

**DEVELOPING A RESOURCE-BASED APPROACH FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING  
AND IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NAMIBIAN PUBLIC SECTOR**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to develop a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector. The constructivist grounded theory design was adopted to collect data from seven directors purposively sampled from twenty-three identified directors from twenty-three institutions in the Namibian public sector. Resources are critical to the Namibian public sector strategic planning and implementation processes. However, Namibia faces resource constraints, which affect the development and implementation of its strategies. The study concluded that the resources required for effective strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector are human resources, financial resources and infrastructure. The quality of these resources falls short of the desired standards, with the sector struggling to attract and retain qualified and skilled personnel. The study discovered that the Namibian public sector faces shortages of resources and is unable to sustain supply of resources for strategic processes. The resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation was developed for application within the Namibian public sector, emphasising consideration of resource quality, quantity and ability to sustain the supply of resources throughout the strategic planning and implementation process. The study recommended linking strategic plans to the resources the institutions have and can create during the strategy cycle. The proposed resource-based approach emphasise importance of resources in strategic planning and implementation while prioritising on quality and quantity of resources allocated to strategic processes. The resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would enhance the development of feasible strategies and their implementation towards the achievement of strategic objectives, effective public service delivery and economic development. The limitations of the study were that it relied solely on qualitative data collected from participants purposively selected. The area for further study would be to use quantitative methods to test and evaluate the variables identified statistically.

### **Key words:**

Resources, Resource-based, Strategic objectives, Strategic planning, Strategy

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my mother who is my role model!

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## **DECLARATIONS**

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Strategic planning is that management approach, which facilitates collaboration of organisational stakeholders in developing strategies for achieving organisational long-term plans and objectives through prudent use of the organisation's resources (Pederzini, 2016; Checkland *et al.*, 2018). Public institutions undertake strategic planning and implementation processes in an endeavour to utilise public resources efficiently in achieving their institutional strategies and long-term plans (Elbanna, Andrews & Pollanen, 2016). The purpose of this study was to develop a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector and this chapter introduced the research.

The chapter begins with the introduction, outlining the sections contained in the chapter, followed by the background to the study, which positions the studied phenomenon within the research context and the research problem statement that the study sought to address. Chapter one (1) also articulates the research questions, the significance of the study, the limitations encountered during the research and the delimitations of the study. In addition, the chapter discussed the definition of key terms before outline the research structure and concluding with the chapter summary.

### **1.2 Background of the study**

Public institutions perform strategic planning to meet objectives by improving provision of public goods and services (Höglund, Caicedo, Mårtensson & Svårdsten, 2018).

Improvement of goods and service delivery is essential to public institutions since their objective is to deliver value to the public. Organisations create long-term plans towards achieving their strategic objectives through strategic planning and implementation (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016). The development and implementation of strategies and strategic planning, presents organisations in the public sector with the opportunity to direct their resources towards the creation of public goods and services (Pederzini, 2016; Höglund *et al.*, 2018). By engaging in strategic planning processes, public institutions create opportunities for efficient delivery of public goods and services.

According to Parker, Ntounis, Millington, Quin and Castillo-Villar (2017), strategic planning processes by public entities determine the vision and strategy of the organisation. The desire by public administrators to improve the public standards of living through effective service delivery, promote economic development and achieve public reputation are drivers for strategy processes within public institutions (Peel & Parker, 2017). Scholars show interest in strategic planning in the public sector, with much focus on developed economies (Lee, McGuire & Kim, 2018; Elbanna & Fadol, 2016). Basing their argument on developed economies' perspective, Bryson *et al.* (2018) suggests that public sector strategic planning encompasses a set of actions applicable to specific scenarios. Höglund *et al.* (2018) posit that public administrators encounter challenges in formulating, executing, and evaluating strategies to allocate scarce public resources efficiently to the attainment of short and long-term organisational objectives. Administrators within the public sector significantly contribute to strategy and strategic planning because they have the responsibility to manage public resources, which are essential in the achievement of strategic objectives.

Comparing developed economies and developing economies, Humer and Granqvist (2020) observe that limited public budgets and neoliberal national objectives hinder the achievement of public sector plans within the developing economies while the developed economies tend to have sufficient reserves to fund their plans. According to Ratti and Vespignani (2015), the developed economies include the United States of America (USA), the European Union (EU) and Japan and these represent the three leading economic blocs in the world. Humer and Granqvist (2020) further suggest that developing nations' sectorial policies usually do not align with long-term development goals informing their strategic planning endeavours. That explains some of the misalignment of resource allocations by public institutions in emerging economies.

Developing economies are nations in the process of overcoming economic challenges towards lifting barriers to economic growth in the quest to improve the standards of living among their citizens (Jellenz, Bobek & Horvat, 2020). With reference to Namibia, Jellenz *et al.*, (2020) suggest that the economy is in the process of progression towards implementing programs that would help the country to achieve its goal of industrialisation, service delivery and global competitiveness. Such programs require the development and implementation of strategies by public institutions (Mohammad, 2018; Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Dharyanti, Jati & Pramukarso, 2019; Lee *et al.*, 2020).

Achieving the developmental agenda by developing economies demands for strategic intent and focusing of available resources to areas of developmental priorities. The desire by developing economies to implement programs that lead to economic growth faces the challenge of raising the required resources (Schellens & Gisladdottir, 2018; Jellenz *et al.*, 2020; Lee, 2020; Nayeemunnisa & Gomathi, 2020). There is need for public institutions

in developing economies to address their resource constraints to develop feasible plans and strategies.

Unlike developed economies, developing economies face resource constraints, external pressures, economic instability, and lack of political will that diminish developmental ambitions (Prosekov & Ivanova, 2018). The variations in the systems and processes implemented by different economies arise from the differences in the political systems as well as environmental dynamics (Afonsoa *et al.*, 2016). For example, Adua, Alagidedeb and Karimuc (2015) argue that Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) economies are prone to growth swings, susceptible to governing and political changes.

A study by Afonsoa, Araújo, and Fajardo (2016) shows that successes in Brazil resulted from its ability to emerge from crises by mobilising internal resources rather than from effective strategic planning. To promote growth and achieve Millennium Development Goals and Sustainable Development Goals, developing countries perform strategic planning (McArthur & Rasmussen, 2018). The Namibian public sector, being in a developing economy, engages in strategic planning and implementation processes with the objective of achieving national development objectives as well as sustainable development goals.

Another study by Prosekova and Ivanova (2018) characterises vulnerabilities within developing economies due to the external influences from developed economies that seek to impose certain developmental goals and policies. For example, despite their local public sector strategic direction, developing countries in the Middle East and Africa sometimes abandon their strategic orientation to meet the requirements of their donors from

developed economies like the United States of America and the European Union. The study by Pereverza, Pasichnyi and Kordas (2019) shows that sustainable strategic planning should involve inclusive tools adjustable to socio-cultural contexts such as the planning horizons, planners' skills set, and the extent of strategic intent.

A conceptual study by Pederzini (2018) on the complexity of managing organisations in a volatile environment shows the need for the use of evidence-based information in ensuring the achievement of strategic objectives. In their study, Opatha and Hewapathirana (2019) show the use of resources as a key driver to achievement of organisational objectives. Boselie, Van Harten and Veld (2021) also observe the value of resources such as human resources in organisational processes and strategy. The study by Melton and Meier (2016) regards the significance of human resources in the organisation from the perspective of the skills, competencies, and intellectual abilities that other organisations may not have the capacity to imitate. These resources are critical in ensuring that the organisation achieves its operational targets.

Regarding the infrastructure and financial resources, studies show that they are essential in the creation of goods and services (Opatha & Hewapathirana, 2019; Boselie *et al.*, 2021). Infrastructure includes the machinery, logistics and premises that the organisation uses for combining the factors of production in the production of goods and services (Hallstedt & Isaksson, 2017; Lee, 2020). Organisations in all sectors of the economy require the availability of adequate infrastructure to conduct their businesses towards efficient production of goods and services (Luu, 2018). Studies therefore put emphasis on the importance of resources in the achievement of performance targets and business efficiency (Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Dharyanti *et al.*, 2019).

