

**A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE
AT A NAMIBIAN UNIVERSITY**

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degree of Master of Education in the Faculty of Education
at Stellenbosch University*



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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that production and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

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ABSTRACT

This philosophical study draws on Gadamer's hermeneutics, which is primarily concerned with the understanding and interpretation of texts. From this perspective I conduct a conceptual and documentary analysis of institutional culture with the aim of gaining deeper understanding of how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in institutional policy documents. The unit of analysis is the University of Namibia (UNAM), the leading higher education institution in Namibia. The available data indicates that institutional culture in the Namibian context has been under-studied.

I constructed four meanings (strategy, typology, history and tradition, and scholarship) that served as a theoretical framework for an analysis of the institutional policy documents of UNAM. This study found that the meanings of institutional culture are articulated in relevant policy documents and that the university's institutional culture is influenced by the national policy, Namibia Vision 2030. UNAM seeks to develop its students and the community to lead institutions in the country towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and improved quality of life. By implication, UNAM is not an outstanding institution but envisages to become one by the year 2030. Further, UNAM sees itself as weak in terms of knowledge creation and publication, and desires this area to be a best practice in the next five year. UNAM can be classified as a developmental institution and draws from the national developmental strategy in Namibia Vision 2030. To respond to this national vision, UNAM seeks to align its institutional culture according to national priorities.

KEY WORDS: conceptual analysis, hermeneutics, institutional culture, higher education, meanings

OPSOMMING

Hierdie filosofiese studie maak gebruik van Gadamer se hermeneutiek, wat primêr besorg is met die verstaan en interpretasie van teks. Uit hierdie perspektief doen ek 'n konseptuele en dokumentêre analise van institusionele kultuur met die doel om 'n dieper begrip te bekom oor hoe institusionele kultuur in institusionele beleidsdokumente geïnkorporeer en geïnkorporeer word. Die eenheid van analise was die Universiteit van Namibië (UNAM), die vernaamste hoëronderwysinstelling in Namibië. Beskikbare data dui daarop dat institusionele kultuur in die Namibiese konteks onderbestudeer is.

Ek het vier betekenisvolle geïnkorporeer (strategie, tipologie, geskiedenis en tradisie, en akademieskap) om as 'n teoretiese raamwerk vir die analise van UNAM se institusionele beleidsdokumente te dien. Hierdie studie bevind dat die betekenisvolle van institusionele kultuur in relevante beleidsdokumente geïnkorporeer word, en verder dat die universiteit se institusionele kultuur beïnvloed word deur die nasionale beleid, naamlik Namibië se *Vision 2030*. UNAM poog om sy studente en die samelewing op te bou om sodoende instellings in die land te lei na 'n kennisgebaseerde ekonomie, ekonomiese groei en 'n beter lewensgehalte. By implikasie is UNAM nie reeds 'n uitmuntende instelling nie, maar streef hy wel daarna om teen die jaar 2030 'n uitmuntende instelling te wees. Verder sien UNAM homself ook as swak in terme van kenniskepping en -publikasie, en wil graag sien dat hierdie area in die volgende vyf jaar 'n beste praktyk raak. UNAM kan as 'n ontwikkelingsinstelling geklassifiseer word en verkry inspirasie uit die nasionale ontwikkelingsstrategie vervat in *Vision 2030*. As antwoord op hierdie nasionale visie streef UNAM daarna om sy institusionele kultuur as 'n nasionale prioriteit te rig.

SLEUTELWOORDE: konseptuele analise, hermeneutiek, institusionele kultuur, hoër onderwys, betekenisvolle

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

BEd	Bachelor of Education
BEd Hons	Bachelor of Education Honours
BETD	Basic Education Teachers Diploma
CCE	Caprivi College of Education
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
GRN	Government of the Republic of Namibia
IUM	International University of Management
KM	Katima Mulilo
LCE	Learner-centred Approach
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OLG	Open Learning Group
UNAM	University of Namibia
PON	Polytechnic of Namibia
SA	South Africa
SAERA	South African Education Research Association
SBS	School-based Studies
SU	Stellenbosch University

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE RESEARCH

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study entailed a conceptual analysis of the institutional culture at a Namibian university, and the site of analysis is the University of Namibia (UNAM). The study was interpretive and I conducted a hermeneutical inquiry that drew on Gadamer's theory of understanding and interpretation. My aim was to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of institutional culture in a university setting, and how it is constructed and articulated in institutional documents. Namibia is a developing country, and there has been a major shift in the changing nature of the roles of universities in developing countries since the beginning of the twenty-first century (Dodds, 2001:502). It follows that the universities that were established in the newly formed African states had high ideals for them to become major agents of nation building and socio-economic development (Kirby-Harris, 2003:359). African universities were thus seen as more than institutions for teaching, research and dissemination of higher learning, and instead were accountable to, and in service of, the vast majority of the people in a country (Yesufu, 1974, in Kirby-Harris, 2003:359). As Saint put it (in Kirby-Harris, 2003:359):

African universities were viewed as being instruments for national development and they were expected to produce the skilled human resources necessary to manage newly independent countries, to generate developmentally relevant research, and to provide community service.

In the light of the above, the University of Namibia (UNAM) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1992 after Namibia gained independence. Following the recommendations of the Act, UNAM has a key role to play in national development (Bull *et al.*, 2012:4).

The higher education system in Namibia consists of three institutions: the University of Namibia, which is a public institution, the Polytechnic of Namibia (PON), which is also a public institution,

and the International University of Management (IUM), which is a private institution. To come back to UNAM: as a new institution in a newly independent country, the university was established with a number of roles. One of the roles assigned to UNAM was to contribute to the social and economic development of Namibia by providing higher education through teaching and research (Republic of Namibia, 1992). In order for this role to be effective, Hopson (2001:123) states that transforming the Namibian society was the key to higher education development in Namibia. Two challenges are related to the latter, and these challenges are articulated in Vision 2030 (Republic of Namibia, 2004).

Given the above, a question arises: what is institutional culture? The concept of institutional culture does not have a single meaning. It is a concept that cannot be understood from a cultural perspective (Jacobs, 2012:58; Van Wyk, 2009:335). The concept of culture refers to many elements in universities, with the result that the concept of institutional culture can be difficult to understand. Due to these many elements, the question is not what institutional culture is, but rather what constitutes the concept. In trying to understand the concept, higher education scholars present many aspects that constitute it. The aspects include the shared beliefs, values, practices, assumptions and ideologies that guide the behaviour of those within the university (Jacobs, 2012:73; Van Wyk, 2009:337). Institutional culture touches on many aspects that are not always clearly articulated as meanings of institutional culture. Central to understanding institutional culture in these institutional documents, it was necessary to look at the aspects that guide the behaviours, actions and activities of the university members, for example leadership, governance, language, sport, research, strategy, mission, information, policies and socialisation (Van Wyk, 2009:338; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:129). Given all these aspects, it becomes clear how difficult it is to study institutional culture and, drawing from Vukuza-Linda's (2014:39) statement, exploring institutional culture not only involves the question of whom to study, but also of what to study.

This chapter presents an orientation to my study. Firstly, I present the background to the research. The motivation for the study follows next. Then there is a discussion of Philosophy of Education

as an approach to the study, the statement of the problem, and an introduction to related concepts. Lastly, I provide the chapter outline of the study.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Before Namibia gained independence in 1990, the higher education system was in line with apartheid policies because the country was colonised by South Africa. By this I mean that the provision for higher education was based on racial issues, according to which black students did not have access to higher education. As Ping and Crowley (1997:384) put it, colonial Namibia was a place where those who held political power saw no advantage in providing education at any level to the black majority. In this section I shall briefly discuss the background to the context of study, namely UNAM. I will provide a detailed discussion of this in a dedicated chapter (Chapter 4). I do this because I wanted to familiarise the reader with the historical context of the study. I draw on Gadamer (1975), who says that one way to understand a phenomenon or text is to understand it from a historically conscious perspective. As Dilthey (in Van Wyk, 2004:27) puts it, we may find that our texts are not the only sources, but that historical reality is a text that has to be understood. To this end I will describe the historical development of higher education in Namibia.

Namibia spent many years under colonial rule. It was first colonised by the Germans (between 1884 and 1915) (Kandumbu, 2005:10). I could not find studies that write about higher education during this period. After the Germans, South African rule took over from 1915 to 1990. During this period, Namibia had only one higher education institution, which was known as the Namibian Academy (Vergnani, 2000:51). It was established by Act 13 of 1980, which granted it greater autonomy under the name, “the Academy for Tertiary Education”. Given greater autonomy, the Academy was expected to extend its powers and organise itself into divisions, such as a university, college, technikon and institute. It was also expected to award degrees, diplomas and certificates, provide for management and control of its affairs, and also provide for incidental matters (Vergnani, 2000:51). The Academy was organised into three relatively autonomous institutions, namely a college, a technikon and a university. These three institutions were all under a single management (Ministry of Education and Culture [MEC], 1993:108). The university section continued with its previous structure that had its origins in South Africa. It had five faculties,

namely Arts, Science, Economics and Management Science, Education and Health Sciences. When Namibia gained independence in 1990, it saw a need to close the Academy and establish a new university. The Namibian Government appointed a Presidential Commission on Higher Education (Kirby-Harris, 2003:360). One of the aims of the commission was to propose the closing of the Academy and recommend the establishment of a new university with the name 'the University of Namibia' (Choombe, 1993:65). As recommended by this commission, the University of Namibia was formally established by an Act of Parliament in 1992 (Hopson, 2001:121-122; Republic of Namibia, 1992). The university was established with several aims. Some of the aims were to provide higher education, undertake research, advance and disseminate knowledge, engage in further training and continuing education, and contribute to the social and economic development of Namibia (Republic of Namibia, 1992).

Soon after UNAM was established, it assumed responsibility for continuing and managing the programmes of the former Academy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:110). The newly established university's structure, purpose and culture were drawn from some of the African higher education traditions that existed. It specifically inherited these from the British elite university system that were adopted by other African higher education institutions, and this influenced its institutional culture. Having inherited its culture, teaching, research and other services, it was expected to help build a new nation by changing both individual lives and the structure of Namibian society (Ping & Crowley, 1997:384).

In terms of policies, the Namibian government used several policies to transform the higher education system after independence. The first policy that was developed to transform not only higher education, but the entire education system, was 'Toward Education for All' (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993). The aim of the policy was to address past education inequalities, and it suggested a move away from education for the elite towards one that included the whole Namibian society. It stated that 'education is the right for every Namibian'. This statement was in line with the constitution and the national developmental strategy, since these emphasised that basic and higher education should be for all (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:2-3). The second policy that came after this was Vision 2030, which was developed in 2004. This policy does not address issues concerning education, but is a policy framework for long-term national

development in Namibia. The policy document presents a clear view of the major national problems, and how these problems may effectively be resolved by using all necessary human and natural resources. In other words, Vision 2030 defines Namibia's future development possibilities. What the government wants from the private and public sector is to ensure that the Vision is translated into reality (Republic of Namibia, 2004:10-11). To enable this policy to be effective, the third policy to be developed was the 'Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), in 2005. This policy is directed to the education sector (basic and higher education). In terms of higher education, the aim of the policy is to prepare higher education institutions in Namibia for the implementation of Vision 2030. In reality, the policy may increase the relevance of Vision 2030 and adopt a science and technology approach to development. In this, higher education institutions are directed to look for innovative ways of developing teaching, learning and the research infrastructure that will put the Vision's goals at the frontline of development (UNAM, 2006:7).

Having looked at national policies that guide actions and practices in higher education, one may ask, what makes up higher education in this context? Higher education in Namibia is relatively young, since it only started in 1992. The Higher Education Act does not grant automatic qualification as higher education institutions to all post-secondary institutions (Republic of Namibia, 2003). It makes a clear distinction between those that fall under this system and those that do not. Other institutions, such as vocational colleges and the Namibian College of Open Learning, do not form part of the system. The system only consists of those that operate as public institutions, such as UNAM, the Polytechnic of Namibia and the International University of Management. The latter operates as a private higher education institution (Matengu *et al.*, 2014:83). Therefore, only three institutions constitute the Namibian higher education system.

Let me re-emphasise that this study focuses on UNAM only, and currently the university has grown to about eight faculties. These are the Faculties of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Economics and Management Science, Education, Engineering and Information Technology, Health Sciences, Humanity and Social Sciences, Law, and Science. The university also has schools such as the Namibian Business School and the School for Postgraduate Studies. It has spread its programmes by establishing about ten campuses across the country (UNAM, 2014).

1.3 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

It is possible to conduct a study based on one's personal reflection or beliefs with the aim to gain deeper insights and engage in discussions that will contribute to the existing body of knowledge. Soltis (1998:197) confirms this when he writes about the personal dimension, which he describes as a set of beliefs for the person conducting an inquiry. For me, this means that one must possess a set of beliefs that enables one to gain more insights into the concept under study. Referring to Soltis, such personal reflection and beliefs should comply with the norms and rules of academic research in order for them to be considered good, right and worthwhile. As such, my personal experiences, challenges and thoughts played a critical role in deciding my choice for a study. Taking my cue from Soltis, I shall discuss my personal interest in the concept of institutional culture and the discipline of Philosophy of Education as an approach to my study.

My interest in conducting this study arose during my honours studies at Stellenbosch University in 2013. In one of the lectures in Philosophy of Education with MEd coursework students, I was given a compiled reading of Chambliss. In this reading there was a book chapter on institutional culture by Berte van Wyk (2009). While engaging with the book chapter, my curiosity deepened and I reflected on the culture that I experienced as a student at the Caprivi College of Education (CCE) in Namibia. I also thought about the University of Namibia. I had no opportunity to study at UNAM and I wondered what made this institution unique. I asked myself questions: Why is UNAM special? What is going on in there? How are things done? What kind of culture is there? I thought perhaps a study of the concept of institutional culture would help me understand the systems and practices at UNAM.

Coming to my personal experience as a student teacher at CCE, I gained admission to CCE, an institution that offered a Basic Education Teachers Diploma (BETD), in 1996. My admission came two years after matric and being admitted to college was exciting. I came from an education system that only required learners to memorise answers, and therefore experienced a great deal of challenges. At college we were not expected to memorise answers but to talk in class. In other words, my educational and cultural background was different from that of the college. The teacher education programme was organised in such a way that there was room for students to actively

engage in classroom discussions and also to present lessons. I found it difficult to engage, express myself and present lessons because I was shy.

I also experienced a culture of teaching during the three years that I was a student teacher at CCE. The programme required students to do theory and practice. After doing the theory, we were sent for teaching practice in schools. I received extensive training on how to teach lower grades (1 to 4). In my second year, further lesson presentations were conducted in lectures called micro-teaching. For instance, each student was required to prepare a lesson in their field of specialisation and then present it in class, after which we got feedback from the students and lecturer on the weaknesses and strengths of the lesson presented. In both my second and third years I was sent to a school for teaching practice. My teaching practice was exciting, since I had to break from classroom activities at CCE for a while to teach young children. I conducted my practice in a grade two class, and observed the teacher while conducting lessons for a week.

A culture of academic writing and research was not part of the BETD programme, and I therefore did not experience such a culture while a student teacher at CCE. In terms of academic writing, assignments were written in various modules and were mostly handwritten. With regard to research, a mini-research project, which we referred to as an action plan, was conducted in my second and third years. When I conducted this mini-research project, I was sent for school-based studies (SBS) at a school outside the town centre for a period of five weeks. In the first two weeks I was required to observe and record my observations, and at the same time identify a problem. The last three weeks were meant for an action plan, during which I was expected to teach and come up with strategies to solve the problem that I identified. Upon returning to campus after my teaching practice, a full report on the outcome of the research was written. This was the only research paper that I wrote while a student teacher at CCE.

To come to my personal reflection about UNAM, the desire to understand this institution always appealed to me, but there was no opportunity to pursue this. Among the reasons for not applying to this institution were that it did not offer education management at the time, and also the assumption that UNAM did not offer a good education. It seemed to me that some people considered UNAM to mean nothing, while there also were students at this institution who were

very proud of studying there. During the holidays, UNAM students would boast about their institution. Those who considered UNAM to be weak in terms of education claimed that students did not complete their studies on time or that they did not pass their studies. They even went so far as saying that PON provided a better education than UNAM. Apart from this, there had been numerous reports in the media about activities at UNAM such as student demonstrations, suspension of lecturers, and the cancelling of student examinations (New Era, June 2014). All these things raised so many questions in my mind – too many to give here. As I read the book chapter by Van Wyk (2009), questions kept filling my mind and I thought to myself, let me conduct research on institutional culture with reference to UNAM.

Further motivation is that the study shall contribute to the understanding of institutional culture that is understudied in Namibia, and that the study shall bring to the fore aspects of the institutional culture that are valued at UNAM. Having provided my motivation for conducting this study, I now turn to my interest in Philosophy of Education as a discipline and also as an approach to my study.

1.4 PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

My interest in Philosophy of Education stems from images that arose from my cultural and educational background before the end of my BEd Honours degree at Stellenbosch University in 2013. I again touch on the aspects that led to my interest in the discipline of Philosophy of Education (see Soltis, 1998:197). I attended school at a village in Caprivi in Namibia, where I grew up. During my school years, I learnt in most cases by memorising lessons and providing answers. Two years after completing my secondary education, I gained admission to CCE, where things seemed to be different from what I did at school. Since I spent my school years learning by memorising, I came to college with the idea that we were required to memorise. However, I found that, at college, they expected students to engage in classroom discussions and present lessons. I mention again that my major challenge while at CCE was shyness, which made it difficult for me

to express myself in class. As a result of this, I chose to specialise in lower primary (grades 1 to 4).

I do not think that someone is born a shy person, but shyness can be a result of the things that you encounter in life. I was shy for two reasons; firstly, my culture did not allow me to express an opinion on anything. What I mean is that I was not allowed to explain anything or simply to have an opinion on something. When I did something wrong, no explanation was required and all that happened was that I was beaten, even if it was not my fault. Secondly, the schooling system also added to my shyness due to the expectation of memorising answers and content. At school, learners were expected to answer questions every time a new lesson started in all the subjects. We had to memorise answers after school and at night to avoid being beaten. If one gave a correct answer to a question then all was well, but if the answer was wrong, the one who gave a right answer would smack the one making a mistake. There was no way to escape this beating in class, because if one decided to stay away from school, the beating was worse. Although the beating was over after school, the fear and shyness remained in me and I carried it with me to college. After I completed my diploma in 1999, I took it with me to a rural school in Owamboland, where I started teaching. Nothing much changed for me at this school as a teacher, because it was deep in the rural areas, where we would only see a car once a week or no car at all. We survived by walking ten kilometres to the main road to get transport.

My experience as a teacher at the school in Owamboland was very different from the one at college. I experienced challenges with regard to the language. Although teachers spoke English, learners had difficulties with the language. For this reason, I could not teach my specialisation (lower primary) because of the language. Lower primary classes were taught in the mother tongue, which was different from mine. I was then given a class in upper primary, where I taught social studies and mathematics, which I was not trained to teach. I only taught at this school for one year and then decided to go back home to Katima Mulilo (KM).

At home, I again got a post at a rural school in Caprivi, but three years later I finally went to teach at a school in Katima Mulilo, where I was given a grade three class to teach. This involved class teaching, which means I taught all the subjects in the class. As a class teacher, the only time that I

was allowed to leave the class was at break time or at lunch, when it was time to go home. Even when I was moved to a grade four class in 2007, it was still within the same lower primary system. It became a daily routine to go to school, sit in a class until lunch, leave for home and wait for the next day. My life was heavily constrained because I moved with the fear and shyness I had carried with me from school. I left the college the same person, and I went to teach in Owamboland, where the language was a barrier and then, upon coming back to KM, I remained attached to a class until the day I resigned in 2012. There always is an assumption that lower primary teachers are poor in English because of spending many years teaching in the mother tongue. Because of this we hardly talked during staff meetings and also because we were not very involved in school activities, since we were class teachers. I hardly spoke in staff meetings, not because I did not have anything to say – I had ideas – but I was already judged as not knowing anything. I also was afraid that, if I made a point, it might not turn out to be a good one. What I am trying to say is that things did not make sense to me. I could not understand what I was teaching, why I was teaching and, most importantly, I could not understand why I was afraid and shy most of the time. I felt as if my mind was blocked by something I did not understand. I decided to come to Stellenbosch University in 2013 with the hope that I could be rescued from my situation and be transformed into a different person.

While studying honours at Stellenbosch University in 2013, I experienced the same shyness that I had before I came to this university. During lectures I found myself wanting to bury myself in the ground because of being afraid to be asked a question. I sometimes preferred to sit in a corner or at the back of a class, where I was not noticed. My interest in Philosophy of Education helped me to express myself, which then caused me to overcome my shyness. I had studied Education Management at Potchefstroom University (now North West University) in 2002 and I did modules such as education management, organisational management, education and society, and adult basic education, but not Philosophy of Education. For this reason, my first encounter with theories like positivism, interpretive approaches, communitarianism, deliberative democracy and democratic citizenship, critical theory, hermeneutics, phenomenology and pragmatism were enticing yet challenging (Waghid, 2004). To my surprise, I found some of these theories (positivism, interpretivism, critical thinking) in the Core Module. I began to wonder whether the theories were in English or in another language I did not know. What was strange during the lectures in philosophy was that it was emphasised that one must construct an argument. This was strange

because I thought an argument meant that there is a quarrel between two people. I asked myself: Who am I quarrelling with in this assignment? In this study, I explored Philosophy of Education because I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what it means, and this is why the study is grounded within the discipline. Conceptual analysis enabled me to explore the meanings of concepts, and I do so in the sections to follow.

1.4.1 What is Philosophy?

Prior to coming to Stellenbosch University, my understanding of philosophy was limited and I perceived it to be only concerned with thinking. As I started to explore the concept, it seemed to me that there was more to philosophy than just thinking. Insights into philosophy show that it has its roots in two Greek words: *Philos* (love) and *Sophos* (wisdom). When these two Greek words are put together, it simply means that philosophy is the love or pursuit of wisdom (Jacobs, 2012:9; Shanyanana, 2014:26). In my view, this means that philosophy is practised when one loves to explore new and interesting ideas. In other words, it means that one is eager to explore something interesting in order to gain a deeper understanding.

Barrow and Woods (1988:x) argue that philosophy is less about generating knowledge of new matters. Simply put, it is not to be thought of as a fixed body of information waiting to be digested. In the same way, Hirst (in Carr, 2005:2) argues that philosophy is not simply the pursuit of moral judgement. For me, this means that conducting research using the philosophical lens is not only about knowledge production or writing for the sake of gaining a degree. It is also not about writing facts or what is true, since knowledge requires constant questioning.

If philosophy is not only about acquiring knowledge, then what is it all about? Barrow and Woods (1988:x) argue further that philosophy is rather an activity through the exercise of which men and women can think things through, in concert with others, for themselves. In other words, it is about providing greater understanding of what we are already familiar with. They see it as mainly concerned with making sense of arguments and ideas. For Hirst (in Carr, 2005:2), philosophy is an analytical pursuit or a second-order area of knowledge that is concerned with the clarification of concepts and answering philosophical questions about the meaning of terms and expressions.

In view of the 'second order', Hirst and Peters (1998:28) argue that philosophy is an activity that is distinguished by its concern with certain types of reflective, second-order questions. They further argue that not all reflective, second-order questions are philosophical in nature. Philosophical questions are not about particular facts or moral judgements, but about what we mean by facts or moral judgements. From this point of view, philosophy is about gaining a deeper understanding of a situation. It is also about answering philosophical questions that are concerned with clarifying and justifying the meanings of concepts and ideas.

A question arises from this discussion, namely: How can one tell whether a question is philosophical or not? Hirst and Peters (1998:28) provide an answer when they argue that philosophy is distinguished from other reflective investigation because it entails a reflection on the concepts, and the kinds of grounds that are involved in making philosophical judgments. Put differently, philosophy is concerned with questions about the analysis of concepts and with questions about the grounds of knowledge, beliefs, actions and activities in education. In my view, this implies that, in philosophy, we do not ask questions that are specific or that give a specific answer. We ask questions that require an analysis of concepts, and also questions about the grounds of ideas, beliefs and ideologies in education.

Then, which questions are philosophical? Hamm (1989, in Jacobs, 2012:6) refers to three sorts of questions that philosophers attempt to answer. They attempt to answer questions like what do you mean? How do you know? and What is presupposed? Such questions, says McLaughlin (2005:21), require the philosopher to clarify concepts, and to explore the grounds of knowledge, the elucidation of presuppositions and the development of criteria for justification. From this discussion I understand that philosophy is not about answering questions that are specific or that give you an exact answer; it is also not about accepting knowledge that already exists. But, it is about questions that require some philosophical thought or analysis. It is about questions that require one to dig deeper by exploring the grounds of knowledge, clarifying concepts, developing an argument. In this study I apply philosophical beliefs not only to answer a specific question, for example what is the institutional culture? It rather is about analysing what institutional culture is all about, questioning ideas or what is known about the concept, developing an argument and exploring how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by UNAM. Therefore in this

study I explain philosophy to mean applying philosophical questions, a clarification of concepts, argumentation, justification and exploration of knowledge.

1.4.2 What is Education?

As a teacher in Namibia, I found it difficult to apply the learner-centred approach (LCE). This approach requires learners to be at the centre during teaching and learning. It means that the teacher should consider the ideas or understanding of learners throughout the teaching and learning process. However, it was difficult for me to use this approach because of the language of instruction. I mostly used a teacher-centred approach, because the school was in an area from which many disadvantaged children came. For me, LCE places an emphasis on the learner, who should be at the centre during teaching and learning. In other words, it requires learners to actively engage in classroom activities. Thus I associated the concept of education with a teacher giving knowledge and learners receiving it. I relate this to Freire's conception of education as the banking system.

Oakeshott (1998:287) argues that education is not about acquiring a stock of ready-made ideas, images, sentiments or beliefs. Barrow and Woods (1988:27-31) provide more insight when they clarify the concept of education. They begin with the claim that education implies that something worthwhile is being or has been transmitted intentionally in a morally acceptable manner. In my view, this means that education takes place when something important has been communicated in a good way. It means that, to be educated, a person must have gone through a process of learning (Jacobs, 2012:9; Shanyanana, 2014:27). Barrow and Woods's (1988:27-31) claim of education provides hints and clues to interesting questions, like What are the worthwhile things which are to be transmitted? and How do we tell whether a manner of transmission is morally acceptable or not?

In response to their questions, Barrow and Woods (1988:32-33) identify four criteria that distinguish education from other human pursuits, that imply that something worthwhile is transmitted and that the manner in which it is transmitted is worthwhile. Their first criterion entails a body of knowledge and understanding. They refer to this as the acquisition of a body of

knowledge and understanding that surpasses mere skill, know-how or the collection of information. But such knowledge and understanding must include the principles that underlie skills, procedural knowledge and information (Jacobs, 2012:9). I relate this to Oakeshott (1998:287), who simply argues that education is about learning to look, to listen, to think, to feel, to imagine, to believe, to understand, to choose and to wish. For me it means that one must not just collect information, but there must be some sort of understanding.

The second criterion that distinguishes education from other pursuits involves transformation (Barrow & Woods, 1988:31). This means that it must be able to transform the life of the person being educated in terms of his or her general outlook (Jacobs, 2012:9). The third criterion is commitment, which means that an educated person knows that evidence must be found for assumptions, and also knows what counts as evidence and takes care that it should be found. The educated person must have concerns of relevance, consistency or coherence in order to stay focused. The fourth criterion that distinguishes education from other pursuits involves a cognitive aspect. In this respect the process of education involves thought and activity. Thought includes general inquiries into the metaphysical, together with logic and the theory of knowledge (epistemology). Activity refers to the practices that encompass education, for instance the philosophy of science, history, mathematics, religion, ethics, aesthetics and social philosophy (Jacobs, 2012:9).

What I can gather from this discussion is that education is about acquiring a body of knowledge and understanding by engaging in reading, listening, and doing, talking and thinking. Thus, education must also be able to change a person in terms of how a person views things, thinks, is committed and how the person analyses things, and the person must be able to provide evidence for whatever he/she says. For example, I obtained my second diploma from Potchefstroom University through Namibia Open Learning Group Distance Education (OLG) in 2004. Since it was distance education, there were no lecturers to support students where they needed clarification. Most of my assignments were a duplicate of what was in the books. During the examinations I just

memorised the books. From this discussion it follows that I was not educated, but that I obtained the diploma because of memorising.

1.4.3 What is Philosophy of Education?

I was challenged when I was given a compiled reading of Chambliss (2009) that speaks about the current state of the field of philosophy of education. In trying to understand what philosophy of education is all about, my expectation while reading this article was to find a specific, clear meaning of ‘philosophy of education’. But it was not the case; each philosopher in the reading set about differently to explain what it is about. This made it difficult for me to understand. Randall Curren (in Chambliss, 2009:234) says it applies a set of philosophical beliefs to educational practice. Nigel Blake, in Chambliss’ *Blackwell Guide to Philosophy*, does not attempt to define philosophy of education, but begins by asserting that “important work and creative work” is being done in philosophy of education. Wilfred Carr (2005:236) points out that “what is striking about contemporary philosophy of education is the range of diverse and conflicting ways to understand what the discipline is all about”. This, for me, implies that philosophy of education is a discipline that is interpreted in many different ways. Its meaning depends on how one understands it.

