

**COMMODIFICATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION? AN
ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING SECTOR
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME (ETSIP) PHASE 1 (2006-2011)
DOCUMENT OF NAMIBIA'S 2005-2020 EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

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ABSTRACT

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The conceptualization of education is an essential term which generally tends to be understood in different ways, this is especially in terms of how it is supposed to function in the society. For Namibia, the notion of education in Namibia is emphasised as an important sector to enable the country to achieve developmental goals. This is partly because of the education perspective(s) that has shaped how the concept of education is theoretically and practically understood from legislative framework to policy discourse.

Additionally, the Higher Education (HE) sector plays contributes immensely on the development that the country strives to achieve yet the sector has been faced with various problems, mainly relating to financing higher education and ensuring equal access to higher education institutions for all Namibians . As a result, the country has invested in different educational programmes and initiatives aimed at transforming the education system in the country especially through government policies such as the ETSIP document.

Using document analysis as a methodological strategy, this thesis investigates the different perspectives of education that avail in the ETSIP document in order to stress both explicit and implicit education perspectives in the Namibian education programme. First, I identified themes from the ETSIP document, particularly Phase 1 from the year's 2006 to 2011 document of ETSIP. Then analysed the ETSIP document, for instance, on the basis of how the idea of the commodification of higher education as an emerging education perspective prevails in the Namibian education system. The results demonstrate the role of education in Namibia, especially in the planning and the anticipated development of the country.

Keywords: ETSIP, commodification, education, Namibia, HE, equality, KBE.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACCRONYMS

ACTET	Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Training
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EFA	Education for All
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HE	Higher Education
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
KBE	Knowledge- Based Economy
OVC	Other Vulnerable Children
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOE	Ministry of Education
NCHE	National Council for Higher Education
NDP	National Development Plan
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NKIS	National Knowledge and Innovation System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPA	National Plan of Action
NPC	National Planning Commission

NQA	Namibia Qualifications Authority
NSFAF	Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PoN	Polytechnic of Namibia
PQA	Programmes and Quality Assurance
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TMSA	TradeMark Southern Africa
UN	United Nations
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
VTCs	Vocational Training Centres

CHAPTER 1–INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF STUDY

This Master’s thesis investigates the different contexts of education in Namibian educational policy. The broad idea of education has been of great significance worldwide this is in terms of shaping how societies have evolved, additionally, how countries aim to develop and improve the living conditions of its residents through education. As stated by Winthrop et al. (2013, 5), “education has long been accepted as a foundational component of human development and a key enabler of social progress”. The idea in this statement has been supported by an immense investment in the education sector in many countries in Southern-Africa, including Namibia. As part of the development goals and effort to improve the living conditions of people, higher education serves as an imperative component of education in many developing countries. This is also illustrated by government policies and strategic future plans of the education system for such countries in Southern Africa for instance, South Africa and Botswana. For Namibia, one document that clearly puts a picture of the government’s vision for education is the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) 2005-2020 which was drafted first in 2005. Amongst many other projects the government has proposed in response to socio-economic problems of the country, this document gives an indication of the country’s goals and hopes for education in the future (in this case, to be achieved at least by the year 2020). These are, to an extent, guidelines and strategies that need to be set out in order to improve the education sector in Namibia; accordingly, the question of whether the outlined strategies will be accomplished by 2020 is a questionable matter and certainly a concern, especially considering that it has already been 15 years since the first ETSIP document was publicly published in 2005.

According to the World Bank (1994, 13), there is proof that investment in primary and secondary education tends to bring development benefits for the country, as it directly decreases the income imbalances rather the negative externalities that arise as a result of education. Even though this is the case even in Namibia, this does not mean investment in higher education is a redundant course but rather a segment that needs to be evaluated and investigated. With that said, there has indeed been considerable support and a significant amount of prior research done regarding

education policies, including ETSIP, from many national and international agencies, such as the World Bank, as a means to financially support the programme and the initiative to provide an education for all.

Using document analysis as a methodology, this thesis scrutinizes the ETSIP document to analyze how the challenges that either boost or hinder progress in the higher education sector are addressed in the ETSIP document in the context of the Republic of Namibia. Although this research takes an approach of analysis of the document, the ETSIP document includes sections in Early Childhood Education (ECE), primary education and so on. In this study, I will focus on the section that deals with higher education, nevertheless using the other parts as background for the education sector in Namibia.

1.1. Rationale for this study

One of the main reasons that led to my interest in this study is the recent recognition of the importance of the global effect of commodification in the education sector, especially in relation to the definition of education. This commodification extends to a global scale as it has also shaped the manner in which the role of education is perceived in the 21st century. Secondly, the problems in the higher education sector affect other branches of the education sector and the development of the country since this particular sector is believed to have potential capabilities to tackle the numerous socio-economic problems in both the local communities as well as those of Namibia's the country's economy. Therefore, I perceived this as a good opportunity to investigate and evaluate how higher education is discussed in Southern Africa with a particular focus on Namibia's education policy as any policy-related move is of great significance in the interest of the country's future development.

Globally, the notion of education on its own has been a course of reform and debate over the years specifically in relation to the role it plays in individuals and societies. This debate on the role of education, however, depends on the generation in question as different generations have

different needs which education is meant to meet or meets. Subsequently, there is a need for studies that investigate existing and new perspectives of education through government policies that seek to reflect the country's investment in its education. As highlighted above, there have been some impressive improvements over the years in Namibia's education in terms of policies and strategies to address challenges in all sectors of education, including higher education. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1998) provides a definition:

“Higher education includes all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level, provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent State authorities”.

However, the definition of higher education on its own is highly contested, whether in the proclaimed developed nations or in the developing ones. This contestation takes place, especially when evaluating the role it plays in the society and ways it can be accessible to the public. Therefore, this study investigates the intangible function of higher education and its accessibility to the public as described in Namibia's legislative framework. Teichler (2004, 5) argues that the discussion on higher education tends to be narrow and focus on one or two aspects of it without stressing different components that highly contributes to the changes in higher education such as internationalization.

In line with Teichler who emphasized the aspect of internationalization as one of the silenced themes in the higher education debate, I argue the aspect of 'commodification' also falls amongst the neglected theme in the discussion of higher education, particularly in policy work. Amongst other factors, this topic arises from an observation that policy work (especially in Namibia) has focused on education at a specific linear frame whilst oblivious to potential consequences that may result from the decisions adopted in policy work, which therefore compromise the likelihood of their success such as the impact of privatization of higher education which has led

to a number of problems and concerns for access to higher education in many countries including Namibia.

Furthermore, this study arises from the ongoing global debate such as equitable access to higher education and many other challenges that contributes to problems in higher education such as funding that consequently led to a reduction in the investment in higher education in Namibia in the past few years and the impact of profit driven motives by the higher education institutions, thus making access to higher education a commodity that can be accessible by a few. The ETSIP document, therefore, plays a vital role in executing the necessary steps to ensure the country's future of education. Furthermore, it is useful for this study to evaluate how far it responds to some of the main challenges of higher education, as well as some of the 'other' aspects, such as commodification, in addition to the question regarding the purpose of higher education in Namibia, as executed in the ETSIP document.

For some time, there have been numerous debates worldwide with regards to higher education, however, debates have focused on the issue of having equal access to education in relations to Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) rising tuition fees, and an increasing amount of debts due to students loans in higher education, especially in developing countries where access to higher education is limited. According to Coughlan (2015) mass student demonstration against tuition fees and the retention of maintenance grants in the United Kingdom (London) were reported following the government's proposal to raise tuition fees and increase cuts to the teaching budget. Reform in higher education policies has been a global concern and can be evidently proven by student movements and cases of mass student protest against the increase of tuition fees in many developed and developing countries such as South Africa, USA and also in Germany which resulted in tuition fees being scrapped.

The neighbouring country of Namibia, South Africa according to Fihlani (2015) is still experiencing continuous student protest in support of 'free quality education, despite the

government's agreement to a 0% fees increment following an earlier announcement of a 10-12 % tuition fee increase for the 2016 academic year by university management. Similar demonstrations have also been reported in other countries. In Namibia, for instance, in early January 2015, when thousands of students from the Polytechnic of Namibia (PoN) threatened to boycott the institution if the registration fee was increased. In many student protests, there have been general sentiments and connotations such as 'education is a right, not a commodity' another slogan that has been used is 'education should not be a debt sentence' and many other different views that lament the problems in higher education institutions. This arguably goes to demonstrate just how Namibia does not live in isolation, as such, this study will be of considerable value in the global discussion of education, particularly regarding access to higher education and the implications of fees in higher education institutions.

1.2. A brief background of Namibia's education system

In order to understand higher education in Namibia, it is important to first highlight the country's background in its educational profile. Namibia is a beautiful country located on the southwest coast of Africa with a total population of "2.4 million in 2014 the latest total population" (World Bank Group, 2014). Like many countries in Africa, the country has a history of colonialism and an apartheid system implemented by the previous colonial rulers of Germany (1884-1915) and South Africa (1915-1990). This historical experience shaped the current socio-political conditions and policies after gaining independence in March 1990 from South Africa. According to Godana and Ashipala (2006, 12) the Namibian educational administrative system was divided according to eleven semi-autonomous political entities which were racially and ethnically connected, which exacerbated the skewed and the unequal allocation of resources, including education opportunities.

During that period, the country was highly characterized by the notorious unjust apartheid system that shaped the changes post-apartheid. To challenge some of the imbalances of the apartheid system in order to maximize equal access to education, the country then adopted policies such as *Education for All* that is designed to ensure all children have an opportunity for schooling. In addition to the Namibia Student Financial Assistance Fund (NSFAF) that was set

to support university student from poor backgrounds. To illustrate the commitment to the goal of providing equal opportunities for education in the country, according to the Ministry of Education (2016) a policy was implemented in 2013 to eliminate compulsory fees towards school development funds for free primary education. Additionally, the MoE announced plans to eradicate fees for secondary education for the 2016 school academic calendar.

It has been stated that “Namibia inherited a dual economy with four interrelated challenges: low economic growth, coupled with a shallow economic base; an inequitable distribution of wealth and income; high unemployment; and a high rate of poverty” (TradeMark Southern Africa (TMSA 2012). The idea in this statement is supported by Namibia’s education policies that have been set address these challenges in order to improve the development of the country, by first targeting current socio-economic challenges such as poverty inherited from the past injustices. Even in the National Development Plan 2030, it has been noted that through knowledge-based economy the country has a potential to increase its Growth Domestic Product (GDP) and alleviating major socio-economic burdens.

When looking specifically at the schooling system and important aspects that shape the county’s education after independence, according to World Bank (2014) the Namibian academic year begins in January and ends in December. Also, the official primary school entry age is 7 years old, at this age to 16 years old primary education is free and compulsory in accordance with the country’s institution, the system is structured in a way that primary school cycle lasts up to 7 years whilst lower secondary lasts 3 years and finally upper secondary lasts 2 years. This is generally regarded as General Education which has been stressed a lot in many government policies and as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) particularly achieving universal primary education and in order to reverse the imbalances as a result of the apartheid system (United Nations 2013).

By higher education, this study refers to the definition by UNESCO (1998) which is education that includes “all types of studies, training or training for research at the post-secondary level provided by universities or another educational establishment that is approved as institutions of

higher education by the competent State authorizes”. The public and private sector has balance share of higher education in Namibia through its institutions and access to further education are limited. “Post-secondary education is accessible through institutions of higher learning such as the University of Namibia, International University of Management, Polytechnic of Namibia, College of Education, and vocational education training centres” (Ministry of Education 2008, 3). However, the University of Namibia is the only public university. As stated by the ETSIP 2005, that Namibia has private and branches intuitions that are South African university institutions that many Namibians study at as a result of limited resources in the country.

Higher education in Namibia is also regarded as an important aspect of societal development and forms part of the ETSIP mission for the country’s future which is the reason why it is part of the National Development Plan (NDP) Vision 2030. The World Bank (1994, 15) notes higher education is the pivotal aspect of society which is usually useful for human resource development of the country and also helps improves the economy in various ways. Investment in education for Namibia is an essential move towards addressing the challenges the country faces in the sector. The Namibian government has put to place a number of policies; strategy documents as means to meet the goals asserted in the NDP 2030 (such includes ETSIP). Moreover, separate four medium-term national development programmes abbreviated NDP 1, NDP2 2010, NDP3 2007-2011 and the ongoing NDP4 2012-2017. In summary, the Ministry of Education described ETSIP as the following;

The Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) is a 15-year strategic plan formulated through recognition given to international commitments such as the Millennium Development Goals, Second Decade for the Education in Africa, Education for All Goals, SADC protocol on Education and Training, and national development plans additionally in response to national obligation of realizing Vision 2030 (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Even the NDP 2030 is primarily concerned with economic development that can be achieved through knowledge dissemination in the country. The policy document is crucial for evaluating Namibia’s government perspective on higher education and its role in the development of the

country. Various stakeholders such as the Ministry of Education board together with National Council of Higher Education (NCHE), World Bank associates, educational experts and teachers were involved in the drafting of the ETSIP policy document with the hope to formulate best solutions for the country's education and development.