The rationale for emphasising on the resources is that production of goods or services requires resources such as raw materials, machinery, human capital, talent, and funding (Luu, 2018; Schellens & Gisladdottir, 2018). Nevertheless, while studies continue to acknowledge the value of resources in the achievement of objectives, planning activities tend to focus on the goals to be achieved and neglect the capacity of the organisation to develop feasible strategies as well as implementing them successfully (Ongeti & Machuki, 2018). There is need for addressing the resources component in developing and implementing strategies.

Numerous studies on public strategic planning show interest in the achievement of goals to improve the livelihoods of citizens (Erling & Saarinen, 2016; Mboti, 2018; Safari & Mazdeh, 2018). Other studies expand to the activities that are crucial in the development of strategies (Ongeti & Machuki, 2018) required focus on implementation of the strategies as well as evaluating the strategies (Jarzabkowski, Kaplan, Seidl & Whittington, 2016; George, 2017; Jabbar & Hussein, 2017; Dharyanti *et al.*, 2019). A study by Elbanna *et al.* (2016) concludes that well-developed strategies and strategic plans result in achievement of sustainable development goals when implemented effectively. Gaps in literature, however, exist due to limited qualitative studies that delve into the strategic planning variables on the resources' lens, especially focusing on developing economies (Elbanna & Fadol, 2016; Wan & Loo-See, 2019; Bryson, Edwards & Van Slyke, 2018).

With reference to the Namibian context, which is a developing economy, Jellenz *et al.* (2020) discover that the country still has resource constraints in terms of adequate talent. Economies like Namibia would therefore benefit from paying considerable attention to the resources they have or can feasibly access when developing their strategies and plans.

The knowledge gap exist on the basis that there is no known framework for strategic planning by public institutions in developing economies that emphasize the linkage of quality resources in sufficient quantities to the strategic objectives.

A study by Nyambe and Kaulihowa (2020) focuses on Namibia's prominent concerns regarding public debt-subtleties and fiscal endurance over the period 1980 to 2018 and uncovers concerns regarding the nation's ability to mobilise desired resources. The study proposes designing workable approaches towards matching the available resources to priority developmental endeavours. According to the study by Chudik, Mohaddes, Hashem and Raissi (2017), the national developmental agenda ought to consider the ability to sustain intended growth. The ability to provide resources such as funding, to national development goals is critical in addressing failure in achieving strategic objectives as well as handling national expenditure constraints (Shastri, Giri & Mohapatra, 2017; Tronzano, 2017). Addressing the resources aspect when developing the economic growth agenda is essential for the Namibian public sector (Nyambe & Kaulihowa, 2020). The resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would therefore help the Namibian public sector in prudently developing strategies and strategic plans that they would implement effectively.

Since attaining independence in 1990, Namibia embarked on developmental initiatives to address socio-economic problems resulting from the apartheid rule by South African authorities and the war for liberation (Carver, 2019; Du Plessis & Keyter, 2019; Heeren-Hauser, Cheikhyoussef & Chimwamurombe, 2020). While the nation formulated a developmental agenda at National level, the respective ministries had the obligation to strategise towards tackling sectorial issues such as education, health and social services,

poverty eradication, finance, housing, urban and rural development, maintenance of marine resources and safety and security.

Other institutions created were the ministries tasked with transport infrastructure development, managing information and technology, fostering agricultural development, defence, trade and industrialisation, mines and energy as well as managing the country's relations with other economies (Winder & Le Heron, 2017). Over the last three decades, there is a standing expectation for these institutions to develop and implement strategies towards contributing to the achievement of millennium development goals as well as sustainable development goals.

Namibia is among the countries endowed with natural resources, owing to its marine resources, mineral resources, and tourism attractions (Naidoo *et al.*, 2016; Carver, 2019; Heeren-Hauser *et al.*, 2020). The country also has a smaller population of just over two million, which means the country has the potential to use its resources in addressing economic challenges (Shilongo, Sam & Simuela, 2018). Studies have shown that effective utilisation of living and natural resources significantly contributes to economic development (Carver, 2019). Nevertheless, the living and natural resources would have no significance regarding economic development when they are not turned into finished products to generate finances needed in infrastructure development (Naidoo *et al.*, 2016).

Ministries such as the ministry of mines and energy, ministry of agriculture, ministry of fisheries and marine resources as well as the ministry of works and transport have the mandate to develop the nation's infrastructure for economic development (Mboti, 2018).

These institutions therefore engage in strategic planning processes to ensure that they develop strategic objectives towards economic development and growth.

A study by Oliveira and Hersperger (2018) focuses on the implementation of public strategies and strategic plans as a complex task that requires capacity building, formulation of strategies, and execution of exceptional activities. The availability of funding and talent is also crucial in coming up with feasible strategies, creating adequate infrastructure, and controlling the strategy implementation process. Knowledge of the individuals involved in public strategic planning is important in the achievement of public goals (Tennøy, Hansson, Lissandrello & Næss, 2016). With reference to tourism, studies show that the sector contributes to Namibia's economic development and is vital to national development (Erling & Saarinen, 2016; Mboti, 2018). The various sectors of the Namibian economy are drivers for national development and should be properly supplied with inputs to needed for the production of goods and services.

Achievement of strategic objectives within the Namibian tourism sector is essential for sustainable development. Another study by Green, Sheyapo and Kavita (2018) put emphasis on strategic planning for sustainable development towards guaranteeing benefits from the nation's endowment with natural resources. There is also consistency in literature (Erling & Saarinen, 2016; Ikoro & Nwosu, 2017; Qehaja *et al.*, 2017; Kabui *et al.*, 2018; Green *et al.*, 2018; Kabui *et al.*, 2018; Safari & Mazdeh, 2018) that strategic planning is only beneficial to an organisation that succeeds in crafting and executing strategic plans. Developing of strategies that are not effectively does not add value to the entity in any way as it only takes up valuable time with no tangible outcomes. Engagements in strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector should therefore focus on

developing feasible strategies for successful implementation, improving the nation's delivery of public value.

The capacity to create or access resources needed for development, implementation and evaluation of strategies is crucial in public strategic planning for developing countries (Boselie *et al.*, 2021). Their efforts to improve their economies are notable, with governments making strategy development and implementation mandatory for public institutions (Peal & Parker, 2017; Checkland *et al.*, 2018). The question arises regarding the dimensions through which developing economy public sectors engage in strategic planning while remaining alert to ecological factors and considering their resource limitations. George, Desmidt, Cools and Prinzie (2018) propose studies of a qualitative nature, addressing the sector specific features omitted by existing variables. This study therefore intended to develop a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation for the Namibian public sector.

### **1.3 Problem statement**

Public sector institutions in developing economies conduct strategic planning to achieve desired outcomes (Mazzei & Noble, 2017). A study by Doner and Ross-Schneider (2016) argues that the countries within the developing economies understand the necessity of mobilising resources such as human capital, technology, and finance towards developing and implementing their strategy. Implementation of well-thought strategy within the Namibian public sector would contribute to economic development and growth positively (Shopati, Mitonga, & Aipinge, 2018; Semente & Nandjungu, 2020). Nevertheless, the strategies and strategic plans developed by public institutions in developing economies

appear to be inconsistent with their resource capabilities (Nayeemunnisa & Gomathi, 2020; Jellenz et al., 2020). It becomes difficult for such institutions to implement their strategies and strategic plans since they would not have the resources necessary for strategy execution.

