilometres which the participants believed had a negative effect on the coordination of academic activities. In addition, participants maintained that some departments and some activities were coordinated far away from where the majority of staff reside. For example, a lecturer at this campus who was not in a position of authority mentioned that:

I am concerned that former colleges far away from the Faculty must not be neglected due to distance. They really can be forgotten sometimes, so unless we put proper management in place, a proper coordination system at all departmental and at faculty level, how this can be best done I have no idea but my concern is that the history of having rural-trained teachers poorly trained will not repeat itself and the merger will be recorded in future as a failure. I mean there must be a way of making Former Colleges especially those that are kilometres away closer even if they are geographically far from us [HF]

It was also felt that long distances between campuses made it difficult for the Faculty members to frequently share views and plan together for the attainment of quality teaching, as was noted for example by some particular teacher educators who were not in a positions of authority:

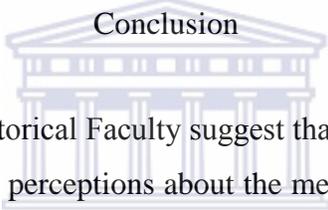
TE1: Distance between campuses will remain a problem. I did a lot of travelling since the merger was introduced. Travelling between campuses is not just stressful it is costly. I propose we could invest in something else instead of spending so much money on travelling if we have to build the capacity of the satellite campus. There are modern technologies to cut on distance. But the university must be willing to invest in technology.

TE2: There are lot of challenges. Transporting students to SBS is a major challenge at the moment in former colleges. Our colleagues told us how they are still waiting to be given new fleet because those other busses that transport students are gone back to

government. The transition is not easy if you have not made provision for it. Finance is also another challenge. Government is supposed to give UNAM money. Is almost end of year and no money. But we just hope things will fall back to normal

A similar response from a participant in a position of authority was:

Those campuses far away from the main campus deserve our priority because of the distance between campuses. How they can benefit from this merger requires a lot of proper planning. But it will still be difficult to manage. How can I be an Head of Department here and monitor and support the colleagues who are 1500 km away. But they have our priority anyway...



Conclusion

The emergent findings from the historical Faculty suggest that the participants' teacher education quality conceptualisations and their perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education differed from those at the other campuses in that they strike a balance between inputs, processes and outputs. On the other hand, the conceptualisations and perceptions in the HDCE related mainly to process and to a lesser degree to input whereas in the HACE they related mainly to output and to a lesser degree to input.

Having presented the findings about the HF teacher educators' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education, Part 3 provides discussions about the findings, the emergent theory and the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 8

THE COMPLEXITIES OF PERCEPTIONS: THE CONTINGENCIES OF PERCEPTIONS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapters 5, 6 & 7 regarding the perceptions of participant teacher educators about the capacity of the merger between Higher Education Institutions in Namibia to improve the quality of teacher education.

The following discussion about the findings is in accordance with the contexts and key questions of the study, namely, participants' conceptualization of teacher education quality; perceptions on the merger's capacity to improve quality and the perceived challenges in this regard. Where applicable the discussions on the findings are linked to emergent associated issues from literature. The discussions begin with the findings about the perceptions of the participants in the campuses located in the historically disadvantaged colleges of education, followed by those of participants in the historically advantaged college of education and then those of participants in the historical Faculty of Education. The chapter ends with conclusions drawn from the above discussion in preparation for the discussion of the emergent theory which is presented in the next chapter.

Discussions

As may be gathered from the previous three chapters, the generated data suggested that, generally, the participant teacher educators across all the merging campuses were of the view that the merger between the Namibian Teacher Education Higher Education Institutions promised improved quality teacher education. This shared perception might help to explain why the Namibian Higher Education merger may be generally concluded as having been peaceful six years into the merger, that is, at the writing of this report. However, despite this apparent consensual perception that the merger would help improve the quality of teacher education, the participant teacher educators' perceptions about the merger's capacity in this regard differed from campus to campus. These different perceptions and underpinning meanings can be attributed to the complexity of perceptions and that these complexities relate to various

contingent circumstances. A summary of conceptualizations and challenges is provided in a table towards the end of this chapter Table 8.1.

Perceptions in historically disadvantaged campuses

As discussed in Chapter 4, references to the three campuses situated in Northern Namibia in the study are in terms of historically disadvantaged colleges of education. This reference is due to their shared context which, apart from remoteness from the central campus, was due to the apartheid education provisioning system which inadequately provided educational infrastructure and preparedness of staff and students when compared to the campuses originally established to serve the other racial groups.

The conceptualizations of teacher education quality

As a prologue to the discussion of findings about how the participants in the various campuses' conceptualised the quality of teacher education, it was deemed necessary to begin this section with a review of various scholars' views on this matter. Mainly, the review suggested that a number of researchers in this area conceptualize quality education by means of the *input/process/output* approach (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010; Yoloje, 2009; Ajai, 2009; and UNESCO Quality Monitoring Framework as in UNESCO Report, 2004). Scheerens who writes for UNESCO Report (2004), critiques the practice whereby process issues are discussed separately from input and output in relation to the quality of education. The author argues that the *input, process* and *output* approach is appropriate in the conceptualisation of education quality, because inputs are transformed through process to give rise to expected outputs. As a result, a disjointed application of input or process as indicators of education quality also makes sense as it allows an understanding of how either input or process contribute to outcome. However, the disjointed viewing of education quality only in terms of either input or process is criticized by other researchers, including Sullivan (2006) and Mingat, (2003). The criticisms are that institutions might be well resourced but still fail in their duties to provide quality. For example, Mingat (2003) is of the opinion that, apart from input only, some transformation processes on the cognitive and professional development of educators are needed to enable achievement of quality education. The UNESCO (2004) framework for quality education in an attempt to avoid such disjoints adopted a framework which combines the input, process and output aspects in its conceptualization of education quality.

HDCE and conceptualizations of teacher education quality

As presented in Chapter 5, the findings in the study suggested that the participants in HDCE campuses conceptualized quality teacher education predominantly in terms of processes and to a lesser degree in terms of input. Mainly, the process related conceptualizations appeared to be linked to staff development opportunities, curriculum quality and supervision of teaching and learning. The findings which suggested that the participants' conceptualization of QTE in terms of input included views that it relates to teacher educator academic and professional preparedness, adequate resources and appropriate curriculum.

The HDCE participants' conceptualization of QTE in terms of processes such as staff development, research informed curriculum and innovative teaching methodology may be linked to the University of Namibia's prioritization of continuing education and research involvement in providing quality education (UNAM Strategic Plan, 2011-2015). On the other hand, the participants' conceptualization of teacher education quality in terms of input reflects the EFA Report (2005) which states that the level of quality depends on the level of resources such as the books and materials, infrastructure and human resources. Similarly, Yoloye in Odukoya (2009) lists six input indicators of quality in higher education as comprising quality of teachers, quality of facilities, quality of instruction, the quality of evaluation procedures, quality of morality and of administration and management, of students and of supervision of teaching and learning. These views are further supported by the views of authors such as Odukoya (2010), Asiyayi (2013) and Ayayi, (2009). Other views that seem to link quality to input include UNESCO's opinion that, for higher education quality to be attained, 26% of the country's expenditure must be spent on higher education (UNESCO Report, 2010).

The deductions made from the findings about the HDCE participants' conceptualization of QTE as process and to a certain degree as input, seem to have been informed by their historical context of deprivation in these respects during the colonial era and the subsequent legacy of apartheid disparities. The legacy of inequalities in the Namibian teacher education system can be best understood by the following illustration by Meyer in (Snyder & Voigt, 1998):

The populous northern regions of the country, organized around traditional agriculture ... has about three thirds of the students in Namibia. ... But teachers are much less well trained and certified. For instance between 55%-75% of primary teachers in the north lack grade 12 compared to south and central which are about 30%. About 30 – 64% lack specialized teacher training compared to 20% in the south and central (Snyder & Voigt p. 105).

A deduction from the above views on general education in Namibia is that there seems to be a connection between the type of education offered in black schools and the teacher training before independence. The qualifications of black teachers as a result of their education determined the type of training they received as their preparation for a better training was limited due to a number of inadequacies in schooling (Sneyder & Voigt, 1998). My conclusion is that it is because of such historical deprivation that part of the teacher educators in HDCE's conceptualization of quality teacher education was also in terms of resource inputs. This conceptualization can also be aligned with the arguments by Odukoya (2010) that institutions that faced historical challenges of resources and infrastructure tend to conceptualize quality education in terms of input. In particular, Odukoya (2010) maintains that the colonial legacy mainly in sub-Sahara is one of the reasons why individuals in these area use input criteria to conceptualize quality teacher education and education at large.

HDCE and perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve teacher education quality

As in the participants' conceptualization above, context also appeared to have an important role to play in how the participants in the HDCEs perceived the capacity of the Namibian teacher education institutional merger to improve teacher education quality. For example, an examination of the participants' perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality of education was found to relate to the provisioning of resources, infrastructure and qualified teacher educators all of which were related to historical deprivations. Such an input related view to the merger can be explained in terms of the contingency approach to understanding various

aspects about mergers which was also one of the findings by Jansen *et al.* (2003) when studying five South African higher education mergers. Jansen *et al.*'s (*Ibid*) argument based on their findings in this study was that the outcome of a merger is contingent upon contextual factors within which the merger takes place. Examples of emergent factors associated with contexts in this study included leadership, financial position, staff complement, merger plans and implementation and governmental support (p. 22).

As indicated in Chapter 5, the findings in these campuses suggested that the participants' perceptions about the merger's capacity to contribute to improved teacher education quality also related to process. These processes included changes in assessment processes and the introduction of quality assurance measures such as external evaluations, curriculum reviews and staff development which were not a normal practice of the former colleges before the merger. For example, during this period the teacher educators without Masters and PhDs were not granted opportunities to pursue further studies at the universities of their choices free of charge. Perceptual links with such deprivations may be deduced from responses such as:

TE1: ... UNAM announced we [teacher educators] will be put on staff development [programme]. This was unbelievable but UNAM keeps her words. None of us was dismissed because of low qualifications. Instead some of us find ourselves studying with various institutions such as Rhodes. Some are with UNAM, Pretoria and so on. In terms of remission of study fees and study leave, we are given means and opportunities because study leaves can be granted.

The responses which suggested the relationship between historical disadvantage and the perceptions of the participants in former colleges of education regarding the merger's capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in terms of infrastructure inputs included the following comments from an HOD on this campus:

The situation in which our colleges were found by the merger is pathetic. It needs a huge investment. The government is prepared to invest in improving our poor conditions. Once the infrastructure improves, and more resources pumped into former colleges, the situation [of poor teacher education quality] will change to better.

Thus, the conclusion that was drawn from the above findings was that the views about the merger amongst the HDCE participants related to perceived redresses of the past disadvantages where quality teacher education was seen to have been hindered by the absence of such processes and inputs.

HDCE and perceptions about the merger's challenges for teacher education quality

Even though the findings suggested that the perceptions were that the merger would be delivering the stated inputs and processes, the participants raised concerns about what they viewed as slow provisioning of teaching materials such as reference books in libraries and laboratory equipment for subjects like science. This concern suggests anxieties about contextual circumstances which Fullan (2007) warns are not conducive to delivering quality if ignored or not addressed adequately.

The perceived challenges also related to lack of academic expertise in subjects believed to be difficult such as mathematics, sciences and to a certain extent English. Over the years the teaching of these subjects was problematic in ex-colleges especially among the HDCE. For example, the English proficiency for the majority of the Namibian teachers educated in ex-colleges over the years has been criticized publically as poor (The Namibian, 2011, November 9, p. 1; The Villager, 2011, 07-13 November pp. 1-3). The lack of proficiency in English may be attributed to the fact that most teacher educators come from an Afrikaans medium of instruction background and had very little exposure to English, but find themselves teaching in English (The Namibian 2011, p. 1). This English language proficiency deficiency prevailed over the years following independence despite the introduction of the Language Policy in 1992 which declared English as medium of instruction in Namibian schools after independence.

Another perceived challenge about the merger's capacity to contribute to improved quality of teacher education was that the distances between the campuses was resulting in poor programme coordination and the perpetuation of the history of poor teacher education inequalities in Namibia. Various studies also highlight how providing good coordination over a distance can be cumbersome in achieving desired goals as indicated, for example, in findings in a study about the Finish Higher Education merger (Ursin, 2010). Thus distance is a constraint to delivering quality education even in mergers in developed countries such as Finland.

In historically disadvantaged sections of developing countries such as the Namibia HDCoE, insufficient resources have been found to serve as the major setback to effective implementation of many programmes and restructurings. Hako's (2014) views that the shortage of resources, specifically financial resources, impedes the effective implementation of education reforms in Namibia is in line with the participants' perceptions about the role of insufficient resources for the merger's contribution to improved quality teacher education.

Historical Advantaged College of Education (HACE)

As indicated in Chapter 6, the historically advantaged college of education in this study refers to the college in Windhoek known as Windhoek College of Education before the merger. This campus' advantage relates to central geographic location and being adequately resourced as it used to serve racial populations whose education provisioning was favoured by the colonial and apartheid political systems.