These documents are interrelated and reflect the overall interest of Namibia's education goals and planned strategies for educational reform also, these documents both stress the discussion of education in the discourse and narrate the journey of the country's education history and the future it hopes for through its education transformation. The focus in this study is specifically to analyze Phase 1 of ETSIP and not all the other written documents relating to ETSIP such as Strategic Plan 2001-2006 for the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) 2005-2030, this is to minimize this study from being ambiguous and esoteric. This is certainly not to disregard the value of other published ETSIP documents but instead will focus on one document that is detailed enough to respond to the research questions and have the ability to represent the overall education programme. It is characterized by vital components that reflect the ideas prioritized in the other ETSIP documents such as challenges, goals, and strategies to improve all sectors of education.

The Namibian government in the past decade has implemented and continues to alter and propose more strategies to reform education. One particular example is the country's first National Development Plan (NDP) which according to the National Plan of Action (NPA n.d.) was set as a first step to reducing the country's poverty rate and inequality through major investment in education and learning in Namibia. As a result, the country has experienced rapid improvements in development although coupled with multiple challenges. This research is useful as it slightly reflects at how countries in Southern- Africa particularly in Namibia endeavor to address this phenomenon of commodification in education through its policies. This is because not much study has been done specifically looking at the commodification of education, which is somewhat fascinating in a country with a colonial history and great influence of neoliberalism. "For most newly independent states emerging from an era of apartheid where education was segregated and a preserve for the few, the need to approach access to education with a firm social justice agenda is often a necessity than a choice" (Tshabangu, Matakala, and Zulu 2013, 123).

This makes the global debate on education even more interesting and different in the context of Namibia as the country that has achieved progress and continues to endeavor for better results in education through its policies.

1.3. Aim of the study and the research questions

Similarly, to many developing countries in Africa, education, in general, is usually discussed in motion with the idea of its potential to improve the economic, socio-political standards of the country, therefore, serving as a vital component in the cultural and socio-economic development of the country. Thus, it is interesting to analyze how that can be possibly achieved through education policies that seek to address the problems in Namibia's higher education sector. This thesis aims to scrutinize the conceptualization of education in policy writing, whilst, stressing the underlying and emerging concepts in the education discourse that tends to be either silenced or disregarded in the discussion of equal access to education such as commodification of education.

I consider the notion of commodification to be a crucial component in today's global debate on higher education in order to question and investigate the role of education in society especially the function of higher education in the developing countries as delineated in the legislative framework. Additionally, this study aspires to support and contribute to the society by adding value to the education discourse and global goal of achieving social justice as aimed by the Namibian government and the international community, in order to ensure equality and social justice when it comes to access to education and knowledge.

This study seeks to extend the discussion of theoretical perspectives that guide the conceptual understanding and the function of education in different countries predominantly in Namibia's legislative framework, while on the other hand responding to the following research questions;

- How the concept of education is defined and discussed in the ETSIP document?
- a) What kind of perspective(s) influences the discussion of education in the policy document?

- b) Is there a specific way(s) in which higher education is mainly discussed in the document? And, are there any specific perspective(s) that are silenced?
- c) How does the policy propose to address the main problems of higher education in Namibia?
- In what ways (if any) is the process of commodification of education insinuated in the document?

The main objective of this study is to analyze how education in Namibian policy is discussed to meet the challenges the education sector aims to halt, moreover highlighting the progress of the programme thus far. Although my focal point is on the role of higher education consequently, bringing various crucial factors (especially commodification of education) into the discussion to evaluate how they are addressed in the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) 2005 to 2020 through the analysis of the first phase of ETSIP (2006 to-2011). Also, to make this study valuable is its potential to fill the gap that possibly exists on the discussion of higher education in order to stress silenced and emerging factors that potentially exist on the subject of higher education. Ball (2004, 2) points out that policy rhetoric tends to praise the role of private without heed to how that role also contributes to the silencing of crucial aspects in policy discourse. This research then explores this argument through commodification as a main factor of discussion because of recognizing the importance of evaluating ETSIP document in different perspectives including how the document address or fail to address issues of commodification in higher education. Consequently, stressing the notion of ‘silencing’ of certain themes that exists in the dialogue of higher education as part of the critical point of discussion in existing education policies which this study aims to draw attention to.

1.4. Background literature on topic

There are interesting researches that have been done on a similar topic because of different underlying rationale. These are important for this thesis in order to understand trends and the usual application of commodification in higher education. Such studies include Equitable Access to Higher Education: Trends, Commodification and quality dimensions in Namibia by Icarbord

Tshabangu, Vincent Matakala, and Africa Zulu in 2013. Their study made use of a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and interviewed a purposive sample of 20 grade 12 students, 10 university lecturers and 50 university students to attain their perspective of the topic and how it has inherited the challenges in higher education. The study revealed different perspectives from all the participants and therefore, concluded by executing how the decrease in funding for higher education hinders student, especially from lower income households, poses a threat to their opportunity to access higher education. Education has long been accepted as a foundational component of human development and a key enabler of social progress

Although the study revealed interesting points especially on the basis of students and lecturer's experiences and perspectives to the challenges they face in higher education institutions. However, this thesis identifies a minor gap that can be fulfilled by an examination of education policy frameworks, in this case, Namibia, in order to evaluate the focal points that are designed to alleviate problems in the higher education sector. This is where the ETSIP document comes in, especially that this is a profound document that does not only highlight the present and past problems in higher education but also because it depicts a vivid picture of the direction of higher education in Namibia through its declared goals and mission.

Another useful study example is by Paula Malan in 2011 called "whose ETSIP? National and local ownership of Namibia's education and training sector improvement programme" it specifically on ETSIP but it focuses on ownership perspective(s) of the document, this study is useful in order to question the representation of people in the decisions process and determine who holds the power to the decisions agreed upon. Therefore, to analyze the ETSIP document especially on how the commodification of higher education is addressed in the document is crucial in public policy work too, in order to respond to the topic of challenges that prevail in the higher education sector in Namibia.

The purpose of this study is initially to show the existing gap between education policy and theory in order to bring attention to commodification as a concept in the discourse, additionally, furthering the discussion on meeting challenges in higher education and social equality. It also provides a unique and vivid investigation that support Namibia's endeavors for transformation in higher education to ensure a legislative framework that reflects the ETSIP.

1.5. Structure of the thesis

This Master's thesis has 6 chapters. The structure of each chapter begins with a short introduction, followed by the different detailed points that characterize the chapter then a short conclusion to finalize the chapter. The first chapter introduces background information on the study, including rationale aims and research questions of the study to gain an insight of what this thesis is about. Chapter two provides detailed theoretical perspectives to education especially providing the reasons they were chosen to support this study and how they are applicable in the data. It also briefly provides the concepts that are essential to define and explain for this study. Chapter three comprises of the methodology and the motivations that led to the chosen analytical tools used in this study. Chapter four provides results of a detailed analysis of different themes and their interpretations based on my understanding of the ETSIP document. Chapter five provides results of the thematic analysis conducted on the basis of the perspectives to education as identified in the ETSIP document. Lastly, chapter six presents conclusions of the study and the implications for policy making.

CHAPTER 2- PERSPECTIVES TO EDUCATION

This chapter positions the chosen literature of education from a general perspective to particularly the commodification of education which is explored in this study. To do so, the theoretical perspectives this study chose as a focal point in response to the discussion of commodification and challenges in higher education is narrowed into four relevant perspectives to education, (a) education as provision of knowledge to humankind (b) human right to education, (c) education as means to human capital (d) expansion of capitalism and neoliberalism. They were selected by means of an examination of common recurring themes that emerged in the literature review on the discussion of commodification and challenges in higher education. Moreover, beside the literature review, the use of these themes is due to a careful observation of the ETSIP document specifically how these themes as reveal important perspectives of education and particularly higher education. It is necessary and useful to give a brief conceptual background since they are an important base of the topic and may give greater understanding to avoid the misconstruing of this study. To some degree, these theoretical perspectives are all interrelated and seemingly vital in the discourse of education, their relationship is demonstrated below.

2.1.1. Education as provision of knowledge to humankind

The concept of education in a broader sense is contested from one generation to the next in the academia due to various social and economic changes in relation to its function in the society and development. It is therefore, crucial to explore how education is defined and used in developing countries to provide knowledge for everyone. This theoretical perspective focus on the function of education as merely for providing humankind with knowledge, which places knowledge at the center of expected results. According to Brennen (1999, 6) throughout the world, the word ‘education’ is understood to originate from the Latin word meaning *educare*, which in simple terms can be explained as to draw out. In a broad sense, the meaning can be argued to not only refer to elicit creative thought and knowledge from the student, but also to draw humankind out of the predicament it is in. The idea of what it exactly means to educate and to be educated has been highly contested but usually, it tends to feature an element of knowledge dissemination and exchange which can be obtained from provided education

institutions in the country. Additionally, Kauppinen (2014, 395) points out that there are different types of knowledge that exist which their interpretation should not be confused with the term information as the two are not the same but rather two sides of the same coin.

The manner which education is defined put emphasis on the value of knowledge dissemination that can be obtained from the institutions of education such as academic knowledge students learn from higher education and training institutions. This theoretical perspective put the availability of knowledge at the center of education. “By definition, education is a transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. It is a system or practice of teaching and learning” (Tesda (n.d). This is one example of how education has been generally defined, but such a definition is most likely to be originated from various philosophies which have been argued for over centuries with the aim to find the best that will be apposite for the society such as Plato, Immanuel Kant and so forth. As a result, the concept of education has been somewhat over used and to some degree arguably vaguely because of influences such as commodification or rather commercialization of academic knowledge that has reshaped the purpose of education in today’s society. Therefore, this common hypothetical perspective is essential in order to examine how the term education is being discussed in the document as this elucidate the function of education in the country.

Finally, this theoretical perspective leads us to question whether the provision of education for this purpose alone is enough or if has to be accompanied with other theoretical perspective for it to be viable especially when there changes that influence the understanding of the purpose of education in the society. This perspective place the purpose of education as means to provide a platform that allow the dissemination of knowledge and skills to that is necessary for humankind, which tertiary and education training institutions promise to provide. Also, is this type of knowledge merely available at higher education institution? Are there any other alternative platforms that can offer knowledge? The purpose of higher education particularly university institutions is to provide knowledge and highest innovative thinking that can be used to provide solutions to society’s problems (Escotet 2012).

2.1.2. Human right to education

Education is said to be a fundamental human right yet access to higher education to the majority continues to be a questionable matter in Namibia especially when looking at access and social inequalities that hinder access to higher education for the majority. According to the UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, n.d.) the need for education is a fundamental human right and essential for the exercise of all other human rights. Therefore, from the perspective of human right approach, it is relevant to challenge whether access to higher education is indeed open to the disadvantaged groups in practice, especially to those with limited means or financial stability to provide them with adequate quality higher education. The idea that availability of higher education is public good or human right since both perspectives slightly emphasise the limitation of consumption for certain goods such education. Consequently, access to education remains ambiguous and a debate, Beinefeld (2003) argues education is not a commodity but a right. In line with Beinefeld, is essential to examine the lenses of how commodification of higher education contests this human right if it is a right. Education should function as a right than actually a commodity.

When looking at higher education, the question of whether higher education is a public good or a commodity continues to grow as a result access to particularly higher education and training institutions is limited. The relationship between the idea of human right and the contested idea of education as a public good is rooted from the question of what kind of goods are defined as public goods, meaning goods that are mainly funded by the state also, they are not exclusive. “Educationists, but also other social scientists and thinkers including economists, have recognized the public good nature: higher education constitutes a public good in itself, and also it produces public goods, to benefit simultaneously the individuals and the larger society” (Tilak 2008, 450). This is a viewpoint that has been generally stressed in many policy documents and has been highly emphasized in the discussion of education. However, this argument is questionable especially how feasible it is in practice.

The idea of education as a human right is highly exploited and further contradicts with the country’s constitution. According to Article 20 of the Namibian Constitution, all persons shall have the right to education. If this is the case, then how come access to higher education is only

limited to those with financial means and not extended freely to all? With the global rise in graduate unemployment rate and tuition fees, the importance of higher education as a result without a doubt has been questionable. Furthermore, according to UNICEF (2007) “education is not a static commodity to be considered in isolation from its greater context; it is an ongoing process and holds its own inherent value as a human right”. Education is generally viewed as a universal human right which is demonstrated by being one of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in the Post 2015. The ongoing commodification process has challenged this view and has resulted into various kinds of contradictions and ambiguities especially for those who cannot afford it. This challenge highly motivates the investigation of this study and the reason this theoretical perspective is crucial in this study.