The Namibian public sector, being a developing economy lags in the achievement of strategic objectives, as the sector tends to adopt generic strategic planning approaches that promote exaggerated thinking and produce strategies that are difficult to implement successfully. The study by Semente and Nandjungu (2020) reveal that inadequate resources such as financial and human resources within the Namibian public sector lead to poor strategy implementation. The quality of the available and accessible resource appears not to be considered at the time strategies are formulated by public sector institutions in Namibia, which lead to mismatch between objectives and resources available for their implementation.

The generic approach produces idealised strategic plans and strategies that do not consider the resources available to deliver desired outcomes (Elbanna & Fadol, 2016). There are limited strategic planning and implementation studies, which consider availability, quantity and quality of resources focusing on the Namibian public sector. Studies therefore propose strategic planning research that focus on addressing the availability and appropriateness of resources required in formulating and implementing strategies (Bryson et al., 2018; Wan & Loo-See, 2019). This study therefore intended to develop a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation for the Namibian public sector.

## **1.4 Research questions**

### **1.4.1 The main research question**

The main research question was how would developing a resource-based approach to strategic planning lead to effective strategies in the Namibian public sector?

### **1.4.2 Secondary research questions**

- How do the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning in the Namibian public sector?
- What is the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector?
- What are the elements that add to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector?
- How could the Namibian public sector embrace the resources component in strategic planning and implementation?

## **1.5 Significance of the study**

This study's contribution was manifold because it addresses a practical gap in terms of the achievement of strategic objectives by Namibian public institutions and the knowledge gap by developing the resource-based approach for strategic planning within the Namibian public sector, which is a developing economy. The study uncovered the effects of organisational features in the Namibian public sector on the quality of strategies developed and the fitness of strategic plan documents. The study developed a resource-based

approach to strategic planning and implementation through grounded theory. The use of grounded theory addressed the methodological gap and facilitated the development new knowledge based on in-depth interactions with the experiences within the phenomenon.

Unlike most studies that pay no attention to availability of resources for implementing strategies and strategic plans, the study adopted the resource-based view to generate theory on the consideration of resources in strategic planning and implementation (Elbanna & Fadol, 2016; Nayeemunnisa & Gomathi, 2020; Jellenz et al., 2020). The study contributed to knowledge by developing a resource-based approach framework for strategic planning and implementation for the Namibian public sector. The study informed public administrators to prioritise quality and quantity of resources in designing feasible strategies. Through adoption of the resource-based approach framework developed by the study, Namibian public institutions would develop strategies that they would implement successfully.

### **1.6 Limitations of the study**

Despite the advantages of implementing the qualitative methods in conducting the study, such as the method's flexibility in data collection, conducting qualitative methods has some limitations (Almalki, 2016; Queirós, Faria, & Almeida, 2017; Almeida, 2018).

This qualitative research relied on experiences and views of directors responsible for strategic planning who could purposely provide incorrect information to cover institutional shortcomings. The researcher mitigated this limitation by informing participants of the significance of the study. The grounded theory method of data collection, which used non-structured discussions, also encouraged participants to provide

elaborate facts. Triangulation by asking the same set of initial questions to all participants allowed the researcher to compare the responses for confirming credibility of the participants' opinions. Follow-up discussions also facilitated clarification of unclear statements as well as ideas that the participants expressed.

### **1.7 Delimitations of the study**

The delimitation of the study articulately describes the parameters of the study to ensure achievement of specified study objectives, answer the research question and provide accurate recommendations (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). The study fell within the scope of strategic management, focusing on strategic planning and implementation. The unit of analysis were the directors responsible for strategic planning processes within the public institutions, which are the ministries within the Namibian public sector that the researcher made conclusions about at the end of the study.

The study therefore did not expand to any unrelated concepts, with its findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn from data relating to the Namibian public sector only and collected from individuals responsible for strategic planning and implementation within the institutions. The directors that are responsible for strategic planning from the ministries within the Namibian public sector operate from the country's capital city, Windhoek. The study therefore took place in Windhoek since the sources of data were situated in Windhoek. Ministries within the Namibian public sector were included in the study. Any other government departments and agencies, which do not fall within the criteria of ministries, were excluded.

## **1.8 Definition of key terms**

This section presents the definition of key terms used in this study, giving the context in which, the terms apply in the study. The meanings of the terms used relates to their general usage in strategic planning. Various literature was consulted in deciding on the definitions, taking into consideration the context in which the terms are used.

### **1.8.1 Resource-based**

The resource-based concept is a theory that proposes that resources, which are rare, valuable, not easily substitutable, and difficult to imitate, position an organisation for long-term success (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991; Alexy et al., 2018; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Gerbera et al., 2020). The concept suggest that, with the right assortment of resources a firm would be able to achieve its strategic goals and achieve competitive advantages because other firms would not be able to imitate its resources. Barney (1991) coined the resource-based concept as a management component and the concept has been widely recognized within the strategic management discipline. The inclusion of resource-based approaches to the public sector would create space for identification, acquisition and efficient allocation of adequate resources to public strategic objectives. This would result in achievement of strategic objectives and national development.

### **1.8.2 Strategy**

The concept of strategy derives its roots from around 340 B.C. within the military realm, intended to depict the articulation of unique actions taken to outmanoeuvre the enemy (Ayoubi, Mehrabanfar & Banaitis, 2018). Post-World War II, the concept entered the

business fraternity relating to the act of determining long – term goals and adopting distinct courses of action in the allocation of resources towards the achievement of objectives (Safari & Mazdeh, 2018). In this context, strategy distinguished the course of action taken by an organisation in the way it does business such that it could effectively compete within the business environment (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018). According to (Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015), strategy refers to the set of actions taken by an organisation towards achieving competitive edge and long-term goals. For this study, strategy therefore means the combination of actions adopted by the firm towards achieving competitiveness, sustainability, and effective allocation of resources in the pursuit for strategic objectives. From the context of the public sector, strategy implies the actions required to use the organisation in the delivery of public goods and services.

### **1.8.3 Strategic planning**

According to George (2017), various definitions of strategic planning prevail in academic discourse, resulting in the need to interrogate rigorously each of them to gain better understanding of the concept. The authors cite researchers such as Schendel and Hofer (1979) who describe strategic planning in terms of the taking of logical steps towards defining the organisation’s mission, long – term goals, analysing the business environment, formulating, implementing, and controlling strategy.

Armstrong (1982) describes strategic planning as the periodic assessment of performance goals, budgeting, and prioritising of resources towards achieving goals. Dharyanti *et al.* (2019) further refers to Hopkins and Hopkins (1997) who observe strategic planning as systematically formulating, implementing, and controlling the strategy process. As a

result, their definition of strategic planning is “a more or less formalised, periodic process that provides a structured approach to strategy formulation, implementation, and control” (p. 5).

According to Chavunduka, Chimunhu and Sifile (2015), strategic planning is the periodic process through which the organisation rigorously analyses its business environment, evaluates its mission, develops, and implements a strategic plan over a period. In view of this backdrop, strategic planning is a periodic process of formulating and implementing the organisation’s strategic plans.

#### **1.8.4 Strategic plan**

A study by Kabui *et al.* (2018) posits that a strategic plan is a document produced to depict what an organisation envisions within the short- and long- term future. According to Kabeyi (2019), the strategic plan document outlines the organisation’s vision, mission, values, strategy, broad and specific objectives as well as articulating courses of action designed for the attainment of the overall goal. Hence, the strategic plan relates to the organisation’s path towards its destiny in the long-term.

Organisations, therefore, interpret strategic plans into specific day-to-day activities undertaken towards reaching set milestones (Höglund *et al.*, 2018). The definition of a strategic plan in this study relates to a document containing the organisation’s set of unique action plans for achieving strategic objectives. It is therefore the organisation’s blueprint for success because it facilitates the systematic review of the organisation, assessment of opportunities, creating feasible objectives and implementing them in pursuit of the long-term direction of the organisation.