Randall Curren (in Chambliss, 2009:234) describes philosophy of education as applying a set of philosophical beliefs to education practice. I understand this to mean that philosophy of education draws from the concept of philosophy to address issues in education. The concept of philosophy is concerned with second-order questions that require a clarification of concepts, an exploration of the grounds of knowledge, and the development of criteria for justification. Viewed from this perspective, philosophy of education, according to Carr (2005:20), is a quasi-technical, value-free discipline that is concerned with elucidating meanings of basic concepts in education by analysing logical conditions that govern the terms used to express them. Jacobs (2012:9) gives a better explanation of philosophy of education when she says that it is an applied field of philosophy that draws from the traditional field of philosophy, such as ethics and epistemology, to address questions regarding education policy, human development and curriculum theory. Put differently, philosophy of education is the philosophical study of the purpose, process, nature and ideas in education. What interests me more here is how philosophy of education uses philosophical beliefs

to understand matters in education. In this study I use philosophical approaches such as conceptual analysis and hermeneutics to understand how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by UNAM.

In sum, philosophy requires me to use philosophical approaches in my study. In other words, I undertake my study by using philosophical approaches. These approaches include formulating philosophical questions, clarifying concepts, exploring the knowledge, justifying what I say, and developing an argument. The concept of education wants me to engage in readings in order to acquire knowledge. It also wants me to change, to be committed to my work, to support what I say with evidence, and to read widely so that I can draw from a range of sources in various disciplines. When I have gained all this, then philosophy of education is an appropriate discipline to understand what I want to study.

In my quest to understand philosophy of education, I learnt about analytical philosophy while attending lectures with MEd students in 2013. I explored this field in order to gain a deeper understanding of how it can assist me in my study. I draw on Soltis (1998:197), who argues that analytical inquiry is a reflective and critical educational tool for research. He refers to it as a perspective to think with. For me, analytical inquiry has to do with thinking and can be considered a detailed instrument in research that concerns education. In other words, it is a research tool that can be used to think about education.

According to Soltis (1998:197), analytical inquiry has three overlapping dimensional approaches to educational tasks and problems. These are the personal, the public and the professional. For him, to have a *personal* dimension is to possess a set of personal beliefs about what can be considered good, right and worthwhile to do in education. Put simply, it is an inquiry from the view of the person conducting the research. In my view, this means that a person conducting research must have beliefs that comply with the rules of research. He further adds that the personal dimension of inquiry pursued from the view of the individual enables him/her to gain more insight into a subject, curriculum, policy and management. This means that a set of beliefs enables a person to gain a deeper understanding of his/her inquiry. What I can gather here is that the personal dimension requires me to have a concern that I want to understand, which is based on my personal

encounters, challenges and understanding. I must bring with me these encounters, challenges and understanding to gain insights into the educational issue that I am trying to understand. For example, I am trying to understand the institutional culture of UNAM. I must have concerns, questions, experiences and understanding to be able to gain insights into institutional culture. Therefore, the personal dimension is a very useful tool in research, as it allows one to bring one's personal experiences to the research.

The *public* dimension aims to guide and direct the practices of the many, including educators, policy analysts, academics, intellectuals and philosophers. This means that an inquiry is not only a personal exercise, but it is read by many people. One has to know that there is an audience waiting to hear your views. It will assist the practice of those whose are concerned about issues in education. Soltis (1998:196) explains it as everybody's business, and that it ought to be such. This means that an inquiry is directed to the public, not the individual. The point of this dimension is to articulate public inspirations and educational values, and give sense and purpose to the public enterprise of education. It also provides an opportunity for thoughtful participation by those who are interested in matters concerning education. It further offers space for debates and critiques. This means that, when an inquiry is viewed from the public dimension, it creates an opportunity for those who are interested in educational matters. It opens up pathways for future research, critiques and discussions to others who are interested in the inquiry. For example, my study can guide and direct the research of others who may become interested in what I say. It can open up a platform for debate, it can be critiqued, it can help others to develop ideas, it can help the context of the study and it can give insights to others who are researching my ideas.

Lastly, the *professional* dimension of educational matters is concerned with the logical soundness of arguments, explaining the meaning of concepts, and constructing reasonable arguments. It also provides ways to think about educational matters, before devising "ways to do or solve them" (Soltis, 1998:196). In my view, the professional approach is a technical philosophical work, in the sense that it allows for the critical examination of concepts, a logical soundness of arguments and for the meanings of concepts to be explained. In the same way, Van Wyk (2004:13) views philosophers who perform as professionals to be more into analysing, reflecting, evaluating and seeking for a clearer understanding of educational matters. Soltis (1998:199) further explains that

to be professionally analytical is to make the educational enterprise as rationally self-reflexive as possible. This is done by providing philosophically rigorous examinations, critiques, justifications, analyses and syntheses of aspects in the educator's conceptual and normative domain. I align this with my previous discussion of the concept of philosophy, since it is also concerned with analysing, clarifying concepts, argumentation and justification (Section 1.4.1). For me, the professional dimension means that my inquiry is to be professional in the sense that I carefully examine and analyse concepts, construct an argument, and provide reasons for my ideas. Let me take the example of my key concept, institutional culture. It will be professional if I engage with the literature to carefully examine what it means, clarify its meaning, develop my argument and justify what I say.

This discussion on analytical inquiry provided me with insights into what to consider when conducting my inquiry. The personal dimension allowed me to have a set of ideas that were acceptable in research. I also had to be aware that my inquiry was meant for the public. It must inspire those who read it to be able to build on it, critique, discuss and analyse it and give insights. My inquiry also had to incorporate a professional dimension that showed that I had read more in order to be able to clarify concepts, construct an argument, justify my views and offer critical ideas. In this study, where my key concept (institutional culture) was viewed to be a complex concept to study because of its many uses and meanings, it was important that I conduct a careful analysis of the concept. Having gained insight into analytical inquiry and the three dimensions, I shall now turn to the statement of the problem.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In this study I explored how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by UNAM. In this section I discuss the main concerns that triggered me to conduct my study. One may start by asking: What is the problem?

I became concerned when I read an article by Kirby-Harris (2003:360), titled 'Universities Responding to Policy: Organizational change at the University of Namibia'. In his discussion of UNAM, Kirby-Harris writes that, at the establishment of the University of Namibia in 1992, it

drew its purpose, structure and culture from both the African and the South African traditions regarding higher education. The structures, curriculum and traditions were derived mainly from the British elite universities, which were transplanted into its institutional culture. I understand this to mean that the university had no proper structure at its establishment, so it just took the structures that other universities in Africa and South Africa were using. Since some African universities were modelled on British culture, UNAM also adopted this. Its activities and practices were of a British nature. I understand this because, at that time, it lacked proper guidance on how things are done, so it took over whatever existed in other universities. Ping and Crowley (1997:384) add that UNAM was expected to be a developmental institution, utilising its legal autonomy and inherited culture of teaching and research to help build a new nation. It was also expected to change both individuals and the structure of the Namibian society.

It seems that, when Namibia became independent, changes were made with regard to the aspects that determine how things are done at UNAM. Kirby-Harris (2003:369) views the university as a young institution with a weakly developed identity and little sense of its own culture and values. The university is influenced by the government, which has a strongly developed set of values (through policy) that are conditioned by a combination of an economic purpose and reconstructionist purpose. By reconstructionist Kirby-Harris means the ideologies and policies that were developed during the liberation struggle. For him, this strong set of values is also evident within Namibian society. In my view, this means that how the university functions is based on a decision that was taken before Namibia became independent. The ideologies and values that were held by those concerned determine the activities and actions taken at UNAM and in Namibian society. He concludes his discussion by saying that, the university lacks cultural autonomy, because its strategic behaviour is heavily constrained because of the absence of a clear direction and clear government policy, which only increase the university's policy discretion at the operational level (Kirby-Harris, 2003:369).

Looking at Kirby-Harris's discussion, one may conclude that the university makes decisions based on government values and ideologies. I find this to be a concern, because it implies that UNAM relies on government values and ideologies to build its culture. However, Kirby-Harris opens up pathways for scholars to ponder about the culture of UNAM. His focus is not on a critical analysis

of the concept of culture or institutional culture, although he mentions them in his study. To date there is very little knowledge on and no analysis of what constitutes institutional culture in the Namibian context.

1.6 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of my study was to explore the concept of institutional culture with reference to the University of Namibia. It was an attempt to understand how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in institutional documents. To this end I restricted myself to an analysis of institutional documents.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF KEY CONCEPTS

My study is conceptual in nature and is mainly concerned with the clarification of concepts. In this section I attempt to familiarise the reader with the key concepts specific to my study. I also provide a brief clarification of the meanings of these concepts. A detailed discussion of some of these concepts will follow in Chapter 3, and these specific concepts are discussed in the next section.

1.7.1 Institution

The literature shows different meanings and interpretations of the concept of ‘institution’. Some researchers explain the concept by referring to it as a place where people interact with one another. Jacobs (2012:69) regards an institution as a social construct that influences the actions or behaviour of role players. She regards it as a social construct because it plays a wide range of social functions. It plays a role in the development of individual learning and human capital, it socialises individuals into different political loyalties, preserves knowledge and responds to national policies. Van Wyk (2009:334) argues that an institution is not a place, but a system that functions – whatever its degree of coherence and integrity – as a de facto community. In my view, an ‘institution’ refers to any community arrangement that shapes the behaviour of its members. It does not refer to a place that is without people, but to a system that is kept running because of the activities carried out by

its members. Vukuza-Linda (2014) provides examples of institutions, for example universities and colleges.

I looked for materials in the Namibian context that explain what an institution means, but could not find any. I wanted to find out how this concept is explained from a Namibian point of view. Nevertheless, the concept of university is used here to refer to UNAM.

1.7.2 Higher Education

In an attempt to understand what higher education means, I drew on various scholars who explain the concept. I align myself with Shanyanana (2014:17), who affirms that higher education is an education system that constitutes universities and other degree-granting colleges. It refers to universities, polytechnics and training colleges, to name a few. Similar to this, Vukuza-Linda (2014:36) refers to higher education as post-secondary institutions of learning that, at the end of the course, award diplomas, degrees and other higher education certificates. She explains that higher education does not only refer to universities and colleges, but also to institutions that offer music, arts and business. On the other hand, Hopson (2001:121-123) sees higher education as a means of national transformation and development through university education.

In the Namibian context, higher education means all learning programmes leading to qualifications higher than grade 12 or its equivalent, and it includes tertiary education, as contemplated in Section 20(4) of the Namibian Constitution. The Higher Education Act does not view all post-secondary institutions as institutions of higher education. It excludes those that fall under vocational training that is provided by a vocational training centre that is registered under the National Vocational Act. It also does not include open learning, which is provided by the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL), which was established by the Namibian College of Open Learning Act. Therefore, in this study, UNAM is regarded as a higher education institution on the grounds that it is registered as a public higher education institution under this Act (Republic of Namibia, 2003).

1.7.3 Institutional Culture

‘Institutional culture’ is a concept used to describe the aspects that determine how a university functions. It is a concept that is interpreted in many ways because of its many meanings. On the one hand, it has a subjective meaning (for example shared assumptions, values, meanings and understanding) and, on the other hand, it has a more objective meaning (physical artefacts, organisational stories, heroes, heroines, rituals and ceremonies). All these elements bring with them difficulties in giving it an exact meaning. As a result, the concept is used and explained in many ways. Due to this, Van Wyk (2009:337) sees the concept of institutional culture as embedded in the shared beliefs, norms, values and beliefs and ideologies that bind a group together. In my opinion, this means that institutional culture constitutes the aspects that bind the university together. I am further assisted by Parker (2008:22), who says that an easy place to begin understanding institutional culture is by looking at the values of the institution. These values explain why the institution is doing what it does. Therefore, institutional culture is constituted by those aspects that explain what the institution does, that is, the actions it takes, how it communicates, and who has the authority.

1.7.4 University

In the literature, the concept of ‘university’ is used to refer to an institution. It seems to imply that a university and an institution are the same. For example, Enders (2004:362) defines a university as an institution because in all societies it performs basic functions that result from the particular combination of cultural and ideological, social and economic, educational and scientific roles that assigned to it. He goes further to say that universities are multi-purpose institutions that contribute to the generation and transmission of ideology, the selection and formation of elites, the social development and educational upgrading of societies, the production and application of knowledge and the training of a highly skilled labour force. Bétteile (2005:3377) refers to a university as a socially inclusive institution for three reasons. Firstly, it plays a part in the transmission and creation of knowledge. In my view, this refers to the exchange of knowledge that is acquired through teaching and research. A university, for example, offers facilities such as teaching and research that are authorised to grant academic degrees (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:36). Secondly, a university also provides a very distinctive kind of interaction among students, lecturers, administrative staff and scholars. It is my opinion that this view relates to the kind of culture

present within the institution that determines the way people interact on a daily basis. Lastly, a university also includes the driving forces that determine how it is being governed. In my view, this implies there are those who have a desire to determine how a university must be governed. These, to me, are the government and policy makers.

1.8 CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter 2 deals with the research methodology and research methods of this study. The research methodology of this study is hermeneutics, and I provide a detailed discussion thereof. I also provide reasons why I am interested in this methodology. A discussion of the research methods for this study (conceptual analysis and documentary analysis) is then provided.

In **Chapter 3** I explore the concept of institutional culture in the literature. I do this by analysing the concepts of culture and institution separately. I then construct meanings of the concept of institutional culture. This chapter ends with a construction of meanings that provide a theoretical framework for analysing the institutional culture of the University of Namibia.

Chapter 4 provides an analysis of institutional culture of the University of Namibia as articulated in institutional documents. The documents that I analysed are the University of Namibia five-year strategic plan and other relevant national and institutional policies. The analysis of these documents was based on the research questions of this study. This analysis was assisted by a theoretical framework constructed in Chapter 3 to show how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in institutional documents.

In **Chapter 5** I discuss the findings and recommendations of the study. I touch on the limitations of the study, and provide my own hermeneutic reflection on the study and a conclusion.

1.9 SUMMARY

This chapter has served as an introduction and orientation to the study. I presented a brief background to the context under study (UNAM). Part of my reason for exploring the background

is to gain a deeper understanding of the context under study. The other reason was to familiarise the reader with the context of UNAM, because the study was conducted at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, where they might not be aware of the university. To be brief, my exploration of the background made me understand that UNAM was established in 1992 after Namibia gained independence. At its establishment, UNAM was given a number of aims, some of which include developing the Namibian nation into a knowledge-based nation. It was given these aims in order to address the inequalities that existed during the apartheid period, when the institution was known as the Academy. As a young institution, the university is expected to contribute to the development of the Namibian nation. With regard to institutional culture, it is my opinion that the activities and actions of the university are influenced by the developmental strategy of the Namibian government. I see that policies have an influence on the functioning of the university. In this chapter I also provided the significance of the study, where I showed the motivating factors that contributed to my pursuit for knowledge and understanding. This study was not motivated by my experience in higher education or as a member of the University of Namibia. A book chapter on institutional culture caught my attention and I began to reflect on my educational background. I also talked about philosophy of education, since it also contributed to my motivation for undertaking this study, and the study is grounded within this discipline. This was followed by the statement of the problem, where I stated my main concerns for this study.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

I encountered a challenge in educational research during my honours at Stellenbosch University in 2013. The reason was that I was doing the module for the first time. For the three years (1996-1998) that I was a student at CCE in Namibia, educational research was not included in the modules. As a result, I had a lack of knowledge about what educational research is all about and the whole process of conducting research in the field. It became a challenge when I was expected to write a mini-research paper in this module as the module assignment. Steps were provided on how to conduct a research, but my understanding of educational research was limited. As expected, I wrote the assignment not because I understood, but because I had to do it. I therefore found it important in this section to gain insight into the notion of educational research. I asked myself a question: What is educational research?

I respond to my question by drawing on Waghid (2013:2), who provides a clearer understanding of educational research. He argues that educational research is a systematic and sustained inquiry made public. By ‘sustained inquiry’ he means a constant commitment, the kind of dedication that relies on the virtues of patience, industriousness, thoroughness and care. A ‘systematic inquiry’ embodies an analysis and interpretation in terms of the ways in which inferences are drawn and conclusions reached, and also whether the results of a new inquiry either confirm or refute previous evidence (Bridges, in Waghid, 2013:2). In the same way, Leedy and Ormrod (2014:54) write that educational research is a systematic process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in order to increase our understanding of the phenomenon in which we are interested or about which we are concerned. This for me means that conducting research in education is not only for the benefit of the researcher, but is an exercise that must be in the public domain. Since it involves the public, it must be organised in a way that makes it acceptable in the public domain. This requires one to dedicate one’s time to the research. In other words, one must be able to spend more time on the

research. By this I mean that one must be tolerant, attentive and careful in relation to what the research is about. For instance, research is a process that requires one to analyse and interpret data. In my study, for which I conducted research on educational matters, I was required to collect data, analyse and understand it, and also to be a committed researcher.

I was further enlightened that conducting research in education is a process that is governed by the following rules:

- Rules that govern the analytic and explanatory concepts (paradigms, methodology or ‘sophia’) appropriate to the research task;
- Rules about the way in which appropriate inferences can be drawn for the evidence (reasons); and
- Rules that guide the methodology (techniques or procedures) appropriate to the research task (Waghid, 2013:2).

This understanding implies that conducting research in education is not just a matter of collecting data, analysis and interpretation, but that there are rules that need to be followed. A research project must have an appropriate paradigm or methodology within which key concepts are analysed and explained. Reasons must also be provided for the conclusions that are drawn. The research must also use research methods that are appropriate for data collection and analysis. While I conducted the study of how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by UNAM, I therefore was mindful that I required a methodology to use, as well as research methods.

Having explained how I gained insight into what educational research entails, I now turn to the focus of this chapter (the research methodology and research methods appropriate for this study). I begin by presenting the research procedures used. I then offer the main research question and sub-questions for this study. Lastly, I discuss the relevant methodology and research methods used in my study.

2.2 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

In my attempt to understand what a research procedure is, I observed that there are many ways to go about it. Some authors speak of either research design, research process or research analogy. This can be very confusing for a novice researcher like myself, but having conducted a thorough reading I realised that the only difference is how the ideas are presented, although they are the same.

In this section I draw on Mouton (1996:24), who compares scientific research to a journey. For him, a person undertakes a journey with a specific purpose in mind to reach a specific destination. Similarly, Kumar (2011:18) writes that we can only undertake a journey when we know the route to take in order to arrive at our destination. This means that to conduct research is to have ideas in mind on how to do it. It is simply to think about what you want to do and how you want to do it. Kandumbu (2005:25) further contends that, whatever a person intends to do, there should be an appropriate way or an approach to a specific activity.

Generally speaking, there is always an approach to any activity. Let me give an example of building a house. A person cannot just wake up one day and decide to build a house. Building a house is an activity that requires some deep thought or a detailed plan. One must think about why you need a house, what are the expenses, how many building materials are required, who will build the house, where will it be built, and how do you go about building it. In the context of my study, it meant that I had to think about how I intended to do my research. I had to think about what kind of data I needed, where I would get it, and why do I needed to obtain the data. I had to have research questions, and to answer these I needed to find the appropriate methodology and research methods. Finding answers to research questions, according to Kumar (2011:18), is what constitutes research methodology. I therefore compared my conceptual analysis of institutional culture at a Namibian university to a journey and approached it by presenting research questions. I also discuss the research methodology and research methods, to which I shall now turn my attention.

2.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In the research project that I conducted while doing my BEd Honours in 2013, I was required to formulate research questions. I formulated a main research question and sub-questions and, if it

were not for the help of my lecturer, I would have found it difficult to do it. I formulated them roughly and they were later checked by my lecturer. What I could not understand was why I needed these research questions and how to formulate such questions. This is what I wanted to understand before I presented my main and sub-research questions for this study. I ask myself, why should I have research questions for my inquiry into institutional culture?

I align myself with Mouton (2001:53), who writes that we often formulate research problems in the form of questions as a way of focusing the problem. This means that my inquiry into the concept of institutional culture will not make sense without research questions, as they provide focus. I further align myself with Leedy and Ormrod (2005:54), who state that research questions provide guidance for the kinds of data the researcher should collect, and suggest how the researcher should analyse and interpret those data. They also mention that research questions provide a position from which the researcher may initiate an exploration of the problem. This, in my view, implies that a study without questions is a study without proper guidance. The research questions give clear direction as to what one must gather, how to gather it and how it can be interpreted. For example, when we have research questions, we are able to collect information in whatever form (data, documents, interviews, speeches, diaries, questionnaire responses, test scores), which we then analyse and interpret (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:26). In this study, I formulated research question in order to have clear guidance on what methodology and methods I should use to collect, analyse and interpret the data.

Having gained insight into why I needed research questions for my study, I still had a question in mind: How do I formulate research questions for my study? Looking at my educational experience, I was a teacher at a primary school in Namibia before I gained admission to Stellenbosch University. I knew little about higher education and the only experience I had in this context was my being a student at Stellenbosch University. Despite my lack of experience in higher education, I was enlightened that the design of all research requires conceptual organisation, the ideas to express them need understanding, conceptual bridges are required from what is already known, cognitive structures have to guide data gathering, and there have to be outlines for presenting interpretations to others (Van Wyk, 2004:24). For me, this meant that inquiring into the institutional culture of UNAM was not only about having experience, but also about doing a thorough reading

of what others have written about institutional culture. Once I had read and understood, then I would be able, for instance, to organise my ideas and formulate research questions, and choose the appropriate methodology and research methods. Therefore, I formulated the research questions for my study based on an engagement with the existing body of knowledge on institutional culture. The research questions kept me focused through my journey of exploring how UNAM's institutional culture was constructed and articulated in its institutional documents.

The insights I gained from this discussion gave me the confidence to present the main and sub-questions for my study.

The main research question for my study is:

How is institutional culture constructed and articulated by the University of Namibia?

The sub-questions are:

- How is institutional culture articulated in the institutional documents of the University of Namibia?
- How does the university respond to government policies?
- How is the institutional culture aligned with the vision and typology of the university?

2.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature makes a distinction between methodology and method. This enlightened me, because I had a lack of understanding of methodology and method in educational research in my honours studies. I perceived these to have the same conceptualisation. I could not differentiate between the two and I was not sure whether methodology referred to a paradigm. Now that I was writing about methodology and method, I encountered Dawson (2009:14), who argues that research methodology is different from research methods. This implies that methodology and method do not have the same meaning. I was left with a question: What then are methodology and

method? In this section I discuss the deeper understanding I gained about what methodology means, followed by a discussion on method.

I draw on Harding (1987:2), who refers to methodology as the theory of knowledge and the interpretive framework guiding a particular research project. He further provides aspects that are considered in methodology, such as research design, data analysis and theorising, together with the social, ethical and political concerns of the social researcher. Harvey (1990:1-2) also refers to methodology as the interface between methodical practice, substantive theory and epistemological underpinnings. By epistemology he means the assumptions about the nature of knowledge and science that inform practical inquiry. He thus regards methodology as the point at which method, theory and epistemology come together in the process of directly investigating specific instances within the social world. In the process of grounding, empirical methodology thus reveals the presuppositions that inform knowledge generated by the enquiry. For Dawson (2009:14), methodology is the philosophy or general principle that guides the research. From this I understand that one can only conduct research when there is an appropriate methodology, as it is a theory of knowledge that guides the whole research process. It brings together an interpretive framework, research methods and data analysis. Methodology is simply asking myself which theory can be used to guide my inquiry into institutional culture at UNAM. For example, will I use a positivistic, interpretivist, critical theory, feminist or a post-structuralist approach? Among these theories there had to be one appropriate to my study. Within this view, Van Wyk (2004:25) argues that one can also consider methodology as a paradigm. For me, this means that methodology simply means a paradigm. In my study I therefore viewed methodology as a specific paradigm that I could employ to guide the whole research process.

What is a paradigm? I was amazed at how the lecturer in philosophy of education explained paradigms. The lecturer started the lesson by displaying a picture of an animal and asked the class to say what it was. It was very interesting when some of them said it was a duck while others said it was a rabbit. But why was he doing this? For me it was one way of showing them that people see things differently. Put simply, what I see might not be what the other person sees. Should I then say that a paradigm means seeing things differently? Waghid (2013:6) argues that we can talk about paradigms when we are referring to knowledge (epistemology). This means that one cannot

talk about a paradigm without making any reference to knowledge. A paradigm describes the way knowledge is viewed and constructed. A picture of an animal thus was a good starting point; one can say that knowledge can be viewed in many different ways.

In response to my question of what a paradigm is, Babbie (2004:33) provided me with insights where he refers to it as a framework for observation and understanding, which shapes both what we see and how we understand it. For Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, in Jacobs, 2012:17), research paradigms influence the way knowledge is studied and interpreted. What I understand here is that there is not only one way of conducting research, but many different ways. So paradigms present different ways of how to organise, understand and inquire into a situation or phenomenon. Let me go back to the picture the lecturer used to explain paradigms. If I see it as a duck then it will lead to a question such as, how do I know that it is duck. Of course I can see it, but it is not good enough to maintain my stand that it is a duck. I will therefore need to prove it and it will require me to dig deeper and describe its appearance and habitat. I will also need evidence, which I must know where to find, how to get there, and how I arrive at my conclusion that the picture shows a duck. Crotty (1998:5) gives examples of paradigms such as positivism, interpretivism, critical theory and feminism. In my study, I found it a challenge to choose the appropriate methodology or paradigm to guide my inquiry. This challenge might have been due to a lack of deep understanding of paradigms, and I found it useful to first gain an understanding and then choose a specific paradigm for my study. To this end, I shall briefly describe different paradigms.

2.4.1 Positivist theory

I learnt about positivism in Philosophy, Core Module and Education Research when I was studying towards my BEd Honours degree in 2013. It was difficult for me to understand what it meant, since it was the first time I had encountered such a theory. I attended a teacher training college (CCE) in Namibia and did Education Management at Potchefstroom University in South Africa, but I did not conduct research in these programmes. In this section I want to set out how I came to understand what a positivist approach means in order for me to have decided whether it is an appropriate approach for my study or not.

The theory of positivism was first developed by French philosopher Auguste Comte, who used it to characterise approaches to social sciences that made use of datasets, quantitative measurement and statistical methods of analysis (Waghid, 2004:3). It is a theory that is associated with the following features: firstly, it accepts the empiricist account of the natural sciences. Secondly, it sees knowledge as genuine if it can be tested. Thirdly, to explain a phenomenon is to show that it is an instance of a general law. As Babbie (2004:57) frames it, a positivist assumes that we can scientifically discover the rules governing social life. Lastly, statements are objective and scientific if they are factual and can be separated from the subjective value judgements of human beings. Cohen *et al.*, (2011:7) share this view, stating that a positivist approach is based on sense experience and can only be advanced by being tested through the use of observations and experiment. Waghid (2004:5) provides an example, stating that a positivist approach uses a deductive, nomological model, which suggests that, whenever A happens, then B occurs – A happens, therefore B occurs.

Following from the above, I understand that a positivist theory relies on sensory experience in terms of what we can see and touch. If we are able to see and touch the object of knowledge, then we can test it to see if it is genuine knowledge. Once knowledge is tested, it therefore is regarded as genuine. Analysis from the tested knowledge is expressed in laws or law-like generalisations. For example, after submitting this study, it will be sent to the examiners for testing. The outcome will serve as part of the general statistics for the university. In research it means that researchers can understand a situation under study based on empirical evidence. Researchers use data that they can see and touch, then test it to see if it is real knowledge. The findings are then generalised to a wider context. A quantitative method is employed whereby samples are administered using tools to measure, and the results give a broader picture. I find this approach to be problematic, because understanding a situation does not require scientific methods; we deal with human action. It does not seem to leave any room for interpretation or explanation.

Kemmis (1991:61-64) points out that positivist educational theory leaves no room for metaphysical value judgements, and therefore removes itself from the domain of ethical and political commitment. In other words, positivists separate themselves from the world they study (Van Wyk, 2004:28). This means that the approach does not consider conclusions from the

perspective of the person conducting the research. Those who use this approach cannot use their experience or understanding of what they are researching. Based on this, I find this approach not appropriate for my study in the sense that I am trying to understand how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by UNAM. In order to understand this, I am required to interpret, analyse and explore the institutional culture of UNAM. I cannot assume that the way UNAM functions can be attributed to the university's institutional culture. I think that there are many factors that influence how the institutional culture of the university is constructed and articulated in its institutional documents. Next I explore critical theory.

2.4.2 Critical Theory

Before I started writing a proposal for my study, I was asked to formulate a research title. I was given some readings on institutional culture by my supervisor, but it was a challenge for me to come up with a research title. The challenge was that, while reading these materials on institutional culture, I observed that the scholars' titles were associated with critical theory and hermeneutics. Seeing this, I thought of a 'critical inquiry of institutional culture at a Namibian university'. By then I had a little understanding of critical theory and I asked myself: What is critical theory? In this section I discuss the process I went through to try to understand critical theory, and also to justify why it was not an appropriate approach for my study.

I gained insight when I presented a lecture in Philosophy of Education to BEd honours students. I learnt that critical theory has its roots in the Frankfurt school, where major philosophers such as Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Marx Horkheimer and Jürgen Habermas wrote about the theory (Waghid, 2004:10). Critical theory, according to Marcuse, presents a different way of thinking about education, and is primarily concerned with solving particular social problems. For me, critical theory is not only concerned with thinking critically about problems in education, but also wants to suggest ways to solve such problems. The main concern of this theory is the idea of emancipation. For critical theory, to solve social problems is to change the world in the direction of freedom, justice and democracy, with the practical intent to transform and empower (Waghid, 2004:10). Put simply, the main interest of emancipation is for human beings to liberate themselves from forms of domination. For Fay (1975:103), critical theory is concerned with the detailed

analysis of ideas and their influences on a society to enlighten and emancipate people in their lives or in their societies. This means that people often do not engage critically with educational issues due to external control. For example, in schools, teachers are expected to teach what is given to them rather than what they think. What they teach and how they teach it is already prescribed in syllabi, schemes of work and very strict curricula.