This study emphasise that if education is actually a right then it should be freely open to everyone including the most disadvantaged groups in practice, particularly those individuals without suffice means or financial stability to provide them with adequate quality higher education. This idea is emphasized as a universal view by many researchers such as Tilak, J.B.G. 2008, additionally, policy framework of Namibia suggests the same idea for instance, the Namibia Supreme Court and Namibia’s Constitution. As such, it is essential to examine the lenses of how commodification of higher education contests this human right. If it indeed is a right, in line with McCowan (2012), I would like to stress that “higher education should be considered a right in the sense that it should be made available to all, but it should also be considered a privilege in the sense that it is a precious opportunity that must be taken advantage of as fully as possible and then used for the benefit of society” (McCowan 2012, 1).

As some have argued, does then denying this universal human right means Namibia will swap from discrimination that used to be based on race/ethnicity during apartheid to discrimination based on social status or income regardless of race or ethnicity in the modern days to cater for the elite? As Marope (2005) stress “public spending on education and training is significantly tilted in favor of the rich, with about 80% of the population which shares merely 40% of Namibia’s government subsidies”. These figures are an alarming unfair reality which contributes to the exacerbation of income inequality and slows development progress in the country. With

commodification of education in the mix, it is certainly doubtful the situation for the poor will eventually get better.

2.1.3. Education as means to human capital

The third theoretical perspective of education as means to human capital looks at the function of education differently to education from the above perspectives in the sense that the utility of education is to ensure all individuals have the skills and knowledge to use in the workforce. The relationship with education as provision of knowledge to humankind in this perspective is the expected space to utilize the knowledge individuals acquired. According to Robeyn (2006, 71) human capital perspective considers education relevant in so far as education creates skills and helps to acquire knowledge that serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as an economic production factor, that is, as a worker. This aspect of emphasis on skills for employment creation which the likes of the famous Karl Marx¹ argued against as the conflict theory due to the education system. This perspective emphasise how the education system functions to maintain the status quo by excising hegemony and power over the majority by the elite. Therefore, Majors (2013, 6) argues education is the only instrument to change power dimension in the society, in favour of the majority.

The manner which the purpose of educational institutions has been conceptualized has shifted from the time education was understood as a mechanism for learning and gathering knowledge, if that ever existed to the time where education is also seen as a human capital. Robeyn (2006, 71) human capital view considers education relevant in so far as education creates skills and helps to acquire knowledge that serves as an investment in the productivity of the human being as an economic production factor, that is, as a worker. This is of great significant and can open opportunities but it may have negative consequences that encourage and stress community that is driven by profit and money and less value on the importance of knowledge.

¹ Karl Marx is best known for his extensive writings about capitalism in the 19th century.

The idea of emphasizing on human capital is related to that of factory model of education of which according to Weebly (2013) replicates the notion that education and schools were originally built to train future workers during the industrial revolution. This very idea of factory model of education still exists even today, this has led to education being perceived as a tool for one to merely attain their career and get a high paying job whilst not prioritizing knowledge. On the other hand, Goens(n.d.), 4) argues that “education is more than simply getting a job or meeting a career goal”. Although these two conflicting ideas are important in understanding the role of higher education, when looking at the Namibian education context the country’s mission seems to be caught in between meeting national economic outcomes whilst valuing knowledge. The concept of human capital raises questions as to what exactly is the role of education in societies and how exactly is it executed in the policy documents of Namibia in this globalised world. One of the main challenges is maintain relevance in this fast and changing to ensure Namibian citizens do not fall out of the global community (Bösl 2008, 1).

Although much has been said to define education, the meaning of education has changed overtime. There are numerous reasons that affect changes in policy framework and function of higher education in society, for instance colonialism, modernization, and so on. Therefore, the policy sought to address modern social and economic issues with emphasis on increasing the economic development of the country. As Marope (2005) “the current education system is still ineffective to the extent that it renders most basic education graduates untrainable and unemployable”. This brings into perspective to whether knowledge dissemination is enough in higher education and how higher education knowledge can be used to create economic development for the country.

2.1.4. An expansion of capitalism and neoliberalism ideologies?

This is the last theoretical perspective which critically looks at the ways which the influence of higher education in practicing and using this form of education to realize goals of capitalist and neoliberal schools of thought in societies. This notion is arguable especially when questioning access to higher education institutions as limited to the minority because of unaffordable costs that tend to deter students from the poor background from having equal access to higher education.

Since the rise of the economic crisis and the market model during the late 1970s and the famous ‘Thatcherism’ period, fees have been slowly reintroduced in various countries due to the economic crisis that has led to the rise in tuition fees and an increase in the pattern of privatisation of public education around the world in the last twenty years (Beinefeld 2003).

The influence of commodification process in education has shaped its meaning to education, especially higher education institutions. Such institutions have been somewhat operated as private businesses, primarily aimed at benefiting the seller and to a lesser degree, the buyer too. In the context of Namibia, the role of the private sector with regards to the question of whether higher education is a public good or a private benefit remains a question. Academics such as Ball argues against the privatisation of education that is implicitly due to neoliberal perspectives. “The increasing use of ‘private’ as a means of delivery of public services, including education is risky and should be done with consideration to the negative impacts it entails” (Ball 2004, 2). This viewpoint warns against the risk of privatization especially if the government truly reflects on meeting the needs of the general society and research has shown how that negatively affect those from the previously disadvantaged background.

Historically, higher education was designed purely to benefit the minority groups. This led to the application of neoliberal thinking in higher education originating from various main purposes within capitalism particularly to provide higher level work skills for future top professional positions whilst essentially producing the belief system that promotes the culture and lifestyle of the elite (Radice 2013, 411). The purpose of education is to extend and practice ideologies of capitalism and neoliberalism in the society in this perspective as it designed to provide merely for the minority. This is demonstrated by the increasing use of the private sector and the privatization of education which is the components of these two schools of thoughts that to some degree extends to the notion of education as ‘commodity’ or access to higher education as a private opportunity.

Also, it should be noted that Kauppinen (2014) stressed that in a capitalist society, commodification is not a strange phenomenon as the society functions and responds to capitalist means that include choices that come from neoliberalism. Although it is debatable whether

Namibia does or does not qualify to be listed as one of the capitalist society. Nonetheless, it is undeniable that the country does pose characteristics of a capitalist society based on its history and neoliberalism practices like many developing countries in Africa and in a globalised community.

As mentioned before, in some way or the other all the above-mentioned aspects of the concept of education have a direct link amongst each. For instance, the human capital perspective to education is linked to both the concept of education as ‘commodity’ and also capitalism and neoliberalism expansion, which in this case in my view has a close association with economic liberalism. “Economic liberalism is, basically, the belief that states ought to abstain from intervening in the economy, and instead leave as much as possible up to individuals participating in free and self-regulating markets” (Thorsen and Lie 2006, 8). The debate on which system works best between minimum states intervention in the economy or full states intervention in the economy has been a case of both good and bad in many countries. In Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan better known as the Asian Tigers economy, for instance, full states intervention in the economy was a success yet still coupled with some difficulties but there was an improvement in terms of development.

Ross (1973, 103) emphasized that in developing countries higher education shifted from an academic concept of education which used put emphasis on knowledge dissemination to improve national development in order to compete with the rest of the world. It is quite a norm for many countries in the south to replicate systems that have been adopted in the developed regions with the hope to make them work in their context. Namibia can be said to be amongst those countries that are in search for a panacea that will allow the country to reach desired economic prosperities, even if it means adopting harmful neoliberal practices. The signs of neoliberal activities are suggested by the emphasis by Namibia’s policy framework such as the NDP to use private in order to attain economic growth. “The NDP, which embodies the goals of Vision 2030, sets out the macroeconomic growth targets and emphasizes the role of the private sector as an engine of growth” (Ministry of Education 2012-2017). The move towards more privatisation and the emphasis on society controlled by the private sector as the engine for economic growth in policy planning place the education system on the verge of commodification that aspires to

reinforce neoliberalism and neo-capitalism ideas in higher education since there is so much reliance on the private sector.

2.2. Emerging perspectives and key concept(s):

In the previous literature, I have identified four theoretical perspectives to education that are relevant to this study. However, as a continuation I propose two more perspectives that I strongly suggest are connected to the research topic in the context of Namibia that is necessary to scrutinize in order to analyze the ETSIP document. Although, these concepts may have multiple definition and interpretations but for the sake of narrowing them to correspond with the research questions and data, they will be discussed in the interest that I have understood them by means of how they apply particularly in this study. These two concepts are commodification and Knowledge-Based Economy, they are already discussed in the previous chapters especially in relation to some of the theoretical perspectives and the manner that explains their relevance in the context of Namibia's education and policy framework.

2.2.1. Defining 'commodification'

In a deeper sense, the definition of commodification is complex, although it has been debated by academics of different fields especially in sociology it is certainly not a new term but in fact its dates back to the famous classical Karl Marx's (1818–1883) commodity fetishism (which also can be traced back to Adam Smith and his doubts of the markets and competition. The commodification process can be argued to refer to a process of changing what regarded as good into a commodity that can be bought and sold to the public. The steps of which this process takes place has been discussed over time but as for Gottdiener (2000) "commodification is deployed in two main ways; either to refer to the displacement of use values by exchange values or more generally to describe how consumer culture becomes embedded in daily lives through an array of subtle process". Although there are various definitions of the term, in this research commodification of higher education is discussed and understood under the latter definition.

Based on the frequent use of the term nowadays, I like to believe that the effect of commodification is more relevant in today's society than when the concept was introduced in the 19th century, for Namibia it is said that commodification impact threatens the public sector in

many ways including in higher education. The “Commodification has continued to threaten state in higher education thereby pressurizing the public higher education institutions to privatize their business” (Tshabangu, Matakala and Zulu 2013, 125). The process of commodification challenges the role of education and its meaning in the society. Furthermore, the manner of which education nowadays is being discussed has been associated with commodification in many ways, whereas students have shifted to be generally viewed as consumers. According to Kauppinen (2014, 394), education is no longer seen mainly as a way to pursue socially valuable knowledge, but rather a process wherein value is determined by how much direct benefit it will bring to the student-consumer. The Namibian government has formulated and implemented education policies that sought to pursue socially valuable knowledge and commodification of education unconsciously challenges that goal as government spending on education can be argued to decrease. Although the state has put in place social policies and funds to aid the poor in accessing higher education, privatization compromises the sustainability of those changes.

It is noted that privatization of education has negative consequences that should not be taken for granted. “...The increasing use of ‘the private’ as a means of delivery of public services, including education. Current political and policy wisdom stress, almost exclusively, the benefits of such moves, ignoring, almost entirely, the apparent and possible cost” (Ball 2004, 2). By critiquing policy document on higher education, this may reveal the apparent and possible cost that may have dire consequences on the policies such as Namibia’s Vision 2030 and ETSIP aimed at achieving social justice and alleviate poverty. It can be argued that the commodification of higher education is a strategy to widen inequality and maintain the status quo by separating the ‘haves’ and the ‘have not’ through education. This view was argued by Karl Marx on the conflict perspective that stresses the disruptiveness of education (). It is important, therefore, to investigate how commodification applies in ETSIP so as to establish steps to either prevent or manage commodification in the higher education sector and ensuring the goals and vision for ETSIP are realized.

2.2.2. Knowledge-Based Economy (KBE)

The second concept that is useful to note because of the role it plays in understanding the possible future of education in Namibia, is the knowledge-based economy. According to ETSIP

(2007), the main use of education is to be a catalyst for a knowledge-based economy that at least by 2020 can be realized. In analytical terms, knowledge-based economy is defined as “production and services based on knowledge-intensive activities that contribute to an accelerated pace of technical and scientific advance, as well as rapid obsolescence. Therefore, knowledge alone plays a vital role in the implementation of KBE in order to make use of the intrinsic and learned knowledge. “The key component of a knowledge economy is a greater reliance on intellectual capabilities than on physical inputs or natural resources” (Powell and Snellman 2004, 199). This view emphasizes the main characteristics of the term KBE. For Namibia, this move is highly motivated by the mission to improve the country’s labor skills through increased employment opportunities and many other economic developments related activities.

Additionally, Juma and Awara (2006) describe the term ‘knowledge-based economy’ as a combination of human capital, innovation and technology that was derived from the realization of how knowledge and technology play a vital role in economic growth and education. To emphasise this view, the close relationship between education and this term is because of the knowledge dissemination and its use in the economy. It is because of how education can enable the realization of KBE especially with regards to employment, innovation, and knowledge for many developing countries.

It is noted that the key to KBE is as a result of the lack of skilled labour in the country is due to. “A shortage of skilled labour is one of the most significant barriers to Namibia’s effort to become a knowledge economy” (Pillay 2010, 123). Whether this is the best move or no, it is still interesting to scrutinize how the ETSIP document describes activities and tasks that will be taken to meet this goal. Many leading Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) economies are known to have adopted this approach to allow themselves to develop and increase its economic growth, an example is Finland which is amongst the leading countries in education worldwide. With that said, it is of great significant to look at this perspective in the context of developing countries such as Namibia.