### **1.8.5 Strategic objectives**

The concept of strategic objectives derives its basis on rigorously developing intentions spanning over a lengthy period. The process of designing strategic objectives, therefore involves the analysis of the organisation's mission, environmental factors, and resource capabilities (Chavunduka *et al.*, 2015). Höglund *et al.* (2018) describes strategic objectives in terms of their long – term focus as well as short – term measurable deliverables which allows management to constantly monitor performance in a quest to achieve the organisational goals.

A study by Nakayama (2018) on an empirical analysis of the application of strategic management techniques within Japanese companies' states that strategic objectives result from holistic organisational planning activities aimed at directing the organisation towards achieving its goals. In this study, strategic objectives refer to the long – term deliverables that the organisation intends to achieve over time.

### **1.8.6 Stakeholders**

Stakeholders refers to the individuals, groups or entities that have interests and are affected by or hold a stake in the organisation. In the view of Kabui *et al.* (2018) stakeholders influence the performance of the organisation in numerous ways such as the supply of resources, determining the organisation's definition of quality as well as regulation of the parameters within which the organisation operates. In these contexts, stakeholders' perception and experience with the organisation and its services plays a pivotal role in its ability to achieve its purpose of existence. For the current study, stakeholders are the

individuals, groups and separate entities having interests, affected by or influencing the operations of the organisation directly or indirectly.

### **1.8.7 Resources**

There are various definitions of resources in literature (Melton & Meier, 2016; Lee, Rocco & Shuck, 2020). The study by Nielsen, Nielsen, Ogbonnaya, Käsälä, Saari and Isaksson (2017) discussed resources in terms of tangible and intangible possessions of an organisation. After reviewing various empirical and theoretical articles, Lee *et al.* (2020) concludes that resources are the assets that the organisation requires to conduct its business.

The tangible resources are the physical belongings, such as the human capital, physical assets, physical infrastructure, and finances (Osborne, 2017; Schellens & Gisladottir, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, the intangible assets are capabilities such as the reputation, competitive edge, intellectual abilities, and patents, social and cultural capacity (Pinha & Ahluwalia, 2019; Lee *et al.*, 2020). Within the context of this study, resources are the human capital, funding, and infrastructure, which exists as tangible or intangible assets.

### **1.9 Overview of the chapters**

In this section, the researcher outlines the frame of the study, detailing the components of each chapter. The organisation of the study serves as a summary of the stages that the research followed as well as showing the way in which the research was carried out. The

summarised structure enables the reader to follow through the discussion logically. The study was structured into five chapters:

### **1.9.1 Chapter 1: Introduction**

Chapter one (1) is the chapter that introduced the study, presenting the background setting of the study, the research problem the research sought to address. The chapter also highlighted on the research objectives that the study focused on achieving. Further, the chapter details the benefits of the study with the purpose of justifying the importance of conducting the study and highlighting the stakeholders' standing to benefit from the study's findings and recommendations. The chapter proceeds to a discussion of the limitation, which had the potential to deter the achievement of the research objectives as well as the measures implemented to mitigate the limitations. In addition, chapter one (1) outlines the scope of the study, setting out the parameters of the study before providing the definitions of key terms used in the study to highlight the usage of the terms in the context of the study. The chapter then presents the structure of the study, by outlining the chapters contained in the study as well as their components. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary, discussing the purpose of the chapter and briefly discussing the key concepts from the chapter.

### **1.9.2 Chapter 2: Literature review**

Chapter two (2) presents the literature review conducted to set the basis of argument during the study. The review of literature serves the purpose of rigorously interrogating the study concepts as presented by scholars in academic discourse and deepens the researcher's comprehension of the field of study. Hence, in this chapter, which began with

an introduction and critical review of the strategic planning concept, the researcher presents a critical analysis of the theories underpinning strategic planning, strategic planning processes and the use of strategic planning in guiding organisations towards their goals. Chapter two (2) outlines the discussion of literature in terms of the components of strategic planning, its evolution and application in various business sectors. Further, the chapter discusses the techniques used in strategic planning, the circumstances leading to the adoption of strategic planning, the factors influencing successful implementation of strategic planning. In addition, chapter two presents the conceptual framework. The chapter ends with a brief synopsis of the concepts discussed in the chapter.

### **1.9.3 Chapter 3: Research methods**

Conducting research requires a well - defined and clear methodology outlining the process followed in planning, designing, and conducting the study towards achieving the research objectives. Chapter 3 is therefore the chapter presenting the research methodology adopted in conducting this study. Beginning with an introduction, the chapter proceeds to discuss various methodology concepts, philosophy, approach, design, method, and time horizons. The chapter further demonstrates the population of the study, which provided the possible data sources, the sample and sampling strategies used in deciding and reaching the sample size, the data collection tools and procedure as well as the techniques and tools used for data analysis. The chapter discusses the validity and reliability of the study before dealing with the ethical issues the researcher adhered to during the research process. Finally, the chapter concludes with the summary of the discussions of key issues outlined in the section.

#### **1.9.4 Chapter 4: Results and Discussions**

Chapter 4 presents the analysis, presentation, and interpretation of data. The chapter commences with the brief discussion of the way and techniques through which data analysis ensued. After the introductory section, an analysis of the demographic characteristics follows, aiming to justify the participants and the relevance of their contribution. The discussion proceeds to the analysis, presentation and interpretation of themes emerging from the analysis of data collected through grounded theory. The chapter then discusses the results in relation to the research questions. Lastly, a summary of the chapter concludes the chapter.

#### **1.9.5 Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

Chapter five (5) concludes the study and presents the discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations emerging from the study. The chapter provides a rigorous discussion of findings drawn from the results, giving attention to the consistency of results with literature reviewed. Further, the researcher uses the findings to develop the strategic planning model for implementation by the MET towards effectively performing strategic planning. A discussion of the recommendations follows, providing articulate suggestions for improving strategic planning processes within the MET. In addition, chapter five gives an account of the consideration of limitations in drawing conclusions and making recommendations, with the sole intention of ensuring justification of generalising the findings, the model, conclusions, and recommendations. Finally, the researcher concludes the study, and illustrates how the research findings led to the achievement of the objectives.

## **1.10 Summary**

This chapter dealt with the introduction to the study. The chapter began with the introduction, outlining the sections contained in the chapter, followed by the background to the study, which positions the studied phenomenon within the research context and the research problem statement that the study sought to solve. Chapter one (1) also articulated the main research question and sub-research questions, the significance of the study, the limitations encountered during the research and the delimitations of the study. In addition, the chapter discusses the definition of key terms before outlining the research structure and concluding with the chapter summary. Following this chapter is chapter two (2) which presents and discusses the literature examined for the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of the study was to develop a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation for the Namibian public sector and this chapter presents and discusses a critical review of literature conducted for the study. Literature review refers to the collection and analysis of literature associated with the concerned subject (Winchester & Salji, 2016). In reviewing literature, the researcher examines ongoing discourse on a subject to discover underpinning concepts within the subject. The review of literature appraises existing knowledge critically to enable the researcher to amass fundamental concepts and understanding of the subject (Fisch & Block, 2018). According to Winchester and Salji (2016), literature review enables the researcher to identify the gaps in existing knowledge. Reviewing literature therefore permits the researcher to discover the gap that the current study addresses.

This chapter addressed the evolution of strategy and strategic planning, followed by the concept of strategic planning and the strategic planning techniques. The strategic planning processes were also addressed in the chapter. Concepts surrounding the implementation of strategic planning in public institutions. The resource-based view discussion followed. The next in the discussion was the strategic planning and the resource-based view, which addressed the need for resource allocation to strategic processes towards achieving strategic objectives. This was followed by the conceptualisation of the study under the conceptual framework section. The summary of the chapter conclude the literature review chapter.