HACE and conceptualizations of teacher education quality

As in the case of HDCE, findings in this college also suggested that context took centre stage regarding the participants' conceptualisations and perceptions. The context which seemed to inform participants' conceptualisation of quality teacher education in HACE was different from the one discussed above in that the former enjoyed historical advantage in terms of resources. This historical context seemed to inform the teacher educators' conceptualization of teacher education quality in terms of education output as opposed to the input related conceptualisation amongst the HDCE participants. The emergent findings which suggested that the participants' conceptualisation of a quality teacher education at this campus was associated with the quality of teacher outputs included views that the quality related to teachers' attitudes towards learners, good citizenship, and high level competency.

HACE and perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve teacher education quality

The findings in the historically advantaged college of education (HACE) suggested that the participants at this campus perceived the merger as capable of improving QTE mainly in the form of process. Participants' responses about the merger's capability to improve the quality of

teacher education in the country mainly included the continuous reference to access to a large body of knowledge and expertise at the historical faculty, increased research opportunities and the possibility to benefit from the activities at the main faculty campus due to the campus's close proximity to it. In addition, the findings suggested that the participants were of the view that their close proximity to the HF also enabled TE quality improvement by enabling them to share lessons with the academics at the HF and to also learn from the experienced researchers, as was deduced from the responses such as:

Every second person here talks about research as enabling teaching quality. In fact they are not just talking about it they are doing research and publishing. This spirit of wanting to do research and become a publishing scholar is in the air. And since we're just a few minutes distance from main campus, possibility that we work together in conducting research is ensured. One must just be motivated.

These processes related perceptions as informed by their historically and geographically advantaged context are congruent with research findings which suggest that the major preoccupation amongst well-resourced institutions relates to improved cognitive (academic and pedagogics) processes. For example, Riddell (1996) in a DFID paper argues that the so-called 'school effectiveness research', which places emphasis on process variables, has been overlooked in developing countries although it has had marked success in industrialised countries. On the contrary, education quality perceptions in developing countries or less industrialized countries such as Namibian because of the context of poverty and rural geography focus more on input than output when conceptualizing quality (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010; Barrell, 2005; Sullivan, 2006).

HACE and perceptions about the merger's challenges for teacher education quality

The perceived merger challenges amongst the HACE participants also appeared to be related to the adequately resourced context in that the perceptions tended to be more about process than input. Of concern at this campus were views about inappropriate post-merger teaching

methodologies, inadequate time allocated for teaching practice, undervaluing of teacher educators' expertise and inappropriate allocation of subjects to staff. The conclusion that can be made from such perceptions which focus less on material things are that the HACEs are well off and thus have time to focus more on intangible academic and professional related challenges than material and technical issues. Such an inclination can be related to the conceptualization of quality education by the industrialized nations who tend to define quality in terms of performance and pedagogy as opposed to definition of qualities in developing countries which focus more on resources be they material or human (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010; Sullivan, 2006).

Historical Faculty of Education

Conceptualization of Teacher Education Quality

Unlike the HACE conceptualization of quality teacher education which emphasised process and output, and similar to the HDCE which emphasised input and process, the HF participants' conceptualization of QTE seemed also to refer to inputs. Mainly, resources to the HF participants appeared to refer to human capital. Again here context seemed to be at play in that the HF staff component was comprised of nearly 100% of suitably qualified staff and the campus was, as described in the contextual background in Chapter 7, well resourced. In addition, the HF participants also conceptualized teacher education quality in terms of education process which related mainly to in-serve training and lifelong learning of teacher educators.

HF and perceptions about the merger's capacity to perceive quality teacher education

The participants at the historical Faculty seemed to share the same perceptions as the participants in the ex-colleges that the merger had the capability to improve teacher education quality. However, their different contexts which reflected historical academia and being better resourced indicated contextual differences between the HF and the ex-colleges of education. The differences regarding resources referred mainly to the HDCEs. The findings suggested these differences informed their perceptions about the merger and how it was capable of improving the quality of teacher education differently than was the case in the former colleges.

One of the participant's reasons at this campus for believing the merger was capable of improving quality teacher education lay in perceiving the merger as having the capacity to harmonize teacher education which historically fell under different governance and administrative bodies (Crebin, 2007).

The perception among HF participants also was that the merger's capacity to improve teacher education related to the improvement of the research capacity of teacher educators in the ex-colleges. This perception might have had links with the research-oriented context of the HF which was not the case with the former colleges of education.

Similar to those in the ex-colleges was the perception that merger would contribute to improve QTE through the facilitation of appropriately qualified human resource in ex-colleges which they believe is conditional to quality teacher education. The reason for HF to regard highly qualified human resources seemed to be influenced by the context of being in an environment of appropriately qualified academics. A number of authors are also of the view that suitably qualified human resources are able to improve the quality of teacher education which indicates the importance of investing in empowering human resources (Papadakis, 2005; Chetty, 2010; Jansen, 2004).

Another seemingly contextually related perception amongst the HF participants was the view that by merging with UNAM teacher education in Namibia would be on par with international trends whereby teacher education is being provided in universities as opposed to colleges of education, although this was also more or less the same finding as with the HACE but the argument was different. For example one of the participants stated:

Many countries' teacher education now are provided by the universities or by university colleges instead of by colleges of teacher education. Where there are still colleges of education they seem to be affiliated to a certain recognized university in one way or another. That is in order to ensure such colleges are benefitting from the university teaching. Mind you when colleges that were previously neglected work with the university, quality may improve as their programs content and methodology are informed by the input from highly qualified staff at faculties at the university.

A conclusion from the above views is that, due to their context of being strong in curriculum, qualifications and well-resourced in terms of materials and facilities, HF participants seem to have perceived the merger as a gateway to allowing former colleges to work closely with them [HF] to improve teacher education. This on its own is a subjective perception which emanates from their historical context of being unable to collaborate as they wanted with the ex-colleges. By collaborating with the ex-colleges of education, participants perceived the merger as allowing them to contribute to building the capacity of staff in the ex-colleges in the interest of improving teacher education. The views of quality in the form of such inputs are shared by authors such as Coombe *et al.* (1999) and Skodvin (1999) in Norwegian higher education mergers.

HF and perceptions about the merger's challenges for teacher education quality

Perceived challenges which were found to be related to the HF context were views that the merger had increased the teaching load and the problem of burn-out amongst HF teacher educators. The views were that the overload and burn-out also resulted from travelling between campuses to teach specific subjects where a shortage was experienced and for capacity building by HF staff. In addition, the merger implementation involved numerous committee meetings, specifically for those in positions of authority.

Lastly, how context informed the HF's perceived challenges related to lack of funds to help redress the inequalities as can be derived from the example below:

Some infrastructures especially in those former colleges in the north require an enormous budget. Government cannot expect that UNAM provide all that. After all UNAM also depends from government for its own infrastructure development. Where will UNAM get money for the merger?

In view of these responses about the merger related budget, efforts by this researcher to get hold of the merger budget were not fruitful as not even the university Bursar's office had clarification on the question. Responses from the office of the Dean indicated that UNAM ended up using savings to cover costs incurred as a result of the merger.

Shared perceptions about the merger's possibilities and challenges

As could be gathered from the findings, all of the participants across the campuses were of the opinion that the merger indeed had the capacity to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. However, the participants' views differed regarding how they thought the merger was capable of improving the quality. These differences appeared to be due to their different contextual circumstances. Even though there were differences in perceptions in this regard, there were also shared meanings about the merger across the merging campuses, especially as related to their subjective meanings of how the merger was perceived to improve teacher education quality. This implies that in considering the complexities of mergers, the focus should not just be on differences but also on similarities. Of importance about such a consideration is that such commonalities help to contribute towards the development of better understanding about mergers and in so doing inform practice and policies regarding mergers' possibilities and challenges of improving quality more appropriately.

Issues of similarities about the merger possibilities and challenges

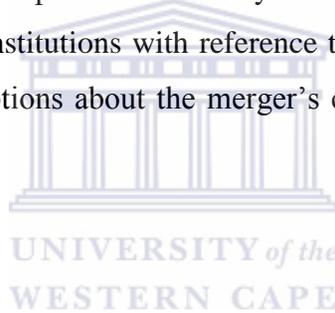
The findings that suggested similarities amongst the participants' perceptions at the different campuses were mainly with regards to views that the following issues about the merger would help improve the quality of teacher education in the country: the harmonization of curriculum offerings amongst the teacher education institutions; the offering of degree instead of diploma programmes; university based teacher education; research based teaching and the professional and academic staff development plan of the university.

In addition to the similarities of the perceptions about the possibilities, the findings suggested that the participants also shared common views regarding the challenges facing the merger for achieving the goal of improved teacher education quality. Such views included concerns about the short period between the merger announcement and its implementation and that this impacted negatively on their emotional and professional preparedness, adequate planning and the smooth implementation of the merger. Other findings which suggested similar perceptions about the merger's challenges included views that the handling of the merger suggested poor change management and leadership capacities. Research findings suggesting links between successful mergers and quality management are abundant (Appelbaum, 2000; Curri, 2002; Moran & Panasian, 2005). Some of the change management skills which are viewed to be crucial among individuals in positions of authorities include transformational leadership and bottom-up or

participatory leadership decision making (Skodvin, 2004; Harman & Meek, 2002; Kyvik & Stensaker, 2013; Kansal and Chandani, 2014). The similarities of perceptions about management challenges in the study were also related to concerns about communication systems during the merger, particularly in terms of poor feedback on ‘people issues’. This aspect is despite findings which suggest that effective communication is crucial for the success of mergers (Appelbaum *et al.*, 2000; Curri, 2002; & Skodvin, 2004).

Another finding which suggested similar perceptions about the challenges which participants feared would impact on quality teaching education after the merger related to views about under-preparedness in teaching certain subjects in the ex-colleges, particularly in mathematics, sciences and computers.

The following tables provide a comparative summary of the differences in emphases by the teacher educators from different institutions with reference to their conceptualization of quality teacher education and their perceptions about the merger’s capacity and challenges to improve the quality of teacher education.



Tables 8.1 (a, b and c). A comparative summary of the findings

A) A summary of the conceptualization of quality teacher education in the different contexts

Context	Input	Process	Output
HDCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately qualified staff • Adequate infrastructure and materials • Appropriate curriculum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing staff development and lifelong learning • Research based teaching • Integration of IT in teaching • On-going curriculum review • Quality assurance procedures 	

Context	Input	Process	Output
HACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate student admission criteria • Appropriate academic and professional teacher educators' qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous teacher educators' professional development • Effective management and leadership • Quality assurance • Effective student recruitment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate competencies • Competitive Graduate Professional Standing • Graduates who are responsible citizens • Graduates who are agents of change

Context	Input	Process	Output
HF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriately qualified staff • Adequate infrastructure and facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-going professional development • Appropriate teaching methods • On-going curriculum reviews • Harmonized teacher education • Teacher education benchmarking • Enabling academic and research atmosphere 	

B) A summary of the perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve the quality teacher of education

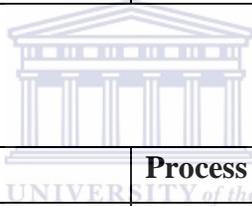
Context	Input	Process	Output
HDCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved staff qualifications • Improved content and assessment procedures • Research culture • Improved finances • Improved facilities and Infrastructure • Higher admission criteria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving teacher educators' formal qualifications • Focus on developing high order thinking skills • Better support services 	

Context	Input	Process	Output
HACE		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous staff development programmes • Development of an enabling environment for academic and research activities 	

Context	Input	Process	Output
HF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A harmonized teacher education • An empowered teaching staff in terms of skills • Improved infrastructure and facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved curriculum processes and articulation of BETD into B.ED • Research capacity building • Emphasis on research based curriculum • Quality assurance policies for all institutions • Recruitment of appropriately qualified academic and management & leadership staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved access to University facilities • Degree qualifications

C) A summary of perceived merger challenges

Context	Input	Process	Output
HDCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective change management and leadership • Absence of merger plan • Under preparedness of teacher educator • Low HDCE staff's self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centralized management and administrative services 	HDCE



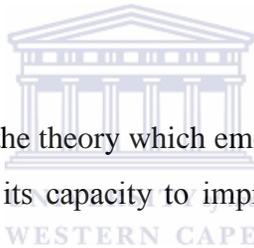
Context	Input	Process	Output
HACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate teaching methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short duration of practice teaching • Lack of acknowledgement of previous management experience 	HACE

Context	Input	Process	Output
HF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased work load for HF staff • Insufficient budget • Long distances between merging institutions 		-

Conclusion

At the core of the discussion in this chapter were the complexities of mergers, particularly in terms of how the contexts in which the participant teacher educators found themselves were associated with their perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve the quality of teacher education. The findings in this respect are in line with views expressed in the EFA Global Monitoring Report (2005) that “...whether education takes place in a context of affluent or where poverty is widespread determine how quality is perceived...”. (p. 35). Similarly, different contexts in the study determined how quality teacher education was conceptualized as input, process or output or both or all three. Only a HACE campus adopted the full input-process-output approach in their conceptualisation.