In summary, the connection between these two concepts and the theoretical perspectives is that both these concepts reflect on theoretical literature above and the data. For instance, KBE focuses on the economy and the production of skilled labour which can arguably directly reflect on the human capital perspective which to some extent seeks economic prosperity through education. Also, the commodification concept touches on education as human right perspective in the sense privatization can compromise access to education to be limited to those with financial means. This is similar to neoliberal and neo-capitalist perspective which critics the function of higher education as the preservation of these school of thoughts and elitism.

To conclude, the understand very roots of the concept and how it has changed over time particularly in Namibia is important for further understanding especially on how the concepts are used and interpreted in this study. Thus, it imperative to first look briefly at some of the various schools of thoughts that have been articulated by various scholars on how they have defined the notion of education and transformed the manner which education has been conceptualized over the time.

In this chapter, I have explained the four theoretical perspectives that support this study, as the continuation I have identified two concepts that I have used to analyze further the ETSIP document. The conceptualization of education can be done in multiple ways to influence higher education a great deal by the manner of which the function of education is illustrated in policy documents. The chosen theoretical perspectives are different as each seeks to provide a unique understanding and explanation of the purpose of education. They were chosen mainly because of their ability to offer crucial and unique perspectives that have been the raised in the discussion of education in Namibia and the overall Southern African Development Community (SADC).

CHAPTER 3- METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will briefly discuss my methodological approach and the specific data analysis approach used in this study. The selected method is document analysis, therefore, the strengths and weaknesses of this method is briefly explored in this chapter in order to elucidate reasons that led to document analysis as a methodological approach for this thesis.

3.1. Selection of document analysis as an overall methodological approach

Because this study focuses on the ETSIP document, document analysis simultaneously became a perfect methodological approach that will allow this study to examine and analyse the ETSIP document. Using Bowen (2009) as the primary source to support document analysis as a qualitative research method chosen for this thesis, especially since his studies reveal extensive perspectives about this research method will allow this study to fully respond to the research questions with the provided data. According to Bowen (2009, 27) document analysis is a systematic process that involves evaluating and reviewing printed or electronic documents for qualitative research purposes. In this study, the ETSIP Phase 1 (2006-2011) is reviewed and evaluated on the basis of a document analysis.

Document analysis was chosen as an appropriate method for this thesis mainly because of its ability to allow this thesis to investigate the topic well, especially in order to best answer my research questions. Moreover, I chose this method after I had done the literature review on it to get an idea of how scholars have conducted similar studies. A good example that is slightly similar to this study, is a research conducted by Gregory T. Owen in 2014 on the background policy check in higher education in one of the universities in the United States. The research was guided by conceptual framework and made use of a blended methodology of interviews and document analysis for data collection. However, in my study I apply merely a document analysis in order to “to categorize, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents whether in the private or public domain” (Payne and Payne (2004). This is precisely what I aim to do with the ETSIP document of Namibia to respond to

challenges of higher education and commodification. This does not mean merely a basic analysis but rather an extensive analysis which involves reading and re-reading the document to fully understand it, whilst, paying attention to every aspect of the document, from a language point of view to emphasized and subtle perspectives that can be revealed in the ETSIP document.

In my view, this research method is perfect in order to gain insight of the education policy framework of Namibia that enables researchers such as myself to development academic and empirical arguments based on public documents. Bowen (2009, 27) state that “document analysis also requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge”. Additionally, as a qualitative method in social science, the use of document analysis as a methodological approach that is inexpensive and most importantly, will most likely respond directly to the research topic and question of this study differently than any other method would have.

The method adopted for this study is aimed at gaining full understanding of Namibia’s ETSIP document and hopefully revealing government’s perspective and endeavor for the future of higher education in the country. Using Bowen (2009) as the primary source to support this According to Bowen (2009) in most cases document analysis it is mixed with other different qualitative research methods through triangulation process. This is an advantage for authenticity and attaining more data which document analysis may not fulfill such as different perspectives of individuals that can be attained via in-depth interviews with participants which can make the study a lot more solid than it maybe would have been. Although triangulation will not be functional in this study, it is still good to note.

Although the document analysis approach is viable and is characterized by strengths that favours this study, it is important to note the weaknesses of this methodological approach. For instance, documents are not always primarily produced for research purposes, hence, they cannot always satisfy meet the expectations and respond to the research questions posed by different readers. Bowen (2009, 31) state document analysis may have some limitations such as being insufficient in terms of details since they are not produced primarily for research purposes. Additionally, to

Bowen, many documents tend to be biased as they may represent distorted information that is either in favor of the writer or the purpose of the document. As a result, this makes the credibility of the document to be questionable. In the case of ETSIP document, for instance, since it is government produced the document can possibly be biased and to serve a particular political agenda.

This is the part where research ethics is essential, in order to demonstrate the credibility and to adhere to the research ethics as expected for a social science thesis. Document analysis is no different as it emphasise the use of code of ethics whilst making sure that there is a link between research questions and the methodology applied for this study whilst noting. "Like all research methods, document research method requires rigorous adherence to research ethics" (Ahmed 2010, 11). These will include double checking authenticity and credibility of the documents which will be explained more on the section of data validation. Since ETSIP is a public publication supported by the World Bank, the copy of the main document is available on World Bank Group website (under project and operation) and many other government websites of Namibia such as the MoE. The treatment of data in this study is done with careful respect for research ethics and without the intention to harm or distort policy documents and the efforts by the Namibia's education sector in their education transformation. This thesis is of great value and its data can be trusted to be reliable, therefore, require high respect for ethics.

One of the ways to know if this study has met its objectives is by evaluating the validity of findings especially as to how they answer the research questions and respond particularly to the research topic. The chosen research strategy for this study is done with careful understanding to its ability and somewhat inability to respond to the data and the research questions.

3.2. Methods of analyzing the ETSIP document

The methods of data analysis applied in this study have been done to correspond with document analysis and the data. The first analysis method chosen is coding. According to Saldana (2008) codifying is done through arranging things in a specific systematic order so as to make easier to identify them and be part of a system to categorize. Special highlight will be categorized so that

they are easily identified and summarized in the process of data analysis. Furthermore, thematic analysis will be applied too as a main data analysis method in order to identify themes that avail from the data which will be presented as perspectives of education in the ETSIP document in chapter 4.

Braun and Clarke (2006, 35) state that there are six steps that are popular in conducting a thematic analysis namely:

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing the report

Before following the thematic analysis procedures, I identified the themes from the ETSIP document then analysed the ETSIP document on the basis of the perspectives of education that were already identified in the literature chapter (in chapter two). These themes that I had identified prior to the analysis of the document from the literature review and akin to this study were education as; defined as provision of knowledge to humankind, as human right, as human capital and lastly as means of capitalism and neo-liberalism ideologies. I will evaluate these themes in order to double-check if they are present and how they are discussed in the ETSIP document (so as to evaluate if there are any 'other' themes that avail in the document) also, how are they relevant in the discussion of education in Namibia.

My intended plan was to follow the steps precisely as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) from the very first step of reading and transcribing data to the last step of reporting themes in order to produce structured and good quality themes that reflects the ETSIP document. Because of the data and the research questions it was important for me to follow the steps especially the steps precisely as Braun and Clarke advised. The first step Braun and Clarke state the first step was to familiarize myself with the data, which happened very natural as I read the document multiple times. Therefore, by first reading the document to grasp understand its position and existence whilst jotting down some of the ideas and points that avail as I familiarize myself with the data.

Then, the second step the generation of codes. I started by generating codes from each sentence to sentence of the document to then paragraph to paragraph of the entire document as a result, highlighting and making notes of words chosen in the document and how they are used. The following paragraph is an example of analysis and generation of codes will be generated in this study;

Tertiary education and training institutions will critically review their existing graduate programmes and support infrastructure for research against improvements in enrolments, dropout rates, admissions from disadvantaged groups and regions, perceived weaknesses of students and staff, against fiscal and academic sustainability, and the human resource requirements of the labour market over the ETSIP time period and beyond (ETSIP 2007, 43).

This paragraph shows the first duties that the tertiary education and training institutions are expected to fulfill secondly, the existing graduate programmes are in need for reviewing and support by the tertiary education and training institutions and lastly, some of the factors that need assessment in the higher education sector hence, ETSIP will place emphasis on the analysis and evaluation of such codes that leads to themes that respond to the research questions. According to Braun and Clarke (2006, 9) thematic analysis is a widely used method for analyzing data in qualitative research because of its flexibility and ability to allow the researcher to capture meaning and patterns in the data set and produce them as themes. Therefore, the data which in this study is the ETSIP document is analysed in line with the characteristics of thematic analysis as a method.

The third step of Braun and Clark identified is the search and the identification of themes. In this step I used codes to search for potential themes within the data and grouping them according to the recurring codes subset of codes that simultaneously results to the generation of each potential theme. The fourth step of reviewing themes, using a thematic map I had created which consisted of different codes and subset of codes that were linked into each potential theme. Moving to the next step, the data codes were linked with their themes with the constant renaming of themes in order to polish and double check if they are in line with the overall story of analysis which is essential according to Braun and Clarke 2006. The thematic analysis as an analytical tool

enabled me to read the ETSIP document through different perspectives which themes were constructed and identified.

This chapter has provided detailed information of the methodology and the analytical procedures selected for this study. By providing motivations and viewpoints that sought to support the selection of the methodological route chosen for this thesis, this chapter explains methodological strategies chosen specifically how they correspond with the data and the research questions of this study. In the two following chapters I will present the results of my analysis.

CHAPTER4- THEMES IDENTIFIED IN THE ETSIP DOCUMENT

This chapter presents my analysis of the first Phase of the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) 2006-2011 document of Namibia. Such analysis is based on the methodology explained in the previous chapter to illustrate ways which such analysis and concluding findings have been gathered. The data analysis chapter is therefore important in highlighting overall findings of the ETSIP document and further the analysis of the data in order to understand this study's conclusions. As mentioned above, the data for this analysis was drawn from mainly the ETSIP (2006-2011) phase 1 document as a primary data source that data was extracted from whilst reference of policy plans and other relevant documents produced by the central government, regional government development partners and other stakeholders are referred to in brief.

The first phase of ETSIP comprises of detailed explanation of challenges, achievements, goals and objectives for each component noted in education. Knowing that there are many themes and codes that can avail from the document especially that it is detailed and 155 pages long therefore, I will try to focus specifically on those themes and codes that I consider to be closely related or rather directly relevant in this study. Also, it is crucial to note that the identified codes may vary but are important in the formation of the themes.

First of all, the ETSIP document is written with strategic objectives that executes the target focus for education in Namibia. This is executed by the table below called Strategic Objectives by Sub-Programme and Order of Priority that is taken directly without any alteration from the ETSIP document.

Strategic Objectives by Sub-Programme and Order of Priority

Sub-programme	Policy Objectives				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Early Childhood Development & Pre-Primary	Delivery capacity and management	Quality / effectiveness	Efficiency of resource mobilization and	Equity and access	

Education			utilization		
General Education	Quality / effectiveness	Equity and access	Equity and access Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization	Delivery capacity and management	Development relevance and Responsiveness
Vocational Education and Training	Delivery capacity and management Development	Quality / effectiveness	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Equity and access
Tertiary Education and Training	Delivery capacity and management	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Quality / effectiveness	Equity and access	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization
Adult Education and Lifelong Learning	Delivery capacity and management	Delivery capacity and management	Quality / effectiveness	Equity and access	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization
HIV and AIDS	Delivery capacity and management	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Equity and access	Quality / effectiveness	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization
ICTs in education	Delivery capacity and management	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Quality / effectiveness	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization	Equity and access
Knowledge creation and innovation	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Delivery capacity and management	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization	Quality / effectiveness	
Capacity Development	Delivery capacity and management	Quality / effectiveness	Development relevance and Responsiveness	Efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization	Equity and access

Table 1, (ETSIP 2007, 5)

The above table shows the focus of ETSIP on each education sector. The policy objective has five priorities and focus for implementing ETSIP. The first priority is to delivery capacity and management; secondly, quality and effectiveness; thirdly, the efficiency of resource mobilization and utilization; the forth is development relevance and responsiveness; lastly, providing equity and access. It seems these priorities were as a result of the research and findings from the previous ETSIP documents.

Also, I noticed a trend of reoccurring codes in the document that have been repeated a number of times and play an important role to stress factors that contributes to Namibia's education focus. Below are some of the main generated codes and the number of times they are mentioned in the ETSIP document.

- Skills –133 times
- Employment–18 times
- Marginalized – 18 times
- Disadvantaged groups 17 times
- Resources – 111 times
- Knowledge creation - 22 times
- Knowledge –184 times
- HIV and AIDS – 98 times
- Gender- 25 times.

I also included the number of times such codes have been mentioned in the document. This was done in order to emphasise their importance in the ETSIP document. Indeed, this was done while taking consideration that in some cases they are mentioned for other purposes for instance, 'will' is repeated at least 920 times in the document. On the basis of this study I viewed it as a necessity to emphasize assurance and urgency but this certainly does necessary not mean that every time 'will' is mentioned it is in relation to this purpose but it could also be just as a future tense.