## **2.2 Evolution of strategy and strategic planning**

To comprehend the concept of strategic planning fully, there is need to discuss the theoretical development of strategy and strategic management critically. For decades, the concept of strategy gained momentum across many disciplines such as the military, technology, and business management (Johnsen, 2016; Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Brorström, 2019). Various disciplines use strategy as a tool for success and competitiveness. Strategy remains a significant component within the strategic management arena (Qehaja, Kutllovci & Pula, 2017). Management of businesses requires the effective use of the resources belonging to the organisation to achieve success, growth, and competitiveness (Bryson *et al.*, 2018). In this context, strategic management is about strategy and its application in pursuit of organisational objectives.

According to Kotler, Berger and Bickhoff (2015), the concept of strategy derives its name from the Greek word *strategos*, which refers to the act of making resource deployment plans for the achievement of specific objectives. Strategy focuses on the attainment of objectives and strategic management becomes the process of strategy actions in ensuring the discovery of ways for successfully taking full advantage of the strategy process. This is to say, strategy enables the organisation to maintain focus in a dynamic environment (Johnsen, 2016; Qehaja *et al.*, 2017). Strategic leaders develop and implement plans with the intention to get progressive outcomes towards organisational sustainability.

As early as 340 BC, the armed forces began implementing unique tactics to win wars (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018). Ayoubi *et al.* (2018) further point that the idea of strategy required critical positioning of the armies, time of attack, and allocation of critical scarce resources,

monitoring and evaluation of progress as well as maintaining a motivated army in the face of imminent death. The authors further cite Glunk *et al.* (1980) who relates strategic management to the use of strategic decision-making in World War II as well as the introduction of strategy concept in the business world by a Harvard University professor.

In the findings of Narikae and Lewa (2018), strategic management develops valuable knowledge required for the effective direction of an organisation. Strategic management bridges the knowledge gap and enhances the pursuit of critical actions, since as an externally oriented business management philosophy; strategic management helps managers to navigate through the dynamic environment for ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the short and long run.

Adopting strategic management approaches requires that the organisation engage in formulating strategy and effectively implementing the strategy to guarantee organisational success (Magiri *et al.*, 2018). According to Narikae and Lewa (2018), the tactical manoeuvres should occur within the milieu of strategy towards ensuring the accomplishment of strategic resolve. Nevertheless, strategy sometimes fails, and, in such a predicament, the tactics overtake the actions. Narikae and Lewa (2018) therefore observe that whether it be on the battlefield or within the business setting, realisation of the objectives hinges on the predetermined action plans made in consideration of the forces that influence the organisational processes. Strategising enables to the organisation to have a broader view of its current and future environment, resulting in enhancement of opportunities for success.

The use of strategy stems from the military generals' tactical actions in utilising their armed forces in staging a winning battle (Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Narikae & Lewa, 2018). Through the formulation and implementation of strategy during war, sides outline specific actions with the intent to win the battle with minimum or no casualties. On the other hand, the business environment focusses on effectively utilising resources to achieve favourable outcomes within budget and profitably (Johnsen, 2018). In all circumstances, however, the objective is to achieve short and long-term objectives. The aim of developing and implementing strategy is to find a unique way of conducting activities with a high chance of achieving desired objectives (Bento *et al.*, 2017; Palladan & Adamu, 2018).

With the writings of renowned authors such as Alfred, D. Chandler, Philip Selznick, Peter Drucker, and Igor Ansoff during the 1950s to the 1960s emerge the strategic management concept as applied to the business environment (Safari & Mazdeh, 2018). The concept saw the development of major global market players through its pro-active approach to management and allocation of resources (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018). Safari and Mazdeh (2018) regards strategic management in terms of an approach to enable the business to reach its objectives through the formulation, execution, monitoring and evaluation of organisational processes. Strategic management therefore increases the chances of achievement of business objectives because it enables the organisation to develop, implement and evaluate strategic actions.

During the 1970s, the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) became an addition to literature on strategy (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018). In the 1980s, in an attempt to improve the strategy process, strategic planning emerged as a key function within strategic management (Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018). Particularly, Palladan and Adamu (2018)

regard the function of strategic planning as an approach towards promoting critical thinking during the setting of goals, implementation of action plans and reviewing the performance of the organisation in line with set objectives. Strategic planning provides management with a clear picture into the future, while readying their orientation for effective utilisation of resources on priority actions and operations (Bento *et al.*, 2017). Organisations from different industries can therefore apply strategic management as a key component in their business and that calls for entities to perform strategic planning.

According to Wolf and Floyd (2017), it was not until the mid – 1990s that research conceptualising strategic planning and its influences on organisational outcomes surfaced, seeking to identify the role the strategic planning practitioners play in the process, procedures implemented in strategic planning and the actions necessary for effectively performing strategic planning. The desire to achieve organisational objectives continued to influence the increase in recognition of the value of strategic planning. Alford and Greve (2017) observe that since its emergence, strategic planning has led to significant strides in organisations' efforts in delivering value. Adopting strategic planning can therefore enhance the ability of an organisation to provide value to their stakeholders.

### **2.3 The concept of strategic planning**

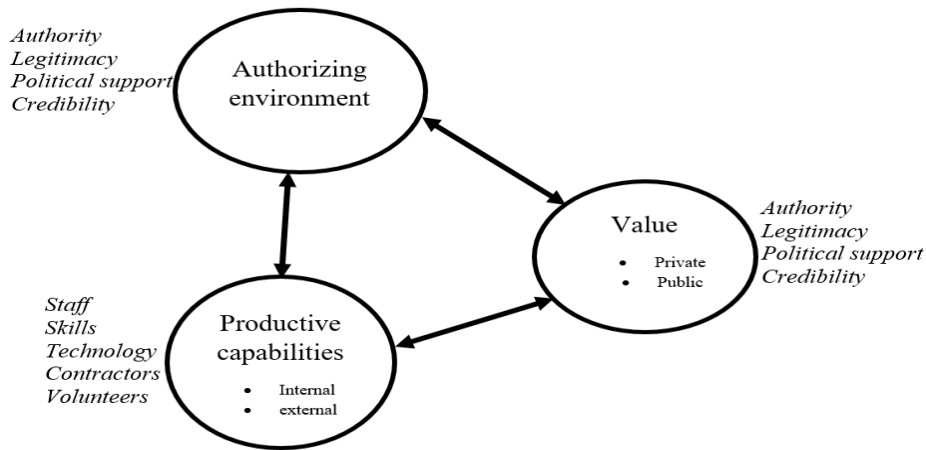
A study by Gomera, Chinyamurindi and Mishi (2018) observes that adopting the strategic view in planning, coupled with monitoring and evaluation of plans significantly influences organisational performance. The observation arises from the comprehension that the process of strategic planning creates a platform for considering the internal and external organisations with the potential to influence the achievement of goals negatively or

positively (George, Desmidt & De Moyer, 2016a; Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Brorström, 2019). Organisations could use their understanding of the internal and external environments to make critical business decisions, creating room for effective allocation of resources to priority areas. According to Brorström (2019), strategic planning is a continuous articulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategic activities at all organisational levels.

Strategic planning is an intricate rational process through which the organisation formulates plans, executes, and evaluates strategies (Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Brorström, 2019). The strategic planning process involves developing plans and strategies that the organisation implements towards achieving short and long-term strategies. According to Johnsen (2018), strategic planning requires the understanding of organisational intent and ensuring translation of intent into actions that yield results. Engaging in strategic planning therefore focuses on relying on the understanding of the situation surrounding the organisation to formulate plans and strategies, which the organisation implements to achieve the favourable outcomes.