In the context of research, Neuman (2011:109) says that the primary purpose of critical theory in research is not simply to study the social world, but to change it. He adds that studies that take a critical approach critique and transform social relations by revealing the underlying sources of social control, power relations and inequality. In the same way, Brian Fay (in Van Wyk, 2004:48) writes that a critical theory wants to explain a social order in such a way that it becomes itself the catalyst that leads to the transformation of this social order. For me, critical theory in research enables one to critique and question educational concerns, thus revealing the underlying assumptions behind such concerns. The idea of making explicit what is implicit in education is for people to be empowered so that critical theory itself becomes a tool they can use to change themselves. Scholars who use this approach do not study concerns in education for the sake of changing their thinking, but to question their thinking and then empower them so that they are free to change themselves. For instance, if I use critical theory to study institutional culture at UNAM, I then analyse this concept in such a way that I reveal the underlying assumptions or sources of power that influence the culture of this university. Once such assumptions or sources of power are revealed, then it is up to the university to change itself.

Following the emancipatory agenda of critical theory, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer bring in ideology critique (Waghid, 2004:10). By ideology they simply mean a set of ideas that serve the interests of a particular social class. They argue that autonomous people rationally analyse and critique different ideological discourses imposed upon them. Here, it becomes a form of oppositional thinking, a constant process of criticism whereby everything must be questioned, and in which critical and reflexive thinking become processes of criticising questioning itself. What I understand by this is that the ideology critique has an idea that people critically analyse and oppose those ideas that are prescribed for them. They question such ideas and critique them. For example, those curricula and policies that are prescribed for teachers are to be questioned and

critiqued. In my study of the institutional culture of UNAM, it means I question why the institutional culture is constructed and articulated the way it is. What I do is to critically analyse the institutional culture of UNAM and oppose it by asking critical questions.

The ideas of ideology critique influenced Habermas to propose the idea of an ‘ideal speech situation’. His idea is that education should promote an ‘ideal speech situation’ in terms of which people are able to communicate with one another and participate equally in public debates about political and social life (Waghid, 2004:11). In my view, this means that education is for all and it should allow an interaction between people and also offer a space for these people to participate in discussions. Education is not a private practice, but involves the public, so there must be an equal opportunity for everyone to take part in discussions. For instance, in schools, teachers, learners, parents and education officials must be able to relate to one another and have the same opportunity to talk publicly about education. In my study it means that education should allow me to listen to the views of others and allow my views to be heard by others.

Having gained a clear understanding of what critical theory entails, I asked myself: Is the theory appropriate for my study, and if not, why not? The ideas of critical theory are very interesting, but were not appropriate for my study. The reason is that, in my study, I did not intend to empower UNAM for it to change itself. Rather, my study wanted to understand how UNAM’s institutional culture was constructed and articulated in its institutional documents. I would have considered critical theory as an approach if I had found more literature on institutional culture in the Namibian context, or if it were a problem. For the purpose of this study, I considered critical theory to be an inappropriate approach due to its ideas on emancipation, ideology critique and the ideal speech situation. This brings me to a discussion of the interpretive approach.

2.4.3 Interpretive Theory

While trying to understand what interpretation means, our department (Education Policy Studies) was visited by Professor Paul Smeyers in 2014. I was invited to a seminar at which he presented a paper on *Varieties of interpretation in education research: How we frame the project*. As he

presented his paper I felt as if he was telling me what interpretation is all about. During his presentation he mentioned that interpretation applies to all research in education.

In this section I describe how I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of interpretive theory and also want to justify why it was an appropriate approach for my analysis of institutional culture at UNAM. I draw on Connole (1993:59-60), who argues that the primary concern of interpretive theory is the understanding of human actions in the context within which they live. She further says that human behaviour is seen as the outcome of external influences, and that human actions have reasons. These actions take place within a structure of social rules within which they have meaning for both actor and observer. Meanings are generated and shared through language and other forms of symbolism, and are negotiated. For Cantrell (1993:84), researchers from this orientation seek to understand phenomena and to interpret meaning within the social and cultural context of the natural setting. What I understand from this is that people learn in many different ways. We learn through our interactions with others, for example in churches, schools and gyms, and through culture, social clubs and sports. All of these have an influence on the way we give meaning to things. An interpretive approach seeks to use these influences to understand a particular context of study.

Furthermore, Fay (1975:74) mentions that the critical point of an interpretive analysis is to reach the self-understanding of the person acting in the situation, and analysing and understanding his/her reasons for the actions. Similarly, Waghid (2002:46-47) says that an important issue within interpretive theory is the self-understanding of the individual. In my view, this means that we can only make sense of our research when we are able to explain it using our own understanding. In my study this means that, to understand the concept of institutional culture and how it is constructed and articulated by UNAM, means being able to understand using my own explanation. For example, UNAM is regarded as having a weak culture, it holds strong values with the government, and there are political ideologies within the university (Kirby-Harris, 2003; Ping & Crowley, 2000). Due to this, one can assume that UNAM is weak in terms of teaching, research, governance, leadership and management. People also can hold these assumptions because they lack an understanding of the institutional culture of UNAM. One can only understand

circumstances at UNAM by explaining how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by the university.

After having discussed what interpretive theory means, I was convinced that this theory was appropriate for my conceptual analysis of institutional culture at UNAM. The theory is concerned with understanding or giving meaning to situations using own understanding. It is a matter of making sense of the behaviours and actions of persons within a particular context. In my study, in which I sought a deeper understanding of how institutional culture is constructed and articulated at UNAM, interpretive theory assisted me in gaining this. On a different note, I observed in the literature that there are several related theoretical perspectives that are rooted in interpretive theory that one can be used to understand a situation. These are pragmatism, phenomenology and hermeneutics. I will not touch on pragmatism and phenomenology, because I am not interested in a pragmatic view, namely that what is true is what works, neither a phenomenological view of understanding or explaining the lived experiences of others. My interest is in hermeneutics, following Neuman's (2011:101) argument that interpretive social science is related to hermeneutics because they both emphasise interpretation and understanding.

2.5 Hermeneutics

I began by asking myself a question: What is hermeneutics? Gadamer (1977:xii), who is seen as the father of hermeneutics, argues that hermeneutics comprises all of those situations in which we encounter meanings that are not immediately understandable but require interpretive effort. Put simply, Grondin (2002:1) refers to hermeneutics as the science or art of interpretation. According to Danner (1995:223), the term 'hermeneutics' stems from the Greek verb *hermeneúein*, which has three meanings: to make something explicit (to express), to unfold something (to explain) and to translate (to interpret). He further says it involves the art of reading texts or experiences in such a way that the intentions and meaning behind the appearance of such a text or expression are understood. Neuman (2011:101) writes that hermeneutics places an emphasis on conducting a very close, detailed reading of a text to acquire a profound, deep understanding. For Jacobs (2012:298), hermeneutics simply means textual interpretation, or the finding of meaning in a hidden word. In my view, it is impossible to begin to write or interpret something without reading. We can only

have ideas or thoughts when we have done a careful reading. When we apply hermeneutics, we conduct a careful reading of texts in such a way that the meanings behind our ideas are understood.

An example of this is a policy that I received when I was a school teacher in Namibia – the Learner Centred Approach policy (LCE). This policy emphasises the learner as the main focus during teaching and learning. In other words, learners must be fully involved or engaged during lessons. As a teacher I cannot apply this approach without first understanding what it means to involve or engage learners. To engage or involve learners can mean anything; it can mean a question-and-answer approach, a discussion, or a presentation. It is important to read carefully in order to understand what the policy means by placing learners in the centre during lessons. Therefore, in my study, hermeneutics means to conduct a careful reading of texts so that the meanings behind the texts are understood.

On a different note, in this discussion I am referring to a text, and I generally perceive a text to be any written material that has meaning. What does a text mean in my study? I align myself with Ricoeur (1998:165), who regards a text as any type of discourse fixed by writing. In the same way, Neuman (2011:101) explains a text to mean a conversation, written words or pictures. This for me means that, in general, a text can be anything that is put in writing. For example, it can be an advertisement, newspaper, magazine, a book, an article, policies and journals. This implies that, in my study, I am not limited to interpreting policy and institutional documents, but a text also applies to the materials that I engaged with in order to understand higher education, UNAM, institutional culture, research methodology and methods. In my study I therefore refer to a text as any written material that has meaning for my analysis of institutional culture at UNAM.

Having gained some understanding of what a text means, I turned to Hans-Georg Gadamer, who is regarded as the father of philosophical hermeneutics. His hermeneutics is concerned mainly with understanding and interpretation. I draw on his work and lastly also took a look at what Paul Ricoeur says about hermeneutics.

2.5.1 Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics

There are several aspects of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics that can assist one in textual understanding and interpretation.

The first aspect relates to Gadamer's hermeneutical question: "What does it mean to understand, and under what conditions can/do we understand?" (Van Niekerk, 2002:230). In response to this question, Gadamer rejects the early hermeneutics that relied on the subject-object dichotomy, whereby the subject was seen as the interpreter and the object as the text (Jacobs, 2012:30). He argues for an understanding that is not, in the first instance, a procedure- or rule-governed undertaking. His understanding is rather one which underlies and is presupposed by other human activities (Van Niekerk, 2002:230). In my view, this means that understanding is not about following specific rules, but rather is influenced by the activities that a person engages in. In other words, we simply understand a work of art in its relevance to our own situation; that is to say, from the perspective of our own concerns and problems (Warnke, 1987:68).

This means that to understand texts is to have concerns and problems that you want to address. For example, one must bring experiences, scholarship, theoretical framework, research questions, research problems and practical understandings to one's research. In the context of my study, it means that my understanding is not something that requires me to follow rules, but rather one that depends on my experiences and research concerns that I intend to address. I therefore must bring all sorts of understanding to my study while reviewing the literature and analysing policy documents.

The second aspect of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics refers to the historicity of understanding, or the historical interpretation of texts. According to Gadamer (1989, in Waghid, 2004:8), we can only understand a text when we actually make ourselves part of the common aim from which it emerged historically. In other words, history serves as a means to understand the context of a text (Gadamer, 1975:174). Gadamer (1975:174) further argues that we may find that our texts are not the only sources, but historical reality itself is a text that has to be understood. In this historical interpretation, Gadamer (in Waghid, 2004:8) places the individual as secondary, whereas history is primary. In my view, we can understand what a text means when we understand the historical reality of the context of study. Texts are a result of the historical events of this context.

History is a text because it tells about past events, about the present, as well as about the future goals of the context you are trying to understand.

I again use my example of the LCE policy. To understand why the policy emphasises the learner as the centre of all lessons is to understand the history that led to such ideas. Something must have happened to the way learners were taught in the past. The policy must have been written because, in the past, learners might have been excluded from lessons. Perhaps teachers used teacher-centred approaches in which learners often were mere recipients of information from teachers. In other words, the teacher taught the lesson while learners had nothing to say, but learnt by memorising. Thus, in this study the historical interpretation means that what texts mean is to understand the historical events of the context that led to the development of such texts.

The third aspect in Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is the concept of a fusion of horizons. I sometimes find it difficult to understand Gadamer's use of concepts, and this is certainly the case with this concept. In order to have a clear understanding what this concept means, it will be better if I explain fusion and horizon separately. On the one hand, Gadamer does not explain what fusion means, but the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* (2012) explains it as a process of integrating things to form a whole. In my view, to fuse ideas is not something that has an end, but it is a process of analysing texts so that two or more ideas are joined together to become a whole set of ideas. On the other hand, Gadamer (1975:301-304) explains a horizon as a range of visions that the person who is trying to understand must have. For me, this horizon is one that is formed by the person conducting research. Simply put, it is a collection of different views from the perspective of the person conducting research. Thus, a fusion of horizons refers to an integration of one's understanding of a text or historical event with its relevance to one's own circumstances. The fusion of horizons is done in such a way that an original or intended meaning cannot be differentiated from the meaning of the text or event one comes to oneself (Warnke, 1987:69).

My understanding is that a fusion of horizons is not about showing a separation between the ideas of the text and one's own ideas. It is about combining the two so that it becomes a single idea. In other words, it means to join together one's ideas with those of the text so that there is no separation between what the text says and what the interpreter says. For instance, the interpreter's own

understanding, concerns, questions and interpretation of a text must be joined together to form one whole set of ideas. In this study, a fusion of horizons means to join together concerns and questions in relation to the historical textual interpretation.

Furthermore, Gadamer (1975:305) argues that there is no more than one isolated horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons that are to be acquired. Van Niekerk (2002:233) distinguishes between these horizons. The one horizon is the context within which the text originated (which is also known as the horizon of the past). This horizon refers to the context of my study. The other horizon is the context that constitutes the interpretive possibilities, concerns and questions of the interpreter (also known as the horizon of the present). This horizon simply consists of a fixed set of opinions and evaluations of the researcher. As Gadamer (1975:303) points out, as interpreters, we must already have a horizon in order to be able to bring ourselves into a situation. He sees this horizon as an on-going process of being informed, since we continually have to test all our prejudices. This testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come.

In my view, this implies that we cannot have a single, separated horizon that is based on experiences, concerns and questions, but the understanding of the context of study must be acquired as well. In other words, if we already have a horizon, we must gain another horizon in our analysis of texts. It means that one must have two horizons to understand and interpret texts. One of the horizons is the context from which the text comes, and the other emanates from the experiences, concerns and questions that need to be addressed, for example own understanding, research questions, a theoretical framework and understanding of the history of the context of the study. In my study it refers to my own experiences and understanding of philosophy of education, an understanding of the history of UNAM, research questions, and the meanings of institutional culture that I will construct. Therefore, to understand a text, the horizons of the past and the present must be integrated for the fusion to occur. I shall now turn to the fourth aspect of Gadamer's hermeneutics.

The fourth aspect of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics relates to the dialogical nature of understanding in the "fusion of horizons". Gadamer (1977:xix) compares the process of

hermeneutical understanding and interpretation that culminates in the fusion of horizons as having more in common with a dialogue (also a conversation) between people. What is Gadamer trying to say here? Can a text speak to the interpreter? It is possible for a text to have a conversation with the interpreter? Warnke (1987:66) confirms that it happens when a text or textbook speaks language that reaches the interpreting person. He further writes that a work of art (a text) makes a claim to those who view, read and perform it. In other words, the process of understanding and interpretation is grounded in language (Grondin, 2002:40-41). Since a dialogue is always about something, it presupposes that both the partners involved in a conversation share a common subject matter, that is, a common question about which they converse (Gadamer, 1977:xx).

What I understand here is that a text speaks to those who read it and must also be written in a language understandable to readers. The interpreter and the text must not be contrary to each other, but must have a common idea or a question they are trying to address. For example, it will be irrelevant to analyse documents that speak about schools when one is trying to understand the culture of a university. I therefore analysed documents that were relevant to my study.

Coming back to the understanding that culminates in the fusion of horizons, Gadamer (in Figal, 2002:108) says central to a conversation in the fusion of horizons is listening to and addressing each other. In other words, one is prepared for a conversation only when one is prepared to listen, or let the other person say something. In the fusion of horizons, a conversation begins when the interpreter genuinely opens up to the text by listening to it and allowing it to assert its viewpoint (Gadamer, 1975:xx-xxi). Thus, it is by confronting the otherness of the text, in hearing its challenging viewpoints, that the interpreter's own present horizons are thrown into relief and thus come to a critical self-consciousness. The fusion occurs when we understand the subject matter of the text that addresses us by locating its question. By locating this question, we are continually transcending the historical horizon of the text in our own questioning and fusing it with our own horizon, consequently transforming our horizon (Gadamer, 1975:xxi). During this process, the interpreter is taken up by what he seeks to understand, so that he responds, interprets and searches for articulation in the text (Grondin, 2002:42-44). Grondin goes on to say the goal of this dialogue is to find those questions to which the text constitutes the answer.

In my view, this means our analysis will not make sense if we analyse texts without understanding. In other words, one cannot analyse a text without first understanding what it says. We must read these texts with understanding before analysing them. Once we have read and understood what the text is about, we then bring in those questions we seek to answer. We are led by these questions in our analysis of these texts. For example, when I sought to understand how institutional culture was constructed and articulated in UNAM documents, I began by reading what the documents say. After I had done this, I questioned the text and found out if there was any reference to institutional culture in these documents. In my study it means that I first had to conduct a thorough reading of documents before analysing them. I had to listen carefully to what the documents were saying and, having done this, I brought in my questions and then searched for the answers in the texts. It is through the questions that I was able to respond, interpret and look for the answers in the text.

Furthermore, Gadamer (1975: xxii) also talks about gaining genuine understanding in the process of the fusion of horizons. He relates genuine understanding to imagination. By imagination, he means the capacity to see what is questionable in the subject matter, and to formulate questions that question the subject matter further. The interpreter is engaged by the question, so that text and interpreter are both led by the subject matter. By questioning, one “leads” a conversation, holds on to the subject matter of the conversation at hand, and keeps the conversation open (Fial, 2002:108). A pre-condition for genuine understanding is that one is open to be questioned by the text, to be provoked by it, to ask involvement in dialogue that carries one beyond one’s present situation. This means that one must formulate questions that require one to be taken up by the text. Now come images of my discussion of philosophy, which is concerned with ‘second-order’ types of questions. Second-order questions are not specific or do not look for specific answers, but require a deeper understanding of a situation. Gadamer must be referring to these kind of questions. When I am led by such questions, I allow myself to be questioned by the text, and then taken up by the text to the answers for which I am looking.

The last aspect is the role of authorial intention in interpretation. According to Gadamer (in Van Niekerk, 2002:233), the text has no “fixed meaning”, not even in its context of origination. By this he means that the meaning of a text always goes beyond its author, and that the text at all times represents more than the author’s intention. During a fusion of horizons, the interpreter must

recover and make his own meaning, not adopt the personality of the worldview of the author. The meaning must be based on the fundamental concerns that motivate the text, in other words, the question that it seeks to answer and that it repeatedly poses to its interpreter. Thus, the meaning always emerges through a conversation or dialogue between the text and interpreter, and such meaning is not limited by authorial intentions (Jacobs, 2012:26). In Gadamer's words, the meaning of the text cannot be restricted, but traditions build upon what he calls "excess of meaning" (Gadamer, 1975:xxii).

What I understand from this discussion is that texts are not fixed to a specific meaning; they are instead subjected to many understandings and interpretations. In other words, texts have different meanings for different people, even in the contexts from which they come. The meaning of these texts depends on the questions that we bring with us when conducting an analysis. When such meanings are uncovered, others who want to have access to them do not require any authorisation. The meanings must be available for the public to access. For example, the articles, books, journals and policy documents that I read to understand institutional culture have different meanings for different people. They are also understood in many different ways and from different perspectives. I used these documents to understand my own study, so they also cannot be restricted to other scholars. Therefore, my analysis of documents must be open for scholars to build on, critique and discuss.

Now that I have gained deeper insight into Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, I shall briefly turn to Paul Ricoeur's explanation of hermeneutics.

2.5.2 Paul Ricoeur's Conception of Hermeneutics

I was looking for another writer who discusses hermeneutics in order to build upon Gadamer and came across Paul Ricoeur. He also writes about hermeneutics, which he explains as the theory of the operations of understanding in relation to interpretation of texts. Ricoeur (1998:165) assumes that the central problem of hermeneutics is that of interpretation. He distinguishes between two distinct ways of interpreting a text. The first concerns its field of application, and the second its epistemological specificity. The latter relates to the problem of interpretation because there are

written texts with autonomy (independence of the text with respect to the intention of the author). In other words, the reader can treat a text as a text on its own, without taking author and reference into account (Jacobs, 2012:26). The former is that the concept of interpretation seems, at the epistemological level, to be opposed to the concept of explanation. The interpreter plays a key role in interpreting the meaning of a text.

Having understood what hermeneutics means, I may not have been aware of the idea of interpretation, but I applied interpretation and understanding from the time I started engaging with the literature. Central to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics is understanding and interpretation. As he mentions, understanding is always interpretation, hence interpretation is the explicit form of understanding (Gadamer, 1975). I might not be an employee of higher education or a university, but I refer to the words of Professor Paul Smeyers during his visit, namely that we encounter many experiences in our lives that can form the basis of our understanding. Understanding is not only shaped by what we read, but also by what we experience. We can only make sense of what we read when we reflect on our experiences. Such an understanding was useful in my study, since I was mindful that a university is a social site that is influenced by the many actions, activities and practices that shape its culture (Van Wyk, 2009). In my quest to gain a deeper understanding, I attempted to construct meanings of institutional culture from the literature. These guided me in my analysis of policy and institutional policy documents of UNAM. I analysed institutional documents such as Vision 2030, UNAM's five-year Strategic Plan, the Scholarship Communications Policy and the Research Policy. In my study, I found Gadamer's hermeneutics appropriate, as it assisted me in achieving the following:

- My analysis of institutional policy documents made sense when I understood the historical events that led to the formulation of these documents or the historical events of UNAM.
- Understanding and interpretation using the hermeneutical approach also implied that I brought a horizon, that is, my experiences and research questions into play, and established a theoretical framework for my study.
- The dialogic nature of the fusion of horizons enabled me to move between my own understanding and the possible meanings articulated by the documents. In my engagement with the relevant institutional policy documents, I was self-reflexive and continually questioned meanings. Put simply, the documents spoke to me and I spoke to them in turn.

- The meaning was established during my conversation with the documents. I only drew the meaning as it appeared to me as interpreter.
- Finally, *hermeneutics*, which is a systematic, scientific approach to understanding, was understood as the ‘art of interpretation’.

2.6 RESEARCH METHODS

Further to my discussion of research methodology (in Section 2.4), I also want to discuss the research methods used in this study. According to Harding (1987:2), research method is simply a technique for gathering evidence. Harvey (1990:1) further refers to method as empirical data that are collected, ranging from asking questions, through reading documents, to observation of both controlled and uncontrolled situations. Dawson (2009:27) also refers to research methods as the tools that we use to collect data. In the same way, Neuman (2011:2) says that methods refer to specific techniques we use in a study to select cases, measure and observe social life, gather and refine data, analyse data, and report on results. On this note, Marshall and Rossman (2011:137) provide examples of some of the methods that one can use to collect data, such as questionnaires, interviews, documents and observations.

For me, research method refers to all the tools that one can use to collect data, be it qualitative or quantitative. This implies that we can only find answers to our research questions when we collect data. For instance, to address the question how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in the institutional documents of UNAM, it is necessary to analyse its institutional documents. A document is an example of a research method. In my study it means that I chose specific research methods that would assist me in finding answers to my research questions. On a different note, I bore in mind the argument that some methods lend themselves more readily to certain epistemological perspectives, but that no method of data collection is inherently positivist, phenomenological or critical (Jacobs, 2012; Kandumbu, 2005; Van Wyk, 2004). The research methods I used for my study were conceptual analysis and documentary analysis, and I discuss these next.

2.6.1 Conceptual Analysis

I found it a challenge to understand conceptual analysis while conducting this study. The challenge was that I found the work of Hirst and Peters very difficult to understand. When Professor Paul Smeyers visited the Department of Education Policy Studies in 2014, I asked whether there was another article I could read to understand conceptual analysis. To my surprise, he referred me to the work of Hirst and Peters and said they clarify what conceptual analysis means. I therefore drew on the work of Hirst and Peters in relation to conceptual analysis.

2.6.1.1 What is a concept?

I perceived a concept to mean the normal words that we use in our daily conversations. This is because I had a limited understanding before I started my study. Hirst and Peters (1998:29-30) clarified my understanding by asking: What is a concept? In response, they argue that, to have a concept does not refer to an image, but to a word – a word that can be related to other words. They give an example of the word ‘punishment’. For them, one can have a concept of ‘punishment’ without necessarily having a picture in mind of a criminal being hanged or a boy being beaten. By this they mean that to have a concept is to be able to relate the word ‘punishment’ to words like guilt, and say things like ‘Only the guilty can be punished’. This ability to relate words to each other goes along with the ability to recognise cases to which the word applies. They use the same example of ‘punishment’ and say that to recognise a case to which it applies is to be able to say things like ‘only the guilty can be punished’. Thus, to have a concept is to be able to relate the word ‘punishment’ correctly to other words, such as pain and guilt, and to apply it correctly to the relevant cases.

In my view, this means that concepts do not exist in isolation, but relate to a variety of other concepts. When we have a concept we must have ideas in mind about what it means and also be able to apply it to a particular social life. For instance, one can use the concept ‘argument’ in a way that is irrelevant. To use the word ‘argument’ is to be able to relate it to disagreement and say that only those who disagree argue. In the context of my study, I can claim to have a concept of

institutional culture when I am able to relate it to other words and also apply it correctly to a university context.

This explanation of a concept may be promising, but Hirst and Peters (1998:29-30) further argue that the explanation will not do – for two reasons: Firstly, we sometimes make distinctions between things or group of things together, but do not have a word for making the difference and similarity. This, for me, means that we sometimes have a set of ideas without having a concept in mind. Without a concept, we may find it difficult to see what is different and similar between our ideas. On this note, Hirst and Peters further ask, if we are unable to distinguish the difference and similarity, are we then to say that we have no concept? This will not do, because it would mean denying that animals, which make quite complicated discriminations, have no concepts. It would also mean that children, who behave differently towards their mother very early in their lives, have no concept of their mother until they can use the word ‘mother’. Hirst and Peters find it better to say that we are in possession of a concept when we have the ability to make discriminations and to classify things together if they are similar. To be able to use a word appropriately is a sophisticated and convenient way of doing things. In my understanding, this means that grouping ideas together without a concept that enables us to distinguish the differences and similarities between these ideas can deny our claim to have a concept. For us to justify our claim that we have a concept is to be able to make inferences by grouping ideas together according to their similarities and differences.

Secondly, it is not altogether satisfactory to associate having a concept with the possession of ability, whether it is the specific ability to use words appropriately or to classify and make discriminations. For Hirst and Peters (1998:30), both these abilities assume something more fundamental, namely the grasp of a principle that enables us to do these things. For me, this means that it is not only about associating having a concept with the ability to relate it to other words, and be able to classify ideas together in their categories of differences and similarities. It is also about providing reasons for what we are saying. To have a concept is also to justify why you are using the concept in a study. In other words, you must explain what this concept means in your study specifically. In my study it implies that I can claim to have the concept of institutional culture when

I am able to justify what it means in my study. Having gained deeper insights into what a concept means, I now turn to another question: What is analysis?

2.6.1.2 What is analysis?

In response to this question I align myself with Hirst and White (in Van Wyk, 2004:3), who describe ‘analysis’ as the elucidation of any concept, idea or unit of thought that we employ in seeking to understand ourselves and our world. Such a concept is clarified by reducing it to and breaking it down into the more basic concepts that constitute it and thereby showing its relationship to a network of other concepts, or discovering what the concept denotes. In the same way, Schroeter (2004:426) describes ‘analysis’ as a method of elucidating our current, implicit understanding of what it is our concepts represent. He goes on to say that few would deny that analysis can play an important role in discovering the actual reference of our concepts. Our implicit understanding determines the reference of concepts; all one needs to do in order to say what a concept represents is to make that implicit understanding explicit.

My understanding of this is that our concepts, ideas or thoughts will not make sense if they are not made clear. They are analysed so as to make clear the beliefs surrounding the meaning of these concepts. Let me use the example of my key concept, ‘institutional culture’. I analysed this concept to understand the concepts of culture and institution. I then examined other concepts that constitute the concept of institutional culture. In my study, this implies clarifying the concept of institutional culture by breaking it up into other concepts that constitute it. Put differently, analysis is not merely concerned with the meaning of beliefs, but also with their justification and truth (Van Wyk, 2004:3). In my view, this implies that concepts mean differently things for different people. We do not clarify the concepts only because we need a clear understanding, but we also must provide reasons for what it means in our research or in our context of study. In my study, it was to justify what institutional culture means, and also what it means in a university context.

2.6.1.3 The point of conceptual analysis

I bear in mind the advice from Paul Smeyers to examine what Hirst and Peters say about conceptual analysis, and I draw on them again in this section. I ask myself: What is the point of conceptual analysis? Hirst and Peters (1998:33-34) say that the point of conceptual analysis is to see through the words, to get a better grasp of the similarities and differences that one can pick out. These are important in the context of other questions, which we cannot answer without such preliminary analysis. Such an analysis helps us to pinpoint more precisely what is implicit in our moral consciousness. It also enables us to stand back a bit and reflect on the status of the demand to which the word bears witness. It again frees us to ask fundamental questions in ethics, which is whether the demand is justified. This is a necessary preliminary to answering some other philosophical questions. Hirst and Peters again use their example of the word ‘punishment’, and say we cannot tackle the question in ethics of whether there are any good reasons for punishing people until we are clear what we mean by punishing. In other words, questions of analysis are linked with questions of justification. The linkage of conceptual analysis with these other types of philosophical questions explains the fact that philosophers do not indulge in an indiscriminating analysis of any old concepts. They do not attempt the analysis of concepts such as “clock and cabbage” unless there are further issues with which the analysis is concerned. Philosophers often devote themselves to analysing the concepts of the particular sciences and enquiring into the epistemological status of the methods of inquiry employed.