The same applies with the word 'must' which is mentioned at least 30 times in the document, which can be interpreted to stress urgency and emphasis on the responsibilities by different role-players. For instance, "quality pre-primary delivery *must* result in better literacy and numeracy levels in primary schools" (ETSIP 2005, 15). Moreover, "Namibia *must* get much better returns for its considerable investment in education" 2005, 18). These sentences seem to also suggest the expectation from the action of investment and action taken as a result of the investment in education.

4.1. Identified themes

Using the thematic analysis method, the following themes were identified as some of the crucial themes that I produced on the basis of discussion of education in the ETSIP document. Of course, there were many other themes and perspectives that can be argued to come out of the document but for the interest of this study, the focus is narrowed down to the themes that directly/indirectly respond to the research questions and the overall study.

4.1.1. Economic growth

The first theme identified in the ETSIP document was economic growth. This theme put emphasis on how the ETSIP document accentuate improving factors of the country's economy that needs improvement such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Thus, economic activity is somewhat part of the main rationale for ETSIP in the attempt of achieving the goal of a Knowledge-based economy in Namibia at least by 2030. There are many paragraphs in the ETSIP document that stress the use of education in the country to improve shortfalls of economic activities and growth by comparing annual progress which the education programme aims to improve.

“GDP growth accelerated to 3.5% in 2003 and 6% in 2004 but levelled back to 3.2% in 2005. This pace of growth falls far short of getting Namibia on a steady path toward the ranks of high-income Knowledge-Based Economies by 2030” (ETSIP 2007,1).

The utility of ETSIP document stress the manner which the education programme can help rectify economic problems through a transformation in the education sector, it is not surprising that there is an emphasis on the economic difficulties that the document aims to address since the economic goal of ETSIP is genuinely clear. Therefore, it is reiterated many times that the role of education is seen as means to meet the goals of improving the country's economic growth and development through ETSIP and Vision 2030. This notion has been demonstrated by the investment in the primary and secondary education since the country's independence.

Since independence, there has been a strong political commitment by the government to improve primary and secondary education. This is evident of the pivotal role education is geared to play in the realisation of Vision 2030. Education is expected to play a central role in accelerating economic growth and social development (ETSIP 2007, 17).

This theme is expressed as essential in the development of the country yet it is emphasized that economic growth alone is not enough but rather it is depended on amongst other factors that according to ETSIP are just as pivotal in the development of the country.

“Economic activity, depend on knowledge, skills, and competencies associated with abstract reasoning, analysis, language and communication skills, and the applications of science and technology” (ETSIP 2007, 17).

These factors can be achieved through education and its ability to supply knowledge, skills, and technology as arguably discussed in the first phase of ETSIP document. Economic growth is therefore, expected to improve along with the country’s education position through ETSIP, the characteristics of this theme value different aspect of the economic growth in influencing the changes that are expected to be provided by the implementation of the ETSIP in Namibia.

4.1.2. Employment and skilled labour

Based on the emphasis made on the importance of ETSIP in potentially increasing skilled labour and employment in the country, this is the second theme I identified in the document. For instance, the ETSIP document stresses the reason that led to the production of the ETSIP in Namibia as a result of target skills and employment of the country, “the first phase of ETSIP will *strengthen the quality, effectiveness, and efficiency of the general education and training system*. This strategic sector goal is critical for ensuring an enduring supply of candidates that will take up opportunities for senior secondary education and training, tertiary education and training, and lifelong learning” (ETSIP 2007, 4).

As part of the economic aspects in ETSIP document, several paragraphs point out that one of the key impediments to productivity growth and the country's employment rate is the shortage of skilled workers of various levels and types. These seem to be two sides of the same coin;

Employers note the shortage of qualified artisans and technicians as a critical constraint on increasing their productivity. At the higher levels, there is a shortage of managers (especially business managers), engineers, medical doctors, researchers, and others required to provide technical leadership in the country's quest to intensify the creation and application of knowledge to improve productivity (ETSIP 2007,1).

The document identified problems that led to the inefficiency of education systems in the workforce due to its inability to produce skilled labour, one of them according to ETSIP is the lack of senior secondary education. The ETSIP document stresses the need to challenge and provide solutions to address the problems due to lack of secondary education which is mentioned as;

“The lack of senior secondary education has negative implications on job creation, self-employment and results in a lack of skilled labour” (ETSIP 2007, 23).

By targeting senior secondary education, which according to ETSIP is an important and challenging sector in education, the steps to solve the problems in this sector is as a result a necessity to halt the negative implications in the country's job creation goal. The role of education in this aspect is therefore, to enable students to have skills that can increase the number of skilled workers and increase job creation in the country. ETSIP view education as a key solution to these challenges which can be changed by the results of the effect of ETSIP, furthermore, the document stresses the ripple effects as a result of unskilled labour and how that challenges Namibia's endeavors to compete economically with the rest of the world.

A pressing challenge for Namibia is to break the bottleneck of inadequate outputs at senior secondary level. Shortage of skilled labour acts as one of the most

significant brakes to economic growth. It limits the capacity to apply knowledge and technology in production, constrains productivity growth and hampers Namibia's international competitiveness (ETSIP 2007, 18).

For ETSIP this skills shortage and constraint in economic growth slows down the pace of development for the country and can be rectified by a major transformation in the education programmes such as ETSIP. Also, to solve the issues of insufficient skilled labor in the country, ETSIP suggest alternative measures to achieve the goal of skilled workers.

“The final priority for the first phase of ETSIP, based on the implementation of the earlier measures, is to diversify and expand the output of skilled workers through a variety of means, including stimulation of private training markets” (ETSIP 2007, 29).

This is expected to be done through reform in the Vocational Training Centres (VTCs) for the output of skilled workers and better employment opportunities. The role of ETSIP is described as stepping stone towards attaining the goals of improved of skilled labour and certainly a decrease in the country's unemployment rate in the near future.

4.1.3. Responsibility and Accountability

“Higher Education and its technical advisor are responsible for the establishment of the NCHE and its secretariat. The technical advisor has the explicit responsibility to support the capacity for the NCHE and its secretariat until early” (ETSIP 2007, 40).

This third theme was identified in the ETSIP document because of recognizing how much the document draws attention to the expected roles and duties given to role players in different parts of the education sector. This is done by stressing the need for the appointed to act according to expectations on the assigned duties. These are the government departments, tertiary institutions

and all the working staff involved in the education sector which their performance is said to expect to be improved through the staff development programme. For instance;

“The NCHE will have responsibility for overseeing implementation of the staff development programme through the Coordinating Committee. The management of each tertiary institution, including academic deans, would be responsible for meeting the targets established in the overall plan for each institution” (ETSIP 2007, 46).

The institutions have their own set of goals and tasks set for its management but they seem to be expected to be in line with the goals of ETSIP. The roles for each sector are made clear from one sector to subsector to illustrate the expectations and tasks for the role players in the education. To demonstrate this, the ETSIP document points out how each department can contribute to the transformation within its own department by ensuring accountability and adherence to expected obligations provided.

“NIED is responsible for establishing norms and standards for teachers. Teacher licensing is the responsibility of NIED and General Services. The cluster system and teacher advisory service is the responsibility of PQA and the regions, as is the preparatory work for the teacher incentives system” (ETSIP 2007, 21).

Going back to table 1 above, the first phase of ETSIP demonstrate the importance of responsiveness as one of the target focus on education sectors by one of the priorities called Development relevance and responsiveness, this place the value on responsiveness as a necessity to allow ETSIP to be successful. This identified theme is emphasized throughout the ETSIP document openly as a point of great value to ensure the implementation of ETSIP by 2020.

4.1.4. Education for All (EFA)

The forth interesting theme identified in the ETSIP document emphasize the importance of having equal opportunities for education in Namibia hence, being one of the goals of the

programme. By equal opportunities ETSIP emphasises on ensuring the improvement of opportunities, for all Namibians to have access to education, which means targeting special groups of people who have limited chances to education such as the poor and the disabled. An illustrative paragraph from the ETSIP document states;

The possibility of attaching pre-primary classes to existing schools needs to be urgently explored. At present, ECD centres may include a notional pre-primary group, but access to good quality, pre-primary schooling is mainly limited to wealthier parents who can afford the fees to pay qualified teachers, further exacerbating inequalities. In general, expansion of preprimary classes will target poor communities. Particular categories of children identified as having needs not currently addressed are OVCs, and children from marginalised groups such as the San, the Ovahimba and the Riemsvasmaker communities and disabled children (ETSIP 2007, 14).

The focus on good quality ECD centres to be available and accessed by all is stressed in the document especially that Early Childhood Development, Pre-primary education and General Education are valued as crucial component of a child's education in the document. In addition, ETSIP acknowledges the challenges faced by students of poor background and works towards a pro-poor programme that specifically targets benefiting children who are prone to limited opportunities to education due to socio- economic problems such as poverty in the country hence, targeting the poorest regions to provide schools that can reduce the number of children without access to quality education in the poor regions. Still in the effort for education for all, for ETSIP realizing that goal means prioritizing inclusive education and ensuring to include the physically disabled learners in the process of education.

“...Education to learners with special needs and implementation of inclusive education as well as appropriate support for orphans and other vulnerable children. Schools in the poorest communities of Namibia are least provided” (ETSIP 2007, 25).

Furthermore, ETSIP recognizes the importance of providing financial support to learners from disadvantaged school that beats the odds and attain good grades regardless of their circumstances. The quota system seems to ensure that deserving learners' probability to have access to education is guaranteed.

“The keys to success will be the development and rigorous application of selection criteria for admission based on a quota system for learners from disadvantages schools. It is envisaged that scholarships will be provided for qualifying poor learners, and the parameters of this system will be designed” (ETSIP 2007, 24).

This also means the application selection criteria, especially in tertiary institutions will be monitored to guarantee entry for students from a disadvantaged background. This identified theme proves to demonstrate the role of ETSIP can play through its initiatives that support equal opportunity access to education in Namibia.

4.4.5. HIV and AIDS

By this theme, the ETSIP document indicates the role of education as a major factor that can play a significant role in the fight against the Human Immunodeficiency Virus infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) epidemic in the country. This theme looks at steps which the ETSIP document plans to address its social problems of HIV/AIDS in the country through education, according to ETSIP (2007, 7) since independence HIV and AIDS issues have been a critical significant aspect within education programmes. This is also shown by the emphasis that is placed on the ETSIP document on different measures aimed at fighting HIV/AIDS in the country through educational programmes that are designed to spread knowledge and awareness on the disease. HIV/AIDS is a concern in the education sector as a result of how it, directly and indirectly, impact on the Ministry of Education and the goals of this department especially with regards to children accessing education. Therefore, this place the MoE in the position of being responsible for the steps towards curbing HIV/AIDS as indicated in the ETSIP document;

It has a defined duty to ensure that all children receive the necessary support so that they can benefit from education and training. This support must address all issues that conspire to keep children infected or/and affected by HIV and AIDS out of the classroom. This component of the programme addresses these issues, which range from advocacy, through feeding and related support programmes to counseling service (ETSIP 2007, 79).

ETSIP also ensures that additional measures will be taken to respond to HIV/AIDS as it hinders the education sector from attaining the goals set the country's education and training. The strategies look into benefiting those affected or infected with HIV/AIDS especially who are in vulnerable positions.

“With the HIV and AIDS pandemic, efforts will be made to provide education and psychosocial support to orphans and Other Vulnerable Children (OVC). Evident from this is the need for relief teachers especially in cases where many teachers are incapacitated due to long illnesses as a result of HIV and AIDS” (ETSIP 2007, 25).

Furthermore, as part of the strategic plans to curb the disease in the country, the education sector according to ETSIP will play a significant role to provide information and awareness as from early years of education to adulthood.

General education provides an effective vehicle to ensure that important social messages, e.g. HIV and AIDS information are learned. Secondary education, in particular, has many positive externalities, such as improved health, reduced infant mortality and better family planning, HIV and AIDS prevention, and enhanced social participation. More and better secondary education for girls contributes directly to the empowerment of women (ETSIP 2007, 17).

HIV and AIDS proves to be a significant component of ETSIP that require attention and immediate solutions as described in the document, the role of education plays a vital role in the aspired hopes for the diseases' elimination to allow citizens to have quality education that benefits them economically and to ensure equal opportunities to education regardless of HIV and AIDS status.

4.2. Higher Education

This distinctive theme looks at specifically the relevance of higher education in the ETSIP document, demonstrating subthemes identified within the tertiary education and training chapter in the document. The discussion of higher education focused in the ETSIP document was narrowed down to priority components based on different strategic objectives of ETSIP. The chapter is quite brief and discussed under the subtopic called Tertiary education and training, the role of tertiary education and training according to ETSIP is mainly to produce knowledge and skilled workers that can help with the development of the country, for instance;

Tertiary education and training contribute to development in multiple ways. It informally sets quality standards for the entire education system. It produces high level technical and managerial personnel required for economic growth and competitiveness. It generates knowledge workers and researchers essential to knowledge-driven development. It provides enterprises with technical support and partnership to spur knowledge-based innovation (ETSIP 2007, 37).