The emergent findings in this respect lay the ground for the theory which emerged from the study as offering an explanation regarding the participant TEs’ perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education, as presented in the next chapter.



CHAPTER 9

THE COMPLEXITIES OF PERCEPTIONS: CONTINGENT NEEDS

Introduction

By some chance you may discover a theory only to find someone else has come up with the same theory using more traditional methods. You still have a contribution to knowledge, and a valuable one. You have cross-validated, using a very different methodology, the theory previously offered (Dick. 2003, p. 3).

The previous chapters presented and discussed the findings about the perceptions of teacher educators in the five campuses of the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education about the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality. In particular, deductions were that contexts play an important role in understanding perceptions. Such deductions paved the way for the emergent theory that promises to contribute towards the development of a better understanding about perceptions in general and as they relate to mergers and their capacity to improve quality in particular.

The deductions which were drawn from the inductive findings in this study suggested that the participants' perceptions about the merger were related to the Maslow motivation theory of needs, as discussed by authors such as Jerome (2013) and Koltko–Rivera (2006). The appropriateness of this theory in this study relates to a conclusion drawn from the findings that perceptions related to participants' needs at the given time. In the same way that context was central to meanings of change that informed the participants' perceptions, as discussed in Chapter 8, indications were that the participants' perceptions were also related to a contextual hierarchy of needs. What the above means is that the deductions did not in this study point to a new theory but to an existing but adapted theory as offering explanations about the differences of perceptions between the three groups of campuses in this study, the HDCE, HACE and HFE. The conclusion was found to be in line with Dick's (*Ibid*) views that are presented in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter. Furthermore, According to Sutton & Staw (1995), theory development as a tool to describe or represent the situation can be done either by means of developing a substantive theory inductively from data or by identifying an existing theory which data suggests as befitting for this purpose.

The chapter begins with a brief overview of the relationship between contextual needs and perceptions regarding TE's perceptions in the study. The discussion then proceeds with a review of Maslow's theory of motivation. Thereafter the discussion is about the relationship between the participants' perceptions and the adapted Maslow model of hierarchy of needs. The chapter ends with a discussion about the adaptation of the Maslow hierarchy of needs.

The Relationship between contextual needs and perceptions in this study

As indicated above, deductions drawn from the findings in this study suggested that contextual circumstances played a crucial role in informing how the participants perceived the merger's capacity to improve teacher education quality. In particular, the indications were that individuals' perceptions were aligned to needs associated with historical and current contextual circumstances and institutional needs. The conclusion, therefore, was that the perceptions related to an adaptation of the Maslow theory of needs, the original of which is presented in the next section under Maslow theory of motivation.

Examples in support of the above conclusion include the HDCE participants' perceptions which related to processes and input. For example, the perceptions in these regards were found to be associated with the promised post-merger provisioning of resources and facilities, improvement of infrastructure and the opportunities to upgrade academic and professional qualifications where needed. All of these aspects spoke to what one may refer to as current and historical deprivations and concomitant needs in these campuses. On the other hand, the perceptions among the HACE participants were not found to reside in inputs as these did not comprise what one may refer to as deprivations on this campus. Instead, the perceptions appeared to be linked to the promise for capacity building in professional, research and publication skills which the participants associated with the campus's close proximity to experienced academics on the main campus. On the other hand, the contextual circumstances that seemed to inform the perceptions in the HF appeared to lie in their historical longing to have the former colleges collaborating with UNAM's Faculty of Education for capacity building in curriculum, research and publication to promote quality in their teacher education programmes. In addition, the findings suggest that the harmonizing of teacher education fulfilled a need amongst the participants in this campus to

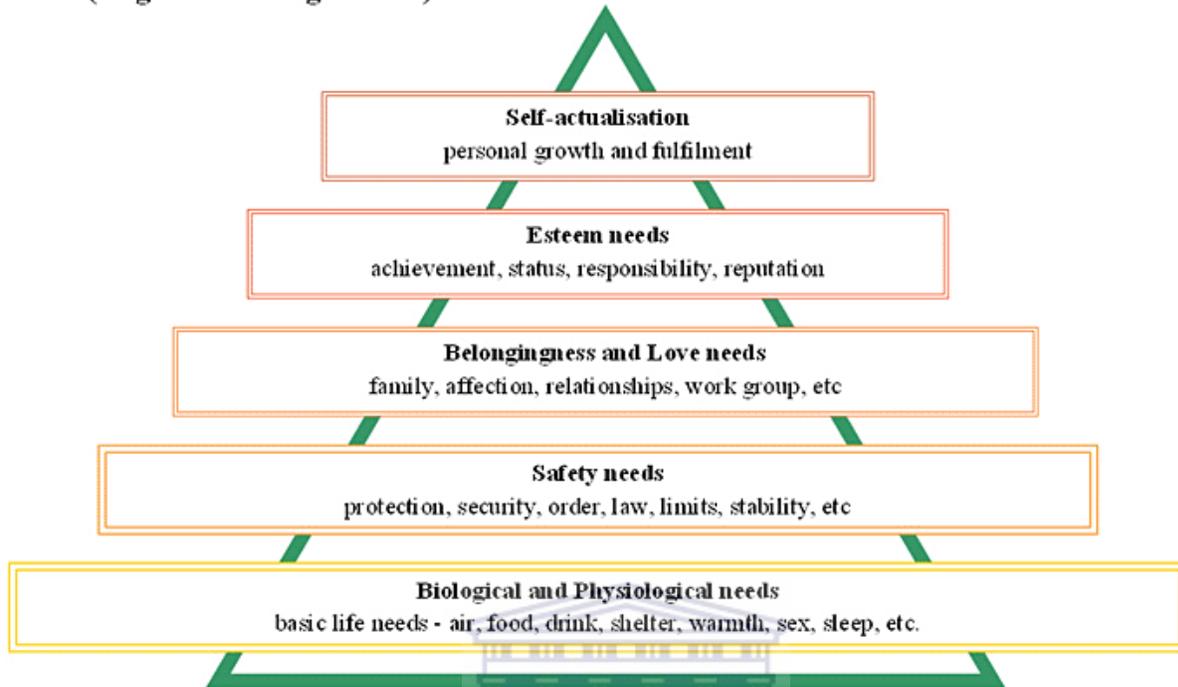
enhance UNAM's mission of expanding access to perceived quality university teacher education degree programs including post graduate programs to less advantaged students.

Maslow's theory of motivation: the relationship between hierarchical human needs and motivation

As indicated above, inductions from the findings that emerged from the analysis of generated data in this study suggested that the teacher educators' perceptions were associated with a range of historical and current circumstances. Furthermore, the conclusion was that the participants' perceptions could be explained through an adaptation of Maslow's existing theory which aligned individual's motivation to a hierarchy of needs.

At the centre stage of Maslow's theory of motivation is the argument that factors associated with internal needs of individuals energize and direct their behaviours towards the satisfaction of those needs (Jerome, 2013). Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, maintained that these needs are in five hierarchical levels, as illustrated in Figure 1.2. below. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the needs for biological and physiological survival, followed by levels that comprise needs for safety, social needs for love and belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization at the top of the hierarchy (Lutz, 2014). Maslow also maintained that human beings seek to satisfy the lowest level of needs before seeking to satisfy the higher levels. For some individuals the upward strive to satisfy the next level needs continues until they reach the highest level, that of self-actualization. Not all individuals reach this level for various individual and/or contextual reasons (Jerome, 2013; Sutton & Staw, (1995).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (original five-stage model)



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Figure 1: 2 Maslow's model of human needs

Perceptions and the adapted Maslow's hierarchy of needs model

As indicated above, the conclusions I drew from the findings suggested a similarity between Maslow's hierarchy of needs motivation theory and what seemed to inform the teacher educator participants' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality in Namibia.

Although the findings suggested that the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education were similarly informed by a hierarchy of needs on the various campuses, the actual contents of the needs at these levels differed from those in Maslow's model. The differences in content were concluded to be associated with contextual circumstances. This conclusion necessitated a modification of Maslow's model in an attempt to enable it to explain the differences amongst participants' perceptions on the different campuses, as presented in the discussion below as well as in Table 9.2 in this chapter.

Level one: Basic teacher education needs

Similar to Maslow's model, the findings in this study suggested that perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education amongst participant teacher educators in HDCE appeared to have been informed by what may be viewed as comprising basic needs for teacher education. These needs relate to human aspects such as formal academic and professional qualifications which meet minimum requirements and material aspects such as the availability of suitable computer equipment, infrastructure and classroom space, fully equipped laboratories, and so on. As indicated in Chapter 5, the HDCE were mostly under-resourced in these respects hence the perceptions which appeared to be informed by institutional needs for basic teacher education paraphernalia; for example:

TE1: Merger has the ability to improve quality. For instance having lecturers to upgrade their qualifications is a remarkable thing to do by UNAM. Also once the infrastructure improves, and more resourced pumped into former colleges the situation will change to better. I mean if money is invested into colleges quality can be improved. There will be a proper library with relevant books, the lecture halls at the moment are small and need upgrading, we also need high technology in teaching as at other campuses. So in the long run, and as I say when all these are in place quality will for sure improve

TE: 2 ... As we speak classroom facilities are somehow started, we are expecting more next year. By the way, we are receiving 20 computer in addition to 89 PC's already received for staff and students , the network for admin is in place although is not wireless. I think everyone around here can say in terms of resources and education technology quality is starting to improve.

In accordance with Maslow, conclusions from the findings were that once the above fundamental or basic needs are satisfied teacher educators' perceptions at a particular institution begin to be underpinned by the next level of needs in the hierarchy, as suggested by findings at two of the campuses.

Level 2: Security needs

As presented in Figure 1.2, the next level in Maslow's original model relates to safety needs. These include shelter, protection, a sense of comfort and stability. Without safety a person is not certain about security and is anxious (Jerome, 2013). Evidence in the study suggested that the perceptions of teacher educators in HDCE about the merger were initially also related to the second level of basic needs, namely: security concerns. For example, the tension and uncertainty caused by post-merger higher minimum academic and professional qualification requirements was one of the significant findings in this respect. As a result, the participants' positive perceptions about the merger appeared to have been associated with provisions which would satisfy their needs for tenure security by means of staff development opportunities to upgrade their qualifications, informal staff development and life-long learning programmes. The responses which were suggestive of the link between safety needs and perceptions in this campus included:

TE1: ...Ministry of Education keeps telling us no one will lose a job. But we needed something in writing to fall back to. Among ourselves people talk about things like, like ..those are sweet talk and that government want it to be a silent merger that's why... But to tell the truth, the fear was in the air especially if you do not have a proper qualification. It was good in the end no one loose a job like here. I am not sure about other campuses. Yes, some people did not end up lecturing but at least they are kept, so I can say government kept its promise although it was hard to believe at the beginning.

TE2: The teacher educators want to further their studies. They need Masters. They know they can be replaced if they do not have it in five years, ...so we are told. They also know that if they are qualified they are safe. Most of them has already applied for Masters at UNAM and some with SA universities. I too am working on my proposal with doing one with UNAM Faculty of Education.

TE3: I went to Windhoek to attend the induction with different feelings; I can say there was a fear of unknown and anxiety. ... The induction was reassuring and I came back motivated.

Level 3: Belongingness and love needs

Level three involves the need for belonging or being accepted by others (Milheim, 2012). In addition, according to McLeod (2007), belongingness includes friendship and intimacy from friends and/or one's work group. In this regard, the findings suggested that the perceptions of the teacher educators in all the ex-colleges of education, particularly the HACE, were informed by needs for a sense of belonging to the university which they associated with a community of academically and professionally learned people and a research environment. For example:

TE1: Talking with more high level people at the university is impressive. High academic qualified staff such as Doctors and Professors is now our colleagues. Before they only come here to moderate our BETD with NIED and today we can interact with them as colleagues. We also get opportunity to conduct research with them...

TE2: ...The e-mail system here is good and links us to the rest of the UNAM. ...We talk a different language now, a language of academics.

TE2: Induction workshops we attended were a good beginning. ... It helped us to do away with fears of unknown, we can teach with confidence because of this continuous support from our colleagues at the faculty.

Of note about this level in this study is that, whilst the need for acceptance and belonging appeared to have informed the perceptions of participants on the campuses located in the historically disadvantaged ex-colleges, it also appeared to have informed the perceptions of participants on the campus located in the historically advantaged ex-college of education. Of further note is that, contrary to Maslow's claims that individuals' needs only proceed to the next level once the previous one has been satisfied, it seemed the first three bottom levels of needs co-existed amongst the HDCE.