Having evolved in the private sector, the strategic concept' migration into the public sector improved the performance of various public institutions that adopted the concept and commit to formally conducting strategic planning (George, Desmidt & De Moyer, 2016a; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020). As a result, organisations in private and public sectors require properly focused approaches towards ensuring holistic adoption of strategic planning processes, which leads to delivery of public value. Alford and Greve (2017) propose the public value framework that resonates with various public managers and

scholars as illustrated below. Figure 2.1 below is an illustration of the public value framework:



**Figure 2.1: Public value theory**

*Source: Moore (2013) cited in Alford & Greve (2017, p. 6)*

Alford and Greve (2017) summarised the concept of public value in terms of the value delivered to the public, by private and public organisations. The framework in figure 2.1 illustrates the acknowledgement that public and private businesses are responsible for value delivery. The authors therefore present key aspects that affect organisations in their quest to deliver value and these are the authority to perform amid internal and external influences, capability to produce quality services and products as well as the value itself. In the opinion of Pyun and Gamassou (2018) public managers serve as the explorers that continuously seek for initiatives for creating public value and encapsulate the triangular framework comprising the value produced, the productive capabilities and the authorising environment allowing the organisation to perform activities towards value creation and delivery effectively.

Literature (Johnsen, 2016; Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Karam, 2018) observes that strategic planning processes do not yield desired outcomes when certain practices lack from the planning processes. While organisations may claim to perform strategic planning periodically in the pursuit for reaching their goals (Andrews *et al.*, 2017) literature (Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Pyun & Gamassou, 2018) points towards the need for specific activities within the strategic planning processes that enhance the implementation of effective planning. Strategic planning requires intent, focus and commitment for all involved parties to achieve their objectives.

In their study on the influence of planning on organisational performance, Kariuki, Maiyo and Ndiku (2016) argue that techniques adopted in the planning process has a bearing on the outcome of the entire planning processes. In addition, Karam (2018) suggest that organisations reserve the choice to decide on the use of appropriate tools in strategic planning to conduct planning processes with high likelihood for success. Hence, there is need for each organisation to endeavour deliberately to understand the techniques, which promote effective strategic planning.

Effective strategic planning relies on formulation and execution of strategic plans, which further depend on how effective the application of formal strategic planning tools like strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis, Porter's 5 forces analysis, in conformity to resource capabilities (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016). Other tools include political, economic, sociological, technological, legal, and environmental (PESTLE analysis) and balanced scorecard as well as using critical success factors, and cost-benefit analysis (Bento *et al.*, 2017). Strategic planning tools are important in achieving organisational objectives for organisations in any sector of the economy.

The strategic planning process endeavours to yield vital decisions and actions, which shape, determine and define what an entity is, its core operations as well as its purposes of existence (Narikae & Lewa, 2018). It therefore determines the organisation's vision, its mission, values, strategic objectives, and critical success factors (Afonina, 2015; Umar *et al.*, 2020). While the process primarily centres at the designing vision, mission, values, objectives, and critical success factors, it also reviews the current situation within and without the organisation for discovering the factors that influences the achievement of organisational intentions as well as ensuring that the vision and mission remains appropriate amid the environmental changes (Elbanna, Andrews & Pollanen, 2016). This makes the strategic planning process a complex effort determined to foster the formulation and implementation of strategic plans (Kabiru *et al.*, 2018; Karam, 2018). Conducting strategic planning is therefore an endeavour requiring effort to ensure achievement of its objectives.

Elbanna *et al.* (2016) call for the implementation of appropriate tools and techniques in strategic planning to ensure effectiveness of the processes. Implementing appropriate tools for strategising helps the organisation to understand the specific resources that the organisation requires to develop plans and strategies as well as efficiently execute the plans (Pascuci, Meyer & Crubellate, 2017). According to Chen, Nasongkhla & Donaldson (2018), effective strategic planning yields an articulate strategic plan as well as its efficient implementation in pursuit of the strategic objectives of the organisation. Therefore, processes adopted in strategic planning require critical consideration in ensuring their appropriateness.

According to Kariuki *et al.* (2016), while strategic planning may be more common in private sector organisations, public institutions also, value the concepts of strategy and strategic planning. Strategic focus leads organisations towards integrating the environmental elements that influence the performance of the organisation (George *et al.*, 2016a; Pascuci *et al.*, 2017; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020). As a result, organisations with the intention of succeeding in their strategy can adopt the various strategy tools such as critical thinking, environmental scanning, and stakeholder engagement (Kotler *et al.*, 2015; Qehaja *et al.*, 2017; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020). Moreover, Jarzabkowski and Kaplan (2015) suggest that due to the diversity of organisational settings, organisations can adopt different tools that best suit their circumstances. The differences in organisational circumstances determine the way they plan, implement, and review their strategies.

Albon, Iqbal and Pearson (2016) reiterate the need for each entity to interrogate its specific environment to understand the appropriate techniques needed to design perfectly suited strategic plans. Relating to the public organisations, studies (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Andrews *et al.*, 2017) argue that though public administrators do not directly participate in public policy resolutions, their tasks in strategically plan the activities of their institutions serve neither to waste of time nor public resources.

The fundamental fact is that organisations have different capacities to create, maintain and manage resources, making their planning diverse (Varsani, 2018; Al-Doori & Areiqat, 2019). They drive the processes of maintaining compliance and adherence to the vision of the organisations. The policy decisions therefore function as guidelines for best practices as set out by their relevant political players. Strategic planning integrates various

techniques in developing long-term action plans in the pursuit of the organisation's strategic objectives (Qehaja *et al.*, 2017).

The process considers the vision, mission, and values of the organisation in determining specific steps that lead to the attainment of long-term goals (Pascuci *et al.*, 2017). According to Wolf and Floyd (2017), long-term planning in public organisations enables public managers to look beyond the government's vision in an endeavour to achieve future demand for public services anticipated within the present.

While strategic planning primarily results in the development of documented plans, some organisations that perform strategic planning do not have written plans (Qehaja *et al.*, 2017). However, Leskaj (2017) suggests that when an organisation does not have a clear plan of action, it is likely to fail. This is an indication that strategic planning is critical in the performance of any organisation. Public institutions also require clear plans with implementation deliverables that enable the institution to monitor progress.

#### **2.4 Strategic planning techniques**

Chen *et al.* (2018) argues that despite the wide use of strategic planning in private and public organisations, its complexity and time-intensiveness leads to difficulties in effectively planning strategically. Therefore, the process of strategic planning demands the use of critical techniques to increase the chances of success in developing and implementing strategic plans. In an earlier study by Chen *et al.* (2018) on translating the vision into action, findings show that the success of the strategic planning process lies in its ability to achieve desired outcomes through the transformation of plans into realistic and actionable activities. Chen *et al.* (2018) points the strategic planning process begins

with the input, which pertains to the resources inputted in the process, followed by a series of activities conducted in the development of the strategic plan and then the output, which is the strategic plan. The strategic planning process therefore require the organisation to have adequate competencies to initiate and execute the process.

The implementation of the strategic plan is the process that integrates the resources towards pursuing the objectives through execution of plans as articulated in the strategic plan document (Chen *et al.*, 2018). In relation to the resources allocated to the various priority areas during strategy implementation, Elbanna *et al.* (2016) suggest that the organisation ought to define the quality and quantity of such resources as well as ensure that the resources are readily available when needed. The strategic planning process becomes complete after a plan has sufficed from planning processes and effectively implemented. It effectively results from the realization of the stated outcomes (Chen *et al.*, 2018). Outcomes from the formulation and implementation of strategy therefore determine whether strategic planning is effective.

There are vital techniques, which an organisation could consider when adopting in conducting strategic planning (Qehaja *et al.*, 2017). Findings from a study by Elbanna *et al.* (2016) show that formality in strategic planning, which utilises available tools of planning strongly and positively influence successful strategic plan implementation and achievement of objectives.