The section on higher education in the ETSIP document focuses on four strategic objectives that provide important components that the ETSIP plan to address in the higher education sector. This priority components list is taken directly from the ETSIP document since it summarizes challenges and strategic objectives that ETSIP identified as a focal point in order to reform and improve the country's higher education level.

Priority Components

Strategic Objective A: Strengthen institutional capacity of tertiary education

Component 1: Develop the NCHE

Component 2: Implement the Teachers' Education Colleges Act

Strategic Objective B: Enhance relevance and responsiveness of tertiary education

Component 3: Develop and operationalise the teacher education reform programme

Component 4: Build capacity for graduate studies and research

Strategic Objective C: Improve the quality of tertiary education and training system

Component 5: Develop pre-entry, foundation programmes and student support

Component 6: Improve the effectiveness and productivity of academic staff

Component 7: Introduce quality assurance systems

Strategic Objective E: Mobilise financial resources and use them efficiently

Component 8: Diversify financing sources

Component 9: Efficient resource use

(ETSIP 2007, 38).

It is noted though that only some of the activities are covered in the first phase of ETSIP and the others will be dealt with in the subsequent phases of ETSIP, at the same time the first phase of ETSIP illustrates the challenges and strategic goals that are prioritized as a whole in the education discourse in Namibia. All the above-mentioned components are interrelated and reflect the goals of ETSIP in higher education, to demonstrate this I have put them into themes below to give a sense of how they are elucidated in the document.

4.2.1. Teacher development

The ETSIP document strongly suggest the need for focusing on teacher-related matters for instance, component number two (to implement the Teachers' Education Colleges Act) this is inherited by Act Number 25 of 2003 which according to ETSIP will enable legal practices and allow umbrella body such as Advisory Council on Teacher Education and Training (ACTET) to fulfill its primary functions and responsibilities in education. The second component promise the commitment into fully implementing the teacher's education college Act which will address the needs of teachers and students through the ACTET as it was already established and functioned effectively to meet their duties, for example;

ACTET will oversee the devolution of management responsibilities to the colleges of education. A plan of action will be developed to guide the smooth and implementation of the activities. The Boards of Colleges of Education will be established and operationalised. These Boards would govern the Colleges regarding all issues pertaining to students and staffing, academic monitoring and quality assurance, as well as managing the Teachers' Education and Training fund. Changes necessary in current management structures at colleges will be made in accordance with the Act and new positions (e.g. registrar, student counsellor, chief librarian, asset manager) budgeted (ETSIP 2007, 41).

Furthermore, this idea looks at how ETSIP can reform teacher's education and training through component 3 (to develop and operationalise the teacher education reform programme) also, focuses on the improvement of teacher and college development by ensuring a better quality of teachers produced by colleges of education in Namibia such as the University of Namibia.

A permanent teacher education task force with a range of subcommittees, reporting to ACTET, will be established to prepare a teacher education reform plan and to oversee and monitor its operationalisation. The terms of reference of the task force will be broad and include the following issues: (a) review responsibilities of all institutions for specific phases and subject areas; (b) review and revise teacher education curricula to reflect standards, competencies and skills as set by the National Standard Setting Body 05 (NSSB 05) of the NQA Council...(ETSIP 2007, 41).

Also, component 6 (to improve the effectiveness and productivity of academic staff) reiterate the emphasis on improving teaching skills and overall working conditions for staff members in tertiary institutions by utilizing facilities and activities of provided by the NCHE.

Academic capacity building and teaching skills will be developed as follows: The NCHE will establish a coordinating committee for staff development made up of

members drawn from all tertiary institutions and the NCHE. The committee, with expert assistance, will develop guidelines for staff development at tertiary institutions. This will include setting priorities among the various disciplines, ideally based on the overall strategic plan for tertiary education, taking into account national priorities (ETSIP 2007, 46).

Since the NCHE is a driving force for development and reform in tertiary education and training in the country, the responsibility of this institution is essential. These components fall directly under teacher development and more on improving tertiary institutions within by establishing initiatives that focus specifically on reform that will benefit teacher education and development in the country through ETSIP strategies.

4.2.2. Student support

Support for students in tertiary institutions in the ETSIP document is also revealed, this is demonstrated by component 5 (to develop pre-entry, foundation programmes and student support) an example which stress the importance of reviewing existing pre-entry and foundation programme to ensure students have equal opportunity to tertiary education and have the probability to remain in school until they complete their education through decreasing the number of students who dropout.

This component comprises a sequence of steps: (a) Each institution will review critically its existing pre-entry and foundation programmes against improvements in admissions, dropout statistics, admission numbers from disadvantaged groups, and perceived weaknesses of students; (b) A national review by representatives of all institutions, coordinated by the MoE, will evaluate the potential of institutional co-operation to maximise benefits from existing and future programmes... (ETSIP 2007, 45).

Similarly, the fourth component (to build capacity for graduate studies and research) for example also, put pressure on research and investigation of problems that hinder progress in tertiary education and training institution and figuring different ways to advance graduate programmes.

The ETSIP document guarantees the support for higher education in the country by investing in a national audit that will ensure the results of students/graduates especially from marginalized backgrounds benefit from this level of education.

“A national audit by representatives of all tertiary education institutions, the MoE, the NCHE, the National Planning Commission (NPC), as well as the private sector, will be undertaken to evaluate the potential for institutional co-operation to maximise benefits from graduate programmes” (ETSIP 2007, 43).

The ETSIP is proving to be committed to graduate programmes that produce unbiased admissions for graduates particularly diploma level students in University of Namibia. These components claim or hope to bring transformation in the higher education with active role by the MoE, NCHE and NPC for students and staff to benefit. Also, similar to the above mentioned point on national audit of all tertiary education and training institutions component 7 (to introduce quality assurance systems) also put emphasis on the importance of quality assurance systems in tertiary education and training institutions to guarantees robust transformation in higher education.

Quality assurance is essential to ensure outcomes that are internationally credible and nationally responsive and relevant. A key part for improving quality and relevance is a robust and internationally benchmarked quality system. Such a system safeguards quality of appointment, promotion, teaching, research and the employability of graduates (ETSIP 2007, 46).

Measures to increase quality assurance process at all tertiary education and training institutions in Namibia will be reviewed with the hope for result of an increase in terms of student achievement and lower dropout rates.

4.2.3. Financing higher education

The ETSIP document also stresses the need to address issues of finance and funding for higher education. The focus is on mobilizing financial resources and using them efficiently through the

last two components (component 8 to diversify financing source, and component 9 efficient resource uses) in short, strategies that stress on way to finance higher education in Namibia and make efficient use of existing resources that will allow this to be possible. ETSIP first draws attention to how the public sector is challenged by financing education in the country, particularly higher education.

The costs of tertiary education are borne at present almost completely by the public budget. The beneficiaries (graduates in terms of higher earnings and enterprises in terms of qualified workers) pay little if any of the costs. Moreover, opportunities exist to generate income through research grants, consulting and renting of facilities. Public financing of education including tertiary education faces constraints in view of competing priorities, such as financing the health costs of HIV and AIDS (ETSIP 2007, 47).

This also means the ETSIP has to weigh the options of socio-economic problems of the country that needed more attention and funding. With that said ETSIP stress the reasons that led to higher support and funding for General Education (as opposed to Higher Education) especially with regards to the possibility of achieving certain envisaged economic development goals through general education.

“The quality of general education plays a large part in determining the quality of tertiary education and is essential for an effective functioning KBE in realisation of Vision 2030. It is the entry point for developing a self-educable learning society to which Namibia aspires” (ETSIP 2007, 17).

This paragraph highlights the vital connection between the two sectors and main reason for focusing on general education, as a results investment for Higher Education competes with the view of how quality general education can influence higher education and most importantly on how it can assist in the realization of a KBE which the country strives for. In order to solve challenges in higher education, ETSIP document suggest a wide range of activities as part of component 8 that hope to enhance financing of higher education listed below as the following;

...Examine the feasibility of expanded student loans with better collection mechanisms and market (or subsidised) interest rates, and the costs of administration - compare the projected returns with the costs of outright scholarships and bursaries; (f) Explore the costs-benefits and feasibility of differentiated tuition; (g) Explore the feasibility of expanding for fee courses in evenings and during vacations; (h) Identify the feasibility of introducing a phased cost-sharing system together with increased scholarships and bursaries targeted at low-income students; (i) Identify possibilities for resource mobilisation through research grants or outside consultancies; (j) Identify possibilities and feasibility of mobilising contributions from the private sector and private individuals, possibly to an endowment fund; (k) Introduce matching grants to encourage institutions to raise substantial proportions of their total expenditures (ETSIP 2007,47).

These and more are some of the activities that are planned to be explored through ETSIP. These activities will give the institutions involved in higher education different tasks and evaluate themselves to what degree are these tasks performed, for instance, the NCHE as expected in higher education will lead the evaluation and implementation of ETSIP in higher education.

“The NCHE will evaluate the funding formula and other principles for money allocation and propose a policy. The NCHE will work on diversified financing resources and the efficient use of money’ (ETSIP 2007, 36).

As mentioned above, the NCHE will play a major role in ensuring the likelihood of meeting the objectives of ETSIP for higher education sector. The key indicator will be a policy that will be accompanied by a significant positive change in higher education, furthermore, on the subject of the efficient use of resources (component 9) is explained to be focusing on three aspects to challenge inefficiency in financing higher education.

“The component involves three parts: an initial study to document the extent of inefficiency in resources use; a plan for overcoming identified problems and

making better use of resources; and the introduction of normative financing” (ETSIP 2007, 48).

ETSIP stress the importance of evaluating existing funding strategies to find alternative means to raise funding for higher education, thus, the focal point is on diversified means to maximize funding for tertiary education and training in the country through identified sources of inefficiency and strategies to overcome the causes of inefficiency and lastly a specific efficiency measures implemented such as normative financing.

4.2.4. Research

Although this is discussed in brief, it is emphasised in the ETSIP document as the important factor in the process of educational reform in the country hence, the ETSIP will invest in funding research activities that play an importance role in knowledge creation and its ability to solve problems in higher education.

Namibia also has an emerging knowledge base on which a knowledge and innovation system can be built. This includes the research and consultancy wings of tertiary education and training institutions, research departments of government ministries, independent research and consultancy firms and individual researchers. The primary focus of these knowledge creation nodes is basic research, in a narrow scope of disciplines, while very limited applied research takes place (ETSIP 2007, 51).

Tertiary education and training will be expected to fulfill and support for research activities will be prioritized through ETSIP as research allows the identification of challenges and possible solutions to curb problems in tertiary education institutions to be realized.

All tertiary education institutions will develop research policies, determine research priorities relevant to national development needs and build appropriate research infrastructure and capacity (inclusive of linked data bases, archives,

library holdings, research portals, laboratories, a mentorship system for young researchers and training in research methods for academic staff and students (ETSIP 2007, 44).

ETSIP discusses research as an important element in solving problems in higher education using research to investigate problems in higher education such as root causes that leads to dropout rates and other challenges experienced in higher education.

Tertiary education and training institutions will critically review their existing graduate programmes and support infrastructure for research against improvements in enrolments, dropout rates, admissions from disadvantaged groups and regions, perceived weaknesses of students and staff, against fiscal and academic sustainability, and the human resource requirements of the labour market over the ETSIP time period and beyond (ETSIP 2007, 43).

This will not only identify problems but also may lead to investing ways to solve such problems which make research an essential part of the success of ETSIP by 2020. Steps towards promoting support for research activities will be invigorated by institutions.

Appropriate incentives for research, such as performance-based funding, funding based on the approval of peer reviewed research plans and projects and publishing in peer-reviewed scholarly journals will be developed. Institutions will, where appropriate, establish research funds and access funds from the National Research Fund (ETSIP 2007, 44).

The ETSIP promise incentives to support and encourage research activities in tertiary education and training institutions. In many ways, research plays a vital role for ETSIP and for tertiary and education training of which that role has been highly stressed in the document to demonstrate the importance of research activities education reform and planning.

Additionally, there are other important subtopics discussed in the ETSIP document such as knowledge creation and innovation; information; adults and lifelong learning; Information

Communication and Technology (ICT) and lastly, Capacity Development. Although these are important in the discussion of education in Namibia particularly how ETSIP strategies to reform them, they conclude the overall ETSIP document but not necessarily used in this thesis as a focal point of discussion for this study.

4.3. Chapter conclusions

To conclude, this chapter has presented the main themes identified in the ETSIP document together with their interpretation. Of course, there are many other themes that can be identified in the ETSIP document, therefore, the presented themes are proposed based on how they respond to the research questions and the data. Each of these themes is unique and plays an essential role in understanding the education perspectives as suggested by the ETSIP document. The themes in this chapter highlight an immense perspectives of the themes identified in the ETSIP document, while the next chapter narrows and presents the results of the thematic analysis in support of the themes identified in this chapter.