Level 4: Self-esteem needs

In accordance with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory people whose needs for belonging and love have been satisfied begin striving for the next level of needs which is associated with self-esteem resulting from the need for humans to be respected and valued by others for accomplishments resulting from one's own efforts. The findings in this study suggested that this level of needs applied to participants in the HF only and my conclusion was that this was because they were the only participants whose first three level needs had been satisfied. For example, their qualifications met the university's minimum requirements for lecturer positions, they worked in a well-resourced environment and were active in research. Indications are that their perceptions were, therefore, not informed by fears of losing their tenure because of sub-minimum qualifications or concerned with resource and belonging related needs.

Instead, their perceptions appeared to have been associated with the participants' eagerness to develop other peoples' skills and open up new opportunities for them. The findings suggested that the eagerness was particularly in relation to the need to contribute towards the development of staff in former colleges and the respect which they were getting from lecturers in those colleges of education because of their [HF] expertise which enabled them to help the ex-college TE in various ways to bridge their historical academic and research related disadvantages. Examples of such assistance included the induction, orientation, course materials and faculty planning sessions that the HF provided to teacher educators in the ex-colleges of education. Indications are that the HF participants' assistance to others provided them with heightened self-esteem.

The above circumstances regarding being of assistance in uplifting others' competencies seem to have influenced the HF participants' perceptions into viewing the merger as enabling for the improvement of quality in teacher education on the campuses located in former campuses of education which they perceived to have been of poor quality. The participants' sense of self-esteem also seemed to be associated with the Ministry of Education's trust and confidence in them by entrusting the merger implementation into their hands:

TE1: It gives us a bit of encouragement when we help a colleague to grow in this field. Like for example how to approach a module. When you have built a capacity you also feel confident about doing more. But our colleagues in former colleges must be willing to bring their sides and must come openly when they need assistance instead of complaining that we are not being helpful.

TE2: We have to date organized several workshops to build the capacity of the teacher educator from ex-colleges of education. Some workshops were highly academic focusing on various content subjects, some were on teaching skills. Some of us here have visited ex-colleges with various programs aimed at capacity building ...faculty travelled to participate in them...the other area people are interested to work with ex-colleges is research.

Level 5: Self-Actualization

This, the highest level of personal growth and self-fulfilment, is considered by researchers such as Ramadhan (2008) and Milheim (2012) to be complex in nature. Milheim (2012) argues that at this level an individual develops the ability and desire for further growth which involves ability to manage pressures, a quest for one's identity and the ability to stand apart and separate from the general world. Furthermore, Rohacek, Adams & Kisker (2010) describe self-actualized people as people who have reached peak experiences including dropping away of all concerns other than the activities in the here and now. Thus, according to this author, they are of the belief that they are at their best.

The conclusions in the study were that self-actualization needs were associated with the TE's perceptions at the historical Faculty, for example in their views that quality teacher education was associated with university teacher education. In justifying this view they referred to the world trend of harmonizing teacher education under one management umbrella involving mergers between colleges of education and universities in pursuit of improved quality of teacher education. In addition, this level of needs seemed to have been related to being entrusted with leading the merger by the Ministry of Education. A senior manager at the Faculty, for example, stated with great satisfaction that:

Through the merger UNAM has become the single largest university with the Faculty of education being the largest in terms of enrolment and staff". And another one that stated that: the Ministry of Education values our capacity to take a lead in the implementation of the merger.

One could deduce from the findings that there was a pressing need among the HF to self-actualise by taking the lead in harmonizing the programmes offered in former colleges with those offered on the main UNAM campus with the perception that the harmonisation in the hands of the faculty would help improve the quality of TE in those campuses previously viewed as providing poor QTE. Based on the seeming self-actualization needs, participants shared how they felt free from fears and anxiety particularly associated with the first three stages on the Maslow hierarchy. In addition, they were able to make contributions to the academic environment and to the improvement of quality teacher education because they seemingly had achieved all those previous three stages. Similar to the co-existence of the three lower level needs amongst the ex-colleges of education, it also seemed the two higher level needs co-existed amongst the participants on this campus. However, although teacher education at HF was more confident in providing teacher education quality, indications were that actualization did not seem to relate to self-actualization in Maslow. Instead, indications are that the actualization was more about community than are than the self. A possible explanation regarding this seems to be that in Southern African culture community is more highlighted over individuals. Literature sources which highlight the importance of culture and its communality in an African society include findings in Ngcobo's study (2006). In this study Ngcobo found that school cultures that are most likely to enable good academic performance in historically disadvantaged African township secondary schools (HDATSS) are those that are predominantly communal in nature, as well as those that incorporate societal features.

The conclusions about the relationship between Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs and the teacher educators' needs which seemed to have influenced their perceptions about the merger and its capacity to contribute towards improved quality of teacher education are summarized in Table 9.2, overleaf:

Table 9.2: Adaptation of Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs

Level of needs	Maslow's model - Motivation and levels of needs	The adapted model - Perceptions and levels of needs
Basic needs	Basic human life needs: Food, clothing, shelter & health	Basic teacher education needs: Infrastructure, resources, curriculum and sub-minimum academic and professional qualifications
Security and safety	Protection from crimes and war, the sense of living in a fair and just society	Teacher educators' institutions and safety needs: Protection from retrenchment, and demotions or transfer to teach in lower education settings such as schools or other campuses far from original locations after the merger
Social belonging and love	The ability to give and receive love, the feelings of belonging to a group	The ability to give and receive love from members of a qualified TE community
Self-esteem	Acquiring the respect of others and contributing to society	Self-esteem from the respect of others resulting from knowledge and contributions to societal development and betterment through research and related publications
Self-actualization	The ability to develop skills and fulfil one's potential	The ability to fulfil one's potential by taking on a community development role regarding skills and new opportunities.

Whilst the above presentation illustrates the link between Maslow's content of needs and those institutional needs in the study, including the adaptations thereof, the next section discusses how

such needs based on Maslow's original needs seemed to have informed the teacher educators' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education quality.

Discussion

As mentioned in the previous section, the findings in the different campuses suggested a link between the participants' or institutional needs with regards to teacher education and their perceptions about the merger's capability of improving the quality of teacher education in Namibia. For example, HDCEs' needs appeared to have been associated with level one, in the study referred to as basic teacher education needs, and with level two, referred to as teacher educators' institutional and safety needs, and level three, referred to as the ability to receive love from members of a qualified TE community. A possible explanation for this finding is that these campuses were historically deprived of the circumstances associated with all these components and that the HDCE participants were now looking forward to satisfying the next level of needs. On the other hand, the country's circumstances had provided for the two lower basic needs in the HACE rather than as was the case in HDCE, thus the association of the HACE needs with the third level of the hierarchy of needs. On the other hand, as the historical circumstances had already provided the context to meet the first three needs at the HF, this meant that the needs of the participants at this campus had proceeded to the upper levels.

Perceptions, historical disadvantage and teacher education needs

The findings in the study suggested that the first two levels of the Maslow model comprising physical and security needs applied to HDCE only, as perceptions in this campus appeared to be mainly about resources and teacher educator formal academic and professional qualifications. The latter contributed to the teacher educators' insecurities about their tenure. The participants' perceptions on this campus about the merger and its capacity to contribute to improved quality of teacher education seemed to have been driven by their contextual deprivations at these levels and related needs to achieving quality teacher education. As a result, the perceptions amongst participants in the historically disadvantaged ex-colleges of education that the merger would improve the quality of teacher education were seemingly in terms of improved resources and teacher educators' formal qualifications.

The link between the physical needs and safety needs layers and their relation to TE's perceptions was concluded to lie in the assumption that well-resourced and secured TEs can offer quality TE than those who are not taken care off in terms of physical facilities and not secured.

Perceptions, historical advantage and teacher education needs

Although there seemed to be a shared meaning between this campus and that of the campuses in HDCEs that the merger had the capacity to improve the quality of teacher education, there seemed to be a difference regarding the needs which appear to have informed the HACE participants' perceptions. What contributed to historical advantage on this campus located at the ex-college of education originally established for the white and later the coloured races included adequate infrastructure and facilities, such as computers, in comparison with the ex-colleges of education originally established for blacks. It therefore appeared that perceptions about the merger at this campus did not seem to be informed by resource deprivation, nor by formal qualifications of their teaching staff even though the qualifications of a large number of them were below the required minimum with 17% of them only possessing diplomas and 62% of them having their highest qualification at the B.Ed. Honours level. It is possible that the seeming discrepancy was because the qualifications of the participants at this campus did meet the minimum qualification requirements.

The findings suggested that the teacher educators in the HACE campus's views that the merger was capable of improving teacher education quality were because of various advantages which the three campuses in the north did not enjoy. Such advantages included, among others, being able to collaborate with experienced and highly qualified staff in the Faculty of Education by means of co-teaching and co-researching, thereby creating a feeling of belonging to the large and strong association of professional and academic staff. All of these were viewed as having the capacity to improve quality teacher outputs. In addition, as indicated in Chapter 6, teacher education conceptualisations at this campus related to outputs such as the development of positive teachers' attitudes towards children, values which were shared with society, competencies in literacy and numeracy, exemplary and respectful citizenship, and so on. Thus, the teacher educators' perceptions of the merger capacity to improve teacher education appeared to have been influenced by the need of being associated with the perceived quality of teachers

who received their education at UNAM. However, the findings also suggested that HACE participants were mindful of the UNAM expectation of academics to ‘publish or perish’. This placed the HACE to a certain degree at level two of the Maslow hierarchy of needs given their inadequate research competencies or activities. As a result, their perceptions were that their development in this regard would empower them to provide QTE.

Perceptions, historical academia and teacher education needs

Data from the historical Faculty of Education suggested that this campus had adequate and appropriate resources and infrastructure for the teacher educator participants that suitably met the university’s quality teacher education standards. The data also suggested that the HF teacher educators were further advantaged in terms of being suitably academically qualified and experienced in research and publications. Both these are requirements of academic staff at the University of Namibia. It also emerged that the management structures of the Faculty of Education were perceived as being far more competent about the coordination of academic activities than those at the ex-colleges of education. As a result, the findings suggested that the HF participants’ perceptions tended to be informed by the view that the merger’s capacity of improving teacher education quality was because it enabled the needs for capacity building in areas which were lacking in the ex-colleges of education such as infrastructure, organization, leadership, curriculum relevance and teacher educators’ formal qualifications. It was assumed that because those needs were to be made available by the merger within the terms and conditions stipulated in the Consultative document (Crebbin, 2007) of the merger, teacher education quality would improve.

The conclusion that can be deduced from these findings is that HF participants’ perceptions about the merger and its capacity to contribute to better quality teacher education were associated with level four and five of the Maslow hierarchy of needs which are about the needs for self-esteem. With regards to level four, it appeared that the merger provided them with opportunities for fulfilling their self-esteem by being accorded respect through contributing to the development of their colleagues in ex-colleges of education. Furthermore, the conclusion is that the location of these participants’ needs at this level was because these participants were in an institution which was adequately resourced. The needs for being self-actualized were concluded to be associated

with the participants' formal qualifications which met the university's minimum requirements. Therefore the participants held no fear of tenure loss and were also advantaged regarding the third level of needs as their research activities meant that they were already part of the academic community. As in the words of Rohacek *et al.* (2010), they were "in their best or in their peak" as self-actualization is the need "to become everything that one is capable of becoming".

Conclusions

The findings went a long way to illustrate the complexities of mergers. Firstly, the findings were that the complexity of mergers perceptions related to their relationship contexts. In addition, the complexity of perceptions related to the role of participants' contextual needs. The conclusions drawn from these complexities suggested the appropriateness of Maslow's theory of needs and which could be related to why the participant teacher educators' perceptions differed about how merger was capable of improving QTE. The Maslow terminology was modified to link with the nature of the study and the findings, as explained above. The adoption and adaptation of Maslow need theory in this regard contributed to the uniqueness of this study's contribution towards the development of better understanding about participants' perceptions about mergers and their capacities to achieve their intended purposes. The uniqueness takes into consideration that I did not identify any study during my literature review which had adopted Maslow theory of needs to develop a better understanding about peoples' perceptions and, in particular, their perceptions about QTE and merger capacities in this regard.

The next chapter provides the summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study.

CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This, the final chapter of my study about teacher educators' perceptions of the possibilities and challenges about the merger of higher education institutions begins with a summary of the study, including the findings that emerged from the study. The summary is followed by the conclusions from the study. This is followed by a section on the emergent recommendations for policy, practice and further research relating to mergers and precedes the conclusion section of the chapter.

The summary of the study

Introduction and purpose

This study was prompted by a desire to contribute to a body of knowledge about the merger and in so doing contribute particularly to the development of better understanding about how teacher educators perceived the merger between the former colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education as it relates to its aim to improve the quality of teacher education in Namibia. The focus was prompted by a view that the perceptions of those who are primarily charged with the improvement of the quality of teacher education in the merger of higher education institutions were important, as may be the case regarding perceptions about mergers of other organisations aimed at improving production of quality education. By understanding the perceptions of teacher educators about the merger one can understand how they would behave towards making the merger successful.