My understanding is that the point of analysing concepts is to have a clear understanding of what they mean and to be able to identify what is similar and different in their meaning. It allows us to clarify our own understanding of the concepts, to critically think about why the concept is on demand, and also to provide reasons why it is on demand. In my study, the point of analysing ‘institutional culture’ was to examine how it is conceptualised in the literature and to be able to identify the similarities and differences between these conceptions. Conceptual analysis also allowed me to have a clear understanding of what institutional culture means, and also to justify what it means in my study and why there is a need to study this concept.

I further aligned myself with Hirst and Peters (1998:30), who pose the question: What do we do in philosophy when we analyse a concept? They respond by saying that, in philosophy, it is about the ability to use words appropriately, and that we examine the use of words in order to see what

principle or principles govern their use. If these principles are made clear, then a concept is being uncovered. Having seen what we do in philosophy when we analyse a concept, I came to understand that we analyse a concept so that we are able to use it correctly and apply it in our own specific situations. But this is not all: we must also identify the criteria that underlie its use. In my study this goes with questions such as, what constitutes institutional culture, how is it used and why is it used in this way? It is by answering such questions that I could make clear the principles that govern its use. I thus came to understand what a concept is and how we analyse a concept in philosophy of education. Let me turn to the point of conceptual analysis.

Now that I have discussed what conceptual analysis means, a question arises: What have I understood from the discussion? I have understood that conceptual analysis is an analytical and theoretical tool for philosophy. By this I mean that researchers who take a philosophical perspective bear in mind that every concept that they use must be used in the right way. This is because concepts have different meanings for different people, and in the different contexts in which they are applied. What philosophers do is to dig deeper into the concept for a clearer understanding. To make sense of these concepts, they analyse their different meanings in the literature. This goes along with an ability to see what is similar and different between the different meanings of the concept. Philosophers also try to make sense of how the concepts are used, justify why they use the concepts in their research, and what the concepts mean in their studies. In essence, the task of the philosopher, having taken the clues and hints from linguistic patterns, is to arrive at a set of clear (clarifying concepts), coherent (making sense of ideas) and specific concepts (being consistent) (Barrow & Woods, 1988:xii).

In my study, the key concept that I attempted to make sense of was institutional culture. I analysed this concept in order for me to have a deeper understanding of what it means. I did this by examining its different conceptions in the literature, for institutional culture has many meanings in a university context. My task as a researcher taking a philosophical perspective was to break down the concept of institutional culture into two parts, that is, to examine what institution and culture mean separately for a deeper understanding. I did this to see those other concepts that it constitutes or that are embedded within the concept. In other words, I analysed institutional culture to identify its different meanings in a university context, how it is used, and why I used the concept in my

study, as well as to identify the principles that underlie its usage. Beukes (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:29) confirms this when he writes that conceptual analysis achieves at least three objectives: firstly, it aims to clarify concepts that are vague and/or ambiguous. Secondly, it attempts to reveal hidden assumptions that underlie a particular view. Lastly, it helps to get a better understanding of the different meanings of a word.

I now turn to a discussion of documentary analysis, because in my study I attempted to analyse a national policy and the institutional documents of the University of Namibia.

2.6.2 Documentary Analysis

In this section I discuss documentary analysis, because it was my second research method. I do this because I wanted to understand what it means to analyse documents, as I analysed a national policy and the institutional policy documents of the University of Namibia. I did not assume that I understand what ‘document’ means. I therefore discuss the meaning of ‘document’ while I retain the meaning of ‘analysis’ from my previous exploration (Section 2.6.1).

2.6.2.1 What is a document?

I respond to my question (what is a document?) by referring to Gilbert (2005:287), who sees a document as anything that we can read and that relates to some aspects of the social world. He further says documents are written based on certain ideas, works or commonly accepted, taken-for-granted principles, or given certain socially accepted bases. For Alasuutari, Bickman and Brannen (2009:495), documents carry content, words, images, plans, ideas and patterns, to name a few. According to Cohen *et al.* (2011:249-250), a document may be defined as a record of an event or process. Such records may be produced by individuals or groups, and take many different forms. Thus, a document refers to anything that is put in writing, on condition that it makes reference to features of education. For example, most black Namibian students had no opportunity to attend higher education during the apartheid period. For this reason, the Government of Namibia devised a policy known as Vision 2030. This document calls on higher education institutions to consider taking a developmental path for the sake of developing the educational capacity of

Namibian society for the future. In my study I refer to a document as any piece of writing that carries plans, ideas, words and patterns.

Further to this discussion, Cohen *et al.* (2011:249-250) make a distinction between primary and secondary documents. Primary documents are produced as a direct record of an event or process by a witness or subject involved in it. In my view, primary documents refer to records that are produced directly and first-hand. Simply put, they are records of first-hand information, such as transcripts of interviews, participant observation field notes, charts, maps and rituals. Secondary documents, on the other hand, are documents that are formed through an analysis of primary documents to provide an account of the event or process in question, often in relation to others. For me, secondary documents refer to documents that are written after analysing primary documents. For instance, if, in my study, I cite another person who cited a primary document, then it becomes a secondary document. In other words, I cited second-hand information. Therefore, primary documents are those that carry first-hand information and secondary documents carry second-hand information.

My discussion of the meaning of ‘document’ implies that any written material, whether primary or secondary, is known as a document. This is important in the sense that it clarified what type of documents I intended to analyse. In this case, the institutional documents of the University of Namibia that I analysed fell within the primary documents category, and the literature with which I engaged to understand institutional culture comprised secondary documents. Cohen *et al.* (2011:250) provide examples of primary documents, such as policy reports. These authors say that policy reports are important for revealing the kinds of assumptions that underlie such policy reforms. Governments, as well as organisations and pressure groups, produce reports in order to define actions and problems and to propose solutions. The documents represent an outlook or ideology and also embody the contradictions and tensions that are inherent in such policies. On this note, I am confident to say that policy reports were a significant source of research evidence in my study.

Having discussed what a document is, one may ask, What kind of documents will I analyse? In my study I attempted to analyse institutional documents of the University of Namibia, namely the

University of Namibia strategic plan, the Scholarship Communications Policy, the Research Policy and also a national policy document known as Vision 2030. I deemed that the meanings of institutional culture would be articulated in these documents. I shall now discuss the point of documentary analysis.

2.6.2.2 The point of documentary analysis

I begin this section with a question: What is the point of documentary analysis? The point is that, according to Best and Kahn (2006:258), document analysis serves as a useful tool to yield information that is helpful in explaining social and education practices. This means that analysing documents provides more insight into a situation and also provides clearer explanations of matters in education. Once documents are located and examined, they do not speak for themselves, but require careful analysis and interpretation (Cohen *et al.*, 2011:151). I understood this to mean that documents speak to those who examine them. They contain information that requires a detailed reading and interpretation. I link this to Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, where he talks about having a conversation with a text.

Interpreting the selected institutional documents within Gadamer's hermeneutical approach implied understanding and interpreting the text, taking into account the history of the context of study. This means that, once I had located the documents necessary for my study, I carefully analysed and interpreted those documents by:

- Establishing the meaning. This involved understanding the information relayed and the underlying values and assumptions of the author, as well as arguments developed. In doing so, it was necessary to comprehend both the text and its wider context.
- Examining the context of the documents. This included taking account of the broad educational, social, political, economic and other relationships that help explain the contemporary meaning of the documents; in other words, how the documents can be understood in the context of their time.
- Identifying meaning from the text, which gave insight into the institutional culture (such as the values, beliefs and practices), and examining how it was articulated (Cohen *et al.*, 2011: 151).

2.6.2.3 Limitations of documentary analysis

Although documentary analysis may seem to be a useful method for a study, Cohen *et al.* (2011:151) point to the limitations of documentary analysis. They caution that the researcher must take into account the reliability of the document, for example the credibility of the account of the event in terms of the bias of the author, the access to the event and the interpretation. Similarly, Vukuza-Linda (2014:49) and Alasuutari *et al.* (2009:293) identify several limitations of documentary analysis, such as authenticity, credibility, representation and meaning. For them, the authenticity of a document concerns its genuineness: whether it is actually what it claims to be. In order to ensure the reliability of the documentary sources in my study, the inclusion of each document was guided by the following questions:

- Is the document an original or a copy and has it been corrupted in any way?
- What about the authorship: is it possible to authenticate the identity of those responsible for producing the document?

Further to this, Vukuza-Linda (2014:50) and Alasuutari *et al.* (2009:293) link the question of authenticity with credibility. They suggest that, once a document has been authenticated, it is necessary to ask how distorted its contents are likely to be, that is, how sincere and accurate was the author of the document. They urge researchers to pay particular attention to the conditions under which the document was produced and the material interest that may have driven the author to write the document. However, the most serious challenge facing users of documentary analysis concerns their representivity and meaning. Vukuza-Linda again requests the researcher to make sure that the documents consulted are representative of the totality of relevant documents. This requires that consideration is given to the survival and availability of relevant documents.

In terms of meaning, there may be difficulty in establishing the literal meaning of documents. Some users of documents face problems of interpretive understanding of individual concepts, a lack of appreciation of the social and cultural context through which the various concepts are related in a particular discourse, and problems in the judgment of the meaning and significance of the text as a whole. It is suggested that researchers must discover as much as possible about the

conditions under which the text was produced and, on that basis, make sense of the author's situation and intentions (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:50).

2.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter I have discussed the research procedures that served as a guide throughout the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting the data. I presented the research questions, and the methodology and methods that were used to answer the research questions. I indicated different research methodologies that can be used in educational research, such as positivist and critical theory. My focus in this study was on interpretivism and, within this approach, I followed a hermeneutical methodology. To be brief, I drew on Gadamer's hermeneutics, which is central to the understanding and interpretation of texts. Understanding goes along with interpretation. For Gadamer, the history of a context plays an important role in understanding and interpreting a text. Understanding and interpretation also involve engaging in a conversation between the text and the interpreter. I then discussed two research methods for this study; conceptual analysis and documentary analysis. Conceptual analysis is concerned with the analysis of the different uses and meanings of concepts, especially with regard to concepts like 'institutional culture', which are ambiguous. An analysis of the meanings of the concepts requires relating them to other concepts in which they are embedded. This process reveals the principles that underlie the meaning of the concept. Documentary analysis has to do with a careful examination of documents. In this study I analysed relevant policy documents of UNAM in order to find out whether they refer to the meanings of institutional culture. Therefore, hermeneutics, conceptual analysis and document analysis assisted in the analysis of the institutional policy documents of the University of Namibia.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

I encountered a challenge in terms of understanding the concept of institutional culture in the literature. Van Wyk (2009:331) observes that there are complex conceptual issues associated with some of the baseline debates on the nature of culture, and the nature of institutional culture. For me, this implies that the concept of culture does not have a specific meaning, which makes it difficult to understand the concept. It is also evident from Jacobs's (2012:260) analysis of the institutional documents of Stellenbosch University and the University of the Western Cape that the concept of institutional culture is not explained well in institutional documents. This means that the concept is not only difficult to explore in the literature, but also in institutional documents.

Before I embark on a discussion of my exploration of the literature for this study, I must acknowledge that I have very little experience in conducting a literature review. I, therefore, begin this chapter by answering the question: What is a literature review? I then proceed with my literature review, in which I shall touch briefly on my understanding of the concept of institutional culture. In the section that follows, I explore the historical emergence of the concept. This is followed by a discussion of culture and higher education, the challenges that are faced by higher education institutions, institutional culture at the University of Namibia, and the significance of institutional culture for UNAM. I then attempted to analyse the concept of institutional culture by analysing the concepts of culture, institution and institutional culture respectively. I also looked at the concepts that are related to the concept of institutional culture. A theoretical framework follows, and I end the chapter by constructing meanings of 'institutional culture' for this study.

3.2 WHAT IS A LITERATURE REVIEW?

Looking back, I can now identify some challenges I had. While I reviewed the literature for my research proposal, I only wrote a summary of what others had written on the concept of

institutional culture. It is now clear I lacked an understanding of what a literature review is all about, and the purpose it has in research. I therefore did not attempt to review the literature without first gaining an understanding of what a literature review is, hence my question: What is a literature review?

I found new insights in Randolph's (2009:1-2) article, titled 'A guide to writing the dissertation literature review'. These ideas were new in the sense that, at the beginning of this study, I regarded the research methodology as an important aspect of a study. It never occurred to me that a literature review also is important. In his article, Randolph argues that a literature review is one of the many aspects that can derail a study. He argues that, if a literature review is flawed, the remainder of the study may also be viewed as flawed. The point I take for my study was to make sure that my literature review was not flawed.

Coming back to my question of what a literature review is, I aligned myself with Randolph (2009:2), who argues that it is not simply about bibliography, citations, summarising the substance of the literature and drawing conclusions from it. Instead, he sees a literature review as an analysis and synthesis of information. Added to this, Ridley (2008:2) writes that a literature review is the part of the thesis in which there is extensive reference to related research and theory in a field. It is where connections are made between the source texts that one draws on and where you position yourself and your study among these sources. From this I learned that it was my opportunity to engage in a written dialogue with researchers in my area, while at the same time showing that I had engaged with, understood and responded to the body of knowledge underpinning my study. It also supported my identification of a problem to research, and to illustrate where there is a gap in previous research that needs to be filled.

Having looked at what a literature review entails, I asked myself: Why must I conduct a literature review? I aligned myself with Randolph (2009:2) again, because he says that there are many scientific reasons for conducting a literature review. He suggests that a literature review assists you in distinguishing what has been done and what needs to be done, discovering variables important to the topic, synthesising information and gaining a new perspective, identifying relationships between ideas and practices, establishing the context of the topic, acquiring the

subject vocabulary, to name a few. For Ridley (2008:4), a literature review helps to contextualise your work. It provides a background and creates a space or gap for a study.

Apart from the different reasons for conducting a literature review, I asked myself, does a literature review serve any purpose in my study? Ridley (2008:16) cautions that there are many purposes for conducting a literature review, depending on what one wishes to address when including references to the work of others. She provides multiple purposes of a literature review for my study: it provides a historical background to my research; it gives an overview of the current context in which my research is situated by referring to contemporary debates, issues and questions in the field; it includes a discussion of relevant theories and concepts that underpin my research; it provides definitions to clarify how terms are being used in the context of my own work; and it addresses a gap in the field. In the same way, Randolph (2009:2) identifies several purposes of a literature review, such as demonstrating an author's knowledge about a particular field of study, including vocabulary, theories, key variables, phenomena, methods and history. He says further that it also informs the student of the influential researchers and research groups in the field. However, Boote and Beile (2005:3) suggest five categories that can make a good literature review, which they usefully refer to as a "literature review scoring rubric". For them, a sound literature review must cover the following categories: coverage, synthesis, methodology, significance and rhetoric. I found this very useful because it provided clarity about what each category should cover when reviewing the literature.

In sum, my aim in this study was to explore how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by the University of Namibia. My central key concept was 'institutional culture', which I had to explore in order to gain a deeper and clearer understanding of what it means. Although Randolph (2009:2) regards a literature review as not being about bibliography or citation, it is my opinion that the bibliography also matters in research, since in my case it was used to demonstrate that I consulted relevant materials on institutional culture. Nevertheless, I can have as many citations as I can get, but without making sense of what I talk about, this literature review will not make sense. Like Randolph, I believe that the purpose of a literature review in my study is not about summarising what others have written about institutional culture. Neither is my literature review all about accepting the ideas of others. I reviewed the literature in order to gain clarity on the

discussions surrounding the concept of institutional culture, since my study is hermeneutical and conceptual. I wanted to develop my own understanding of the concept of institutional culture in the context of UNAM. I also wanted to identify recurring meanings of ‘institutional culture’ so that I could construct the ones on which I focused in my study. Having discussed what a literature review is all about, I now proceed with the literature review for my study.

3.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

By means of this review I wanted to understand the discourses surrounding the concept of institutional culture. Boote and Beile (2005:3) confirm that a researcher cannot perform significant research without first understanding the literature in the field. I now provide my brief understanding of the concept of institutional culture.

3.3.1 Understanding Institutional Culture

I mentioned in Chapter 1 that I first read about institutional culture during my honours studies at Stellenbosch University in 2013. I read an interesting book chapter by Van Wyk (2009), entitled ‘Universities as organisations or institutions’. It was challenging to understand the concept of institutional culture, because it was the first time that I had read an article about higher education or a university. I had read many materials about basic education, since I was a teacher prior to my studies, but higher education seemed to require a different perspective. I therefore had a limited understanding of the concept of institutional culture.

From my review of the literature, it appeared to me that the concept of culture is a difficult one to study, especially when referring to higher education institutions. Välimaa (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:94) confirms this when he points to the difficulty of using culture as an instrument of research, because it can be defined in far too many ways. Due to this, it may also be problematic to use it as a general framework for analysis, as it has to include many elements of higher education institutions. These are, for instance, ecological characteristics, historical events, and institutional traditions and missions. In my view, what makes the concept of culture problematic is that it is subject to many interpretations. To make it even more difficult, it consists of many elements in the

context of higher education. It therefore was possible that this could limit my understanding of institutional culture in my study. Hoffman (in Van Wyk, 2009:335) suggests that it would be critically important to consider how and in what ways the concept of culture can enhance – or impede – understanding, research and action in education.

Having pointed out some difficulties in the study of culture, the literature also indicates that the concept of institutional culture is difficult to understand. Jansen (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:94) posits that institutional culture is a hard-to-define phenomenon because the concept constitutes many aspects of higher education institutions. For this reason it is studied from a wide range of perspectives and disciplines, such as anthropology and sociology to the applied disciplines of organisational behaviour and management science (Van Wyk, 2009:344; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:95), and also philosophy of education. It is also viewed as having emerged from the concept of organisational culture, which was rooted in business studies (Jacobs, 2012; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:95). With regard to methodological issues, it is assumed that a cultural perspective on higher education applies to qualitative studies only (Jacobs, 2012:79). What I gathered from this is that it is difficult to give a specific meaning to the concept of institutional culture. Because of this, the concept is approached in many different ways in different disciplines. For example, anthropologists, sociologists and philosophers have all approached it in different ways.

Due to the nature of institutional culture, I observed that higher education scholars such as Kezar and Eckel (2002) use the concept of institutional culture to look at its effects on change strategies; Sporn (1996) studied its relation to management approaches; while Smart and St John (1996) studied its effectiveness in higher education. In recent studies, Van Wyk (2009), Jacobs (2012) and Vukuza-Linda (2014) have used philosophical tools such as conceptual analysis and critical hermeneutics to analyse the concept of institutional culture. There is a need for such studies, since the literature suggests that institutional culture can be understood best within the context of transformation (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:94). Very important for me was that I could not find such studies in the Namibian context. This indicates that the existing knowledge in the literature on the concept emanates from studies that have been conducted outside of Namibia. To locate my study within the existing body of knowledge, my study took a philosophical perspective in order to gain a deeper understanding of how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by the University

of Namibia. In the next section I briefly provide a historical overview of the concept of institutional culture.

3.3.2 A Brief Historical Overview of the Concept of Institutional Culture

The idea of concepts having historical roots never occurred to me, because history is something that I thought of as applying to people, countries and regions. In this section I describe how I gained a deeper understanding of the concept of ‘institutional culture’ by tracing the historical roots of ‘organisational culture’; in other words, how and why the concept came to be used in discussions on higher education institutions. Such a historical understanding of ‘organisational culture’ assist me in gaining insight into the concept of institutional culture. This is in line with Gadamer’s historicity of understanding, where the concern is understanding the historical reality or the history of a text (Gadamer, 1975:174). It therefore was of great importance for my study to understand the history of the concept of institutional culture through texts.

3.3.2.1 Emergence in business studies

From my review of the literature, it appeared that the concept of institutional culture emerged from the concept of organisational culture. Higgins (2007), Jacobs (2012) and Vukuza-Linda (2014) discuss how the concept of organisational culture emerged, and I drew on them. They enlightened me that the concept of organisational culture dates back to the late 1970s, when it was used to study corporate businesses. They further write that William Ouchi (1993) was one of the first academics with an interest in business studies to make use of the term in his research. He argued that much of the Japanese business success came from the country’s different organisational culture, and the ways this culture produced more committed, energetic and innovative employees. This implies that the term originated from the Japanese business studies after seeing that their businesses were successful due to their organisational culture. Their businesses were successful in the sense that the organisational culture produced a kind of culture that enabled employees to be committed, energetic and innovative. In essence, the use of the concept of organisational culture in business studies was a ground for comparison between Japanese and American business practices. For the Japanese, organisational culture meant a way to minimise conflicting interests

and to integrate each of the members of the group into a whole that works in the common interest. The term ‘organisational culture’ was used in the United States of America (USA) to analyse the strengths and weakness of their businesses due to the sudden, disturbing visibility of Japan as a major global competitor (Higgins, 2007:109; Jacobs, 2012:75-77; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:96).

From this discussion, I understand that the concept of organisational culture was widely used in business studies in the late 1970s. One of the influential writers in business studies to make use of the concept was Ouchi. The concept of organisational culture was used as a means of comparing business practices between the Japanese and the Americans. As far as I understand, the business practices of the Japanese were successful because of their organisational culture. When the Americans saw how successful the Japanese were, they took it as a challenge to their companies and began to use the term to analyse the weaknesses and strengths of their business organisations. Having discussed how the concept of organisational culture emerged, one may ask: How was it translated into higher education discourses?

3.3.2.2 Introduction into higher education discourses

Having seen how organisational culture helped to solve problems in business organisations, it seems to me that scholars introduced the concept into discussions of higher education institutions. Jacobs (2012:76-77) provides me with insights when she writes that the first person to write about and propose the extension of the concept to higher education management was William G. Tierney (1988). He observed the emergence of the concept in the 1980s as a topic of central concern for those who study organisations. He emphasises the notion that it is important to recognise that the emergence of a new term, concept or idea, such as ‘organisational culture’, is always an active response to a changing social and political reality.

Since Tierney was the first to make use of the concept, he also proposed that the concept be extended to discussions of higher education institutions (Jacobs, 2012:76-77; Van Wyk, 2009:334), to cover the work and running of universities as organisations. This implies that the concept of organisational culture never existed in discourses of higher education institutions until Tierney proposed that it should be extended to these discourses. Given this, I asked myself: Why was the

concept introduced into discussions of higher education institutions? Tierney provides reasons for the introduction of the concept. He firstly describes the aim of his work as providing a working framework to diagnose culture in colleges and universities so that distinct problems can be overcome. Secondly, he points out how administrators might utilise the concept of culture to help solve specific administrative problems. Tierney (1998:2-3) suggests that leaders in higher education can benefit from understanding their institutions as cultural entities. Such an understanding could provide them with a better understanding of their institutions. Once there is an understanding of organisational culture, many of the difficulties associated with change in higher education institutions might be managed better (Jacobs, 2012:77). For me, this implies that introducing and extending the concept to higher education discourses provides ways for universities to manage change.

In his article, Tierney explains the concept of organisational culture as the study of a particular web of significance within an organisation. He suggests that such a study be enhanced by drawing on traditional anthropology, in terms of which a university is looked at as a village or clan (Tierney, 1998:4). Of particular interest to me is that Tierney suggests that productive research depends on our being able to enter the field armed with equally well-defined concepts. These concepts provide clues for uncovering aspects of organisational culture, as they also define elements of a usable framework (Tierney, 1998:8). He provides cultural concepts that can be utilised by cultural researchers when they study a college or university. Put differently, cultural concepts can provide a framework for studying organisational culture in universities. This framework includes the following questions that need to be asked when conducting a cultural study (Tierney, 1998:4-8):

- How does the organisation define its environment?
- How is the mission articulated?
- How do new members become socialised?
- What constitutes information?
- What strategy is used to arrive at decisions?
- What does the organisation expect from its leaders?

To summarise: from this discussion I understand that Tierney was the first to write about organisational culture and also the one who proposed the use of the concept in discourses in higher education. He proposed the extension of the concept with an idea that universities could be run in the same way as organisations. In other words, the concept was also applicable to discourses in higher education institutions in the same way that the use of the concept of organisational culture was dominant in business studies in the early 1970s. Having seen how it alleviated some conflicting problems within business organisations, it was then extended to discussions of higher education institutions. It was extended with the aim to solve similar problems to those faced by corporate businesses. I found Tierney's ideas to be very useful, as I sought a deeper understanding of the concept of institutional culture. Tierney's framework provides clues on how the meanings of 'institutional culture' are articulated in institutional documents for universities, since in this chapter I attempted to construct meanings of the concept of institutional culture. Having discussed the translation of institutional culture, I now turn to drawing a link between culture and higher education in the next section.

3.3.3 Culture and Higher Education

I begin this section with a question: How does culture link with higher education? I asked this for the reason that, before I started writing my thesis, I linked the concept of culture to my tribe or clan. My culture is different from that of others in terms of how we behave, act and do things. As Jacobs (2012:2) writes, the concept of culture signifies, in more general terms, that different people live differently. In other words, it is a particular way of life, whether of people, a period, a group, or humanity in general.

I observed that, whenever I walked around, whether on or off campus, people stared at me or greeted me in isiXhosa or isiZulu. They did this because they assumed that I was one of them or simply because they did not know who I am. They may have wondered about who I am, where I came from or about my culture. Strangely, people who greeted me in their language never bothered to ask who I am. For the record, I am a San/Tsubia woman from Katima Mulilo in Namibia. I look different because I am shaped by the San and Tsubia cultures, and this manifests itself in everything I do. The way I walk, talk, think, look at people and express myself, as well as my attitude towards

other people, differentiates me. It is my culture that, when an adult speaks, one is expected to listen and nod to agree or disagree. To speak while being addressed by an adult is a sign of disrespect. It is also my culture to kneel and look down when talking to adults, and to clap hands to show respect to others. Despite pursuing my career, the reality is that I move with this culture wherever I go.

My review of the literature showed a link between culture and higher education. Before I proceed with my discussion of how culture links with higher education, let me clarify what I mean by higher education. This is necessary because the recent literature on institutional culture in the South African context links culture with higher education, and not specifically with universities. In this context (National Council for Higher Education, 1996, in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:97), documents displace the concept 'university' and refer to 'higher education'. In contrast, I see higher education as a broad concept because it refers to all post-secondary institutions that are established under the Higher Education Act in Namibia. As I showed in Chapter 1, higher education in the Namibian context refers to all post-secondary institutions that are registered and established under the Higher Education Act (Republic of Namibia, 2003). In this context, only three higher education institutions constitute higher education (UNAM, PON and IUM). In my study, when I speak about higher education I specifically refer to UNAM.

Coming back to the link between culture and higher education, I draw on Barnett (1990, in Van Wyk, 2009:335). He explains how culture links with universities on two distinct levels. First, he links the idea of culture in universities to the academic community. The academic community, for me, refers to students, scholars and academic staff. For Barnett, the idea of culture suggests a shared set of meanings, beliefs, understanding and ideas. In short, it is a taken-for-granted way of life in which there is a reasonably clear difference between those on the inside and those on the outside of the community. My understanding is that academics have their way of sharing and communicating their ideas, both in writing and speaking. In other words, as academics they share meanings, beliefs and ideas. This is their culture of doing academic work, and they speak a language that makes them different from other people who are outside the academic community. Similarly, Goldgar and Frost (2004:xiii-xix) say that the culture of an institution shows the difference between those who are within the institution and those who are not members of the institution. This implies that a university is a community that is shaped by culture. This culture

distinguishes it from the culture of those that are outside the community. The distinction is seen in terms of how those who are inside share meanings, beliefs and ideas. In the beginning of this discussion I linked culture to my cultural background, where I explained how my culture shapes the way I talk, think, walk and express myself. When I came to Stellenbosch University I found my cultural background different from the culture at Stellenbosch. My thinking, way of expressing and talking were totally different from what was expected of me at this university. I was expected to express myself in front of others, to look at people when I talk, to write in an academic way and to think critically about issues. Even the everyday language in the administration buildings (Afrikaans) is still foreign to me, as I cannot speak it. Therefore, the culture of a university signifies the way of life of those within its setting.

Secondly, Barnett (in Van Wyk, 2009: 335) links culture in universities to student experience. Barnett's view is that the value does not lie in the acquisition of specific competence, but that it is in direct proportion to the critical capacities of its students. I am interested in the idea of student experience, which in my view implies the way students from different cultural groups experience being at the university. I link this to Thaver (2006:19), who speaks of belonging or feeling at home. He explains being at home as meaning being in a place where there are familiar, safe and protected boundaries. For me, this refers to the way students experience being at university or how they experience university life. For instance, my experience at Stellenbosch University was totally different from my home experience. At home I was familiar with my surroundings, I had to go to work and I spent most of my time with my family. At Stellenbosch, the environment was new, I had to read and write assignments and I met different people. Being away from my family I felt like I was in a different world. Part of the university culture is to orientate first-year students and I attended this programme. Part of the orientation was to be told about safety matters on campus, and being taken around to become familiar with the university surroundings and the faculty buildings. But this was not enough; I got lost several times and had to ask for directions. I also learnt about the different societies that students can join to socialise with others. Therefore, cultures in universities also refer to the way students experience life.

3.3.4 Challenges Faced by Higher Education Institutions

When I started writing this section, I had a sense that only people face challenges, given the challenges that I experienced while writing this study. It never occurred to me that universities also face challenges, because I viewed them as places, not as being people-oriented or social constructs. The literature indicates that universities face a variety of challenges that may influence their institutional culture. Kezar and Eckel (2002:435) identify a number of challenges that are faced by higher education institutions today, especially in the USA. In this context, for example, higher education institutions have to deal with greater autonomy, financial pressure, growth in technology, changing faculty roles, public scrutiny, changing demographics, increases in student enrolment and competing values. Similar challenges are observed in South African universities, such as decreased state funding, competition to boost student numbers, attracting the best staff and conducting market-related research (Van Wyk, 2009:334). In the same way, Thaver (2006:24) observes major factors affecting higher education – issues such as the changing character of student distribution and characteristics in higher education, the changing organisation of university management and the changing models of delivery in higher education.