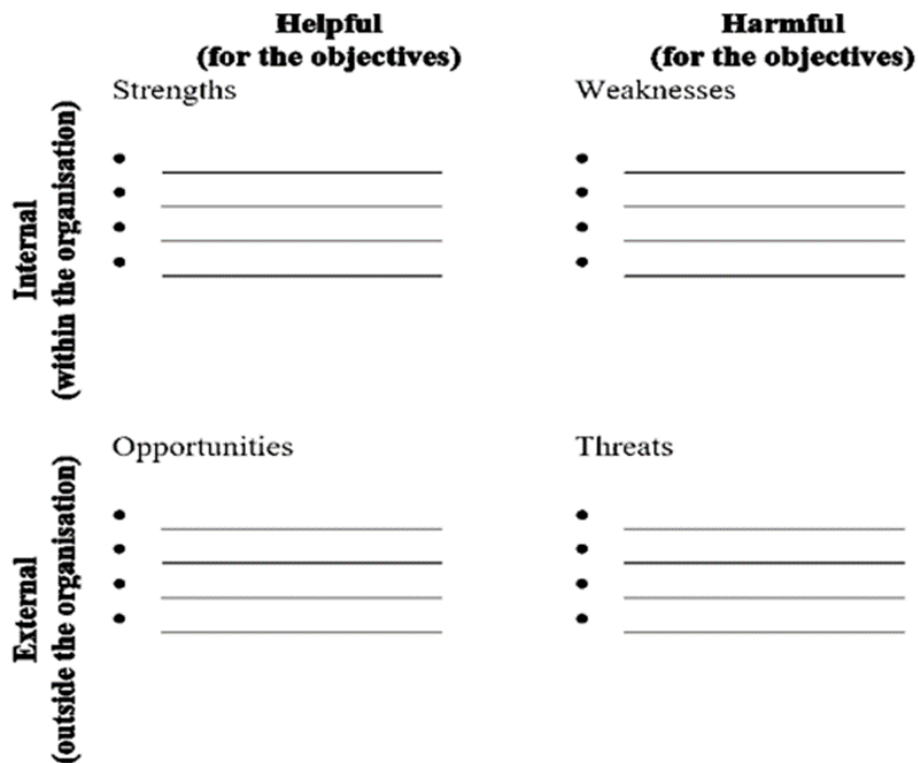
According to Kenno, Lau, Sainty and Boles (2020), the effective performance of the organisation in the implementation of its strategic plan depends on the planning process efficiency. That is to say, the use strategic planning tools to develop realistic and strong

strategic plans remains paramount to the effectiveness of strategic planning processes. Consistently, Jarzabkowski, Kaplan, Seidl & Whittington (2016) suggest that by adopting and implementing tactical tools for strategic planning, the organisation positions itself towards a practice – based approach to planning, which results in realization of strategic planning outcomes.

Strategic planning is among the critical organisational approaches that enhances the performance of an organisation and studies (Nzewi & Ojiagu, 2015; Ali & Al-Jaradi, 2016; Rahman, 2019) find a significant relationship between strategic planning and organisational success. Ali and Al-Jaradi (2016) suggest that one of the important techniques that organisations ought to use in the strategic planning process is the scanning of environmental factors that influences its business.

According to Arshad, Noordin and Othman (2017), an organisation acquaints itself of environmental factors by conducting the strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities (SWOT) which explores the organisation's internal and environment. While the strengths point to the organisation its resources capabilities that it would use in pursuit of opportunities, weaknesses reveal its resource limitations, making it possible to choose the right path to success (Rahman, 2019). In addition, Arshad *et al.* (2017) observe that SWOT also gives the organisation the chance to identify ways of converting threats into opportunities as well as developing its capacity to improve in technologies that bridge the weakness gap. As a result, the SWOT analysis rates among the most beneficial techniques implemented in strategic planning.

Arshad *et al.* (2017) prescribe steps to follow in conducting the SWOT analysis to ensure that the analysis holistically generate sufficient data for decision-making. The analysis therefore begins with the identification, collection and analysis of data relating to the organisation. The second step assorts the data into strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, which affect the working capability of the organisation. The third step develops the SWOT matrix with grids, with the list of the elements of the four descriptive components. According to Nakayama (2018), the SWOT analysis has passed the test of time to remain one of the important strategic planning tools, enabling the organisation to classify factors influencing business actions to determine proper alternatives for success in achieving strategic objectives. Figure 2.2 below illustrates the SWOT matrix as adopted from Arshad *et al.* (2017).



**Figure 2.1: The SWOT matrix**

*Source: Arshad et al. (2017, p. 132)*

The fourth step serves to use the matrix in making decisions by integrating the findings and results from the SWOT analysis (Arshad *et al.*, 2017). The findings inform the decision-making process towards the establishment and determination of best business alternatives best fitting the organisation's strategic plan (Nakayama, 2018).

From the perspective of public institutions, the SWOT analysis influences practical decision-making processes hinged on the environmental factor element that determines successful and sustainable delivery of quality services (George *et al.*, 2016a; Arshad *et al.*, 2017). A study by Sulemana, Musah and Simon (2018) observes that the SWOT analysis gives the public organisation the opportunity to engage its citizens in decision-making processes because they are the end users of the organisation's services, making them the deciders of areas presenting opportunities and threats for the organisation.

Another technique that is available for organisations is the political, economic, social, and technological (PEST) analysis (Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2019). The PEST analysis critically examines the external forces that influences the organisation's operations by focusing on the political situation, economic conditions, social influences as well as the technological developments (Nzewi & Ojiagu, 2015; Umar *et al.*, 2020). A politically stable environment promotes business activities and a business operating in such an environment would need not to invest much in security related infrastructure, as does an organisation operating within the war zone (Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015; Umar *et al.*, 2020).

In terms of the economic conditions, viability of business operations depend on the rate at which the economy grows as well as its sustainability (Babafemi, 2015). The author

further points the social influences because the business depends on social relationships with the society that provides employees and customers, while the organisation faces the burden to remain relevant to the rapid technological development. This shows that PEST analysis may afford the organisation valuable information in its decision – making and strategic planning.

The environment, political, informatics, social, technological, economic, and legal (EPISTEL) analysis is another tool used by organisations in strategic planning (Rahman, 2019). While the EPISTEL analysis has some components in the PEST analysis, the tool expands with three more. These are the environment, informatics and legal, which focus on examining the environmental factors that influence the organisation’s activities, the informatics relating to the vital information required to influence decisions and the legal framework determining the regulations with influence on the existence of the organisation (Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015).

In the opinion of Pyun and Gamassou (2018) the policy regulations, management proficiencies and resource allocations influence effective strategic plan implementation. According to (Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2016), the EPISTEL analysis engulfs the PEST analysis and, in the case, where an integrated approach to strategic planning, it should supersede the latter. Babafemi (2015) therefore urges strategic planning practitioners to carefully consider the technique that best suits the strategic intent of the organisation. As a result, it becomes unnecessary to utilise more techniques if they serve the same purpose.

## **2.5 The strategic planning process**

The purpose of engaging in strategic planning is to develop a strategic plan that is strong and realistic (Chen *et al.*, 2018). The strategic plan focuses on directing the organisation towards achieving anticipated outcomes through the effective utilisation of organisational resources (Kreutzer, Walter & Cardinal, 2015; Leskaj, 2017). Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2020) further determine that the strategic planning process would not be complete and effective unless it involves the formulation of the strategic plan and implementation of the developed plan coordinated with the pre-articulated guidelines.

According to Afonina (2015), strategic planning entails the development of plans and implementing them. In this context, while the term strategic planning seems to refer to the initial phase of creating strategic plans, the process encompasses the entire cycle from the formulation of strategy to the re-designing of the strategic plan. Chen *et al.* (2018) therefore conclude that strategic planning is incomplete unless the organisation designs the strategic plan and see through its successful implementation. This shows that strategic planning processes should go through rigorous activities aimed ascertaining the proper performance, achievement of strategic plan deliverables and attainment of overall organisational goals.