The government of Namibia was hard at work to improve the quality of education in the country in order to realize its goals of a knowledge-based economy by 2030 and beyond. The merger of the former colleges of education with the University of Namibia was a strategy initiated by the government to achieve quality teacher education. At the forefront of the recommendations to merge former colleges of education with the university was an assumption that, once teacher education improves, general education in the country would improve too.

Over the years after independence, the researcher has observed a number of reforms in teacher education in the country's teacher education institutions aimed at improving quality where minimal efforts were made to take into consideration the teaching staff's perceptions about what was happening. This practice meant that the policy makers were not aware of why the affected staff disengaged themselves from what was happening, thus impacting negatively on the success of the reforms to achieve their objectives of improving teacher education quality. Literature also suggested that such a practice was rather widespread. This led to the conclusion that there was a need to investigate the crucial views of those who were involved and charged with the implementation of the merger between UNAM's Faculty of Education and the former colleges of education regarding the possibilities and challenges of such a merger to improve teacher education quality.

Theoretical framework

The study was framed by a Grounded Theory approach. The adoption of this theoretical framework related to inadequate theories in the field of mergers, the complexities of mergers and the various contingencies of the complexities. This approach enabled the identification of, and adaptation of, an existing theory – Maslow's motivation theory of hierarchical needs - as being suitable for the development of better understanding about how the teacher educators understood the merger and its capacity to improve teacher education in Namibia.

Review of literature

There are numerous studies which have been conducted on various aspects of mergers in higher education. Such studies revealed some fundamental issues on mergers in higher education among others that merger studies tend to be highly technical at the expense of being human based (**Buono & Bowditch, 1989**); that mergers as education change are complex because they involve human beings (**Hay and Fourie, 2000; Kyvik, 2009**) and also that perceptions about mergers are contingent (Jansen, 2003 and Schoole, 2006). The scant literature on human aspects of mergers leaves a gap in the literature of mergers. In addition the assumption that teacher educators' perceptions are part of the complexities of change influenced this study to pay attention to human aspects rather than the technical aspects of the stated merger.

Methodology

The study was conducted qualitatively and adopted a case study design to enable the generation of rich and in-depth data which was deemed to be appropriate for developing better understanding about perceptions. Initially, the design was informed by a view that the perceptions would relate to a single case, that of one country, but as the study progressed the findings suggested sub-cases associated with historical and current circumstances. The case study involved triangulation including the employment of multiple methods of data collection such as interviews, observations and document analysis. The triangulation also related to samples which included all the Heads of the merging institutions, the Dean of the Faculty and the five Deputy Deans who were all purposefully selected for the one-on-one interviews. They also included two focus groups per merging institution, conveniently comprising those who were available during the data generation visit, totalling ten focus groups for the whole study with one comprising of teacher educators not in positions of authority and another one with teacher educators in positions of authority.

Summary of findings

The main findings as presented in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 were that, generally, all the teacher educator participants in the merging institutions perceived the merger as being capable of improving the quality of teacher education in the country. The reasons for the perceptions in this regard, however, differed amongst the campuses.

As presented in Chapter 5, the findings suggested that the perceptions of participants in campuses located in historically disadvantaged colleges were that the improvements would be linked mainly to improved processes and to a lesser degree to improved inputs. Input related perceptions amongst the HDCE included views about improved infrastructure, education materials and teacher educator qualifications. On the other hand, the processes related perceptions included views about promised staff development opportunities in relation to research skills and formal qualifications for the teaching staff. The adoption of UNAM quality assurance mechanisms also emerged as a contributor to the improvement perceptions.

Conversely, the views of participants from the campuses located in the historically advantaged college of education seemed to be minimally informed by input considerations but to be more related to processes. In addition, their conceptualisation of quality teacher education related to the quality of graduate outputs. The output conceptualisation related to the HACE participants' views that quality teacher education is when it is capable of producing teachers who are academically and professionally competent and who are capable of meeting the nation's expectations from teachers. HACE process related perceptions included views that the post-merger processes such as continuous staff development and the development of an academically enabling environment would contribute to improved quality of teacher education.

The findings that emerged in the campus located in the historical Faculty of Education, as presented in Chapter 7, suggested that perceptions on this campus were mainly in terms of processes and to a certain extent expected outcomes about the merger and its capacity to improve quality teacher education. As with the HDCE, the process related perceptions amongst the HF participants included views about the contributions in this regard of the forthcoming staff development opportunities in relation to research capacity building and formal qualifications for staff in the HDCE, quality assurance mechanisms on all the campuses and the harmonization of the teacher education programmes in the country.

Apart from the above findings which suggest positive perceptions about the merger's capacity to improve quality teacher education, the study also found that there were perceived challenges amongst all the participants regarding the merger's capacity to contribute to improved quality of teacher education. These perceived challenges included views that there had been ineffective management and leadership in the merger process, including communication about the merger. These latter perceptions are in line with views by various authors such as Skodvin (2012), Appelbaum *et al.* (2000), Curri (2002), Moran & Panasian (2005), Appelbaum (2000), Appelbaum *et al.* (2007) and Bishop (2006) which have highlighted the importance of adequate and appropriate communication for successful merger implementation. In addition, various authors have highlighted the importance of adequate leadership and management support for successful mergers (Kansal and Chandani, 2014; Chipunza, 2010; Skodvin, 1999; Pritchard & Williamson, 2008 and Harman, 2008).

Other perceived challenges related to insufficient time provided to people to prepare emotionally for the merger and inadequate institutional support for change management and leadership. Insecurities caused by the limited pedagogical content and knowledge of some teacher educators who now have to provide deep content and high level teaching in the new B.Ed. curriculum was also found to be challenging for the improvement of quality teacher education. In as much as these perceptions are related to academic aspects they appeal to how human beings are affected. Much of these concerns were raised in subjects such as English, Mathematics and Science. There was also a general inferiority in terms of lack of recognition for lower primary skills as presented in this study. This reflects perceptions that there was a need to recognise prior merger educational experiences to encourage teacher educators from the ex-colleges of education and to enable them to take ownership of the merger process. For example, participants from ex-colleges felt they possessed skills in lower primary education and should be allowed to take a lead in developing the B.Ed. Lower Primary Degree curriculum. Similarly the same participants also felt their model of School Based Studies (SBS) instead of UNAM teaching practice is more quality orientated and should be followed under their direction. In addition to the above, the resource statuses of merging institution at the time of the study were perceived to be inconsistent with the promises of better infrastructure and financing of the merger.

Conclusions

The researcher's conclusions about the findings in this study were presented in Chapters 8 and 9. Part of the conclusions was that a shared perception across all merging campuses was that the merger was capable of improving the quality of teacher education and that this may have contributed to why the Namibian Higher Education merger implementation can be generally regarded as having been peaceful. The finding was also that there seemed to be an overwhelming perception that the capacity of the merger to contribute to improved quality teacher education resided with the university. This perception was despite some pockets of success associated with the former BETD programme offered in previous colleges of education such as the manner in which the School Based Study (SBS) in this programme was organized as well as accumulated experiences of the former colleges of education in the field of primary

education. The conclusion that could be deduced from this finding was that all institutions involved in a merger have their strengths that could be transferred to other merging institutions.

A conclusion also drawn from the findings was that contextual circumstances and needs are crucial for understanding individuals' perceptions about mergers. For example, contextual deprivation appears to have contributed to the HDCE participants' perceptions in terms of inputs and processes in the form of improved infrastructure and education materials as well as free opportunities to upgrade academic and professional qualifications for which their historical context never provided. The same conclusion applied to the HACE participants' perceptions that the reason they referred less to input in terms of materials and academic qualifications than the HDCE participants was due to their historical advantaged provisioning and being in a close proximity to the HF which enabled research and teaching collaboration with staff on that campus. Where input was used to support why the merger was capable of improving quality this was more in terms of curriculum as the historical disadvantage in this area was similar to that of the campus located in the HDCE. Amongst others, Odukoya (2010) and the UNESCO Report (2004) hold similar views regarding the conclusions about the link between perceptions and contexts.



The circumstances in the HF, as in HACE, also found participants on this campus not raising inputs as challenges to quality improvements as their historical and current contexts had not deprived them of those. Instead, their perceived challenges revolved around what they perceived as unreasonable teaching loads that had the potential of disabling satisfactory participation in research activities.

The findings about the participants' perceptions about the merger challenges in relation to its capacity to improve the quality of education in the country appear to confirm Chetty's (2010) views that joining two institutions finds the quality of certain things improving while others worsen.

Emergent theory

In line with the conclusions on the findings summarised above, the adapted Maslow needs theory model emerged as the most appropriate theory to developing better understanding about the perceptions of the teacher educators involved in the merger between Namibia's former colleges of education and UNAM's Faculty of Education as they relate to quality improvement of teacher education.

Contributions of the study

As indicated in the introduction, the study involved the investigation of teacher educators' perceptions with regard to a Namibian Higher Education merger between UNAM and the four former colleges of education about the merger's capacity to improve teacher education. It is believed that the contribution of this study lies in its focus on the human aspect of mergers in general by particularly looking at the importance of the role of this aspect for change and that research on mergers tends to ignore it to focus on the technical aspects of mergers. Hence, the major contribution of this study to what we know already about the mergers is that perceptions about mergers are *'contextual' and are 'need' based* and that a remodelled Maslow hierarchy of needs theory helps understand peoples' perceptions in mergers. By implication peoples' perceptions are influenced by the level of satisfaction to their current needs in different institutions of mergers. Such context may be historic and geographic in nature which may for example relate to the economy and politics.

Furthermore, the contribution of the study is also with regards to its qualitative approach to the study of mergers in that reviewed literature suggested that merger studies tend to adopt quantitative and semi-qualitative methodologies. Thus, in studying the perceptions qualitatively, the study contributed to the development of an in-depth understanding about mergers by providing rich data generated by means of multiple case study related methods. Such in-depth understanding was deemed essential for informing merger related practice and policy more appropriately.

In particular, the contribution of the study for developing a better understanding of the teacher educators' perceptions lay in highlighting the complexities of mergers, together with the contingencies of perceptions. In acknowledging these aspects, the decision was that the study needed to be framed by the Grounded Theory approach. The adoption of Grounded Theory to develop a better understanding of the perceptions, as indicated above, led to an adaptation of an appropriate theory, namely Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs, for explaining motivation, as being suitable for achieving the purpose of this study. All in all, the uniqueness of this study lies in its contribution to theoretical frameworks about the study of mergers which literature identifies as a gap in this field of study. Such theoretical framework related to the conclusion that there seems to be no sufficient evidence from existing studies to develop a theory about mergers. Hence, the purpose of this study is to make a contribution towards increasing the evidence base for the development of a theory of educational mergers.

Recommendations

The above stated contributions, highlights gaps that still need to be addressed in research in a similar field of study and recommends possible ways in which such gaps might be better addressed. They also highlight implications for practice and policy regarding mergers.

Recommendations for merger practice and policy

Recommendations emerging from the conclusions about the findings in this study are that the starting point of all mergers needs to be an establishment of a clear communication channel that is participatory in nature and which encourages bottom-up merger decisions rather than top-down which offers little opportunity for decision acceptance and fairness. The former channel discourages uncertainties associated with mergers, as well as the fear and anxieties which have the potential to impact negatively on quality delivery of teacher educators.

It is also recommended that the merger implementation team focus on establishing psychological support within Human Resource departments in order to cater for the emotional challenges of insecurities, uncertainties and anxieties associated with mergers.

Furthermore, it is also recommended that the training in change management and leadership skills for those in leadership positions before and during mergers be an important strategy of the merger, particularly in relation to how to address human aspects.

Alongside the training in change management and leadership, the study also recommends that in investigating perceptions, as could be seen from conclusions about the perceptions, there is a need for studies on mergers in higher education to focus more on human factors of mergers with specific attention to the role of context regarding perceptions. Hence the study recommends that particular emphasis be placed on role that context plays in informing specific needs of those involved in mergers.

Recommendation for related future research

In addition to the above recommendations for related practice and policies, this study also offers recommendation for future research by looking at the remaining gaps and how best they can be narrowed through subsequent research.

Also, although the findings in this study may be transferable to mergers in similar situations, the small scale of the study does not allow for generalization. Yin (2003) asserts case studies are not meant for generalization because of their boundaries and their uniqueness which may not bear the same resemblance elsewhere. In this study the sample was drawn from a population of only Namibian teacher educators in the five Namibian merging institutions and represents the uniqueness of this merger. It is based on these conditions that I recommend the study be used only as a springboard for related studies that aim to investigate similar issues in order to reach some degree of generalisation, for example, by means of a multiple case study methodology.

Lastly, the study was conducted soon after the merger was introduced and covered the first five years of the merger. Reviewed literature on perceptions maintains that perceptions change from time to time (Bekeena, 2009). A great possibility exists that some of the perceptions that emerged in the study might have changed in ensuing years for various reasons. Such a change of perceptions may hamper a better understanding of teacher educators' perceptions about the merger and its capacity to contribute towards improved teacher education quality which may in

return misinform merger practices and policies. Thus, it is recommend that the study be regarded as a stepping stone from which longitudinal studies on perceptions of teacher educators may be based.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study was conducted in accordance with the Vision 2030 and the enactment of ETSIP which call for improving the education sector quality in order to meet the national needs of a knowledge economy (KE). Hence, there was the focus on improving the quality teacher education with the view that, once the teacher education had improved, the entire education quality would improve. The merger of teacher education colleges with the university with the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education was deemed fit for this purpose.