In the light of the above challenges, Teferra and Altbach (2004:4) posit that African higher education is recognised as a key force for modernisation and development. In this context, universities face an array of challenges that are specific to a developing country, including challenges that are common to a wide spectrum of universities (Ping & Crowley, 1997:383). According to Trotter *et al.* (2014:37), some of the challenges affecting higher education institutions emerged when the majority of African states gained independence from the 1960s onwards. During this period, the new national governments took a strong interest in higher education institutions as agents of social change and development. This led to the conceptualisation of the developmental university. The African governments tended to view universities as intended for the production of manpower necessary to indigenise the civil service. Similar challenges can prevail within UNAM, since it is a young institution that was established soon after Namibia became independent in 1992.

The first goal for higher education is to transform Namibia into a knowledge-based economy (UNAM, 2006:7). This goal is seen in terms of teaching and research. The literature suggests that the University of Namibia is expected to provide quality teaching and research that would transform the Namibian nation into a knowledge-based society. In support of this, the National

Council for Higher Education (2012:7) articulates that central to the growth of a country is the creation of knowledge and the strategic application of this knowledge. Secondly, higher education is concerned with reaching a quality of life equal to the standards of living in developed countries (Matengu *et al.*, 2014:83). In my view, this goal is seen in terms of contributing to the social development of the Namibian nation in comparison to other developed countries. In other words, it means that university education must uplift the living standards of the Namibian nation to that equal to developed countries. Having given all these goals, I got a sense that the University of Namibia was being challenged in terms of initiating strategies that would position it towards the attainment of Vision 2030. It is also my view that, as a young university in a developing country, the university tries to align its activities in order to place the goals of the country at the forefront. In so doing, there is a possibility that it can contribute to the development of the society as a whole.

What challenges does UNAM face? Ping and Crowley (1997:383) identified the challenges faced by UNAM as a developmental university. These include overcoming the legacy of apartheid, cooperating in national development, supporting national/ethnic culture, fostering effective relations between university and government, achieving intellectual independence, providing appropriate education for careers, enhancing student performance and addressing funding issues. In my view, all of these challenges have a huge impact on the culture of UNAM. I now look at the institutional culture of UNAM, the site of analysis of my study.

3.3.5 Institutional Culture at the University of Namibia

I was looking for literature that discusses the concept of institutional culture in the context of higher education in Namibia. Thaver writes (in Jacobs, 2012:86) that the concept is prominent in policy and institutional discourses. To my surprise I could not find any literature on the Namibian context. The reason why I needed such literature was that I needed to find out how the country explained institutional culture as well as the institutional culture of UNAM. My review of the literature in higher education revealed only two studies of interest.

The first is an article by Kirby-Harris (2003), titled 'Universities responding to policy: Organizational change at the University of Namibia'. In this article, reference is made to the

concept of institutional culture and culture at UNAM. Kirby-Harris (2003) writes that, due to the changes that took place with the establishment of UNAM, it inherited the structures, curricula and systems from the British elite, and there were then transplanted into the university's institutional culture. In terms of culture, he writes that the University of Namibia has a weakly developed identity and little sense of its own culture. He also makes reference to institutional culture, but provides no analysis of what 'institutional culture' means. He also does not show the nature of the culture that exists within UNAM. However, I greatly appreciated his insights into the relationship between government and the University of Namibia in terms of policy (Kirby-Harris, 2003).

The second study is a case study report conducted by the Scholarly Communication in Africa Programme (SCAP; Trotter *et al.*, 2014). In this report, brief reference is made to the institutional culture of UNAM. This report touches on several aspects that I found useful for my study. Firstly, they describe the institutional culture of UNAM as a developmental culture. They describe UNAM's institutional culture as developmental because the university has a developmental mission that is regarded as strong and is in line with national strategies and policies. These national strategies and policies have resulted in the administration and many scholars at UNAM having a close association with the government. UNAM aligns most of its activities with national strategies and policies (for example, the national development plan and Vision 2030). What I find more interesting in this study is that they aligned some documents with Bergquist's types of institutional culture (Trotter *et al.*, 2014:65).

Firstly, the goal for higher education is to transform Namibia into a knowledge-based economy (UNAM, 2006:7). This goal is seen in terms of teaching and research. The literature suggests that UNAM is expected to provide quality teaching and research to achieve this goal. In support of this, the National Council for Higher Education (2012:7) articulates that central to the growth of a country is the creation of knowledge and the strategic application of this knowledge. Secondly, higher education is concerned with reaching a quality of life equal to the standards of living in developed countries (Matengu *et al.*, 2014:83). In my view, this goal is seen in terms of contributing to the social development of the Namibian nation, meaning that university education must uplift the living standards of the Namibian nation to the level of that of developed countries. Having given all these goals, I got a sense that UNAM was being challenged in terms of initiating

strategies that would position it towards the attainment of Vision 2030. It was also my view that, as a young university in a developing country, the university was trying to align its activities in order to place the goals of the country at the forefront. In so doing, there is a possibility that it can contribute to the development of the society as a whole.

However, the above studies do not provide a detailed analysis of institutional culture and how it is constructed and articulated in UNAM's documents. In other words, they do not provide an explanation of what is meant by institutional culture, because the study does not specifically focus on institutional culture. However, recent studies suggest that institutional culture describes how things are done by the university community. Further studies are needed that will provide deeper insight into the notion of institutional culture in the Namibian context. This study is an attempt to fill this gap in the literature. This brings me to the significance of my study.

3.4 AN ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

The major challenge that I encountered while reviewing the literature for my proposal in 2014 was to understand the concept of institutional culture. As I reviewed the literature I observed that it referred to many aspects of a university. I observed this, but when I was asked what 'institutional culture' means while defending my proposal, I had doubts about what it means. For this reason I could not give a clear answer to the question. The other challenge was that, in the literature, I observed the use of concepts such as organisational culture and university culture, which had the same meanings as the concept of institutional culture. This also made it difficult for me to have a clear understanding of the concept. Due to this, I found it useful in my study to use the same approach used by Van Wyk (2009:333) and Jacobs (2012:68) in their analysis of 'institutional culture'. They explored the concept of institutional culture by exploring each concept separately ('culture' and 'institution'), and then linking the two concepts together for a deeper and clearer understanding of 'institutional culture'. I therefore proceeded with my analysis and I did this by drawing on the literature.

3.4.1 The Concept of Institution

I briefly explained the concept of institution in Chapter 1 and then explored the concept further for a deeper understanding of 'institutional culture'. I started by posing a question: What is an institution? I asked this because I had a limited understanding of what it means. I perceived the concept to refer to a place that is arranged in a certain way by those operating in it. I thought it generally referred to banks, schools, universities and colleges.

In response to my question, I referred to Béteille (1995:563), who regards an institution not simply as any social arrangement, but one that has a certain meaning for its members. These members acknowledge its moral claims on them and are willing to submit to its demands. For Williams (2007:250), an institution refers to a self-sustaining system of shared beliefs about how the game is played. Van Wyk (2009:334) further argues that an institution is more than just a place, but is a system that functions – whatever its degree of coherence and integrity – as a *de facto* community. Cross and Carpentier (2009:17) also argue that an institution is no longer viewed as a block of integrated functions, but rather as a relatively unstable construction or as an arrangement. In the same way, Jacobs (2012:68) sees an institution as a social construct because it has a wide range of social functions. These range from individual learning and human capital, the socialisation and cultivation of citizens and their political loyalties, the preservation of knowledge, and the fostering of other legitimate pursuits for the nation state. For me, an institution does not refer to a place that is closed, but rather to a system that functions. It is regarded as a system because of the people and the activities they engage in on a daily basis. An institution, can be, for example, a bank, a school, a university or a college. For the purposes of this study, I regarded an institution as a social system that does not exist by itself, but one that is arranged by a community for a purpose.

Why is a university an institution? I align myself with Enders (2004:362), who writes that universities are institutions because, in all societies, they perform basic functions that result from the particular combination of cultural and ideological, social and economic, educational and scientific roles that are assigned to them. He goes further to say that they are multi-purpose institutions that contribute to the generation and transmission of ideology, the selection and formation of elites, the social development and educational upgrading of societies, the production and application of knowledge, and the training of a highly skilled labour force. Vukuza-Linda (2014:54) writes that a university is an academic institution at which research is conducted and

teaching and learning are offered. These take place within the organised contact between lecturer and student, supported by networking, cooperation and collaboration with external academic partners to create, develop and transmit knowledge. For me, this meant that a university is an institution because of a number of social activities that it performs. As an institution, a university functions based on shared values, beliefs and ideologies resulting from various political, historical, economic and educational roles. It also contributes to the transmission of these values and beliefs, social development and production and the transmission of knowledge. From this I became satisfied that I could refer to a university as an institution.

Being satisfied that I could refer to a university as an institution, there remained another challenge. The challenge was that, in their discussions of institutional culture, some scholars refer to a university as an organisation. This brings questions to mind such as: Is a university an organisation, or are there similarities between institutions and organisations, and what is an organisation? I attempt to respond to these later in the discussion. However, I wanted to clarify my understanding because I did Education Organisational Management in my BEd honours in 2013. While doing this module, I learnt that a school is an organisation in the sense that it is organised or structured in a particular way. According to Naidu *et al.* (2008), for schools to provide education it is necessary that they are structured appropriately by placing effective patterns of work, administrative processes and procedures at all levels. For example, the school where I taught in Namibia had an administration block where all matters concerning finances, student records and exam records were handled. It consisted of the principal's office and the offices of the deputy principal, heads of departments and secretary.

In response to my question whether a university is an institution, Van Wyk (2009:334) enlightens me when he brings another perspective to the discussion on institutional culture. He begins his chapter by asking "Are universities institutions or organisations?" He poses this question because he observed ambiguities in the literature. In the same way that I did, he observed that several authors describe universities as institutions rather than organisations, while others use both notions interchangeably (Kezar & Eckel, 2002; Smart, Kuh & Tierney, 1997, Sporn, 1996; Tierney, 1998). Similar ambiguities can also be seen in the writings of Namibian higher education scholars (Kirby-Harris, 2003; Ping & Crowley, 1997). Van Wyk finds this problematic, as it assumes that

organisations and institutions are similar. For me, this meant that the use of both the concepts in higher education discussions was based on an assumption that they are similar. It seems to me that no higher education scholar has proved that the concepts are similar.

Following from this, it seemed to me that ‘institution’ and ‘organisation’ are not the same. Before I went any further into this, it was necessary to ask: What is an organisation? In my attempt to understand what ‘organisation’ means, I drew on the work of Van der Westhuizen (2000:37), who writes that an organisation is the framework within which human activities are directed and coordinated. It is further a formal structure of authority that comes into being by grouping activities into departments and by arranging them in a certain order. Dawson (in Jacobs, 2012:72) describes organisations as collections of people joining together in some formal association in order to achieve an objective. Botha (2013:2-3) expands on this further when he explains the concept of organisation in three ways: (1) it refers to an entity or institution that has features such as leadership, purpose, regulatory operational work, structures, culture, processes, behaviour and context; (2) it refers to the systematic arrangements of an entity (putting systems, structures and processes in place); and (3) it is a process within which various elements of an organisation as an entity function collectively. North (in Jacobs, 2012:58) provides examples of organisations as including political bodies (e.g. political parties), economics bodies (such as trade unions), social bodies (athletic clubs) and educational bodies (schools and universities).

My understanding of this discussion was that an organisation is a group of people who join together and form a formal association for the purpose of achieving an objective. For me, this went back to how the organisation was established and how it was organised in order to achieve a specific objective. In a university context, this would mean that it was organised in a certain way at its establishment. The objective for organising it in this way was simply to provide education. For instance, Stellenbosch University is organised into different divisions. There is a division for international affairs, an administration division, an IT division, a division for student societies, a language department, and a library services division, to name a few.

Coming back to whether there are similarities between the concepts of institution and organisation, I agree with Van Wyk that there is an assumption that the concepts are similar. However, in Jacobs’s

(2012:60) analysis of the differences between the concepts, she says that they are not the same. But why do we use the concept of organisation in a study of institutional culture? In response I refer to Van Wyk (2009), who says that he understands the conflation of the two concepts because of the realities that resulted when universities changed from social institutions to industries, which forced them to organise themselves in specific ways. Gampont and North (in Jacobs, 2012:60) answer this when they write that it is because it provides a structure for human interaction and also provides historical patterns in the development of universities. Jacobs further writes that it makes it difficult to position oneself because of the interchangeable use of ‘institution’ and ‘organisation’, but it helps to understand how institutions are organised. It also helps to understand the structure for human interactions. It became clear to me that the concept of organisation simply refers to specific ways in which a university is organised. This brings me to an exploration of the concept of culture.

3.4.2 The Concept of Culture

In this section I report on my exploration of the concept of culture because I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what it means. This understanding assisted me in exploring the concept of institutional culture. Van Wyk (2009:335) and Jacobs (2012) confirm that a deeper understanding of ‘culture’ can be very useful in an exploration of ‘institutional culture’.

Before I explored the concept of culture I looked at my interpretation of ‘culture’. My understanding of the concept of culture was based on my cultural background. I am a black San woman from the Zambezi Region (previously known as Caprivi) of Namibia. My culture is shaped by the San and the Tsubia cultures because my parents were from different tribes. In my culture, the concept ‘culture’ refers to things such as beliefs, values, customs, traditions and stories. One of the values of my culture is that, each year, we come together to celebrate our culture. During this celebration we cook different traditional foods, wear traditional clothes and dance to traditional songs. It is a time to meet the chief and the officials of the Masubia traditional court. Some of the beliefs practised by my culture practise are performing rituals and initiations when a baby is born, when a woman loses a husband, when a girl reaches puberty and when a woman gets married. When a baby is born, the mother is not allowed to touch anything in the house until the cleansing

period is over. She is to be washed with hot water every day for one month. If a woman loses her husband, she is covered with a sheet until the mourning period is over. After that she is cleansed with traditional herbs. This entails a belief that the husband will not come back to her. The other interesting part of my culture has to do with when girls reach puberty. What happens during this period (menstruating for the first time) is that she is taken to a place away from home for an initiation ceremony (called 'chikenge' in my local language). At this place she is taught many things, including how to look after a baby, how to handle a man, and how to show respect towards elders.

After looking at my cultural background, I could acknowledge that there was difficulty in understanding the concept of culture because it can be explained in many ways. I drew on the work of Välimaa (1998:119), who cautions that 'culture' is difficult to use as an instrument of research because it can be defined in far too many ways. He further states that it may also be problematic as a general framework of analysis, as it has to include as many elements of higher education institutions as possible, such as ecological characteristics, historical events and institutional traditions and missions. In my view, this means that culture in universities is broad, which makes it difficult to understand. It is for this reason that it lends itself to many different interpretations. Looking at my own explanation of culture, it shows that the concept is broad because I speak about values, beliefs, customs, traditional stories and rituals. The problem with the concept of culture for me is that it does not have a clear meaning. Scholars who study the concept use their own explanations to understand it. Since it also includes many elements in higher education, scholars who study culture interpret it depending on what they focus on.

What is culture? The literature introduced me to many similar meanings of the concept of culture. I explored these meanings of the concept in order to gain a clearer and deeper understanding of what it means. I aligned myself with Bartell (2003:69), who views culture as the values and beliefs of those associated with the university, for example administrators, faculty, students, board members and support staff, that are developed in a historical process and conveyed by use of language and symbols. In the same way, Greenbank (2007:210) defines culture as a set of key values, beliefs, understandings and norms shared by members of an organisation. For Zhao (2007:6), culture means the total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, attitudes, human thoughts and

creations. Burnett and Huisman (2009:4) put it simply when they say that ‘culture’ is simplified to mean “the way things happen around here”. Its manifestation is visible in rituals, heroes and symbols. They go on to say that culture is about how one is expected to behave.

Looking at my interpretation of culture, I could see that, even in a university context, ‘culture’ describes the aspects that enable university members to behave and act in certain ways. In other words, it means how members of a university are shaped. Culture is embedded in the values, rules, procedures (formal or informal), beliefs, ideas, behaviours, styles and meanings that guide the attitudes, thoughts and actions of the members of a university. Thus, what is defined as culture in a university context is the shared meanings, understandings and behaviours of people in relation to the institution’s values, beliefs, policies and ideas. These values, beliefs, ideas and policies describe the way in which the university community lives, behaves, works and acts. In other words, the values, beliefs, ideas and procedures shape the behaviour of those within the university. In my study I therefore refer to ‘culture’ as the shared values, beliefs, common understanding and procedures that guide the activities, behaviours, actions and thoughts of university members. Having gained understanding of the meaning of ‘culture’, I turn to the concept of institutional culture.

3.4.3 The Concept of Institutional Culture

Understanding the concept of institutional culture was a major challenge while writing up my study. From my discussion of the concept of culture, it seemed to me that the concept of institutional culture was difficult to understand. I again refer to Van Wyk (2009:344) in this section, as he argues that there is no easy definition of ‘institutional culture’, since there is not one single characteristic of an institution that can be cited to define this culture. This is due to the fact that, on the one hand, institutional culture has a subjective dimension, such as shared assumptions, values, meanings and understanding. On the other hand, it has more objective aspects like physical artefacts, organisational stories, heroes and heroines, rituals and ceremonies (Jacobs, 2012; Van Wyk, 2009; Vukuza-Linda, 2014). In my view, this implies that institutional culture touches on every aspect of the university. It refers to all those aspects of the activities articulated by the university, and those that are unarticulated yet self-evident.

Having been enlightened on the difficulty surrounding ‘institutional culture’, if I wanted to understand it, it was not a question of asking, What is institutional culture? As discussed above, ‘institutional culture’ does not have a single definition. A question that I then asked myself was: What constitutes institutional culture? In answer to this question, Thornton and Jaeger (2006:53) say that institutions have cultural means of communicating their values, and what they believe is important. Van Wyk (2009:337) describes institutional culture as the shared beliefs, values, assumptions and ideologies that bind a group together. Jacobs (2012:73) describes institutional culture as the collective patterns of norms, values, practices, beliefs and assumptions that guide the behaviour of individuals and groups and provide a frame of reference to make meaning of events or actions. Van Wyk and Jacobs (2012:1174) see institutional culture as the common ideas, values and standards that permeate the everyday lives of its members, and that are perpetuated by institutional indoctrination, actions and leadership. Suransky and Van der Merwe (2014:3) describe the culture of an institution as the deeply embedded patterns of behaviour and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs or ideologies that members have about their institution or its work. They further state that these behaviours, values, beliefs, assumptions or ideologies that it articulates are what hold the institution together.

From my above discussion it is now clear why is said that ‘institutional culture’ does not have a single meaning. Its meaning refers to a variety of different aspects that the university community believes is important. It constitutes all the important aspects that describe how things are done within the university. These aspects are regarded as the glue that hold the university community together. For example, as a student at Stellenbosch University, I observed that institutional culture includes aspects such as research, language, buildings, student societies and communication. All these form part of the institutional culture of the university.

Having understood what constitutes ‘institutional culture’, I next wanted to formulate my interpretation of this concept. I did this by drawing from my previous exploration of the concepts ‘culture’ and ‘institution’. The concept of culture implies, on the one hand, the shared meanings, understandings and behaviours of people regarding the institution’s values, beliefs, policies and ideas. These values, beliefs, ideas and procedures describe the way in which the university

community lives, works and acts. On the other hand, the concept 'institution' is regarded as a university that performs basic functions, such as the transmission of ideology, the selection and formation of elites, the social development and educational upgrading of societies, the production and application of knowledge, and the training of a highly skilled labour force. In my study, I explain the concept of institutional culture to refer to how actions, practices, decisions and interactions by the university members take place. In the next section I explore concepts that are related to the concept of institutional culture.

3.4.4 Concepts Related to the Concept of Institutional Culture

While reviewing the literature on institutional culture, it came to my attention that some scholars use the concepts 'university culture' and 'organisational culture' interchangeably in their discussions of culture in higher education. In other words, the concepts have the same meaning as 'institutional culture'. For instance, some scholars refer to the concept of *university culture* in the discussions of culture in universities (Sporn, 1996), whereas others use the concept of *organisational culture* (Smart & St. John, 1996; Smart *et al.*, 1997; Tierney, 1998; Välimaa, 1998) as a key concept when speaking about culture in universities. I wanted to explore these concepts because I wanted to gain clarity and a deeper understanding of what they mean. Such an understanding would assist me in understanding the concept of institutional culture. I began with the concept of university culture, followed by a discussion of the concept of organisational culture.

It appears to me that I can draw some ideas from the concept of university culture into my study of institutional culture. According to Van Wyk (2009:337) one can refer to university culture as a key concept when speaking of institutional culture. Sporn (1996) and Mora (in Van Wyk, 2009) use the concept of university culture in their discussions of culture in universities. Sporn (1996:45) describes university culture as the values and beliefs of university members, which occur as part of a historical process and are transmitted by language or symbols. These values and beliefs influence the decision making at universities. She further mentions that university culture influences the behaviour of role players, as well as governance and decision making (Jacobs, 2012:73). In the same way, Mora (in Van Wyk, 2009: 337) indicates that university culture is regarded as the beliefs of the members of the university community that have developed over

centuries are and transmitted through both language and symbols. He further mentions that university culture is decisive in determining the behaviour of members of the university community, as well as in the governance and decision-making processes of the institution themselves. In my view, the concept of university culture is conceptualised in the same way as the concept of institutional culture. The similarities are that both concepts are embedded in the values and beliefs of university members and influence their behaviours. These values and beliefs determine the governance and decision-making processes within the university.

In terms of the concept of organisational culture, I encountered challenges when I started to review the literature on institutional culture. The challenge was that I expected to find more literature about the concept, but instead I found more literature on organisational culture. This was challenging, because I could not understand why the literature on organisational culture came up when I was searching for literature on institutional culture. It is for this reason that I explored the concept of organisational culture in order to gain a deeper understanding of what it is all about. In order to gain a deeper understanding of and clarity on the concept of organisational culture, I drew on the work of Jacobs (2012), who attempted to find the differences between organisational culture and institutional culture. Although she made such an attempt, it proved not to be an easy task (Jacobs, 2012:58). I agree with her in the sense that the only difference for me is in the concepts, but the ideas are the same. Jacobs, however, found the concept of organisational culture to have similarities with the concept of institutional culture. The similarities are found in the meaning and uses of the concept since the 1980s, when it was used in business studies, and then later in universities and colleges.

Let me take a glance at whether the ideas surrounding the concept of organisational culture are similar to those surrounding the concept of institutional culture. Harman (2002:97) sees organisational culture as referring to those elements that are shared by members of the organisation. Zhao (2007:19) links organisational culture to the prevailing implicit values, attitudes and ways of doing things. Furthermore, Burnett and Huisman (2009:4) describe organisational culture as a set of basic, tacit assumptions about how the world is and ought to be that a group of people share and that determines their perceptions, thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Having looked at this, I could see that what constitutes the concept of organisational culture are the

assumptions, values and attitudes that determine the thoughts and behaviours of the members of a university. The point here is that the concept of organisational culture shares similarities with the concept of institutional culture. In this case, my understanding of the concept of institutional culture is further enhanced by reading studies on the concept of organisational culture. In certain circumstances I drew ideas from this concept in my discussions, and in cases where the authors used the concept I also used the concept. In the next section I discuss the theoretical frameworks that I came across while reviewing the literature.

3.5 TYPOLOGIES OF INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

While conducting the literature review, I come across three different, but complementing, typologies of institutional culture that provided me with the tools to contextualise my study. I draw on the work of Vukuza-Linda (2014:100-101), who writes about these typologies of institutional culture. By typology she means a systematic classification of types that have characteristics or traits in common. In my own words, typologies refer to types of institutional culture that are grouped together according to their common characteristics. She further writes that typologies describe the nature of the institutional culture present within a university setting. She enlightened me that typologies are not the same in universities, but they differ according to institutions. This is because values tend to differ across institutional types, with each institution prizing different attributes to the next, even though certain consistencies may be noted among institutions. I understood this to mean that typologies describe the type of institutional culture a university has. Universities do not have the same culture because their values are different. For instance, the culture at Stellenbosch University may not be the same as the culture at UNAM. The difference is seen in terms of what they value most, although they could hold similar values in certain areas. In my study, the typologies showed the nature of institutional culture at UNAM, or how the university characterises itself.

I now explore the different typologies of institutional culture. The typologies show different ways of viewing the culture in universities (Cameron & Ettington, 1988 and Cameron & Quinn, cited in Vukuza-Linda, 2014; Smart & St. John, 1996; Smart *et al.*, 1997). I describe each of the three typologies below.

3.5.1 Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market Cultures

According to Smart and St. John (1996:221), Smart *et al.* (1997:262) and Vukuza-Linda (2014:101), **clan cultures** are categorised as flexible and internal. They are based on loyalty and commitment to a strong leader. They are also focused on developing cohesion through teamwork, consensus and participation. The bonding mechanism in this culture emphasises loyalty and tradition. For me, institutions in which members work as a team fall into this category. In a university context, a clan culture enables members of the university to have the same team spirit, that is, to work together as a team.

Adhocracy cultures are categorised as flexible and external (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:101). They are bound by commitment to innovation, leading to cutting-edge outputs that are led by entrepreneurs under a management style that encourages individual initiative, freedom and uniqueness. The bonding mechanism emphasises innovation and development. Growth and the acquisition of new resources constitute the primary strategic emphases. In my view, members of an institution with such a culture would be creative by coming up with ideas that add value to the institution. Such members are rewarded by being promoted or receiving financial rewards for jobs well done.

The **hierarchy cultures or bureaucratic cultures** are characterised as stable and internal (Smart & St. John, 1996:222; Smart *et al.*, 1997:262; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:101). They are governed by formal procedures and policies. They value longevity, predictability, efficiency and stability. My understanding here is that institutions that have this culture follow prescribed rules and policies. The rules and policies are what bind the members together.

According to the same authors, **market cultures** are stable and external. They concentrate on achieving goals under aggressive and competitive leaders who measure success by gaining advantage over peer institutions. Goal attainment in this type of culture is what bonds the members together, and their strategies emphasise competitive actions and achievements. In my view, this kind of culture is based on competition among leaders who are outside the university setting and

who hold the university accountable for what they do. Achieving specific goals hold the members together.

3.5.2 Birnbaum's Collegial, Bureaucratic, Political and Organised Anarchy Typologies

Birnbaum (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:119) focused on institutional culture with his four typologies of dominant cultures: collegial, bureaucratic, political and organised anarchy. Birnbaum (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:119) describes *collegial culture* as both enhancing and orthogonal. Individuals here both accept the overriding culture and hold values that are separate from the overall group, but do not conflict with it. Decisions are made based on group discussions and consensus following the use of a standard set of procedures and criteria reflecting what objectively seems best for the institutional overall (Birnbaum in Smart *et al.*, 1997:263).

Birnbaum also frames the *bureaucratic culture* as belonging to those institutions that regard legitimised authority and formal structures as paramount values. In such institutions, deviation from the dominant culture is unlikely, as those interested in charge simply depart.

Political culture is found in institutions that are based on competition for resources. This is where shifting alliances are the basis of institutional culture. This kind of institutional culture is fluid and depends on which alliance is strongest at any particular time. The long-term objectives of the institution may not always be realisable due to shifting in the alliances. Such shifts occur, for example, when a different political party takes over a municipality. In such cases, the plans of a previous political party are seldom carried through by the one taking over. This hampers service delivery and ends up affecting people who have nothing to do with the politics of these alliances (Birnbaum, 1998, cited in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:119).

Lastly, Birnbaum (cited in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:120) suggests that organised anarchy may be the model for the research university. Without a single culture and the broadest values (for example, viability of the institution) of real importance, it does not rise to the level of the counter culture. However, there are no direct challenges that exist to the values of the dominant culture. Birnbaum's

work on institutional typologies solicited a response from Bergquist, and his set of typologies is described below.

3.5.3 Bergquist's Developmental, Collegiate, Managerial and Negotiating Cultures at Universities or Colleges

Bergquist (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:120) offered a variant of Birnbaum's typology in describing the developmental, collegiate, managerial and negotiating cultures. He aligns each culture with an "opposite" upon which it relies and with which it shares certain characteristics. Bergquist's *developmental culture* suggests furthering of the cognitive, behavioural and affective maturation of its members as the basis of meaning at an institution. The developmental culture, for example, arises from the weakness associated with the collegiate culture. The developmental culture is based on the personal and professional growth of all members of the collegiate environment (Bergquist, in Kezar & Eckel, 2002:439).

The *collegiate culture* arises primarily from the disciplines of the faculty. It values scholarly engagement, shared governance, decision making and rationality (Bergquist, in Kezar & Eckel, 2002:439). It stresses the work of faculty and faculty governance, tactics and untested assumptions about the dominance of rationality at the institution (Bergquist, in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:120).

Those in the *managerial culture* derive identity and meaning from the structure of the organisation. In this culture, the results matter across the institution, and fiscal responsibility and effective supervision are prized attributes (Bergquist, in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:120). Simply put, the managerial culture focuses on the goals and purposes of the institution and it values efficiency, effective supervisory skills and fiscal responsibility (Bergquist, in Kezar & Eckel, 2002:439).