To reiterate the themes identified in the ETSIP document presented in this chapter, education is an important factor that the document explain as an essential tool to enable Namibia to achieve its socio-economic prosperities the country aims to achieve. The main themes produced from the ETSIP document are socio-economic perspectives such as activities aimed at improving the skilled labour, equitable access to education by addressing social ill such as HIV/AIDS that hinder progress in the education sector in Namibia. To illustrate this statement, the ETSIP document emphasizes the need to address the issue of shortage skilled labour in order to allow the country to transition smoothly to a KBE and improve economic production.

Additionally, another theme produced in the ETSIP documents is the focus to increase in equitable access to education that is stressed in all levels of education in order to support students from previously disadvantaged background. Plans to maximize access for students located the previously disadvantaged communities are emphasized in the document as part of initiatives set to improve education. Themes in relations to higher education emphasize the transformation that can take place within higher education institutions such as accountability and responsibility.

Other main themes in relations to higher education are explained further in the next chapter, such as programmes that are set to improve teacher development and student support.

CHAPTER 5 -

PERSPECTIVES TO EDUCATION IN ETSIP DOCUMENT

In this chapter, I will present the concluding results of the thematic analysis from the ETSIP document as conducted on the basis of different perspectives to education identified in chapter four in order to give answers to the research questions. The presentation of these themes illustrates the different kinds of theoretical perspectives in which the conceptualization of education is discussed in the first Phase of ETSIP document. Therefore, these themes are the theoretical perspectives which I used as means to process and analyze the data in order to respond to the research questions and aims of this study. On the basis of my analysis with some illustrative quote from the document to show that the ETSIP has elements from different perspectives to education, as typical to any policy document.

5.1. Education as a value itself: a panacea to address socio-economic problems of the country.

From this perspective, the first theme looks at the manner which the notion of education is perceived as something of great value in society through policy planning. By the virtue of the discussion of education in the ETSIP document which signifies how access to education by the citizens enables the country to progress and achieve its envisioned goals for a better and developed society.

Since independence, there has been a strong political commitment by the government to improve primary and secondary education. This is evident of the pivotal role education is geared to play in the realisation of Vision 2030. Education is expected to play a central role in accelerating economic growth and social development (ETSIP 2007, 17).

This theme looks at education as valuable in the sense education generally is seen as something ‘good’ and beneficiary to the country’s development, as a result education programmes such as ETSIP are expected to play an enormous a role to ensure the fulfillment of the already set goals which the education system is anticipated to fulfill in the society. The ETSIP document demonstrates this perspective by how much the document emphasize the importance of knowledge and skills for individuals to acquire through institutions which the country provides. The importance of knowledge and these skills puts higher education at the centre to enable the country to progress more specifically as a system of knowledge that is essential for the development of individuals and the whole society which can be filled with proper education policy reform and adhering of all the key components suggested in the ETSIP document for the tertiary education and training.

The above components will heavily depend on the effectiveness of the tertiary education and training subprogramme's success in strengthening the supply of high quality and high-level knowledge workers who can lead research and development, and who can spur innovation, in collaboration with productive sectors. In this regard, one of the strategic goals of ETSIP is to improve the effectiveness, quality, efficiency, and development-relevance of the tertiary education and training system (ETSIP 2007, 4).

Knowledge in education is prioritized as it is assumed it will enable one to achieve other for instance, the perception by the ETSIP document that once Namibians have access to knowledge and acquire certain skills, consequently that means individuals will have better job opportunities which will increase economic productivity of the country. Consequently, the value of education is not merely on education on its own but its ability to allow one to achieve other goals through education.

The ETSIP document fails short to explain the importance and the value of education as a system of knowledge (aside from its benefits), the document stress merely the benefits such as attaining knowledgeable and skilled labour without elucidating the value in which knowledge alone has on individual and progression of the society. This then raises a question such as, is knowledge not

enough in education? What kind of knowledge should be valued and why? Moreover, can education offer more than just economic prosperity in the county?

In this perspective, education is described in light of how it can respond to the socio-economic problems through academic knowledge which leads to economic prosperity according to ETSIP document and also the social aspects. The investment and transformation in the education sector are aimed at facilitating development and challenge social ills in the future.

In terms of social goals, broad access and equity are best addressed through general education. General education provides an effective vehicle to ensure that important social messages, e.g. HIV and AIDS information are learned. Secondary education, in particular, has many positive externalities, such as improved health, reduced infant mortality and better family planning, HIV and AIDS prevention, and enhanced social participation. More and better secondary education for girls contributes directly to the empowerment of women (ETSIP 2007, 17).

Another point to consider in the valuation of education is the pressure on education to be a penance in solving almost all the problems of the country. For education to be successful in Namibia ETSIP document stresses the importance of revealing how this value of education can be achieved through examining and investigating problems that lead to stagnant progress in education and training sector in Namibia. HIV and AIDS epidemic, for instance, is one of the social problems that are problematic to education by prohibiting people, especially children from participating in education and deprives people natural rights to be alive (this is linked to themes of human right and human capital). Education is trusted and expected to help lessen the problems of the country, it is therefore not a surprise ETSIP invested in measure to rectify the education and training sector by implementing staff development programme and emphasizing accountability for NCHE and other institutions for a successful education system.

5.2. Human rights: Equal education opportunities for all Namibians

The second perspective identified in the literature was that of education as a human right, stressing that each child should have a right to have access to education. The ETSIP document emphasizes how access to education is a fundamental human right that is essential for ‘all’ to have access to. This is shown by the emphasis on the goal of ensuring all Namibians have equal access to education especially Early Childhood Education and General Education by targeting the most vulnerable and children prone to have limited opportunities to education regardless of socio-economic background.

“expansion of preprimary classes will target poor communities particular categories of children identified as having needs not currently addressed are OVCs, and children from the marginalised groups such as the San, the Ovahimba and the Riemsvasmaker communities and disabled children” (ETSIP 2007, 14).

5.2.1. Education for All (EFA)

The ETSIP demonstrate strategies that sought to invest in equitable opportunities for education by emphasizing the attainment of the ‘education for all’ goal which targets those from the marginalized background and poor communities to be able to also have equal access to education. This is done by proving scholarships and bursaries to students from marginalised communities and also evaluating pre-entry and graduate programs in tertiary institutions to increase opportunities for such students, these initiatives are important and show the interest of government and ETSIP partners to include everyone in the education process. The discussion on education was seen as redundant without the inclusion of OVC and prioritizing inclusive education as they are in vulnerable and helpless positions that make them prone to fail to participate in schooling and provided opportunities to quality education. I strongly support this initiative and believe it is useful in the investment of education and ensuring equal opportunities to education for all, for instance, the investment of measures that sought to lessen the unequal distributions to information and educational resources.

The nationwide library network is struggling with inadequate resources to respond to the demand for up-to-date information and educational resources for resource based education, open and distance programmes, research and information requests from community members. Wider and more equal access to information and learning resources countrywide could be provided by making use of international and national electronic information resources (ETSIP 2007, 61).

To some degree, the initiative to equal opportunities to education can be argued to reinforce the concept of education as a human right that needs to be available and accessed by, judging by how much education is discussed as an important instrument to achieve the development goals in the country and also, the confidence that is placed on education to positively change the society for a 'better' future. It is without a doubt the discussion on education is an essential part of Namibia's policy, judging by the effort to increase equitable opportunities to education for all by implementing measures such as free primary and secondary education through the implementation of ETSIP. The ETSIP document proves the focus on General Education as the target that needs improvement for the expected outcome of knowledgeable and skilled workers in higher education.

My concern is that there is a lack of mentions on education with regards to gender equality in the document despite its importance in the education discourse and policy planning. "The gender equality issue in education has been a major concern in many countries, because of its link with health and nutrition, economic development, and civic responsibilities" (Moloi and Chetty 2011, 2). Although the ETSIP briefly mention the benefit of improved secondary education to also improve girl's education, the overall gender equality theme is not emphasized either as part of 'inclusive education' or as an independent perspective. The ETSIP document state the role of inclusive education to be merely focused on children with disabilities, children with special needs and of course also OVC, without a great deal stressing the importance of gender equality in either General Education or in tertiary education and training institutions.

Also, to demonstrate measures to ensure equal opportunities to education through ETSIP the document emphasise the importance of supporting students from the marginalized background for instance through the provision of scholarships and bursaries. Additionally, tertiary education and training institutions envisaged reviewing their graduate programmes and pre-entry programmes to give an advantage to such students, for instance, component eight of higher education strategies illustrate how ETSIP will help use this component to improve access in higher education institutions.

...Identify the feasibility of introducing a phased cost-sharing system together with increased scholarships and bursaries targeted at low-income students; (i) Identify possibilities for resource mobilisation through research grants or outside consultancies; (j) Identify possibilities and feasibility of mobilising contributions from the private sector and private individuals, possibly to an endowment fund; (k) Introduce matching grants to encourage institutions to raise substantial proportions of their total expenditures (ETSIP 2007, 47).

Policies to guarantee free primary education and very recently free secondary education have been implemented, which suggest the human right to education. With that said, it will be interesting to see the possibilities of that being applied in higher education. As a country that seems to value the goal of education for all demonstrated by its effort to equitable access to education through its policy, it is questionable where does higher education stand in this goal which certainly raises questions such as is access to higher education limited only to those who can afford it? Is it actually feasible for Namibia to eliminate tuition fees in tertiary education and training? Lastly, is higher education a right or a privilege?

These questions and more are importance to consider especially in the planning of higher education and ensuring the success of ETSIP as anticipated by many optimists. With higher education playing an essential role in the country and ETSIP perspectives of its function the demand for higher education could potentially grow. According to Eggins (2003, 33) as an ETSIP document of factors such as high demand of students to access higher education the shift cost to parents and students due to austerity for a market-driven economy. Concurring with Eggins, more pressure for parents and students who lack financial means to have enabled their children an equal opportunity to higher education. After this goal of access to education is

realized, how to utilize those skills is questionable especially with regards to the job market, which leads us to the next theme of human capital.

5.3. Human capital: education as the primary solution to the country's shortage of labour

This theme looks at how the idea of education is synonymous to human capital. The ETSIP document has demonstrated just how important it is for education in order to achieve the goal of producing skilled workers that can then give back to the country's economy. The ETSIP document illustrates the shortage of skills in areas such as agriculture, which secondary education is said to play a major role in rectifying the imbalances of labour demands with that of employers. Hence, the discussion on education focused on how it can solve the problems of shortage of labour and skilled workers. It is quite common for many countries to rely on the education sector to provide skilled labour in the country because of the idea behind this perspective of education to influence human resource and more so through employment.

The ETSIP demonstrates how factors such as HIV and AIDS affects this theme as there is a loss of human capital due to the diseases and illness that decrease the number of skilled labour in the workforce.

Efforts will be made to provide education and psychosocial support to orphans and other vulnerable children (OVC). Evident from this is the need for relief teachers especially in cases where many teachers are incapacitated due to long illnesses as a result of HIV and AIDS. In addition, appointment of paramedical staff e.g. educational psychologists, occupational therapists, and audiologists. Some of the strategies may include recruiting retired teachers and training members of the National Youth Service as relief teachers. A teacher relief system will be established (ETSIP 2007, 25).

Therefore, ETSIP document stresses the need to support employees that have been infected or affected by the disease to ensure their utility in the education sector, plus recruiting more

employees such as the relief teachers to affected areas in Namibia as a result of the epidemic. All these actions highly contribute to this identified theme of human capital specifically on how education influences the alterations within human capital and the deficit of skilled labour because of HIV/ AIDS.

The discussion on education has focused abundantly on how ETSIP can increase economic development and the attainment of a KBE in the near future. The World Bank (1994, 15) notes higher education is a pivotal aspect of society which is usually useful for human resource development of the country and also helps improve the economy in various ways. For this reason, it is without a surprise that Namibia's education policy anticipates similar outcome from higher education. Although, the argument of whether this perspective is a prudent strategy for Namibia, it does though raises questions for exactly what is the role of higher education? Is it merely to produce skilled workers (more like a factory model of education aimed at producing robots for the workforce demand)? What is the role of knowledge in education and how can it be utilized usefully to balance the needs of employers' demands? The use of knowledge in the ETSIP document is mentioned in synonymous to how academic knowledge can be utilized in the workforce, therefore, it will be interesting to question how academic knowledge influence human capital also, what elements results in knowledge especially in higher education institutions to constitute of a price tag. These questions are vaguely indicated in the ETSIP document without further analysis.

The first phase of ETSIP will: (a) strengthen and systematise the current knowledge creation and innovation system to ensure adequate capacity for the production and application of knowledge to improve productivity growth; (b) strengthen effective demand for knowledge and innovation required to facilitate productivity growth; and (c) develop and sustain a vibrant knowledge marketplace (ETSIP 2007, 3).