In order to understand the merger between the Namibian Higher Education institutions for improving teacher education and to understand the possibilities and challenges of the merger, the study valued the views and perceptions of teacher educators above any others aspects of the merger 'because people's matters' matter. The areas studied included their understanding of quality teacher education, their perceptions of how merger improves quality teacher education and the merger challenges.

The role of contexts and needs in terms of history, geography, and current status of the different institutions of mergers emerged to be of importance to understand TEs' perceptions of the merger. The data suggested that teacher educators' views were based on input, process and to a lesser extend output issues of the merger. That is why it was suggested that longitudinal research be conducted in future to determine perceptions. The researcher as an educational institutional leader gained insight which may inform policy, planning and implementation.

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Appendix 1

Namibia Chap7

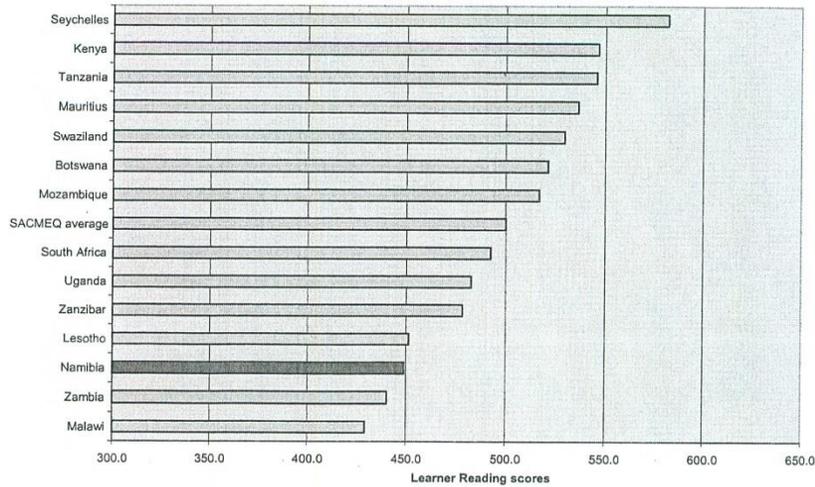


Figure 7.1: Learner reading scores by country

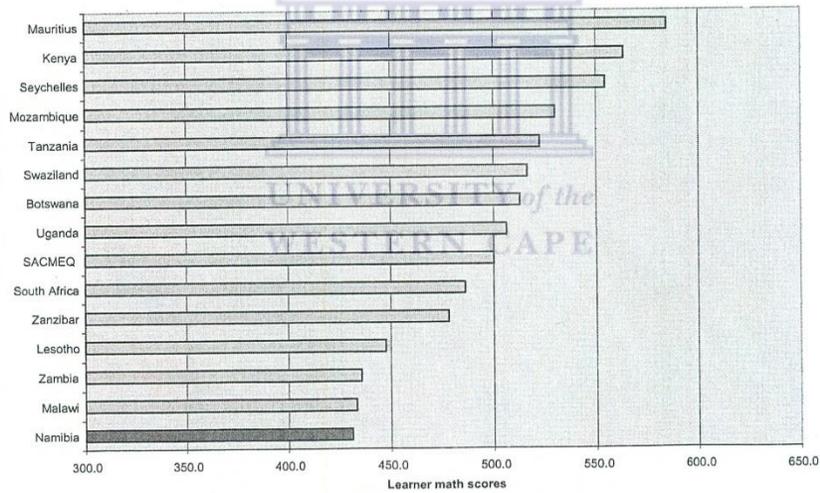


Figure 7.3. Learner mathematics scores by country

In mathematics, Namibian learners were bottom. The overall, low average scores for Namibian Grade 6 mathematics teachers and their learners indicates that there could be a problem with either the mathematics curriculum or the training of mathematics they teach the subject.

Appendix 2

Namibia Chap7

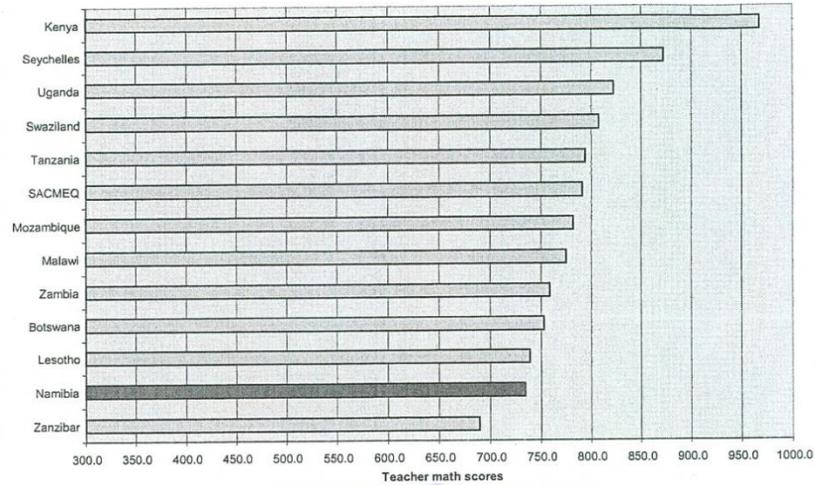


Figure 7.4: Teacher mathematics scores by country

The Namibian teachers were second from bottom beating only the Zanzibar teachers. This is not a healthy situation given that the Namibian government attaches great importance to the teaching of mathematics and science.

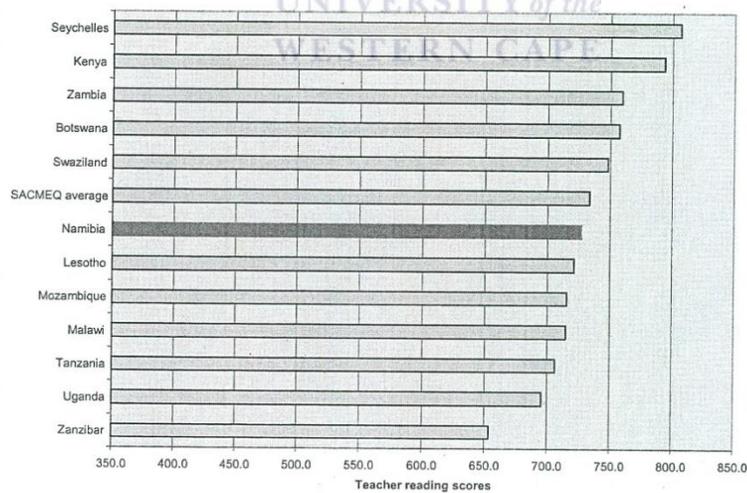


Figure 7.2. Teacher reading scores by country

Final TE Consultancy report (2).exec sum and recc only.doc

Appendix J List of Recommendations

Chapter 1

Recommendation 1.1.1:

That the mandate of the colleges be changed so that they provide initial training for teachers for both phases of primary education (pre-primary - 4 and 5-7).

This could possibly lead to a name change, for example Diploma of Primary Education (DPE) or Primary Education Degree (preferably a degree, e.g. B.Ed Primary Education).

Recommendation 1.1.2:

That the mandate of the University of Namibia be changed so that they provide initial training for teachers for both phases of secondary education (grades 8-10 and 11-12).

This could possibly lead to a name change, for example B.Ed (Secondary Education).

Recommendation 1.1.3:

That the mandates of the colleges be changed in order to facilitate bringing pre-service training and teacher professional development together in ways which enable sharing of expertise and resources between the colleges, UNAM, NIED, TRCs and other education providers (see Recommendations 1.6.3 and 5.2.1).

Recommendation 1.1.4:

That the mandate of the University of Namibia continues to enable them to offer appropriate post-initial primary and secondary teacher training programmes as well as teacher educator programmes.

Recommendation 1.1.5:

That the University of Namibia review their entry requirements for a graduate certificates, diploma and Masters degree to align with the NQF, and the practice of some universities in other countries.

Recommendation 1.2.1:

 The four colleges of education be merged with the Faculty of Education in the University of Namibia.

Recommendation 1.2.2:

That as one of the first steps in the merger process, processes of quality assurance be implemented in the colleges in line with quality assurance processes in tertiary institutions. There needs to be processes that are appropriate to all levels of the institution:- management, academic staff and administrative staff.

Recommendation 1.2.3:

When negotiating the merger model between UNAM, the Faculty of Education and the colleges, that a site based management model be defined which clearly identifies support structures, roles and responsibilities of

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each level of administration.

Recommendation 1.2.4:

That NIED, the colleges and the UNAM Faculty of Education continue to work together in the development of the curriculum and syllabi for the colleges, and on-going professional development for teachers.

Recommendation 1.3.1:

That the teacher education providers adopt (for the interim) the principle of the NQA that teacher educators must have qualifications at least one level higher than the level at which they are teaching.

Recommendation 1.3.2:

Current teacher educators employed at the colleges who do not have a Level 8 qualification relevant to the position they are filling, as well as current senior academics who do not have a Level 9 (Master), will be given a maximum of 5 years (that is by 2013) to obtain an appropriate level qualification. All teacher educators will be encouraged to obtain a Level 9 (Masters) relevant to their position within seven years (2015).

Recommendation 1.3.3

That preference be given to part-time, rather than full-time, study opportunities so that teacher educators are able to continue to fulfill their teaching commitments.

Recommendation 1.4.1:

That there be an on-going plan of professional development for teacher educators established in each of the institutions and that there be a professional development fund established within each institutional budget.

Recommendation 1.4.2:

That individual professional development programmes and plans be linked with staff evaluation and professional appraisal and that these be aligned with the institutional requirements for qualifications and professional expertise (see Recommendations 1.3.2 & 1.4.3).

Recommendation 1.4.3:

That UNAM develop a qualification to meet the requirements of Level 8 **for Lower Primary Teacher Educators** to focus on teaching for example, Literacy, Numeracy, Pre-Primary and code-switching which would be suitable for teacher educators, and future graduates of the colleges. In each case such a graduate qualification could be developed to form a pathway towards a Masters degree.

Recommendation 1.4.4:

Current funding provided be increased for all types of professional development, as well as sourcing from business and private providers and development partners.

Recommendation 1.5.1:

In the process of changing the governance processes of the colleges, and the rationalisation of the programmes being offered in each of the colleges, the numbers and composition of academic staff be reviewed to ensure efficient and effective deployment of staff

Recommendation 1.5.2:

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The terms and conditions of employment for academic staff in the colleges be the same as those which apply to other tertiary institutions (see also Recommendation 1.2.2).

Recommendation 1.5.3:

That the job descriptions of all of the administrative and hostel staff be reviewed, based on productivity, and where possible efficiency measures be applied

Recommendation 1.5.4:

That provided that it does not negatively impact on current specialised course offerings, all vacant positions in the colleges be put on hold until such time as the staffing needs for the revised curriculum are established (see Section 4.3) and staff evaluation and efficiency measures have been implemented (see Recommendation 1.8.1).

Recommendation 1.6.1:

That provision be made in each of the colleges, either the college libraries, or other secure areas, for the safe storage of video cameras and microphones for the use in microteaching.

Recommendation 1.6.2:

That the usage of college classrooms, libraries and other resources be increased by timetabling classes through the whole day.

Recommendation 1.6.3:

That the use of current college and TRC buildings and other resources (libraries, computer labs, etc) be reviewed based on agreed principles of sharing and maximising the usage of those resources.

Recommendation 1.6.4:

That a specific unit in the Ministry/ETSIP be allocated the responsibility to oversee all of the efficiency measures recommended in terms of sharing resources (college and TRC buildings and other resources including libraries, computer labs, etc) and establishing a shared library catalogue (see Recommendation 1.7.1)

Recommendation 1.6.5:

That an electronic data base, equivalent to those used in other countries to maintain records on students in higher education, be implemented (see Recommendations 4.1.1, 4.1.2). Alternative, because some institutions already have data bases, that compatibility between existing systems be investigated.

Recommendation 1.6.6:

That a specific unit in the Ministry or NCHE be allocated the responsibility to implement all of the negotiations, and oversee the processes required to establish and maintain a shared data base for tertiary education.

Recommendation 1.6.7:

That provision be made for training of staff to enter, maintain, access and analyse the data base.

Recommendation 1.6.8:

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That provision be made for video and/or tele-conferencing between the colleges and UNAM

Recommendation 1.7.1:

That all libraries in higher education institutions, and TRCs, be linked through the same cataloguing system, based on a common electronic data base, to facilitate sharing of resources and to avoid unnecessary duplication of expensive resources (see Recommendations 1.6.3 & 1.6.4).

Recommendation 1.7.2:

That adequate resources are allocated in the college annual budgets to renew and upgrade the resources offered by libraries to the standard required for a tertiary institution.