In the *negotiating culture*, Bergquist (in Kezar & Eckel, 2002:439) contends that the meaning resides in how politics determines the distribution of resources. It reacts to the shortcomings that faculty, in particular, views in the managerial culture, but does not eliminate clarity in structure and authority. To simplify, the negotiating culture values the establishment of equitable and egalitarian policies and procedures, valuing confrontation, interest groups, mediation and power.

Now that I have discussed the typologies of institutional culture, a question arises: Can I use all three frameworks in my study? Not necessarily, but I focused on Bergquist's typologies of institutional culture. I found his typologies useful in the sense that, from the readings that I engaged with in the Namibian context, and in the context of UNAM in particular, the concept of developmental culture was a recurring one. The other reason was that Trotter *et al.* (2014:137) conclude that the institutional culture type of UNAM is developmental. They aligned the Mission, Strategy, Vision 2030 and the National Developmental Plan with Bergquist and Pawlak's (2008, in Trotter *et al.*) typologies of institutional culture to arrive at this conclusion. Having discussed the typologies of institutional culture, I now report on my construction of the meanings of institutional culture from the literature.

3.6 CONSTRUCTING MEANINGS OF INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE FOR MY STUDY

In this section I report on my attempts to construct meanings of 'institutional culture' from the literature. I do this because I wanted to find out if the meanings were expressed in the policy and institutional documents of UNAM. In other words, I analysed whether UNAM makes reference to these meanings in their documents. Before I take a look at the recurring meanings of institutional culture in the literature, I refer to constructing meanings. Van Wyk (2004; 2009), Jacobs (2012) and Vukuza-Linda (2014) all write about constitutive meanings. They link constitutive meanings with conceptual analysis, and this link lies in an important task of conceptual analysis, which is to analyse the rules that underlie actions. Fay (1975, in Van Wyk, 2004:39-40; Jacobs, 2012:46) refers to such underlying rules as "constitutive meanings". Here, constitutive meanings refer to those shared assumptions, definitions and conceptions that structure the world in certain definite ways (hence "meanings"), and which also constitute the logical possibility of the existence of a certain social practice, i.e. without them, the practice as defined could not exist (hence "constitutive"). For me, constitutive meanings are those meanings that constitute the shared assumptions and meanings that structure a particular way of life for a certain group, and also constitute the existence of this group. In a university context it means the shared assumptions and meanings within which the university is structured and which also constitute the way it functions.

The question arises: Is it important to establish meanings? I align myself with Fay (in Jacobs, 2012:46) who writes that some of the very best work in social science consists in explicating the sets of shared rules and constitutive meanings that underlie social practices. Constitutive meanings are presuppositions of activities, and as such are not necessarily known by those who operate in them. Fay further states that constitutive meanings are the basic ideas in terms of which the meanings of specific practices must be analysed. For me, this means that constitutive meanings are activities that are based on sets of beliefs, assumptions or rules that are shared by the university members. Such beliefs, assumptions or rules (which I refer to as constitutive meanings of institutional culture) might not be known by all those university members. In this study it means the concept of institutional culture consists of meanings such as beliefs, assumptions and rules that are shared by the members in a university setting, and these might not be known by all of them. Similar to this, Taylor (1985, in Jacobs, 2012:46-47) proposes three articulations of the use of the concept: (1) the meaning of a subject (institutional culture in the university setting) refers to the meaning of a concept for the role players involved; (2) the meaning of something enables us to distinguish between the way institutional culture is demonstrated in practice (and its meaning); (3) things only have meanings in relation to the meaning of other things in a field, so changes in other meanings in the field can involve changes in the given concept.

Taking my cue from Taylor, I refer to meanings rather than constitutive meanings in this study. Having pointed out the importance of establishing meanings, the problem is that, at this stage of my study, I did not know if I would be able to construct the appropriate meanings for my study, since the meanings of 'institutional culture' seemed to be hidden within the concept itself. Van Wyk (2004:52) agrees that constructing meanings of 'institutional culture' is problematic. He, drawing on Harvey, argues that the appropriate meaning only emerges in the course of on-going analysis. This means that one can only construct meanings when the analysis of a concept is done. In my study it meant that the meanings of 'institutional culture' emerged during the analysis of the concept in the literature. Van Wyk's argument resolves my dilemma and I proceeded with my construction of the meanings (and not constitutive meanings) of 'institutional culture' from the review of the literature.

My review of the literature revealed many different meanings of ‘institutional culture’. For instance, Van Wyk (2009:338), in his analysis of ‘institutional culture’, writes about several aspects that influence the nature of institutional culture in universities. These are: environment, mission, socialisation, information, strategy, leadership, management, institutional practices, institutional traditions, language, symbols, institutional priorities, and national and local policies and procedures. In his analysis of institutional documents for Stellenbosch University, he identified various pronouncements of the institutional culture. These are: values and codes of conduct, perceptions, physical symbols, language, ceremonies, university structures and bodies, corporate facilities and sport. Jacobs (2012:90-91) identifies meanings such as values and beliefs, leadership, decision making, subcultures, environment, language and knowledge production. Vukuza-Linda (2014:131) identifies several features of institutional culture, such as typology, history and tradition, symbols and rituals, language, leadership, process, governance, people and communication. Here is a list of meanings of institutional culture as identified by the works I consulted, and I constructed the meaning from the ones appropriate to my study:

- Environment
- Decision making
- Communication/information
- Strategy
- Leadership
- Typology
- Management
- Governance
- Language
- Institutional history and tradition
- Socialisation
- Scholarship
- Knowledge production
- Values and beliefs
- People

- Symbols and ceremonies, and
- Structures and bodies.

There are many meanings of ‘institutional culture’, but there must be specific meanings for my study. I am assisted by Van Wyk, Vukuza-Linda and Jacobs, who identify a variety of meanings of ‘institutional culture’ in their analyses, but they do not discuss all of them. Since there are many meanings of ‘institutional culture’, Harvey (in Van Wyk, 2004:41) enlightened me when he said that, where there may be a large list of concepts in practice, it is not necessary to attempt a separate critical analysis of each. They are interrelated, and so the ‘key’ is to locate a central concept and critically analyse that. From that, the other concepts can be reconstructed. This implies that, once meanings are located, they can be narrowed down to specific meanings for a study. Van Wyk (2009), Jacobs (2012) and Vukuza-Linda (2014) narrow down specific meanings for their studies. I took my cue from this and attempted to narrow down the meanings of ‘institutional culture’ that were specific for my study. Before I discuss how I did that, I first explain how I constructed these meanings. Having reviewed the literature and my analysis of the relevant policies, certain meanings were found to be recurring. Jacobs (2012:93) constructs four constitutive meanings of ‘institutional culture’: shared values and beliefs, language, symbols and knowledge production. Vukuza-Linda (2014:131-132) also constructs four meanings, namely typology, history and tradition, university leadership, and academic staff and students. From the list I constructed four meanings that were recurring in the literature:

3.6.1 Strategy (Shared Values and Beliefs)

I begin this discussion with the question: What is a strategy? I asked this in my study because I had no idea what it means. Bush (in Thurlow, Bush & Coleman, 2003:104) links strategy to the evolution of the culture of an organisation. Kafidi (2014:3) generally refers to a strategy as the way people in an organisation behave and carry out their duties for the survival and wellbeing of that organisation. Vukuza-Linda (2014:74) expands on this when she explains a strategy in two ways: (1) as a direction (where it is going); (2) as a scope (kind of activities covered and involved) that is aimed at achieving advantage (benefits from the configuration of resources) of an organisation. She goes on to explain that an advantage is achieved through the configuration of an institution’s

resources within a challenging environment (external factors that influence the institution's ability to compete) in order to meet the needs of the market and fulfil stakeholders expectations. What I gather from these explanations of a strategy is that it refers to a plan that gives an institution a direction and that guides the behaviour of the members of that institution.

Having looked at the meaning of 'strategy', a question arises: Is there a relationship between culture and strategy? I respond to the question by referring to Torben Rick (in Vukuza-Linda, 2014:185), who says that strategy is just the headline of the company's story, while culture needs a clearly understood common language to embrace and tell the story. This story includes an articulation of mission, vision, values and clear expectations. According to Vukuza-Linda, the mission and vision of an institution are key elements and central to understanding institutional culture. She explains a mission statement to generally describe what an organisation is, why it exists and its reasons for being, while a vision provides the direction an institution wants to take in order to reach its goals.

In terms of values and beliefs, Jacobs (2012:94) writes that institutions have a unique set of basic values and beliefs that are shared by most of their members. They represent basic beliefs that a certain way of doing things is preferable to another and influences behaviour (Naidu *et al.*, 2008:58). Institutions make decisions that reflect their values and beliefs. This implies that a strategy is based on what the university members decide upon. Once decisions have been made, a university articulates the values and beliefs that its members share. These are what influence the way things are done and influence the behaviour of those within the university.

UNAM is a young institution that is expected to provide quality teaching, research and community service. Since a strategy provides direction for an institution, I used this meaning to look for the direction UNAM is taking and what it is aiming at.

3.6.2 Typology (Nature, Features, Characteristics)

I wrote about the typologies of institutional culture in Section 3.5 (Cameron & Ettington, 1988 and Cameron & Quinn, cited in Vukuza-Linda, 2014; Smart & St. John, 1996; Smart *et al.* 1997).

Although I write about three different typologies that characterise the nature of institutional culture in universities, my interest was in Bergquist typologies (in Kezar & Eckel, 2002:439; Vukuza-Linda, 2014:120). I was interested in Bergquist's typologies because I observed that the idea of 'developmental' is a recurring one in my review of the literature in the Namibian context. I explained 'typology' by referring to types that are grouped together according to their nature, features or common traits or characteristics. In my study, I used typology to look for features and characteristics of UNAM, in other words, how the university characterises itself. For example, a university can be either a developmental institution or a research institution or both.

3.6.3 History and Tradition (Symbols, Language and Rituals)

The history of a context plays an important role when one tries to explain, interpret and understand a context of study. I find it difficult to speak about history without referring to an important aspect of Gadamer's work, which is historical consciousness and interpretation. Gadamer points out that we can only understand a text when we locate ourselves in its history. He sees the individual as secondary, whereas history is primary (Gadamer, 1975:174).

How does history link with institutional culture? Jacobs (2012:99) and Vukuza-Linda (2014:134) argue that history manifests itself through symbols and language. Symbols are revealed in stories, logos, physical settings and individuals. My interest was in stories/narratives, since I was trying to understand the history of UNAM by understanding institutional policy documents. These documents tell stories about the history of UNAM. Furthermore, symbols play a very important function in an institution. They connect people with their institution, they provide a touchstone for people in the extended community, and they are concrete representations of what the institution is all about (Jacobs, 2012:99).

History also manifests itself through language. Language is the system of sounds, signs and gestures people in any organisation use to convey meaning to one another. Meanings can either be conveyed orally or in a written form. They reflect what is important for the institution, for its new members and for those outside of the institution. Language links with culture because it plays a function in transmitting cultural formation from one person to another. It also determines how a

person processes information and helps to formulate his/her ideas, as it carries culture (Jacobs, 2012:96). I saw this to mean that institutions use language to convey meanings to others, and these are expressed in writing. It tell those within and outside what the university and its members value. In a university context, language conveys what the university is all about – what it values. The institutional policy documents that I analysed were written to convey meanings and also express what the university and its members find important.

UNAM has an origin and was established with a history. History explains the events and practices within the university setting. The history of UNAM is one way of understanding how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in policy documents. In order for me to understand institutional culture, I looked for the history of UNAM in the documents.

3.6.4 Scholarship (Knowledge Production and Dissemination)

When I came across the concept of scholarship I thought it meant funding for research or students. According to UNAM (2013:7), scholarship refers to work intended to expand boundaries of knowledge across disciplines through analysis, synthesis and interpretation of ideas and data. It is founded on rigorous and documented scientific methodology and internal standards. Frick (2007:12) associates the notion of scholarship with academic work within higher education, such as being involved in research and publication within specific disciplines. Boyer (1990, in Frick, 2007:12) and Smith-Tolken (2010:7) expand the notion of scholarship by associating it with four overlapping functions: discovery (refers to the contribution and advancement of knowledge); integration (refers to connections across disciplines in the larger context); application (through service as dialogue between theory and practice); and teaching (understanding of knowledge by those involved in scholarly activities). It is a process that requires the rigour and accountability traditionally associated with research activities. I understand this to mean that scholarship is a process of conducting research work, knowledge production, publication and communication. It is a rigorous research activity that requires ethical considerations.

Having explained what ‘scholarship’ means led me to the question: Why do I use this meaning in my study? One of the key roles of a university today is to conduct research. In the documents I wanted to find out how UNAM articulates research.

3.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter I reviewed the literature related to institutional culture, and began with a discussion of what a literature review means. I have shown the meaning of a literature review and the purpose it has in my study. In my review I touched briefly on my understanding of institutional culture, the emergence of the concept, its translation into higher education discussions, culture and higher education, challenges that are faced by higher education institutions, institutional culture at UNAM, and lastly the significance of institutional culture at UNAM. I proceeded with my analysis of the concept of institutional culture, in which I analysed the concepts of culture, institution and institutional culture in order to gain a deeper understanding.

Part of the reason for conducting a literature review was to construct the meanings of institutional culture for my study. I identified several recurring meanings of institutional culture in the literature. These are environment, mission, communication, strategy, leadership, typology, management, governance, language, institutional histories and rituals and socialisation. Since these meanings are many, I constructed four meanings for my study: strategy, typology, history and tradition, and scholarship. I will explore in the next chapter how these meanings are constructed and articulated in the policy and institutional documents of the University of Namibia.

CHAPTER 4

AN ANALYSIS OF POLICY AND INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Further to my introduction in Chapter 1, I examine relevant policy documents in this chapter with the aim to understand and interpret how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in these documents. I also wanted to examine whether a major national policy, known as Namibia Vision 2030, had an influence on the nature of UNAM's institutional culture. I describe my methodological approach as historical interpretation, and my analysis of policies draws on Gadamer's historical interpretation and his hermeneutical interpretation and understanding. For Gadamer (1975:174), a historical interpretation serves as a means to understand the context of a text, even when it sees in the text simply a source that is part of the totality of the historical tradition. It is also part of Gadamer's interpretation and understanding that a text can be understood when we bring along with us a horizon or prejudices. By horizon or prejudices he means the sort of understanding the researcher brings with, which includes experiences, research questions, the analysis of concepts, and the research methodology. I therefore interpreted the policies that I examine in this chapter in their historical context and, in the process, bring in my horizon or prejudices.

In this chapter I attempt to analyse only one national policy, although I refer to two others (Toward Education for All, and Education Training Sector and Improvement Programme (ETSIP)) and the relevant institutional policy documents: Scholarly Communications Policy, Strategic Plan and the Research Strategy. I analysed these policy documents with reference to the meanings of institutional culture (strategy, typology, scholarship, history) constructed in Chapter 3.

Before I embark on a discussion of the analysis of the policy and institutional documents, I first need to fully understand what education policy means. I therefore commence this chapter with a discussion of education policy. This is followed by a justification of why my study is a policy analysis. I then proceed to a discussion of three major policies of the University of Namibia. An

analysis of Namibia Vision 2030 will follow, and then an analysis of the institutional documents. The analysis commences with a discussion of the historical context of UNAM, which will lead to an analysis of the institutional documents of UNAM. I end this chapter with a summary of my analysis.

4.2 WHAT IS EDUCATION POLICY?

I received several policies from the Ministry, region and the school when I was a teacher at a school in Namibia. These included the language policy, policy on leave matters, policy on code of conduct for teachers, policy on dress code, policy for lower primary, learner-centred education policy and policy on the promotion of learners. Although I received these policies, I knew little about what education policy means. As a result, I perceived education policy to be some sort of directive from the Ministry, the region or the school level, thus a directive that informed teachers about any changes in the system or that served as a guide to what should be done and what was expected from teachers. In this section I discuss how I gained a deeper understanding of the meaning of education policy.

Van Wyk (2004:19-20), Jacobs (2012:105-106) and Snyders (2013:51-52) discuss education policy, drawing on the work of McLaughlin (2005). McLaughlin (2005:17-18) links education policy to philosophy and lists four preliminary points on the nature of education policy and policy making. First, he begins his discussion with a question: What is education policy? He addresses this question by referring to some writers who stress the relationship between education policies and politics, power and control. Writers such as Punty (in McLaughlin, 2005) explain education policy as an exercise of power and control that is directed towards the attainment or preservation of some preferred arrangement of schools and society. In the same way, Codd (in McLaughlin, 2005) argues that education policies are sets of political decisions that involve the exercise of power in order to preserve or alter the nature of educational institutions or practices. For McLaughlin, Punty and Codd's explanations seem to imply that educational policies can be formulated only by those who exercise power and control, and who are involved in politics. He argues that this is not the case; education policy can be formulated by many bodies and agencies, such as political parties in opposition, and subject and teacher associations. But what is central to

the notion of education policy is that it is a detailed prescription for action aimed at the preservation or alteration of education institutions or practices. Thus, an education policy and the related notion of education policy making can be used either in power or control – it can influence either the aspirant's senses or context (McLaughlin, 2005:17). What I gathered from this is that we cannot just relate education policy to power, authority and politics. If we do so, we deny other bodies and agencies who are also involved in education policy formulation. It will be more satisfactory if we explain education policy as a guide that is aimed at changing an educational institution or practice. In this study I explain education policy as a guideline that maintains or suggest changes to an education institution.

The second point is that educational policies originate at different levels and contexts in the education system and from a number of different agents and agencies, ranging from the national level to schools. This implies that policy making does not only occur at the national level, but also at school level. He goes further to say that there are different 'languages' of policy debate, which he labels as official, professional, research and popular (McLaughlin, 2005:17-18). This means that education policies speak differently depending on the context to which it is directed. In other words, it depends on to whom the policies are addressed. For instance, when I was a teacher I did not only receive national policies, but also policies from agencies and the school level. Thus education policies differ in terms of the context they originate from and to whom they are addressed.

The third point (McLaughlin, 2005:18) views education policy as different with respect to the scope of its content and application. These differences invoke various kinds of continuums on which policies can be located. One such continuum involves generality and specificity. At the one end of this continuum are policies of a very general kind, involving matters such as the aims of education and the structure of the education system. At the other end are very specific policies relating to strategies for the teaching of particular topics within specific subjects. Another continuum involves 'depth' and 'surface' characteristics. The 'depth' end of this continuum involves educational policies with clear philosophical implications and ramifications. At the 'surface' end are education policies that are less apt for philosophical reflection. I understand this to mean that education policy differs in terms of what it covers and how it is expressed. Some

policies cover a wide range of concerns, while others address specific matters or are addressed to a specific group of people. For example, Namibia Vision 2030 does not only address educational matters, but also health matters, development, environmental issues and economic matters.

The fourth point (McLaughlin, 2005:18) is useful when one wants to note the distinction between different aspects of education policy and policy making, such as: (i) the process of education policy making, (ii) the policy itself, and (iii) the application and evaluation of the policy. In my view, this point concerns researchers who are interested in finding the difference between aspects of education policy and policy making. In other words, we can analyse the differences between the process of education policy making, the policy itself and the application and evaluation of the policy.

Furthermore, there is a relationship between philosophy and education policy that concerns the different aspects of the policy-making process to which it can make a contribution. Ham and Hill (in Van Wyk, 2009:31) and Jacobs (2012:120) provide a distinction between “analysis for policy” and “analysis of policy”. The former is done in order to provide policy makers with information and takes two forms: (1) policy advocacy (involves specific policy recommendations); and (2) information for policy (which provides information and data). Philosophers can contribute to both, although, in their case, ‘information of policy’ will take the form of conceptual clarification. ‘Analysis of policy’ is concerned with the process of policy making, and can also take two forms: (1) analysis of policy determination and effects (this examines the processes and outcomes of policy); and (2) analysis of policy content (examines the values, assumptions and social theories underpinning the policy process).

From this I understood that, in philosophy, we can contribute to both ‘analysis for policy’ and ‘analysis of policy’. The difference is that, when one wants to provide information to policy makers or make recommendations to policy, ‘analysis for policy’ is appropriate. In other words, one can analyse policies for the purpose of providing data to policy makers or to make changes. In contrast, we can be involved with ‘analysis of policy’ when we want to examine the values, assumptions and social theories that underpin the policy process. My aim in this study was not to provide any information to policy makers or make changes to policy. Instead, I wanted to understand how

institutional culture is constructed and articulated in the institutional policy documents of UNAM. As such, I examined the shared values, understanding, assumptions and ideologies that underpin such policies. I therefore consider ‘analysis of policy’ in my analysis of policy documents. I am not alone in doing this sort of analysis. Jacobs (2012:106) and Vukuza-Linda (2014) followed the same approach in their analysis of policy and institutional documents. This leads to my question of why my study is a policy analysis, which is my focus in the next section.

4.3 WHY IS MY STUDY A POLICY ANALYSIS?

Prior to writing a proposal for this study I assumed it was paramount to gain insight into institutional culture by conducting document analysis and narrative constructions (interviews). However, after defending my research proposal I realised that I had little understanding of institutional culture. As such, I decided to remove the narrative constructions and remained with documentary analysis. Let me explain why my study is a policy analysis.

I align myself with Christie (2008:117-118), who views policy as a joint social decision-making process that is conducted by different participants whose concern is the whole society, rather than the individual. She further relates policy to features such as that it is a form of decision making that has goals and purposes; it is a value-driven activity; it involves a vision of some ideal state of affairs; it a statement of policy intention; it is a compromise between interested parties and groups; and it suggests improvements. On the same note, Czerniewicz and Brown (2009:122) refer to a policy as the allocation of goals, values and resources. What this means is that I analysed policy documents because they are a collective decision-making process that concern not only the individual, but the whole of society. They are also driven by goals and purposes, a vision and values; are a form of consensus; and provide strategies for improvement. For example, the Namibia Vision 2030 policy is not concerned with particular individuals, but it is directed at the whole of Namibian society. It provides a vision that is accepted by the whole nation. All future government policies, including polices for UNAM, will draw on Namibia Vision 2030.

I again refer to Christie’s (2008:149) idea that insights into education policies reflect the broad social, economic and political contexts in which they are formed. Similarly, Kirby-Harris

(2003:356) notes that education policy is a result of three forces, namely the academic guild, the state and the market. For him, the academic guild reflects the values of professors, which emphasises research and academically driven activities. The state corner shows the values of government that dominate. The market corner has a view that higher education can work well as a free market. My view on this is that conducting a policy analysis can assist in gaining a deeper understanding of the aspects that influence policy formulation. Policies are formulated based on global, academic, historical, social and economic challenges. For example, Namibia Vision 2030 was formulated to address specific concerns that caused the lack of development in Namibia. It reflects the political issues that existed during apartheid, when most Namibians were excluded from having access to education. It also reflects the challenges that the nation faces in modern society. It directs all private and public sectors in Namibia to pay attention to the development of the country. In this study I analysed policies to gain insight into the broader context in which they were formed.

I further align myself with Ball, Maguire and Braun (2012:13), who argue that, to a large extent, policies have a semantic and ontological force. They play their part in the construction of a social world of meanings, of causes and effects, of relationships, and imperatives and inevitabilities. Van Wyk (2004:32) puts it differently when he says policy documents contain concepts that are essentially contested and to which meaning could be attributed. They are what Soltis (1998) refers to as the 'professional dimension' because they contain concepts that are subject to analysis and reflection when seeking a clearer understanding of what they mean. This means that policies have concepts that are subject to different interpretations. These concepts can assist us in understanding educational concerns. A policy such as, for example, a strategic plan, contains concepts that are central to understanding institutional culture. It contains concepts such as mission, vision and core values, typology, scholarship and leadership, and has a history. These concepts were not clear to me in how they were articulated in these documents or what they meant. One way to understand these was to conduct an analysis of policy documents.

Now that I have explained what makes my study a policy analysis, I briefly discuss national government policies in the next section.

4.4 NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POLICIES

After Namibia gained independence in 1990, the Ministry of Education undertook major educational reforms that were aimed at addressing the apartheid educational ideologies and policies. In this section I briefly refer to two national policy documents, namely Toward Education for All (TEFA) and Education Training Sector and Improvement Programme (ETSIP), and then analyse the national policy, Namibia Vision 2030.

4.4.1 Toward Education for All (TEFA) (1993)

At independence, the Ministry of Education faced a major challenge of building a new education system, in which quality of education for all became the foundation. According to Shanyanana (2011:86-87), Toward Education for All evolved three years after independence as the first policy document to be formulated and was adopted in 1993. The policy served as a guiding document for all further policies in education. This policy document not only addressed issues pertaining to higher education, but also refers to basic education. In terms of higher education, the policy addresses the inequalities that existed during apartheid, when it was a privilege for the elite. Some of the inequalities that it addresses are that many young Namibian black students had no access to higher education.

The implication is that some students who required higher education attended institutions in other countries, while some did so within the country. Consequently, many students of higher education spent years studying abroad, such as at the United Nations Institute in Lusaka (Zambia). Within the country, a few studied at the Academy, Technikon, and Out of School Training. Some studied at the teacher training colleges, but the Windhoek College of Education was restricted to educating the elite. The black teacher training colleges had inadequate facilities to meet the needs of the population. The Namibians who studied in distant settings mainly undertook courses through correspondence (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:2).

In order to address these inequalities, the policy document was developed so that the former Namibian education system, which offered education to a few, could be transformed into an

education system that included all Namibian children (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:3). The policy was aimed at five broad goals, namely access, equity, quality, democracy and lifelong learning, as principle means to promote socio-economic development (Mutorwa, 2004:3; Republic of Namibia, 2002:6). Its primary aim was to move away from education for the elite group towards providing accessible education to those who were denied the opportunity to acquire education. As it states, “education is the right for every Namibian”. This is also in line with the constitution and the national development strategy, which place the goal of basic and higher education as education for all (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:19-23).

I thus understood that many black Namibians did not have access to higher education due to the apartheid policies. The students who needed to further their studies had to do so outside the country. Within the country, institutions that offered education to black students had a lack of resources preventing access for all people to higher education. It is against this background that Toward Education for All was developed in order to address the lack of access to education by the majority of black Namibian students.

4.4.2 Namibia Vision 2030 (2004)

While exploring the literature in the Namibian context, I observed that some higher and basic education scholars referred to Namibia Vision 2030 in their discussions. I then realised that the policy was a profound document within the context of my study.

Following Towards Education for All, Namibia developed a broad policy directive known as Namibia Vision 2030 in 2004. According to Trotter *et al.* (2014:65), Namibia Vision 2030 is a major directive policy that guides all Namibia’s governmental policies. It provides a long-term alternative scenario for the future course of development until the target year 2030. Shanyanana (2011:104) further links Namibia Vision 2030 to Namibia’s growth strategy and also calls it a road map for development in this context.

Furthermore, Namibia Vision 2030 is a document that opens up discussions for a sort of education that can change Namibia from an industrialised nation to a knowledge-based nation. According to

Shanyanana (2011:104), Namibia Vision 2030 is grounded in the country's capacity to build a knowledge-based nation that will make it a fully developed nation. Furthermore, Namibia Vision 2030 calls for the country to operate a totally integrated, unified, flexible and high-quality education training system that prepares Namibian learners to take advantage of a rapidly changing global environment (Trotter *et al.*, 2014:65). This requires Namibia to be transformed into an innovative, knowledge-based society that is supported by a dynamic, responsive and highly effective education and training system (Republic of Namibia, 2004:77). In my view, this Vision places emphasis on transforming Namibia into a knowledge-based nation and adopting a science and technology approach to development. One way to achieve this is through education and training.

Given this developmental strategy, it seemed to me that UNAM was being challenged in terms of how it positions itself to meet the demands of the government. The challenge is left to higher education institutions in Namibia to reposition themselves in order to play a key role in the creation of knowledge and preparation of human resources. I speak here of the kind of knowledge and human resource that will carry the country through its transition from a developing country to a fully-fledged industrial nation by the year 2030 (UNAM, 2006:7). Furthermore, a knowledge-based economy implies that the creation of knowledge and the strategic application of this knowledge become central to the growth of a country (National Council for Higher Education, 2012:7). This means that the key role that UNAM must play is to prepare itself to contribute to the creation of knowledge. The activities that UNAM plans must be in line with the developmental strategies in Namibia Vision 2030. Having discussed Namibia Vision 2030, I now turn my focus to the ETSIP support policy.

4.4.3 Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (2005)

I was called for an interview for the post of head of department at a Namibian school in 2009. One of the panellists asked me a question about the major issues addressed in ETSIP. I had no knowledge of this policy and could not answer the question properly. When I came back from this interview I searched for the document and I found it was also referring to Namibia Vision 2030. I

then tried to make sense of this policy document, since I did not have the privilege to do so when I was a teacher.

According to Shanyanana (2011), ETSIP was introduced in 2005 and adopted in 2007. The policy covers all aspects of education, ranging from early childhood and pre-primary education through general education, vocational education and training, tertiary education and training, knowledge production, innovation and information, to adult and lifelong learning. The aim of this policy is to prepare higher education institutions for the implementation of Namibia Vision 2030, and in practice increase its relevance and adopt a science and technology approach to development. This means that ETSIP is a response to the call of Namibia Vision 2030. It directs all higher education institutions (including UNAM) to look for ways of developing teaching, learning and research infrastructure that will put the goals of Namibia Vision 2030 at the frontline of development efforts (UNAM, 2006:7).

Having explored three major national policies in Namibia, I was left with a challenge – all these policies seem to be crucial documents for Namibia. The question arose: which of the policies should I analyse, and why? I respond to this in the next section.