All these questions are important to be considered to determine the function of higher education in the economy and strategies between goals of balancing knowledge dissemination and labour

skills. The ETSIP document have also mentioned how students wishing to pursue certain studies such as medical studies and engineering have to rely on universities from foreign countries such as South Africa (which also has been experiencing major disputes regarding tuition fees in tertiary education and training institutions) in order to produce skilled and knowledgeable graduates in these fields.

Another point of concern is on graduate unemployment. Even though ETSIP seem to focus on skilled labour as the main goal of the first phase of ETSIP (and more or less the overall goal of the education programme) the discussion is weaker when it comes to graduate employment that exists or could possibly exacerbate in case ETSIP fails to match labour demands with that of employers? The human capital perspective covers all aspects of the role of education and how it affects the workforce and the markets which lead us to the third education perspective below.

5.4. Neo-capitalism and neo-liberalistic perspectives: Silenced perspective

The forth perspective to education, neo-capitalist and neo-liberalistic perspective which is closely related to the human capital perspective since it looks at the economic markets and the role of education in perpetuating and reaffirming the systems of thoughts of capitalism and liberalism. This perspective generally is seldom mentioned in the education discourse due to that its existence tends to be subtle, therefore, the analysis identified this theme perspective based on the indication that I considered suggesting how it emerge in the ETSIP document.

By merely, the fact that ETSIP document focused on the economic benefits of education, specifically its endeavors to achieve the KBE through education is precisely under this education perspective.

“ETSIP represents the education and training sector’s response to the call of Vision 2030. Its key purpose is to substantially enhance the sector’s contribution

to the attainment of strategic national development goals and to facilitate the transition to a knowledge-based economy” (ETSIP 2007, 2).

The amount of confidence placed on education to enable the country to transition to KBE is worrisome, especially that the overall purpose of Namibia’s education transformation for education that supports the developmental goals of Vision 2030 through ETSIP. This is because the focus on economic benefits and the market in education can bring different outcome than expected, more so as a contradiction. This perspective looks at government intervention in economic and political systems to support private ownership of the elite in education. For example, how access to higher education and training is limited to a few, although ETSIP document sought to narrow the gap by encouraging funding to students from impoverished background access to higher education is still limited which could possibly result to the contrary for the state and the general public.

This perspective is identified in this thesis as a silenced perspective due to the lack of emphasis in the ETSIP document especially as compared to other relevant education perspectives such as human right. This perspective is equally crucial as it reflects the transformation of perception in education from a traditional understanding of education (for example, knowledge dissemination) to modern and capitalistic definitions which subtle in the ETSIP document.

The ETSIP document evidently lacks emphasis on the role of private sector and strategies to halt problems that avail as a result of private influence in education. Also, given that students have the pressure to compete in the market in the endeavor for high skills that will allow them to get 'high paying' jobs. This notion I argue is somewhat directed at bringing about neo-capitalism where only the strongest survives in the economic markets.

The markets are competitive and can be argued to entail capitalist and neoliberal features such as competition, individualism and the drive for skilled labour which is also evident in the ETSIP document. This education perspective is similar to commodification of education as one of the silenced perspectives that tend to be elusive in policy writing.

The data can be argued to prove that the ETSIP document sought to expand capitalist practices as it has clearly emphasized on aiming at attaining economic development by focusing on KBE as the focal point of education in Namibia as means to increase economic growth which comes with vast consequences. This is no surprise but instead, raises questions about the viability of the policy document to achieve set goals of equal access to education.

5.5. Commodification of education: Emerging perspective in Namibia's education

This perspective is a concluding perspective based on my observation of the subtle emerging perspective in Namibia's education derived from the ETSIP document that this study sought to reveal. The results of the thematic analysis on the basis of different perspectives to education show that ETSIP explicitly stresses the perspectives that promote equal access to education and the potential of education in alleviating social ills and labour shortage but, however, implicitly execute characteristics that indicate commodification of education similarly to the previous perspective of neoliberal and capitalist thinking for higher education.

I truly commend Namibia's policy plans and attempt to improve the education of the country in its effort to produce quality education and training that is fruitful to the country's future goals. With that said, I feel there are some aspects that have either been purposely ignored or disregarded which are important and could cripple the ETSIP mission. Such include the process of commodification especially in higher education and training which gives pressure for the parents and students to pay for tuition fees which are not always affordable for many.

Results of ETSIP document shows that little is said or insinuated to stress the existence of commodification in the country's education especially with regards to challenges of fee increment of tertiary institutions. "Imposing tuition fees or increasing them at a rapid rate might exclude potential students from poor or rural or otherwise disadvantaged families" (Eggins 2003,

35). There is a lack of research and emphasis in education programmes such as ETSIP on the role of private sector in education, from funding to decision leading to fee increment in universities. The relationship between the two (public and private sector) in dictating issues such as fee increment in higher education and training institutions needs to be prioritized. The students protest in UNAM against fee increment is one of the indications of the problems in higher education which is a lament from students who are unable to afford higher education.

Although ETSIP seeks to lessen the gap of access to education by increasing support for students from the marginalized background, the support can be argued to still not be enough. As Marope (2005) argues public spending on education and training is significantly tilted in favor of the rich, with about 80% of the population which shares merely 40% of Namibia's government subsidies. This is evidently visible in ETSIP by the lack of investment in higher education especially as compare to general education in the country. Also, with the strategies for spending in education and training it is limited to how it can benefit the country towards the goal of KBE.

Indeed, there are many dynamics that needs to be considered in the transformation of universities such as graduation programmes and so forth. The measures that lead to fee increment in tertiary institutions is not emphasized in the ETSIP document, which I believe is significant for ETSIP in order to evaluate measures which the programme can plan to contribute in favour of both the public and the education and training institutions.

The commodification of education happens precisely when access to education is limited to those with financial means and more so when the use of education and training institutions is to produce merely laborers for a competitive market. As a result of competition and the demand for higher education, the commodification of education will likely results in a different form of pressure for Namibian education in order to compete globally. Eggins (2003, 33) argues “an increasing demand for higher education has placed higher education on the brink of commodification especially in developing countries that are shifting access to higher education from being merely privileged good to ‘mass’ opportunity whilst striving to compete economically with the rest of the world”. I certainly concur with Eggins in this argument as it

warns against the contradiction that could be detrimental to the goals of ensuring equal access to education for all which ETSIP document and the Namibian government has strived for.

To conclude, what I have done in this chapter is present results of the thematic analysis, therefore, concluding perspectives to education based on the thematic analysis as an analytical tool of choice for this thesis. These themes sought to respond to the research questions and highlight the connection between the ETSIP document and this study.

CHAPTER 6 - CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will revisit the research questions and my overall results, and provide conclusions on the basis of my results. The conclusions include theoretical conclusions as well reflections of potential policy implications.

6.1. Revisiting the research questions

I analysed the ETSIP document using thematic analysis as the core analytical procedure with special reflection to all the research questions in mind. To recap on the research questions and how my analysis of the ETSIP document seeks to answer the research questions of;

- How the concept of education is defined and discussed in the ETSIP document?
 - a) What kind of perspective(s) influences the discussion of education in the policy document?
 - b) Is there a specific way(s) in which higher education is mainly discussed in the document? And, are there any specific perspective(s) that are silenced?
 - c) How does the policy propose to address the main problems of higher education in Namibia?
- In what ways (if any) is the process of commodification of education insinuated in the document?

Using these research questions, I was able to investigate and analyze the ETSIP document immensely to gain insight of different perspectives that can be revealed in the document. My endeavor to answer the research questions enabled this study to seek best ways to investigate and respond to the research topic.

As an answer to the first set of research question, I identified the main themes of education in chapter four that reflects the overall perspectives of education in the ETSIP document explained in chapter five. These themes are namely; economic growth; employment and skilled

labour; responsibility and accountability; EFA and lastly HIV/AIDS. The ETSIP document emphasizes each of these themes by suggesting how education in Namibia is characterized by the economic and social aspects that require transformation in the Namibia's education sector. The ETSIP document put emphasis on how the programme can function to address problems in the education sector by ensuring responsibility and accountability in all sectors of education, for instance. Identified themes in the Higher education chapter of the ETSIP document are include responsibility and accountability particularly in the NCHE, teacher development, student support, research support and lastly, action plan for financing higher education. The way these themes manifest in the document is demonstrated by how much the ETSIP document suggest and stress their relevance in the changes to be adopted for higher education sector in Namibia.

This study reveals that ETSIP document is a crucial action plan document in the education planning and transformation for Namibia. In the ETSIP document, I identified different themes of education which are production of the thematic analysis as a result, allowing this study to investigate the topic in different angles, highlighting different factors that bind each perspective to the research topic. In addition, their relevance in the context of Namibia is demonstrated by the initiatives by the Namibian government to invest in transformation of education through the ETSIP document. For instance, the theoretical perspective of access to education as a human right falls part of the initiatives emphasized by Namibia's MoE and the country's legislative frameworks that support equal access to education, for instance the EFA programs.

This study has shown the manner in which the ETSIP document as plan of action is discussed and stressed the function of education as something that is essential to the country due to the perspective that it brings economic development and could possibly allow the country to achieve a smooth transition for the goal of a KBE. The definition of education for ETSIP document is characterized by various aspects that emphasise equality and social justice in policy literature. The results show the discussion of education in the ETSIP document as a momentous phenomenon that is entitled to hence, the programme focused on pro-poor programmes and other means to ensure that the marginalized and particularly children in vulnerable positions have access to education. Major steps to ensure General Education and secondary education is accessible freely in the country have been taken even the ETSIP document stressed the

importance of improving the quality and effectiveness of General Education and also, prioritized the benefits that may result through secondary education such as guaranteed skilled labour and possibilities to improve girl's education

The main conclusions of this thesis is that the ETSIP document, there is explicit on certain perspectives of education for instance, discussion on human right and human capital is very explicit, whilst on the other hand, critical perspectives such as the influence of neoliberalism and neo-capitalism thoughts in the transformation of education remains silenced. It is unclear of the reasons that led to silencing of certain perspectives of education, possibly oblivion or some other unknown reason. The influence of commodification process in education has shaped its meaning to education, especially in higher education institutions, being operated like private businesses primarily aimed at benefiting the seller (through profit) and to some degree the buyer too. In Namibia role is slowly diminishing to the hands of the private sector, even in the ETSIP the role of private sector has been emphasized which Ball argues against. As highlighted above, he said, the state needs to be aware of the emphasis of the private use in the delivery of public services including higher education (Ball 2004, 2). This viewpoints sought of warns against the risk of privatization especially if the government truly reflects on meeting the needs of the general society and research has shown how that negatively affect those from previously disadvantaged background.

There is an acknowledgement of the importance of higher education to facilitate the transition for a KBE but there is less emphasis on other intrinsic values as a result of higher education such as the importance of knowledge and creative thinking beyond the goal of high paying jobs. Therefore, this makes the value of education to be highly associated with merely employment "A possible result of the commodification of education is that the actual and intrinsic value of education is lost since education is commercialized. The only reason some youth pursue education is because of its instrumental value, the instrumental value has cause youth to seek education only to have technical skills through which they could get high paying jobs" (Amiri 2016, 5). Even the terminology used in the ETSIP document about the objective of seeking to increase skilled 'workers' can arguably seem to suggest the role of higher education as merely to produce human slaves that are ought to be employed in order to survive in the society.

This study has revealed that Namibia's legislative framework seem to contradict with the reality of limited access to higher education because the imposition of tuition fees and the subtle role of the private sector in higher education. It is important to note the ETSIP document is a very detailed document that points out clear visions and strategies the country plans to take to realize the goals of ETSIP and Vision 2030, in addition the country has shown impressive progress over the years that need to be applauded for and refined along the way.

6.2. Implications for policy making

The practical implications of policy making for this study include the fact that ETSIP document is a government-affiliated document, therefore, it is expected for the document to be biased and reflect the interest of the writers such as being used as a political strategy. What can be learned from this study is that policy literature especially in the context of Namibian education transformation includes the subtle and lack of indications of factors such as the commodification of higher education. As a result, the discussion of education perspective is not always explicit in policy writing, some points will be emphasized while emerging perspective to education remains mysterious and questionable.

Since it is the first broad- based action document for Namibia's education, it is crucial to put into perspective that there is room for improvement in the future. Policy making tends to be overambitious which can somewhat lack the reflection of reality in practice which could possibly increase the gap between theory and practice.

6.3. The need for further research

Since ETSIP document is the very first detailed and broad-based plan of action for education, further and extensive research is required in order to investigate different aspects of the document, hopefully, to increase chances of another detailed, complex plan of education for Namibia in the near future. Also, it will be really interesting for future study to evaluate and

scrutinize the progress of ETSIP before the year 2020 in order to examine if there are any changes made in education sector during the course of ETSIP.

This study has shown the existing gap between policy which can be rectified by further research especial to monitor the progress and implementation of ETSIP policy before the year 2020. Further research will enable the country to refine its education policies and ensure proper implementation of ETSIP.

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