Recommendation 1.7.3:

That librarians be provided with appropriate training for formal qualifications and to support the use of ICT, in cataloguing and in effective library management.

Recommendation 1.7.4:

That adequate resources are allocated to ensure that the library buildings are modified to meet requirements for an academic study environment.

Recommendation 1.8.1:

That all of the current colleges remain open for at least the next five years during which time staff evaluation and efficiency measures will be put in place to ensure that the academic, administrative and hostel staff at each institution/campus are meeting the required levels of performance.

Recommendation 1.8.2:

That until the new academic programmes, and the mechanism for improved sharing of resources between the colleges, TRCs etc have been implemented, that the planning and building of new buildings be limited to those already planned in the 2008 Millenium Challenge Account (MCA).

Chapter 2

Recommendation 2.1.1:

That all teacher education programmes support the national philosophy and values for education consistent with the Constitution and further articulated in 'Towards Education for All'.

Recommendation 2.1.2:

That further professional development be provided for teacher educators (advisory teachers and teachers) to enhance their ability to implement learner-centred and learning centred pedagogies (including indigenous pedagogies) (see section 1.4).

Recommendation 2.2.1:

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Within the Namibian education philosophy attention be given to the definition of quality as a mechanism to re-focus teacher education on quality as one of the four philosophical principles.

Recommendation 2.2.2:

That teacher education and teacher educator programmes be informed by the Namibian context.

Recommendation 2.2.3:

In integrating the teaching competences and standards into teacher education programmes that a 'holistic' or 'integrated' perspective be maintained to ensure a view of competence as a complex combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Recommendation 2.2.4:

That the teaching competences and standards be used as part of the planning framework for syllabi for all teacher education programmes

Recommendation 2.2.5

That standards and competences be assessed in a holistic and integrated manner and reported in such a manner.

Recommendation 2.2.6

That the principles of both learning centred, and learner-centred, approaches to teaching, learning, classroom management and assessment be integrated across all teacher education programmes.

Chapter 3

Recommendation 3.1.1:

That the professional competences in the Broad Curriculum for all future programmes be aligned with the NPST, school performance indicators and any other relevant policy requirements.

Recommendation 3.1.2:

Students enrol in the "ICT's for Educators" course and show proof of certification prior to graduation.

Recommendation 3.1.3:

Students enrol in the English Proficiency for Teachers course and show proof of certification prior to graduation.

Recommendation 3.1.4:

Students enrol in a recognized First Aid training course and show proof of certification prior to graduation

Recommendation 3.1.5:

The new primary programme (preferably a degree) be designed to be registered at level 7 on the NQF.

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Recommendation 3.1.6:

School based studies be reviewed so that it is integrated into the whole programme

Recommendation 3.1.7:

A reflective approach to micro-teaching becomes an integral component of the practical preparation for all student teachers.

Recommendation 3.1.8:

That the guidelines in the Broad Curriculum for critical inquiry be reviewed with the focus being on developing a teacher who is critically reflective about their own learning and teaching practices.

Recommendation 3.1.9:

Students are trained to read and learn from appropriate research as a means to achieve analytical and reflective thought.

Recommendation 3.1.10:

That the content, inclusion and compulsory requirements of the core subjects be reviewed, to ensure that they meet accreditation requirements and the changing needs of schools.

Recommendation 3.1.11

That all student teachers take at least one non-promotional subject in addition to their areas of specialisation.

Recommendation 3.1.12:

That HIV and AIDS and environmental education be taught in depth in one subject (e.g. ETP) that will be compulsory for all students, as well as a cross curriculum theme.

Recommendation 3.1.13:

That using ICT as a teaching tool be integrated into all areas of specialization.

Recommendation 3.1.14:

That the primary programme include training for multigrade teaching, remedial or compensatory teaching, inclusive education, multicultural teaching, classroom management, assessment and counselling.

Recommendation 3.1.15

All teacher educators in study educational philosophical traditions and situate learner-centred education in its appropriate philosophical framework (see Recommendation 2.2.6).

Recommendation 3.1.16:

Teacher educators model their instructional methodology on learner-centred and learning centred approaches.

Recommendation 3.1.17:

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That there be a moderated examination at the end of each learning period for each content area, with a national standardized examination at the end of the first and final years (see also Recommendation 3.4.4).

Recommendation 3.1.18:

Criteria for moderation of the summative assessment are developed using the key competences identified in the NPST (see Appendix H).

Recommendation 3.1.19:

Moderation feedback on summative assessment is used for decision-making regarding student promotions as well as teaching and programme improvement.

Recommendation 3.2.1:

That teacher education curricula be designed to take note of NQA accreditation criteria including credits, level descriptor, competences being addressed, priority weightings and assessment requirements.

Recommendation 3.2.2:

That teacher education curricula be designed around four key areas: National Professional Standards and competences for Teachers; Core skills and Basic Competences required in Basic Education (relevant to the Phase); requirements for a Level 7 qualification (NQF); and subject content appropriate to Level 7 requirements (see Appendix H).

Recommendation 3.2.3:

That English Proficiency, ICT for Educators, and First Aid courses should be certified separately.

Recommendation 3.2.4:

That professional subjects focus on broad educational disciplines.

Recommendation 3.3.1:

A national body be responsible for administering and handling all admissions and aptitude tests to colleges and FoE, consistently applying the requirements.

Recommendation 3.3.2:

Admission standards are increased. The level being advocated is a score of 25 points in 5 best school subjects in grade 12 with a minimum C grade in English plus a C in the area of specialization in UP (see Appendix K) (this requirement will be phased in with the revised BETD requirements (2007) being applied for the 2009 & 2010 intake into the colleges).

Recommendation 3.3.3:

A standardized aptitude test (including English) be developed to assess candidates' "suitability" for the profession. A passing grade is required for admission to teacher education programme.

Recommendation 3.3.4:

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Students who score below the required entry marks (including marginalised students) who wish to enter teacher education be provided with a Foundation or Preparation year in which they would be required to reach a defined level of competence in English and meet the standard entry requirements.

Note: The Foundation or Preparation year is not considered as part of the teacher education programme.

Recommendation 3.3.5:

At enrolment students will either demonstrate proficiency in ICT or take an ICT Literacy course.

Recommendation 3.3.6:

The duration of the qualification offered at the colleges for Primary Teaching remain at three years. The duration of training for secondary teachers, being the B.Ed will be four years. (see Recommendation 3.1.5)

Recommendation 3.4.1:

That the regulations in all teacher education programmes relating to assessment and promotion be reviewed to bring them in-line with general education and tertiary education practices.

Recommendation 3.4.2:

That the pass level of school based studies and microteaching competences be in-line NPST (see Appendix H) and that the students' performance marks be moderated.

Recommendation 3.4.3:

That all teacher education programmes implement a variety of assessment modes relevant to the curriculum, with competency based (criterion-referenced assessment) applied to, continuous formative assessment as well as summative assessment.

Recommendation 3.5.1:

The subjects be reviewed so that they reflect the subject combinations (learning areas) being offered in those phases in the schools (See Appendix E).

Recommendation 3.5.2:

That all Lower Primary teachers be able to teach fluently in both mother tongue and English.

Recommendation 3.5.3:

That Upper Primary students take at least two subjects in the same grouping (learning areas), in the same phase.

Recommendation 3.5.4:

That the institution(s) offering secondary training ensure that they provide training in the full range of secondary school subjects.

Recommendation 3.5.5:

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Appendix 4

Research Tools

Semi Structured interview with Senior Academic Staff of the University of Namibia, Faculty of Education

Introduction

Issues of quality in teacher education are said to be among the factors that led to the merger between Namibia former colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education. The understanding among policy makers is that when the teacher education system is of high quality, the quality of education in general will improve. This interview aims to understand how teacher educators perceive the recent mergers between former Colleges and UNAM's Faculty of Education. Interviews in this study will be semi structured. The interview will be flexible so not all questions below may be asked depending on the flow of the discussions.

The questions represent themes for investigation and analysis. The information gathered will be useful in future decision makings regarding institutional mergers.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:

What is your current position?

How long have you been in this position?

Please tell me about your background- how you have reached this position?

Please describe your duties in the current position with regards to the current merger?

SENIOR ACADEMIC STAFF PERCEPTIONS ON MERGERS

When and how did you start hearing about the merger between colleges of education and UNAM?

From your perspectives how would you describe the purpose of the merger?

At the time the merger was announced, how do you describe your own impressions about the merger?

How do you describe the impressions of the staff about the merger?

What is the most useful think about the merger?

What do you do now that was not possible before the merger?

From your perspective how do you describe the developments of the merger so far?

In what way do you think developments in terms of the mergers so far are in line with the purpose of the merger?

Please describe the relationship between the former colleges and the faculty of education with regards to equal status?

QUALITY

How do you think about the merger's ability to improve quality teacher education?

What do you think is the role of the teacher educator in creating quality?

How do you know when the teaching is of high quality?

How do the objectives of the merger shape your practice of ensuring quality teacher education?

What support do you need to provide high teacher education quality?

MERGER CHALLENGES

What are the major challenges/ problems you are experiencing in the implementations of the merger

What do you think are some of the challenges that your teacher educators face that might prevent them from providing quality teacher education?

RECOMMENDATIONS

What changes do you like to see in your campus that you think would best make this merger successful in improving quality teacher education?

What changes would you like seeing in future with regards to educational institutional mergers?

Are there any other relevant issues to raise with me on the topic under discussion?

Thank you for very much for participating in this research project.

Appendix 5

FOCUS GROUP WITH TEACHER EDUCATORS

Introduction

Issues of quality in teacher education are said to be among the factors that led to the merger between Namibia former colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education. The understanding among policy makers is that when the teacher education system is of high quality, the quality of education in general will improve. This focus group aims to understand how teacher educators perceive the recent mergers between former Colleges and UNAM's Faculty of Education. Interviews in this study will be semi structured. The interview will be flexible so not all questions below may be asked depending on the flow of the discussions.

The questions represent themes for investigation and analysis. The information gathered will be useful in future decision makings regarding institutional mergers.

BACKGROUND:

What is your current position? *(Each participant must talk about his or her position)*

How long have you been teaching at this Campus? *(Each participant must talk about how long he or she has been in the position).*

What other duties in addition to teaching, if any do you have at your campus? *(Those participants with extra duties must describe their other duties)*

When and how did you start hearing about the merger between colleges of education and UNAM?

What was your first impression?

TEACHER EDUCATION

In your opinion, why do you think teacher education is important for Namibia?

What images of a teacher educator do you have before the mergers of former colleges and UNAM's Faculty of education?

Do you think those images are the same after the merger? If yes explain, explain.

If no, what are those changes?

TEACHER EDUCATORS PERCEPTIONS:

From your perspectives how would you describe the purpose of the merger?

What is the most useful think about the merger?

What do you do now that was not possible before the merger?

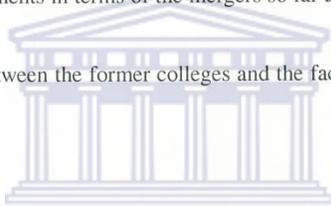
At the time of the merger how would you describe the way you were introduced to it?

In what way do you think the merger was welcome or contested?

From your perspective how do you describe the developments of the merger so far?

In what way do you think developments in terms of the mergers so far are in line with the program of the merger?

Please describe the relationship between the former colleges and the faculty of education with regards to equal status?



QUALITY

How do you think about the merger's ability to improve quality teacher education?

What do you think is the role of the teacher educator in creating quality?

How do you know when the teaching is of high quality?

How does the merger shape your practice of delivering quality teacher education?

What support do you need to provide high quality teaching?

MERGER CHALLENGES

What are the major challenges/ problems you are experiencing in the implementations of the merger?

What do you think are some of the challenges that teacher educators face that might prevent them from providing quality teacher education?

RECOMMENDATIONS

What changes would you like seeing in future with regards to educational institutional mergers?

What changes do you like to see in your campus that you think would best make this merger successful in improving quality teacher education?

Are there any other relevant issues to raise with me on the topic under discussion?

Thank you for very much for participating in this research project.



Appendix 6a

UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA FACULTY OF EDUCATION

MERGER COLLEGES OF EDUCATION WITH FACULTY OF EDUCATION AT UNAM

SUBJECT: Briefing Notes 01 & 02 of the Academic Sub-Committee
FROM: Dean: Faculty of Education and Chairperson: Academic Sub-Committee:
Prof. [redacted]
DATE: 30 October 2009

On 16 October 2009 at a Special Faculty of Education meeting the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Prof. [redacted], briefed officially the Faculty of Education about the Cabinet's decision that approved the full merger of the four Colleges of Education (Caprivi, Rundu, Ongwediva and Windhoek) with the Faculty of Education at the University of Namibia with effect from 1 April 2010. The Faculty of Education accepted the composition and terms of reference of the Academic Sub-Committee with some amendments.