4.5 POLICY ANALYSIS

Further to my previous discussion of national policies, in this section I analyse one national policy document, namely Namibia Vision 2030. I do this because this policy provides the direction in which all government sectors in Namibia must go in order to contribute to the development of the country. I wanted to find out whether this national policy drove actions and activities at UNAM or shaped the institutional culture of the university. I also had observed that some scholars in the Namibian context make reference to Namibia Vision 2030 in their discussions of higher education institutions. For instance, the SCAP project, which undertook a case study of UNAM, looked at how Namibia Vision 2030 influenced the activities and actions at UNAM.

4.5.1 Namibia Vision 2030

I start this analysis with a question: what is Namibia Vision 2030 all about? In the introduction of this policy, it is stated that the motivation for formulating a vision for Namibia was raised by His Excellency Dr Sam Nujoma in 1998. While addressing the cabinet in 1998, he called on the cabinet to deliberate on its vision for Namibia. In his words, “a vision that will take Namibia from the present into the future; a vision that will guide us to make deliberate efforts to improve the quality of life of our people to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by the year 2030” (Republic of Namibia, 2004:19-20). Put simply, Namibia Vision 2030 is about the current state of Namibia, where it wishes to go and over what timeframe. Following this call, Namibia Vision 2030 can be explained as a broad statement that provides long-term alternative policy scenarios on the future course of development in Namibia at different points in time, up until the target year 2030. It provides guidance for planning questions such as: given the past and current conditions, how would development in the country be portrayed by year 2015, 2020 and 2030? What do the people want their country to depict by these future points in time? And what should Namibians do, between now and the year 2030, to elevate the country to the level of a developed society? I now attempt to analyse the policy based on the meanings of institutional culture that I have constructed.

4.5.1.1 Strategy

In the foreword to the policy document, Dr Sam Nujoma explains Namibia Vision 2030 as a perception of the future that reveals and points to something new, beyond what is available and accessible. The main goal of the Vision is to improve the quality of life of the people of Namibia to the level of their counterparts in the developed world by the year 2030. In order to get there, Namibia needs a framework that defines clearly where the country is as a nation, where it wants to be by 2030 and how to get there. Visioning for a nation means creating multiple alternative development strategies and integrated implementation approaches in order to reach the goal of future development. Vision 2030 is a vision that will take Namibia from the present into the future, and also will guide the Namibian nation to make deliberative efforts to improve the quality of life of the nation (Republic of Namibia, 2004:7).

The Vision is about the people and is primarily concerned with the population in relation to its social, economic and overall wellbeing. It is meant to transform Namibia into a fully developed

country where people enjoy high standards of living, a good quality of life and have access to quality education. For this to be effective, the Vision requires that, by the year 2030, the country will operate as an integrated, unified, flexible and high-quality education and training system. The education system would prepare Namibian learners to take advantage of a rapidly changing global environment, as well as developments in science and technology. This, in turn, would contribute to the economic and social development of the citizens (Republic of Namibia, 2004:8).

The policy document was formulated on shared principles, and Jacobs (2012:141) links these with values. I refer to principles as articulated in the policy. The Namibia Vision 2030 is based on principles or values that are cherished by the Namibian nation. The process of formulating Namibia Vision 2030 was based on the idea that it must be a shared vision, developed through national dialogue. Unless it is a shared vision, it may not be socially and politically acceptable. This process involved major social groups at the national and regional levels. For instance, representatives of the government, operators in the private sector and representatives of civil society were consulted to make their contributions (Republic of Namibia, 2004:20).

Following the contributions from various public and private sectors, a variety of principles that are cherished by the nation were identified, namely:

- Good governance
- Partnership
- Capacity enhancement
- Comparative advantage
- People-centred economic development
- National sovereignty and human integrity
- Environment
- Sustainable development, and
- Peace and security.

Having identified the above principles cherished by the nation, Namibia Vision 2030 was formulated as a national, long-term vision to provide the direction in which all partners should be moving, including government, the private sector, NGOs, universities, communities and civil

society as a whole. It also provides a strong framework for collaboration and cooperation (Republic of Namibia, 2004:36). Thus, achieving Namibia Vision 2030 requires a paradigm shift for sector development to integrated approaches through strategic partnership.

What I gathered from the above analysis is that Namibia Vision 2030 is governed by shared principles. These principles are not only for the government, but are shared and accepted by all government sectors, as well as the whole nation. The values that were identified were agreed upon as important for the country – a kind of democratic discourse. As a shared value, it shapes the behaviours of role players at UNAM; it guides the way activities are planned or how the values should be implemented, and also how it aligns its institutional policies with the strategies in Namibia Vision 2030. Therefore, in a country like Namibia, with its apartheid history, such values are important for the transformation of the whole nation.

4.5.1.2 Typology

In Chapter 3 I discussed Bergquist's typologies of institutional culture with reference to a university. In this section I analyse a national policy document, and why am I relating the typologies to a national document. A typology cannot only be attached to a university, but it can be extended to other social arrangements. Analysing Namibia Vision 2030 by using a typology will show how Namibia is characterised in the document.

The government refers to aspects of developments in Namibia Vision 2030 (Republic of Namibia, 2004:9). They refer to sustainable development, the basic principle on which Namibia Vision 2030 is based. Here sustainable development is explained as the development that meets the needs of the present without limiting the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For such a development to be achieved, the government refers to the balance in the social and economic status of the country. On the one hand, social development relates to the people of Namibia in terms of their overall well-being. That is to say, where they live, what they do for a living as well as their status of education and innovation. On the other, economic development refers to wealth in terms of the economic status of the country, finances, investments and capital infrastructure. Sustainable development can be achieved when the social and economic aspects are stable. I therefore

understand development in this context to mean the process of social and economic transformation that is based on complex historical, cultural and environmental factors.

In my view, Namibia Vision 2030 opens up a pathway for future policy plans. It is a policy that emphasises a culture of both personal and professional development. Such a culture ensures that the Namibian nation can have a good life. I therefore regard Namibia as developmental nation.

4.5.1.3 History and tradition

To understand Namibia Vision 2030 one must understand the history of Namibia. In this policy it is articulated that Namibia is not yet a fully developed nation, due to the period it spent under apartheid rule. Geographically, Namibia is regarded as a large country in spatial terms, with a small population size estimated to be 1.8 million in the 2001 population census. Politically, it went through a violent colonial period, which started when the German colonists took control of the country in 1884. Due to this control, conflict arose between the Germans and the Namibian ethnic groups (1890-1908), which led to the decimation of the indigenous Namibian populations. The German rule ended with the outbreak of World War 1. In 1920, the League of Nations granted South Africa a mandate that gave it full power of administration and legislation over the territory. The mandate required that South Africa promote the material and moral wellbeing and social progress of the Namibian people, but this was not upheld. During this period, farmland that previously belonged to Germans was given to Afrikaner settlers. The apartheid system of segregation was introduced in 1948, when the Afrikaner-led National Party gained power in South Africa. The apartheid system was enforced in Namibia as well as in South Africa (Republic of Namibia, 2004:28-30).

The colonial period brought a total disruption to the traditional life of the Namibian people. Resettlement programmes were put in place to remove people from their ancestral homes, wars had decimated their population groups, indentured labour practices had disrupted family life, and colonial legislation had disempowered the traditional structures of authority. The apartheid policies led to severe handicaps, which made it difficult for indigenous Namibian people to take control of the changed country. These policies allowed only inferior education for people of other races, while

most well-paid jobs with entrenched responsibility were reserved for white people. Through foreign missionaries who were active in South West Africa (the former Namibia) during this period, some Namibians had access to education and a challenging work experience.

Since independence, Namibia has taken major steps to address the previous imbalances. It put in place relevant policy and legislative frameworks, and it undertook the massive task of providing basic education for all Namibians and higher education for many. Having looked at the historical background of Namibia, the question arises – what are the major issues that called for the formulation of Namibia Vision 2030? When Namibia Vision 2030 was formulated, a call was made for the identification and careful analysis of the problems faced by the Namibian nation. These issues were identified through national opinion surveys, futures research, regional consultations and national dialogue. The major elements identified were as follows (Republic of Namibia, 2004:38):

- Inequalities and social welfare
- Peace and political stability
- Human resources, institutional and capacity building
- Macro-economic issues
- Population, health and development
- Natural resources and environment
- Knowledge, information and technology, and
- Factors of the eternal environment.

My understanding from this historical analysis is that Namibia went through a period of apartheid that had a negative impact on its developmental capacity. It was first in the hands of the Germans, during which time it experienced conflicts between the local Namibians and the Germans. From the hands of the Germans it went through another period of apartheid rule by South Africa. The South African rule failed to promote the material, moral and social progress of the Namibian people, as was required in the mandate. South Africa instead developed policies that were based mainly on segregation between white and black people. The policies required proper educational facilities to be provided for white people, while the black Namibian community was under-resourced and could not gain access to better education. Namibia had many policies after

independence, and Namibia Vision 2030 paves the way towards the attainment of the country's goals for the future.

4.5.1.4 Scholarship

In this section I analyse Namibia Vision 2030 in order to find out whether the government speaks about research activities. In terms of knowledge production, the policy document refers to a knowledge-based society. This is one of the developmental issues and aspirations the Namibian nation has for the future. It requires the education system to shift the emphasis from imparting knowledge in the form of large quantities of information to imparting learning competencies (Republic of Namibia, 2004:29-30). In a knowledge-driven society, learners or students pursue knowledge, rather than relying on teachers and other learning sources. This means that higher education institutions become sites where such changes should take place.

As for research, the government engages in research by collecting national data and supporting research activities in various institutions. In terms of data, the government collects data on macro-economic issues through the Population and Housing Census, for example the National Housing Census in 2001. Other national surveys include the Household Income and Expenditure Survey, the Namibia Labour Force Survey, the Agricultural Census, health surveys and vital registration of events. The National Population Policy for Sustainable Development provides for the collection and dissemination of national, social, demographic, economic and related data for planning purposes. It also encourages the strengthening of existing institutions that are established for this purpose. In line with the policy's multi-sectoral approach, the need to adopt collaborative approaches to data collection, analysis and dissemination is being fostered among the relevant agencies. However, the government is concerned with collecting official data, and most of these are not analysed to provide information to the public (Republic of Namibia, 2004:74).

Furthermore, the government acknowledges that research is being undertaken in the country by numerous institutions, both public and private (UNAM, PON, National Forestry Research Centre, National Botanical Research Institute, DRFN, NEPRU and Namibia Nature Foundation, to name a few). So far, a review for the National Developmental Plan 2 (NDP2) brings another concern

when it shows that private sector research in science and technology is limited. This is because there is no mechanism for monitoring research activities in the country. As a result, the scope of research activities and their impact on planning and development in general are difficult to determine. To address this, the government's plan is to initiate four key co-ordinating science and technology institutions during the NDP2 cycle. These are the Commission for Research, Science and Technology; the Centre for Innovations, Research and Entrepreneurship of Namibia; the National Council on Higher Education; and the Science and Technology Information Centre. To show its support for science and technology research in public institutions and to encourage private participation, the government plans to create a common resource pool, the Science and Technology Innovation Fund. This fund will finance national research under the guidance of the National Commission for Research, Science and Technology (Republic of Namibia, 2004:74-75).

Given the current state of scholarship in the country, what does the government want scholarship activities to be by the year 2030? The government wants the existing institutions that are responsible for generating data and conducting research for development planning to continue to operate effectively; there are adequate resources for data collection, analysis and the dissemination of data and information; there is a general understanding of development issues in the country; research must cover a wide range of development issues in the country; and information on research must be accessible (Republic of Namibia, 2004:76).

From my analysis of scholarship I understood that the government takes part in research through census and surveys, and that the outputs of these are always disseminated to various government offices. The government fully supports research conducted by both public and private institutions. Those institutions that are involved in research must be in line with the developmental issues of the country. This implies that research in the country is not just meant for building a research culture, but these institutions must conduct research for the purpose of contributing to the development of the nation.

To sum up my analysis of Namibia Vision 2030, I am confident that this policy makes reference to the meanings of institutional culture that I constructed in Chapter 3. My analysis shows that Namibia is viewed as a developing state due to the period it spent under apartheid rule. Its concern

after independence was to leverage the inequalities that existed during apartheid. This can only be done by transforming the Namibian nation to a nation that is striving for development. This can be achieved through adopting a knowledge-based economy, which implies that the production, creation and application of knowledge can be important for the development of a country. Having said this, the question that arises is, does this developmental strategy have an influence on the institutional culture of UNAM? I attempted to answer this question in my analysis of the institutional documents of UNAM. This assisted me to gain a deeper understanding of how institutional culture is constructed and articulated.

4.6 ANALYSIS OF INSTITUTIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS OF UNAM

In this section I analyse the institutional documents of UNAM and focus on the following: the Scholarly Communications Policy, the UNAM Strategic Plan and the Research Policy. Before analysing these policies, I take a brief look at the historical background of UNAM.

4.6.1 An Historical Overview of the University of Namibia

In this study I employed a hermeneutical methodology, which is concerned with historical understanding and interpretation. According to Gadamer, the historicity of understanding implies understanding the historical context from which the text originates. In this study, it means that understanding the history of the University of Namibia will enable me to understand its institutional culture. The historical context is a useful tool for understanding how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in the institutional documents of UNAM.

4.6.1.1 Pre-colonial University of Namibia

I was looking for materials from UNAM that speak about its historical context in detail, but I could not find more information on this. I wanted to gain more insight into the historical events that led to the establishment of UNAM.

However, the UNAM Evaluation Report states that the university had its roots in the Academy for Tertiary Education (Bull *et al.*, 2012:4). When Namibia was under South African political rule from 1915 to 1990, it had only one tertiary institution, known as the Academy (Vergnani, 2000:51). The Academy, according to Naudé and Cloete (2003:84-87), was founded and established by Act 13 of 1980 as a tertiary education institution. Following its establishment, the Academy's objective was to reconstitute the institution for tertiary education with greater autonomy and under the name 'the Academy'. As a tertiary education institution it was expected to extend its powers so as to organise itself into portions as a university, college, technikon and institute. It also had to award degrees, diplomas and certificates, as well as provide for the management and control of its affairs, and provide for incidental matters. In the light of these expectations, the Academy organised itself into three autonomous institutions, namely a college, a technikon and a university, which were all under a single management. Institutions that were under the Academy included a Technical College, a College for Out-of-School Training (COST), and colleges of education, namely Windhoek College of Education, Rundu College of Education, Ongwendiva and Caprivi College of Education (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:108). Within the university component, the Academy used the previous structure, which had its origin in South Africa. It had five faculties, namely Arts, Science, Economics and Management Science, Education, and Health Sciences (Naudé & Cloete, 2003:87:88).

Furthermore, having access to higher education was a challenge because of the racially segregated structure that was in use under apartheid rule. According to Ping and Crowley (1997:384), colonial Namibia was a place where those who held political power saw no advantage in providing education at any level to the black majority. In my view, this means that the provision for higher education during the apartheid regime was limited to a certain group of people. One of the challenges that some black students experienced was gaining admission to undergraduate study by matriculation exemption (Naudé & Cloete, 2003:87-88). This implies that only those who met exemption criteria had access to the Academy. For black Namibians this was a challenge, since only a few students passed with matriculation exemption.

Due to the racial discrimination, facilities in the black institution were quite different from those of the white minority. Due to the distribution of facilities, the majority of children selected for

further education at higher education institutions were white, while the reverse was the case with the black children (Kandumbu, 2005:12). The few black students who were admitted to the Academy were enrolled in teaching courses, since there was no option for them other than educational courses. These students could only enrol in liberal arts, education and public administration (Kirby-Harris, 2003) and become teachers. Thus, these courses were seen as suitable for black students.

4.6.1.2 Post-colonial University of Namibia

As soon as Namibia gained independence in 1990, a proposal was launched to dissolve the Academy and establish a new institution of higher education. The Namibian government appointed a Presidential Commission on Higher Education (Kirby-Harris, 2003:360). One of the aims of this Commission was to propose the closing of the Academy and establish a new national university known as the University of Namibia (Choombe, 1993:65). The University of Namibia was formally established by an Act of Parliament (Republic of Namibia, 1992), as recommended by the Commission on Higher Education in 1992 (Hopson, 2001:121-122; Kirby-Harris, 2003:360).

At its establishment, the university was expected to serve as a centre of higher learning and research (Möwes, 2008:1). It was established with a number of aims, namely to provide higher education; undertake research; advance and disseminate knowledge; provide extension services; encourage the growth and nurturing of cultural expression within the context of the Namibian society; provide further training and continuing education; contribute to the social and economic development of Namibia; and foster relationships with any person or institution, both nationally and internationally (Republic of Namibia, 1992). Established with many aims, the university had just over 2 000 full-time (and about 500 distance education) students. These students were still enrolled in courses such as teacher education, nursing, public administration and the humanities (Kirby-Harris, 2003).

Following its establishment, the university assumed responsibility for continuing and managing the programmes of the former Academy (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1993:110). Put simply, the university subsumed some of its activities when it was established by an Act of

Parliament in 1992. As a result, the newly established university structure, purpose and culture were drawn from some of the existing African higher education traditions (Kirby-Harris, 2003:360). In addition to the African higher education tradition that was adopted by the university, the university also adopted a British model system. It would not be wrong to say that the British system of education was inherently transplanted into this newly formed university. As a new institution in a newly independent country, it inherited its purpose, structure and traditions from the British elite university system, and this brought with it an effect on its institutional culture. In essence, the university adopted both African and British tradition models at its operational level, while its staffing norm was derived from the South African historically black university model (Kirby-Harris, 2003:360).

The above background shows that UNAM is a young institution that started soon after independence. From the above discussion I understand that, after the formation of the university, it continued with what used to be the culture of teaching and research of the former academy. Apart from this, it adopted the British elite model that was passed down to it as institutional culture. The university also was established to facilitate learning and development for the nation of the newly independent country that had been shattered by the force of apartheid.

4.6.1.3 Current landscape of higher education in Namibia

I was looking for a government document that detailed the higher education landscape in Namibia, but could not find any on their website. The reason I was looking for a government document was to understand what constitutes higher education in Namibia.

Nevertheless, I found some insights in the Higher Education Act (Republic of Namibia, 2003). Higher education is relatively young in Namibia, having only started in 1992. This Higher Education Act does not grant automatic qualification as higher education institutions to all post-secondary institutions. It makes a distinction between institutions that fall under this system and those that do not. In this Act, institutions such as vocational colleges and the Namibian College of Open Learning do not form part of the higher education system. They are considered part of the tertiary education system. Therefore, institutions that fall under this system fall into two categories:

firstly there are those that operate as public autonomous institutions, such as UNAM and the Polytechnic of Namibia. Secondly, there are others that are registered as private higher education institutions, like the International University of Management. The International University of Management is the only one that operates as a private higher education institution. Therefore, only three higher education institutions constitute the Namibian higher education system (Matengu *et al.*, 2014:83).

Looking at how young higher education is, one would wonder whether there is any competition between these higher education institutions in this context, since they are only very few. The only competition so far can be seen between government and institutional leaders who, according to Ping and Crowley (1997:336), compete within the same policy space and interact directly with mid-level actors such as deans and senior administrators. It could be that the government and institutional leaders are the role players in policy formulation. It is this relationship that seems to bring about such social interaction. When these interactions permeate the university, they can bring about values and beliefs that are unarticulated in any documents, yet are self-evident.

4.6.1.4 A brief description of the University of Namibia

The University of Namibia offers teaching, advanced education programmes and research. Earlier I mentioned that, at the beginning, the university had only about 2 000 full-time students and, based on Kirby-Harris (2003:335), the university increased its enrolment from 2 000 to 3 200 full-time students and about 1 500 distance education students within a period of eight years. The growth in terms of the number of students and faculty members has caused it to expand its outreach in other regions of the country. The improved quality of distance education and staff welfare has geared the institution's programmes to grow beyond the area of humanities and the public sector to applied sciences and private sector participation. This has apparently increases the acceptance of the role of external stakeholders as employees of graduates and clients of research and training.

According to a recent publication on its website, the university has grown to eight faculties, which comprise the faculties of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Economics and Management Science, Education, Engineering and Information Technology, Health Sciences, Humanity and

Social Sciences, Law and Science, and many schools, including the Namibian Business School and the School of Postgraduate Studies (UNAM, 2014). The university also has spread its programmes by establishing about ten campuses in the country in addition to the main campus in Windhoek. Thus, the university has expanded significantly over a period of twenty-two years after its establishment.

In my view, what seemed to be an ordinary academy in the past has now developed to a full-fledged university that houses eight faculties. Looking at the number of enrolled students and the nature of the programmes that have been introduced, it is indeed a higher education institution. It has become an institution that embodies a variety of activities. The continuous growth and spreading of different activities may likely raise the question, what roles are expected from an institution of this nature?

4.6.1.5 The roles of the University of Namibia

In my opinion, a university in the 21st century is more than an institution of higher learning, since it cuts across different areas of human endeavours. The introduction of a wide range of activities into the university community creates a culture in which scholars in different areas of specialisation and learning are involved in study and research. The same conceptualisation is expected of any university institution that engages in research and study. This expectation was what mandated the establishment of the University of Namibia many years ago (Hopson 2001:122). I believe that the University of Namibia as an institution of higher learning has repositioned itself in the community of academic institutions in the world. According to Hopson (2001), some of its roles as an institution are spelt out by the government policy that brought about its existence. Hopson (2001:122) further comments that the role of the University of Namibia is to serve as “the beacon of hope of a new democracy of Southern Africa...”

Namibian policies are expected to be enforced by the university community in order to facilitate its role in the development of the nation. Kirby-Harris (2003:369) sees these government policies as constraining the smooth running of the institution, since more influence is exerted from outside the university system. As a result, activities at the operational level increase, while the planning of

the university by the members of the community is constrained. This, therefore, limits the cultural autonomy of the institution and weakens the implementation of its institutional culture.

In the context of the Namibian educational system, *Toward Education for All* is a document that contains the policy that spells out the role of higher education in Namibia. The policy was formulated in 1993 by the Ministry of Education. One of the stated roles of the University of Namibia, according to TEFA, is that it should act as a means to encourage the growth of advanced education and research in the country. This advanced education and research are expected to translate into a mechanism to develop the nation (Ministry of Basic Education, 1993:109). Hence the roles that are spelt out for the university enable it to be one of the key players in the development of the nation in the areas of politics, economic, science and technology, agriculture, industry social and general development.

Ping and Crowley (1997:382) mention a variety of responsibilities of the University of Namibia. These include building a modern nation while preserving traditional, ethnic and religious cultures; enhancing social advancement; fostering student values; and extending university teaching and research throughout the nation. In my view, a modern university is expected to enhance its teaching and research. From the above it is clear that the Namibian society expects the university to provide quality education through teaching, innovation and research. These roles are in line with the mission statement of the university, which states that it must “provide quality services in higher education through teaching, research and advisory services with the view to produce independent minded, society conscious and innovative professionals that can identify, manage and solve problems facing Namibian society” (UNAM, 2006:7). This discussion shows that the university has several mandates given to it by the government. Put simply, some of these mandates are teaching, learning, research, good governance and innovation. These are some of the key roles that the university is expected to perform as provided by the Government Policy for Higher Education Institutions.

I now provide an analysis of relevant institutional documents of the university. I begin with the Strategic Plan in the next section.

4.6.2 STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2015

UNAM's five-year strategic plan sets the strategic destination of the institution, which are expressed through its high-level statements, the mission and vision statements. It is a plan formulated in response to key high-level initiatives of the government, such as Namibia Vision 2030.

I looked at the mission statement of UNAM as articulated in the strategic plan and the strategic themes that drive the university by asking, what is a mission statement? I refer to Vukuza-Linda (2014:194), who explains mission statements as generally describing who their customers are, what products and services they produce and the environment in which they operate. For Smit and Cronje (1992:59), the mission gives direction to the institution's activities and is a concise outline of "who we are, what we do and where we are headed". It gives an institution its own special identity, character and reasons for existence.

The strategic plan focuses on the strategic themes that drive UNAM's strategy for the next five years. The four key strategic themes are (UNAM, 2011:5):

- operational management
- teaching and learning
- research and development
- stakeholders' relation

Each of these key areas is aligned with objectives that serve as a guide towards fulfilling the mission. In other words, the four key strategic themes are linked to the cause-and-effect relationship of strategic objectives (UNAM, 2011:9). I now turn my attention to analysing the Strategic Plan in terms of the meanings of institutional culture.

4.6.2.1 Strategy

The five-year strategic plan for UNAM sets the strategic destination of the university, which is expressed through its high-level statements, namely its mission and vision statements. The university's mission is:

To provide quality higher education through teaching, research and advisory services to our customers with the view to produce productive and competitive human resources capable of driving public and private institutions towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and improved quality of life (UNAM, 2011:4).

The vision statement is expressed as follows:

To be a beacon of excellence and innovation in teaching, research and extension services (UNAM, 2011:4).

In order for the strategic plan to be executed, UNAM needs total commitment from academics and staff members and financial support from the central government. It expresses the core values that must be adhered to and that guide the behaviour of staff members. The university articulates the four important core values it has identified and adopted, namely professionalism, mutual respect, integrity and transparency (UNAM, 2011:4-5).

As I read through the Strategic Plan, it became clear that the university needs urgent change or transformation in the area of its organisational culture, where it currently is weak and would want total ownership in the next five years (UNAM, 2011:6).

4.6.2.2 Typology

I found it difficult to extract the features of the typology of this university. In the mission and vision statements, UNAM explains the type of institution it is and seeks to become. In the mission statement, UNAM see itself as a higher education institution that serves to provide quality

teaching, research and community services. It does so with a view to produce a creative and competitive human resource that can lead public and private institutions towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and improved quality of life. I looked at the mission statement and saw features such as economic growth. My interest was in the concept of ‘growth’, which to me means development, and the idea of development is emphasised in Namibia Vision 2030.

UNAM (2011:4) sees its vision as to be “the beacon of excellence and innovation in teaching, research and extension services”. What can be understood from this statement is that UNAM envisages itself as becoming an outstanding institution to improve teaching and research in Namibia. It characterises itself as a university that seeks to meet the needs of the Namibian nation or uplift the social and economic development of the country.

It was difficult for me to understand the kind of institution UNAM is. Perhaps the history of UNAM could shed more light on the typology of its institutional culture.

4.6.2.3 History and tradition

Gadamer (1975) says we can only understand a text when we understand the history of the context under study. I looked for history in the Strategic Plan so that I could understand the institutional culture. The Strategic Plan is not a very big document, and does not say much on the history of UNAM. However, looking at my historical background of UNAM I can say that the university is young, having started in 1992. It is not yet a fully developed university and it is for this reason that it supports the developmental path of Namibia. The university is not only concerned with contributing to the development of Namibia, but also to its own development. Vukuza-Linda (2014:208) states that visions in higher education institutions are often shaped by history, ideologies and academic merits.

From this historical viewpoint, UNAM seeks to develop its students and the community to lead institutions in the country towards a knowledge-based economy, economic growth and an improved quality of life. This kind of higher education development was not made available during apartheid. On the other hand, UNAM categorises itself as a “beacon of excellence” in its vision.

By “beacon of excellence” it means that the university must become and remain an outstanding teaching and research university that is capable of contributing to the social and economic development of the Namibian nation (UNAM, 2006:2). By implication, UNAM is not an outstanding institution, but envisages to become one by the year 2030. Coming to Bergquist’s typologies of institutional culture, the university’s mission and vision can be explained along the lines of developmental culture.

4.6.2.4 Scholarship

Does UNAM speak about knowledge production, research and dissemination in its Strategic Plan? Not much is said about research in this document. However, one of the key focus areas that drive the strategy of UNAM is research and development. This theme places emphasis on knowledge creation and application. The university articulates its strategic change agenda where it compares its current status to what it desires to be. This agenda for change provides the basis for transformation and creates a sense of urgency for change. Currently, it sees itself as weak in terms of knowledge creation and publication, and desires this area to become a best practice in the next five years. Its research and consultancy output is low and it desires it to be high. To achieve this, the university would like to increase and broaden research output to its customers (UNAM, 2011:5-9).

In terms of knowledge production, UNAM aligns itself with the Namibia Vision 2030, which is to develop a knowledge-based society through quality teaching and research. One of the key focus areas that drives the strategy for UNAM is research and development. This area places an emphasis on knowledge creation and application (UNAM, 2011:5). In the Strategic Plan, UNAM outlines its strategic agenda for change where it compares its current status to what it desires. This agenda for change provides the basis for transformation and creates a sense of urgency for change. Currently, UNAM sees itself as weak in terms of knowledge creation and publication and desires this area to be a best practice in the next five years.

Its research and consultancy output is low and UNAM desires it to be high. In order to improve its research area, the university would like to increase and broaden research output to its customers

(UNAM, 2011:5-9). This implies that UNAM is not strong in research or its research activities are not yet comparable to research universities.

4.6.3 SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

I begin this analysis by looking at what scholarship communication means. I noted earlier, in Chapter 3 (Section 3.6.4), that UNAM describes scholarly communications as encompassing the creation, transformation, dissemination and preservation of knowledge. Simply put, it is a process by which academics, scholars and researchers publish and share their work in the academic community and beyond (UNAM, 2013:4).

However, the scholarly communications policy of UNAM is new. The need for the university to have such a policy was realised in 2013, when the faculty of humanities conducted a scholarly communications programme at the university. This programme encouraged the university to formulate the policy, which it did, and by the end of its interaction with the university the policy was drafted (UNAM, 2013:4).

What follows is my analysis of the Scholarly Communications Policy using the meanings of institutional culture I constructed in Chapter 3.