On 27 October 2009 the first inaugural meeting of the Academic Sub-Committee met in the Foundation Boardroom at the University of Namibia. The Academic Sub-Committee approved and made amendments to the composition of the committee as follows:

Composition

1. Chairperson: Dean Faculty of Education;
2. Deputy Chairperson: Under Secretary – Life Long Learning: MoE;
3. Deputy Dean: Faculty of Education;
4. Head of Department: DMSSE;
5. Head of Department: DLLCE;
6. Head of Department: CIAS;
7. Head of Department: DEFM;
8. Head of Department: DEPIE;
9. Director: Postgraduate Studies;
10. Chairperson: Curriculum Compilation Committee;

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Ongwediva College of Education
THE PRINCIPAL
05 NOV 2009
Private Fax: 8607-Oshakati
Tel: (008) 230001
Fax: (008) 230008

Governance, Administration and Mandate

The Consultancy members of the Teacher Education Reform Report will be asked to make a presentation at the next Academic Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Schedule of Meetings of the Academic Sub-Committee

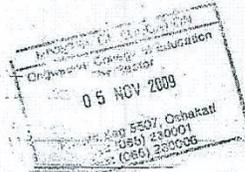
1.	Tuesday, 27 October 2009	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
2.	Tuesday, 3 November 2009	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
3.	Monday, 23 November 2009	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
4.	Tuesday, 1 December 2009	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
5.	Monday, 7 December 2009	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
6.	Monday, 18 January 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
7.	Monday, 25 January 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
8.	Monday, 8 February 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
9.	Monday, 22 February 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
10.	Monday, 8 March 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00
11.	Monday, 22 March 2010	UNAM Foundations Boardroom	10h00

The meeting adjourned at 12h35



Prof.
Dean: Faculty of Education and Chairperson: Academic Sub-Committee

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE



Appendix 6b

Attention: Rectors – OCE, RCE, CCE

2009

Please find the minutes of the
meeting of the Colleges Merger



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Congregate College of Education
The Rector
05 NOV 2009
Private Bag 5697, Oshakati
Tel: (868) 234001
Fax: (868) 230006

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING ON THE TRANSFER OF THE
EDUCATION COLLEGES TO UNAM

DATE: 02 November 2009
TIME: 14h30
VENUE: Registrar's Boardroom – UNAM

i. WELCOME

Mr. [redacted] welcomed all present to the first meeting of the HR Sub-Committee on the merger of the Education Colleges with UNAM. He said that the members would be required to attend a number of meetings until the finalization of the whole merger exercise and that the members may from time to time expect to be called to meetings on short notices. This is due to the hectic schedules of all members serving on the committee. He then gave relevant feedback of the first meeting of the Main Merger Committee and explained the terms of reference of the HR Sub-Committee as follows: reviewing of qualifications of staff, the age profile, fringe benefits, vacancies and new positions, human resources and salary budget, staff development issues, job evaluation of positions in administrative cadre, training of staff, information sessions, outsourcing – issues affecting human resources: catering services, terrain services, refuse removal, security services, laundry services, cleaning services and other relevant services and the organogram of the Faculty/Campuses.

It was noted that the Representatives from the Planning Directorate, MoE and the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) was not present. It was agreed that [redacted] would confirm from the Director of Higher Education (MoE) who are the representatives from the OPM and the Planning Directorate (MoE) and revert back to the Secretary of this Committee. [redacted] the Vice-Rector of Windhoek College of Education represented [redacted] and [redacted] and the meeting agreed that she remains as a co-opted member of the HR Sub-Committee for future meetings, since it would not be always possible for the members from Caprivi College and Ongwediva College to attend the meetings. The Committee also agreed that the UNIONS should form part of the HR Sub-Committee.

2. ATTENDANCE
PRESENT:

[redacted] Chairperson / Convener (Director: Human Resources - UNAM)
[redacted] Chief Human Resources Practitioner – MoE
[redacted] Vice-Rector: Windhoek College of Education
[redacted] Assistant Director: HR Services – UNAM
[redacted] Assistant Director: Policies, SD & Training and FEO – UNAM
[redacted] NANTU Chairperson (UNAM – Branch)

Page 1 of HR Sub-Committee 001/2009

Appendix 7

OFFICE OF THE DEAN
DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH
DEVELOPMENT

Private Bag X17, Bellville 7635
South Africa
Telegraph: UNISELL
Telephone: +27 21 959-2948/2949
Fax: +27 21 959-3170
Website: www.uwc.ac.za

15 July 2011

To Whom It May Concern

I hereby certify that the Senate Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape has approved the methodology and the ethics of the following research project by: (Education).

Research Project: Perceptions of Namibian Teacher Educators of the merger between Namibian Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia

Registration no: 11/5/30



Research Ethics Committee Officer
University of the Western Cape

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

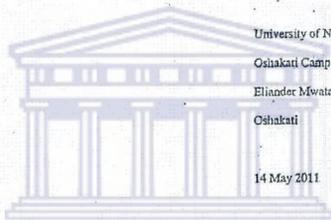
A place of quality, a place to grow, from hope to action through knowledge

Appendix 8

Appendix C: Interview Protocols

Permission to Conduct Research

UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE
Faculty of Education



University of Namibia
Oshakati Campus
Eliander Mwatara Street
Oshakati

14 May 2011

Professor

Pro-Vice Chancellor Academic and Research Affairs
University of Namibia

UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE

Re: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Professor:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at the University of Namibia in the Faculty of Education. I am currently enrolled in the PhD program at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and am in the process of applying for Ethical Clearance. The study is entitled "Perceptions of Namibian teacher Educators on the merger between Namibia colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education." The interviews are planned to take place during the month of June to July 2011.

I hope that the University management through your office will allow me to interview and conduct focus group discussions with senior academic staff and lecturers in the Faculty of Education as well as the groups of 6-8 lecturers per campus (Windhoek, Ongwediva, Rundu and Karima Mulilo).

Appendix 9

UNIVERSITY of the WESTERN CAPE
Faculty of Education

University of Namibia
Oshana Campus

July 27, 2011

Professor . . .
Dean Faculty of Education
University of Namibia

Dear Professor

Re: Permission to Conduct Research Study

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at the University of Namibia in the Faculty of Education. I am currently enrolled in the PhD program at the University of the Western Cape in South Africa and am in the process of applying for Ethical Clearance. The study is entitled "Perceptions of Namibian teacher Educators on the merger between Namibia colleges of education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education." The interviews are planned to take place during the month of August 2011.

I hope that the University management through your office will allow me to interview and conduct focus group discussions with senior academic staff and lecturers in the Faculty of Education as well as the groups of 6-8 lecturers per campus (Windhoek, Ongwediva, Rundu and Katima Mulilo). Apart from the Focus group, the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Deputy Deans will also be interviewed separately.

If approval is granted, teacher educators will be interviewed on site at the time convenient to each campus. The interview and focus groups should take no longer than 40 minutes. The results of the interviews and focus groups will be used for thesis report but individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous.

I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at this time.

If permission is granted please do so in writing and post it to my address stated above.

Sincerely,

Cc: Dr.

Supervisor



If approval is granted, teacher educators will be interviewed on site at the time convenient to each campus. The interview and focus groups should take no longer than 40 minutes. The results of the interviews and focus groups will be used for this report but individual results of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous.

I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at this time.

If permission is granted please do so in writing and post it to my address stated above.

Sincerely,

Cc: Dr. Supervisor



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Appendix 10a

From:
Sent: Thursday, July 28, 2011 12:07 PM
To:
Cc:
Subject: Study Interview with Faculty of Education Teacher Educators
Attachments: Senate Approval.docx

Dear

As a PhD student at the Western Cape University, I plan to conduct research focussing on recent mergers between former colleges of education and UNAM Faculty of Education. (Please See attached Ethical Clearance letter).

I humbly request for your time to have interview with me in your capacity as Deputy Deans and Former Rectors of Windhoek and Ongwediva Colleges of Education.

I also request to conduct at least two focus groups with your staff.

1. One with senior academic staff /management, possibly this group should consist of those who were HOD's in the former college and the new subject coordinators but exclude Deputy Deans.

2. Another focus group with just lecturers drawn at least from all departments.

Each focus group can range from 6- 8 people.

Two days are put aside for you to choose:

Former Windhoek College of Education

- a) 04-05 August or
- b) 18-19 August 2011

HP

- a) 9 August
- b) 15-16 August or 22-23 August 2011

Please let me know which day is mostly applicable to you directly or through Ms.

Appindex 10b

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2011 4:43 PM
To: [Redacted]
Subject: Study Interview with Faculty of Education Teacher Educator
Attachments: Senate Approval.docx

Dear Mr. .

As a PhD student at the University of Western Cape, I plan to conduct research focusing on recent mergers between former colleges of education and UNAM Faculty of Education. (Please see attached Ethical Clearance letter).

I humbly request for your time to have interview with me in your capacity as Deputy Deans and Former Rector of Caprivi College of Education on 1 and 2 December 2011.

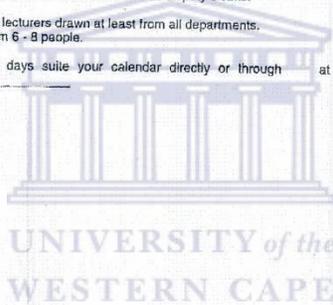
I also request to conduct at least two focus groups with your staff.

1. One with Senior academic staff / management, possibly this group should consist of those who were HOD's in the former college and the new subject coordinators but exclude Deputy Deans.

2. Another focus group with just lecturers drawn at least from all departments.
Each focus group can range from 6 - 8 people.

Please let me know if those days suite your calendar directly or through [Redacted] at 065-223 2234 / 2278 or [Redacted]

Regards



Appendix 10c

From:
Sent: Monday, November 21, 2011 4:44 PM
To:
Subject: Study Interview with Faculty of Education Teacher Educators
Attachments: Senate Approval.docx

Dear Mr.

As a PhD student at the University of Western Cape, I plan to conduct research focusing on recent mergers between former colleges of education and UNAM Faculty of Education. (Please see attached Ethical Clearance letter).

I humbly request for your time to have interview with me in your capacity as Deputy Dean and Former Rector of Rundu College of Education on 28 and 29 November 2011.

I also request to conduct at least two focus groups with your staff.

1. One with Senior academic staff / management, possibly this group should consist of those who were HOD's of the former college and the new subject coordinators but exclude Deputy Deans.

2. Another focus group with just lecturers drawn at least from all departments.
Each focus group can range from 6-8 people.

Please let me know if those days suite your calendar directly or through at 065-223 2234 / 22

Regards

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Appendix 11a

Confidentiality Consent Form for Participants in a Focus Group

We, the undersigned focus group of teacher educators agree to keep all the information that we will provide and share in the interview of the study entitled: Perceptions of Namibian teacher educators of the merger between Namibia Colleges of Education and the University of Namibia's Faculty of Education, as confidential as much as possible.

The nature and general purpose of the study and all the possible risks have been explained to us beforehand and we are aware that we have the right to terminate our services in this research at any time we desire.

We indemnify and hold harmless the researcher, the University of the Western Cape and its employees from any and all liability, actions or causes of actions that may accrue to us as a result of activities for which this consent is granted.

Name of Participant 1 Signature

Name of Participant 2 Signature

Name of Participant 3 Signature

Name of Participant 4 Signature

Name of Participant 5 Signature

This is to certify that I (researcher) have explained the purpose of the study to all the research subjects and promise to keep the information provided to me confidential.

Signature of Researcher:

How long have you been teaching at this Campus? (Each participant must talk about how long he or she has been in the position).

What other duties in addition to teaching, if any do you have at your campus? (Those participants with extra duties must describe their other duties)

When and how did you start hearing about the merger between colleges of education and UNAM?

What was your first impression?

TEACHER EDUCATION

In your opinion, why do you think teacher education is important for Namibia?

What images of a teacher educator do you have before the mergers of former colleges and UNAM's Faculty of education?

Do you think those images are the same after the merger? If yes explain, explain.

If no, what are those changes?

TEACHER EDUCATORS PERCEPTIONS:

From your perspectives how would you describe the purpose of the merger?

What is the most useful think about the merger?

What do you do now that was not possible before the merger?

At the time of the merger how would you describe the way you were introduced to it?

In what way do you think the merger was welcome or contested?

From your perspective how do you describe the developments of the merger so far?

In what way do you think developments in terms of the mergers so far are in line with the program of the merger?

Please describe the relationship between the former colleges and the faculty of education with regards to equal status?

QUALITY

How do you think about the merger's ability to improve quality teacher education?

What do you think is the role of the teacher educator in creating quality?

How do you know when the teaching is of high quality?

How does the merger shape your practice of delivering quality teacher education?

What support do you need to provide high quality teaching?

MERGER CHALLENGES

What are the major challenges/ problems you are experiencing in the implementations of the merger?

What do you think are some of the challenges that teacher educators face that might prevent them from providing quality teacher education?

RECOMMENDATIONS

What changes would you like seeing in future with regards to educational institutional mergers?

What changes do you like to see in your campus that you think would best make this merger successful in improving quality teacher education?

Are there any other relevant issues to raise with me on the topic under discussion?

Thank you for very much for participating in this research project.

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