4.6.3.1 Strategy

The Scholarly Communications Policy responds to Vision 2030, which encourages UNAM to conduct research in order to develop a knowledge-based society. This policy draws on and is grounded in the university's mandate and strategic plan. The university has several mandates, such as to provide higher education, undertake research, and advance and disseminate knowledge (UNAM, 2011:4). Thus, it is the role of the university to produce research and ensure that its research outcomes are available in the public domain. The Scholarly Communications Policy is also in line with the UNAM Press Policy, the Research Policy, the Research Ethics Policy and the Research Guidelines of the university. These policies collectively establish the framework for international standards of scholarly research at UNAM and the publication of that research.

4.6.3.2 Typology

The University of Namibia states that the purpose of the policy is to increase access to information, knowledge, research, and artistic and creative work. It does so in order to facilitate the academic enterprise and advance the progress of society. The university further outlines several aims of the policy. Of particular interest to me was the university's aim to raise the profile of its research and enhance its impact and contribution to national development (UNAM, 2013:5). This aim is in line with the developmental path that is articulated in Namibia Vision 2030.

In this policy I looked for features that describe the nature of the institutional culture that exists at UNAM. I mentioned above that the university conducts research so that it may contribute to national development. I asked myself: what kind of culture is associated with development? I wrote about the typologies of institutional culture in Chapter 3, focusing on Bergquest's typologies. His developmental culture suggests furthering of the cognitive, behavioural and effective maturation of its members as the basis of meaning at an institution. This is based on the personal and professional growth of all the members of the collegiate environment. I saw traits of this culture in the Scholarly Communications Policy of the University.

4.6.3.3 History and tradition

Higher education institutions have undergone many changes in recent years. As a result, UNAM has experienced changes in the process of communication and dissemination of research finding over recent years. These changes have created a challenge for teaching, conducting research, and providing library and information services. Some of the challenges encountered by the university in recent years include (UNAM, 2013:3):

- changes in information technology
- the use of the internet as the primary distribution method in many fields
- the complexity of research in the 21st century
- the increased expectations of quick and easy access to research
- the evolution and transformation of traditional publishing models

- new imperatives for universities to take on the role of publisher, and
- the expectation that publicly funded research should be freely accessible.

In order to ensure on-going participation in global knowledge production, UNAM is called upon to engage with these challenges. The need for a scholarly communications policy stemmed from these challenges, and also from the need to address the university's current position regarding online publication, the sharing of data, and open access to university research. The university's current state in terms of scholarship is that much of the research done at UNAM is not easily accessible, and this limits its impact and value for the purpose of development and/or further scholarly enquiry and debate. As a result of this, UNAM saw a need to position itself with regard to the growing international Open Access movement, whereby academic institutions (including more than twenty in Africa) are opening up and making their research available through the internet, often free of charge (UNAM, 2013:4).

The development of a scholarly communications policy was formulated through the assistance of the Scholarly Communication in Africa Project of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (2011-2013) (Trotter *et al.*, 2014). This project proved to be valuable and identified many issues to be considered in the development of this policy. In 2012, the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research established a Scholarly Communication Task Force. This task force was charged with developing a scholarly communications policy for the university.

4.6.3.4 Scholarship

At the heart of this policy are the promotion of quality research, and the dissemination and communication of scholarly output at UNAM. The university describes scholarly outputs as those outputs that come from university staff, visiting scholars and students as part of their academic work. These include the whole range of publication types, and other forms of knowledge production and sharing. Examples are conference papers, books, monographs, journal articles, research abstracts, consultancy reports, sound, video and film recordings, artistic and creative works, and interactive multimedia. Scholarly outputs that are published in the name of the university, its faculties, autonomous academic centres and departments should be subject to peer

input or peer review. The university views itself as committed to a rigorous academic peer-review process. To ensure that is of a high standard, UNAM Press and the Research and Publication Office will develop guidelines for different types of research outputs that are published or communicated in the name of the university (UNAM, 2013:4).

One of the challenges I experienced while conducting my study was to find scholarly outputs and policy documents of the University of Namibia. I searched online but could not find any. I asked: where can I access materials from UNAM? The university says it has an obligation to share its research findings and scholarly outputs with all stakeholders and the wider society. It also allows these to reach a much wider audience, and thus to be cited more often, which in the process raises the profile of the author/knowledge producer and the university. Through open access, scholarly outputs are made accessible online, free of charge to the reader, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. This is made possible through the internet and the consent of the author or copyright holder, while demanding proper attribution of their work.

An examination of the Scholarly Communications Policy shows say that the meanings of institutional culture are articulated. The university is engaged in research not to become a research institution, but so that research activities can contribute to the development of the country. It does so by encouraging academics, scholars and students to conduct research and ensure that the outcomes of the research are shared with the wider research society. I now examine UNAM's Research Policy to see whether it relates to the meanings of institutional culture in my study.

4.6.4 Research Policy

I found it useful to gain insight into what the university regards as research. Research as undertaken at UNAM means all activities of either an intellectual or professional nature that involve original investigation aimed at gaining knowledge or understanding. This includes work that extends the appreciation of knowledge in order to contribute to something of scholarly value. It also includes the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of disciplines, and all efforts that transform or increase understanding of professional practice, inventions and generation of ideas, images, performances, designs and artefacts. It further involves all creative work that

leads to improved insights into and understanding of the use of existing knowledge and in the production of new or substantially improved products (Kiangi, 2005:1).

4.6.4.1 Strategy

The University of Namibia aligns its Research Policy with its Fourth Strategic Plan (2011-2015). At the heart of UNAM's mission and vision statements is the goal to produce knowledge through quality research. From these statements, one of the strategic themes that drive the university for the next five years is research and development, in relation to which emphasis is placed on knowledge creation and application. This theme addresses several essential aspects of research activities, such as:

- encouraging research mentorship
- improving the research culture
- increasing research output, and
- expanding research activities and research collaborations.

Following from this strategic theme, the policy states that UNAM recognises and values the importance of research in the creation and dissemination of new knowledge and fostering socioeconomic development by addressing the challenges faced by society. In order to realise its vision and mission, it will continue to improve mechanisms, structures and processes that will enhance and promote the conduct and productivity of research and publication activities at UNAM (UNAM, 2013:7).

4.6.4.2 Typology

A typology can be used to show the type of institution UNAM is. In the Foreword of the Research Policy, Prof Hangula (the UNAM Rector) states that today's universities have to transform themselves into developmental universities rather than mere teaching and research universities so that they can increase their contribution to development through the production and distribution of knowledge (UNAM, 2013:4). Following this statement, the university states that it supports and promotes research that enhances the institution's role in making a positive difference to the quality

of lives of members of society. It further articulates that it will continue to invest in research and development activities to ensure the sustainable development of Namibia and beyond (UNAM, 2013:7).

4.6.4.3 History and tradition

It seemed to me that no research had been conducted under apartheid rule. UNAM started to engage in research after its establishment in 1992.

The research policy for UNAM has its origin in the research strategy. Before the policy was formulated, UNAM only had a research strategy, which was developed and approved in 2005. This research strategy has been overtaken by various events and new developments. These were due to global, regional and national changes; UNAM saw a need to revise the research strategy and developed further it into a fully-fledged research policy. Therefore, the Research Policy for UNAM arose out of this process (UNAM, 2013:6).

4.6.4.4 Scholarship

At the heart of UNAM's mission and vision statements is the goal to produce knowledge through quality research. In order for these to be realised, UNAM aims to promote excellence in research, development, innovation and the dissemination of research results. It also ensures proper and efficient coordination and management of research-related activities at the university. Based on this, all academic staff members of the university are required to conduct research, engage in scholarship and publish their findings (UNAM, 2013:8-9).

The university also states that it supports research conducted by both academics and students. It provides internal university research funds and access to externally sourced research funds. The former are managed by the Research and Publication Office (RPO) and are used to support research that is aligned with the university's strategic priorities. The funds are allocated based on a general principle that it should be seen as an investment that will maximise the range of outcomes that UNAM expects to result from staff and student research. The latter are from external sources

and do not only provide funds to students, but staff members are encouraged to apply. Applications for these funds are coordinated through the RPO and must be accompanied by relevant documents for approval.

Now that I have examined the research policy for UNAM, I can see that UNAM is striving towards developing the research activities that were not offered during apartheid. The research policy was developed to enhance the research goals the university wants to achieve. The university values research not because it wants to adopt a research culture, but to contribute to the development of Namibian society.

4.7 SUMMARY

My aim in this chapter was to analyse relevant national policy and institutional policy documents of UNAM. My analysis included policies such as Namibia Vision 2030, the Scholarly Communications Policy, UNAM's Strategic Plan, and the Research Policy. I analysed these policy documents in order to discover whether they relate to the meanings of institutional culture that I constructed in Chapter 3. The meanings of institutional culture that I constructed are strategy, typology, history and tradition, and scholarship. I discuss the findings from this analysis in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In my previous chapter, I analysed national policies and the institutional policy documents of UNAM. In my analysis I looked to see if meanings of ‘institutional culture’ are reflected. The reason for doing such an analysis was to understand how institutional culture is constructed and articulated by the University of Namibia. In this chapter, I discuss the findings that emanate from my analysis of a national policy and the institutional policy documents of UNAM. The chapter begins with a discussion of the findings from the literature review, and from a national policy document (Namibia Vision 2030). This is followed by a discussion of the findings from my analysis of UNAM institutional policy documents. The limitations of my study are discussed, and possible pathways for future research. The chapter ends with a hermeneutic reflection on my journey through my study.

5.2 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

What emerged from my literature review is that UNAM is faced with a variety of challenges as a developmental university that may have an influence on its institutional culture. It has to deal with overcoming the legacy of apartheid, cooperating in national development, supporting national and ethnic culture, fostering effective relations between the university and government, achieving intellectual independence, providing appropriate education for careers, enhancing student performance and addressing funding issues.

The literature also showed that there are a lack of studies on the concept of institutional culture in the Namibian context. My review showed a study by Kirby-Harris (2003), titled ‘Universities Responding to Policy: Organizational Change at the University of Namibia’ and the SCAP (Trotter *et al.*, 2014), which were of relevance to my research. Kirby-Harris discusses the changes in the organisation of UNAM since its establishment in 1992. He mentions the concept of culture and

institutional culture, and adds that, when UNAM was established, it inherited the structures, curricula and systems from the British elite, which were then transplanted into its institutional culture. In terms of culture, the University of Namibia has a weakly developed identity and little sense of its own culture due to the influence of government policies. Although Kirby-Harris refers to these concepts in his study, he provides no explanation or analysis of what the concepts mean. He also does not show the nature of the culture that exists within UNAM. I, however, greatly acknowledge his insights into the relationship between government and the University of Namibia in terms of policy.

The Scholarly Communication in Africa Programme was a project conducted by the UNAM staff in 2014. This report briefly refers to the institutional culture of UNAM. The report touches on several aspects that I found interesting for my study. Firstly, it describes the institutional culture of UNAM as a developmental culture. It is regarded as developmental because the university has a developmental mission that is regarded as strong and that is in line with national strategies and policies. These national strategies and policies have resulted in the administration and many scholars at UNAM having a close association with the government. UNAM aligns most of its activities with the national strategies and policies (for example, the National Development Plan and Namibia Vision 2030). In this report, the writers aligned some documents they analysed with Bergquist's types of institutional culture (Trotter *et al.*, 2014:65).

5.3 DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS FROM MY ANALYSIS OF NAMIBIA VISION 2030

I analysed Namibia Vision 2030 (a national policy document) in relation to the meanings of 'institutional culture' that I constructed in Chapter 3. My analyses revealed that the former president of Namibia, his Excellency Dr Sam Nujoma, called on Namibia Vision 2030 during an address to the cabinet, in which he demanded the doing away with apartheid policies and the need to consider transforming the nation by developing a national vision. The main aim for developing this policy was for the public sector to be transformed in order to respond to the developmental needs of the country, as well as to shift from an industrialised nation to a knowledge-based nation. I shall now proceed to the findings in relation to the meanings of institutional culture.

5.3.1 Strategy

Namibia Vision 2030 is a broad vision for Namibia that maps out the current state of the country and where it wants to be. In terms of what the Namibian nation values, I found that Namibia Vision 2030 was not formulated based on the values of a particular individual, but rather on the principles held by the whole country. Its formulation was done in a democratic manner and it became a shared vision. It was shared in the sense that various social groups, and national and regional offices in Namibia were consulted. People were asked to identify key principles cherished by the Namibian nation. A number of principles were identified and these were indicated in my analysis of Namibia Vision 2030.

5.3.2 Typology

The typology shows what type of nation Namibia is. In the national policy, I looked at how Namibia is characterised. My finding was that Namibia is a developing country due to the period it spent under apartheid rule. It is a country that is striving for economic and sustainable development. It encourages both the private and public sectors to come up with ways to empower and develop themselves and the nation. However, the government does not stipulate how such development can be achieved, but only indicates its support for such developmental activities.

Since Namibia is developing, it is encouraged to empower itself if it wants to develop. In my discussion of typologies I referred to Bergquist's typologies of institutional culture. He speaks about a developmental culture and I see traits of this in Namibia Vision 2030. In the light of Bergquist's typologies, I therefore regard Namibia as a developmental nation or as having a developmental culture.

5.3.3 History and Tradition

History enables one to understand the realities Namibia is facing and why it came up with Namibia Vision 2030. The periods when the country was ruled by the Germans and later by South Africa gave rise to the formulation of Vision 2030 because, during these periods, Namibian experienced

many wars and inequalities in terms of land, health, education and economic development. It was a period where policies were in favour of the white minority, while the black majority were left out. Only a few Namibians could fulfil their basic needs. Following the formulation of this Vision, various government officials were assigned to identify key concerns faced by Namibia that needed attention. They identified issues such as inequalities and social welfare; peace and political stability; human resources; institutional and capacity building; macro-economic issues; population; health and development; natural resources and environment; knowledge, information and technology; and factors of the external environment.

5.3.4 Scholarship

The government conducts scholarship activities by collecting national data on economic issues through population and housing censuses. It wants the findings from these to be made available to the public and to be analysed so that information on developmental issues can be made available to the state. The government is also aware that various institutions in the country undertake research, and such institutions are encouraged to continue with research, but on condition that such institutions have a general understanding of developmental issues. Research must cover a wide range of issues in the country, and information on these must be made accessible.

In Namibia Vision 2030 I found that the government puts more emphasis on research activities in science and technology. It provides funding for research conducted in these underdeveloped fields.

5.4 FINDINGS FROM INSTITUTIONAL POLICY DOCUMENTS OF UNAM

I analysed three institutional policy documents of UNAM in Chapter 4, namely the Scholarship Communications Policy, Research Policy and Strategic Plan. I used the meanings of ‘institutional culture’ to analyse these policy documents. In this section I discuss the main findings that emanated from my analysis of these documents.

5.4.1 Strategy

In its institutional policy documents, UNAM shows the core values that guide the behaviour of both the staff and students. It is committed to core values, namely professionalism, mutual respect, integrity and transparency. In its research policy, the university emphasises that conducting research, the dissemination of research output and making it accessible are very important for its development and that of the country.

5.4.2 Typology

Typologies are explained as a systematic classification or categorisation of types that have characteristics or traits in common (Vukuza-Linda, 2014:238). Typologies reflect the type of institution UNAM is. Although there are many types of institutions, there may be a dominant culture, and this is what I attempted to discover in my analysis of the institutional documents.

UNAM is an institution that is not fully developed. It is striving towards developing itself and the country, contributing to knowledge, and improving the quality of life of the Namibian nation. In the documents that I analysed, the university describes itself as striving towards economic growth and contributing to national development, and that there are more traces of the developmental. This is in line with Bergquist's typology of a developmental culture, where the emphasis is on personal and professional development. I characterise UNAM as a developmental institution. Thus, the university aligns its culture with the developmental needs of the country as articulated in Namibia Vision 2030. It undertakes to develop its staff and students through teaching and research.

5.4.3 History and Tradition

What I discovered in terms of the history of the context is that UNAM was established after Namibia gained independence (in 1990). During the apartheid period, Namibia had one black higher education institution, known as the Academy. This institution implemented apartheid policies in terms of which provision for higher education was for a few. These policies were not in favour of the majority of black Namibian students. They were rather a privilege for the elite. Following the independence of Namibia, the Academy was closed. A new University of Namibia

was established to provide education to all Namibian people. At this time, the university lacked a proper direction and started off by continuing with the structure, curricula and culture of the former Academy. It also adopted the British elite system into its institutional culture.

In order to do away with the apartheid and British ways of thinking, Namibia developed several transformation agendas. One of these was Namibia Vision 2030, which was formulated to address the apartheid injustices and provide a new direction for the Namibian nation.

5.4.4 Scholarship

One of the goals of the government is to shift from an industrial nation to a knowledge-based nation. To achieve this, the university, as a leading higher education institution, is expected to play a role in making this change effective. The university is not fully grown in terms of research activities. One of the roles assigned to UNAM at its establishment was to conduct research. My analysis of the institutional policy documents of UNAM revealed that the university does conduct research. It started to engage in research recently, when it developed a research strategy in 2005. As a result, its research activities are not strong and the research output is low. However, the university would like its research activities to be the best and its output to be high. As such, it encourages academics and students to conduct research and to disseminate the research outcomes for access.

It also was evident from in the documents that UNAM provides funding through the Internal University Research Fund. This funding is made available to staff members and students on condition that such research is in line with the university's strategic priorities. There also is external funding from outside sources which is not available to students, but staff members are encouraged to apply.

5.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

One may ask: What makes my study important? It was very exciting and important for me to conduct such a study for the first time. This study offers a contribution to the on-going discussions

of institutional culture, and provides myself and the role players and community of UNAM with a deeper understanding of institutional culture. UNAM is a young institution that was established after Namibia became independent, and a study of its institutional culture is important, as it is being challenged to play a role in the development of the Namibian nation. However, a project conducted by SCAP analysed the institutional culture of the university, but did not provide a deeper understanding of the concept. My analysis of a national policy and three institutional policy documents of UNAM shows how institutional culture is constructed and articulated in these documents. This analysis assisted me in gaining a deeper understanding of institutional culture that can be of benefit to the University of Namibia. The study is very pertinent in that it enables university actors to understand their culture and thus provide a basis for critique of the taken-for-granted aspects of the culture.

Vukuza-Linda, Jacobs, and Van Wyk suggest that a study of institutional culture is important for four reasons. Firstly, the concept institutional culture is a policy issue in higher education that needs to be understood. Secondly, it is a concept that is used to describe the personality of universities. Thirdly, higher education researchers have come to realise that universities are complex organisations with unique sets of features. Fourthly, unlike many profit-making organisations, universities have certain characteristics that need to be understood and that dominate the culture of these institutions (Jacobs, 2012:102; Sporn, 1996:42; Van Wyk & Jacobs, 2012:1175). This implies that universities have certain features that make them unique. Van Wyk and Jacobs (2012:1175) describe the following characteristics of universities that dominate their culture:

- Like those of business organisations, the goals of universities are fuzzy, differentiated, unclear and difficult to measure.
- Internal stakeholders are numerous and varied, and include domestic and foreign undergraduate, graduate and professional students, as well as mid-career individuals seeking continuing education programmes.
- Researchers typically conduct basic applied and contract research.
- Due to research practices, universities may be characterised by disciplinary and cultural diversity.

- Within a university there are conflicting values and beliefs systems between professors and administrators that militate against the efficient and effective resolution of problems and issues that arise.
- The university operates in environments that are complex, changing and demanding. Mass education, reduction in state funding, distance learning and capital equipment costs are some of the environmental factors that are persistent and strongly affect internal relationships.

Fourthly, there is a need for a study on institutional culture because, in an inquiry on the institutional culture of Stellenbosch University, Van Wyk (2009:332) assumed that a university has a dominant culture. He contends that, while academics may not pay much attention to the culture of their institutions in their day-to-day activities, there is an inescapable, pervasive culture that determines how things are done at each institution. In his analysis, he concludes that the usefulness of institutional culture is that it connects people, and that it is something to use (Van Wyk, 2009:344). He goes further to say that human interaction should be an important feature of an institutional culture, and attention must be paid to how institutional culture facilitates diverse groups to interact with one another. It also assists us in organising ourselves because of the following: it conveys a sense of identity (who we are), facilitates commitment (what we stand for), enhances stability (how we do things around here), guides sense making (how we understand events), and defines authority (who is influential). In the same way, Sporn (1996:42) states that a kind of ideal culture in universities facilitates the following:

- Identification (who are we?)
- Motivation (why do we do all the work?)
- Communication (to whom do we talk?)
- Coordination (with whom do we work?)
- Development (what are the perspectives?)

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF MY STUDY

From my review of the literature I observed that the concept of institutional culture has not been explored and researched fully at UNAM. In other words, the concept is under-explored and under-

researched in the Namibian context. This study contributes to the on-going discussions on institutional culture at UNAM. I had to pay attention to analysing the concept and constructing the meanings of 'institutional culture' for my analysis of institutional policy documents. The documentary analysis in terms of my meanings allowed me to gain a deeper understanding of the university's institutional culture.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Herewith my recommendations flowing from the study:

- I noted earlier that the concept of institutional culture is under-explored and under-researched in higher education discussions in Namibia. However, the concept has attracted attention in the South African context and there has been on-going discussion in higher education institutions. For this reason, more work needs to be done in the context of higher education in Namibia.
- In my study I only analysed institutional and policy documents. I therefore recommend an exploration of the perceptions and narratives of institutional role players with regard to institutional culture at UNAM.
- In addition, a study of institutional culture in the higher education system in Namibia will make a valuable contribution to the existing body of knowledge.
- Remarkably, UNAM policy documents are silent on the issue of an African university, while many older South African universities have focused on the issue in recent years. I thus recommend that this issue be researched further.

5.8 A HERMENEUTIC REFLECTION

This is the last section of this study, and I provide a hermeneutic reflection on the challenges I experienced through this study and that had an impact on my personal and scholarly development. Some of the challenges that I shall reflect on include methodological challenges, academic writing, visiting scholars, and conferences. According to Young (1996:131-132), a narrative reveals the particular experiences of those in social locations, experiences that cannot be shared by those

situated differently but that they must understand in order to do justice to the others. I take my cue from this and I now reflect on my challenges and experiences while writing up my study.

5.8.1 Lack of Research Experience in Higher education

It was a challenge to understand higher education discussions and institutional culture due to a lack of research experience in this field. The only experience that I had was of being a teacher at a primary school in Namibia for about twelve years. Thus, discussions on basic education were familiar to me. In the context of higher education, I studied full time with CCE in Namibia (1996 to 1998) and as a distance education student with Potchefstroom University (2000 to 2004). As a student at these institutions, I paid more attention to my studies and did not have time to read materials on higher education. I had little interest in issues concerning higher education and UNAM, since my focus was on basic education.

As I noted in Chapter 1, my motivation for pursuing higher education generally and institutional culture specifically came from reading a book chapter on institutional culture, which triggered my curiosity to understand the systems and practices of UNAM. Although I became curious, my concern was whether I would manage such a study without having adequate knowledge of UNAM and higher education. Before I started writing my proposal, I spent more time searching for literature that spoke about UNAM, but what I found was not enough for me to gain a deeper understanding. My supervisor introduced me to the literature on institutional culture and requested me to read before writing. I read the literature several times, but found it difficult to understand discourses in institutional culture. Due to this, it took me more time to write a proposal because I needed to understand the literature on UNAM, and what ‘institutional culture’ means in a university context.

5.8.2 Methodological Challenges

One of the obstacles faced by postgraduate students is methodological difficulties (Mouton, 2001:6). For Mouton, the difficulty is that many students at the master’s level have inadequate knowledge of research methodologies or inappropriate levels of research skills. This was the case

with me and I knew little about research methodology and methods. However, understanding the difference between methodology and method was not very challenging. From the literature, I understood this difference without any difficulty. The most challenging part was to understand the theories, as well as to find an appropriate one for my study. As such, I had to explore positivist theory, critical theory and interpretive theory for a deeper understanding before choosing the appropriate one.

While exploring these theories I came into contact with ideas on understanding that triggered me to use interpretive theory. Connole (1993) posits that the primary concern of the theory is understanding social educational practices. Due to little knowledge and understanding of higher education, UNAM and institutional culture, I considered this approach to be appropriate for my study. However, a challenge came with this theory when my supervisor suggested I read and consider Gadamer's hermeneutics as my research methodology. He provided me with books on Gadamer's hermeneutics, but to understand what Gadamer meant by hermeneutics was difficult. When I complained to my supervisor about not understanding hermeneutics, he advised me to stop writing, read more and let it simmer. His advice helped me a lot and, when I got back to my work, it started to make sense. Despite my challenges, I gained greater clarity and my challenges with regard to methodological issues allowed me to understand, explain and interpret throughout my study.

5.8.3 Academic Writing

To write in an academic manner was not an easy task for me. In my journey through this study I sought advice to improve my writing skills from colleagues and the writing laboratory. In an attempt to improve my academic skills, I asked someone to edit my first chapter (Chapter 1), as I had included words that my supervisor dismissed as 'fluff'. He also cautioned me about the usage of words in an unphilosophical manner. This was a challenge, since I had little understanding of words that are 'fluff' and those that are philosophical. When I expressed dissatisfaction with academic writing, my supervisor remarked that academic writing does not come naturally, which is in line with Mouton (2001:7). This remark put me at ease and, as I continued with my study, I could see progress in my work. At this stage my supervisor gave me some readings on academic

writing he compiled while doing his PhD. In these I found the book by Strunk and White (1959), entitled *The Elements of Style*, which helped me a great deal. Another challenge was that I found it difficult to construct an argument. On several occasions my supervisor asked me what my argument was.

5.8.4 Interactions With Other Academics

Before I started writing this document, I thought that my journey would be a lonely one. As Mouton (2001:7) suggests, most postgraduate students experience the writing of a thesis or dissertation based on independent research as an extremely lonely undertaking. In my case, I felt lonely at times, but had the privilege to interact with peers, academics and visiting scholars. I had regular meetings with my supervisor, and these were very enlightening and supportive. From these meetings I was able to understand, reflect and develop my academic skills. My department (Department of Education Policy Studies) regularly held postgraduate day sessions for MEd and PhD students. This was arranged in such a way that each lecturer in the department had something to tell us concerning education research, finding a voice, ethics, formulating a research title and also support for academic writing from the writing laboratory. I gained greatly during these sessions in terms of academic writing, research methodologies and finding my voice. I initially thought I was the only one experiencing challenges, but during these interactions I learnt that challenges are for everyone.

Lastly, I appreciated the opportunities awarded to me by my supervisor to interact with visiting scholars. It was a privilege to have met Professor Paul Smeyers on his visit to our department. I was invited to his presentation about ‘The role of interpretation in research’, which I found very interesting. What interested me more as I listened to his presentation was his discussion of interpretation, and it made me reflect on my discussion of Gadamer’s understanding and interpretation. Professor Smeyers sounded as if he was explaining to me exactly what Gadamer’s understanding and interpretation mean. By the end of his talk I was better informed about what interpretation means in education research.

I was also privileged to meet other visiting scholars. I met Professor Roxanne Mitchel from the University of Alabama, Professor Arnold Dodge and his wife from Long Island University, as well as two school principals from Long Island in New York, Mr Richard Roder and Mr John Singleton. I had an opportunity to listen to their projects, ask them questions and also to visit schools that were involved in the Courageous Conversations Project. It was wonderful to engage with learners and teachers and it reminded me of my years as a school teacher in Namibia.

5.8.5 Conference Presentations

To present your work in front of others can be very challenging, especially when it is the first time you do so. During a postgraduate session for MEd students, Prof Yusef Waghid made a remark that, as MEd students, we were expected to read, write and talk. By talking he meant to engage in discussions with others and to attend conferences. As Van Wyk (2004) puts it, it is very important to put one's ideas in the public domain and get feedback from others about one's work. The thought of presenting at a conference made me uncomfortable. The first time I talked about my study was when I defended my proposal. Although I was relaxed, I was afraid to face a group of professors and doctors. After presenting my proposal, they asked me questions and I felt intimidated.

I presented my work in progress at the Education Students' Regional Research Conference (ESRRC), which was held at the University of the Western Cape in 2014. I found it very challenging and I agree with Jacobs (2012:276), who states that it can be very challenging, intimidating and confusing to present a paper in front of an audience of experienced academics, especially when it is your first time. For me, the challenging part during my presentation was to express myself and present my work in progress in front of others. Even more challenging was to be asked questions after the presentation. I felt intimidated and all I could respond was to simply say I will take note of the questions. Despite my challenges, I had a good experience and am confident that next time I attend such a conference I will be at ease.

At the time of submitting my thesis I was delighted to hear that my abstract for the 2015 South African Educational Research Association (SAERA) conference to be held at the University of the Free State in Bloemfontein had been accepted. My supervisor and I will present a paper based on

my research in October 2015, and I am looking forward to the opportunity to put my research in the public domain.

5.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I discussed the main findings of my study. I outlined the findings from my review of the literature, my analysis of Namibia Vision 2030, as well as findings from my analysis of the institutional policy documents of UNAM. I also touched on the significance and limitations of my study, possible pathway for future research and provided a reflection on my journey through this study.

To conclude this study, I repeat my main research question: How is institutional culture constructed and articulated by UNAM? To respond to this question, I analysed institutional policy documents with reference to the meanings of ‘institutional culture’ that I constructed. On the basis of my analysis I am confident to conclude that UNAM has an institutional culture and that it is reflected in its documents. The university sees itself as a developmental institution because of the social and economic development of the country.

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