The two phases in strategic planning therefore influence the effectiveness of the other (Afonina, 2015). In their study, Umar *et al.* (2020) argue that having a well-articulated strategic plan, with realistic deliverable does not guarantee effectiveness in implementation. Rather, there is need to have the capability to put plans into actions and adjust plans to suit the environmental fluctuations until achievement of objectives (Chen

*et al.*, 2018). On the other hand, the capability to put resources together in implementing the strategic plan would be meaningless unless there is a good strategic plan (Afonina, 2015). As a result, balanced effort is critical in ensuring development of good strategic plans and achieving their effective implementation.

From a public sector viewpoint, Wolf and Floyd (2017) reiterate the need to develop strategic plans not out of obligation, but with serious intent to use the strategic plan as a performance guideline. Hence, Kenno *et al.* (2020) argue that there cannot be a strategy without an implementation plan. Agreeably, Daniel (2015, p. 29) states that “[t]he process of strategy formulation, implementation and evaluation is critical to any organisation.”

### **2.5.1 Strategic plan formulation phase**

The first phase of the strategic planning process encompasses the activities centred at developing the strategic plan and this stage is the strategic plan formulation (Afonina, 2015). Formulating strategic plans serves to allow entities to base their future orientation on information relating to its environmental influences (Zaidi *et al.*, 2018). Adetayo (2018) posits that organisations conduct business within the inevitably volatile environment where only paying rapt attention to environmental factors results in the maximization of opportunities.

A study by Daniel (2015) posits that in formulating strategy, the organisation uses information relating to its current circumstances for design actions appropriate for the attainment of envisaged outcomes. As such, effective strategic plan formulation depends on the information about the organisations’ internal and external environment. Kachaner, King and Stewart (2016) therefore propose that situation analysis, and stakeholder

involvement and goal orientation significantly influences effectiveness in formulating strategic plans. A study by Jabbar and Hussein (2017) reveal that leadership also influences strategic plan formulation.

### **2.5.1.1 Situational analysis**

To capture adequate information relating to the organisation's internal and external environment during the strategic plan formulation the organisation performs situation analysis (Adetayo, 2018). Situational analysis refers to the process of critically looking at the circumstances that the organisation finds itself in within the business (Umar, Muhammad & Hassan, 2020). According to Chen *et al.* (2018), situational analysis scans the environment for factors that have an influence on the organisation's operations and devising means for ensuring that they do not negatively affect the organisation's processes.

In their study, Umar *et al.* (2020) conclude that through the scanning of the environment, the organisation gathers data that adds value to its strategic plan formulation. As such, situational analysis enables the organisation to obtain information on the internal and external environmental factors that have an influence on its business processes (Chen *et al.*, 2018; Arend *et al.*, 2017; Adetayo, 2018). Hence, in an endeavour to take advantage of opportunities and avoid threats, organisations can scan their environment to gather critical information required in informing their decision – making and planning processes.

In addition to the identification of factors that influence organisational success, the scanning of the environment reveals the opportunities that may be hidden within the organisation's external environment (Leskaj, 2017). Therefore, situation analysis reveals

information about the organisation that could enhance critical decision – making. In so doing, the organisation uses strategic planning tools such as the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT) (Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020; Aydin *et al.*, 2020) EPISTEL and PEST.

Organisational leaders have the responsibility to ensure critical analysis of the organisation’s environment, create the strategy, which is coordinated with the long-term goal (Adetayo, 2018). It is therefore the mandate of individuals in leadership positions to ensure that facts about their organisations’ environmental forces come to the decision-making platform to ensure that the planning process relies on evidence for charting the future.

#### **2.5.1.2 Stakeholder involvement**

Weyama (2018) identifies an organisation’s stakeholders as the individuals, entities or groups that has interests, stakes, or claims in the organisation. The author further categorizes these stakeholders into two groups, internal stakeholders, and external stakeholders. The internal stakeholders include the employees, management, Board members and shareholders while the external stakeholders include the government, the local communities, suppliers, creditors, customers, and unions (Weyama, 2018; Sulemana *et al.*, 2018).

According to Aydin *et al.* (2020), each group of the stakeholders have interests on the effectiveness of the organisation in providing quality goods and services, which makes them interested in the plans in place for achieving effectiveness. Therefore, the interests of stakeholders may significantly affect the strategic planning processes.

A study by Magiri *et al.* (2018) on the factors that affect strategy implementation within the Kenyan Police Force recommended consultation and participation of employees in the formulation of strategic plans. The study revealed that the involvement of employees makes them aware of the components of the strategic plan and motivate them to associate themselves with the plan.

Further, the study by Adetayo (2018) shows that there exists a positive relationship between employee involvement in strategic planning and effectiveness of strategic plans because employees have the primary knowledge of the actions the organisation ought to take in pursuing objectives. While the employees' contributions to strategic plan formulation, Kharroub and Mansour (2019) observe that, the community participation in strategic plan development gives the organisation, the urge for success because the information provided by the public relates to their needs. Hence, the community in which the organisation operates and serves should count among the key stakeholders.

For government institutions, the community plays a pivotal role in the reputation of the institution since to some extent; citizens regard public officials as their servants whose mandate remains management of citizens' resources (Pyun & Gamassou, 2018; Sulemana *et al.*, 2018; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020). Thus, involving stakeholders in strategic planning determines the quality of the feedback and opinions used in making strategic decisions.

Despite the significance of stakeholder involvement in strategic planning, literature (Sulemana *et al.*, 2018; Weyama, 2018) indicate that the time taken in consulting different stakeholders and critically evaluating their opinion leads to reluctance to involve them.

As a result, organisations miss some valuable information that could lead to appropriate strategies and strategic plans. Abdi and Sasaka (2017) observe that as part of the strategic planning, formulating strategy and strategic plans works well through the combination of adequate information and critical thinking. This means stakeholders' thoughts add value to the strategic plan formulation outcomes.

According to Michira and Anyieni (2018), strategic plans should result from a rigorous process of analysing the external and external forces that influence the organisation's operations. They require the participation of every individual with information deemed necessary for organisational success. According to Fredriksson and Josef (2016), information is vital in strategic planning. As an intangible asset, information facilitate the process of making evidence-based decisions.

### **2.5.1.3 Goal orientation**

Abdi and Sasaka (2017, p. 668) refer to a goal in terms of "...what an individual is trying to accomplish through his or abilities and capabilities as identified in the strategy evaluation processes." Goals inform employees about the single most important aim that the organisation seeks to achieve over a lengthy period and guides employees on the actions that lead to the expected ending. Umar *et al.* (2020) state that goals motivate employees to work towards a certain direction. Hence, Adetayo (2018) there is need for top management and executives to commit to the setting of and supporting the pursuit of future organisational goals.

A study by Magiri *et al.* (2018) reveal that goal orientation, integrity, innovativeness, and leadership have a positive impact on the implementation of strategy. Another earlier study

by Kisner & Vigoda-Gadot (2017) also suggest that in terms of the public organisation, community awareness of the organisation's goal and their support helps administrators effectively pursue their objectives. That means there is need for understanding the broader directional strategy by top management to formulate a meaningful and clear strategy and set up the plan for effective implementation.

With reference to the Kenyan Police Services, Magiri *et al.* (2018) suggest that all officers participate in the process of developing organisational goals, maintain their integrity in their daily duties and have the platform for innovative thinking. From the perspective of Abdi and Sasaka (2017), strategic plans formulated with the goal of the organisation in mind tend to attract support from top management. Therefore, strategic planners, awareness of the vision of the organisation has a positive impact on the quality of the strategic plans.

In the view of Kharroub and Mansour (2019) the awareness of the vision of the organisation and orientation of the organisation towards achieving the helps the organisation in designing appropriate strategic plans and actions for guaranteeing their effective implementation toward achieving the vision. Hence, Jabbar and Hussein (2017) urge organisation's leadership to cascade the vision to all levels of the organisation towards ensuring that every individual understand the long – term focus of the organisation. This enables personnel to align their actions in the direction of the organisation as coined in the vision.

To navigate the strategic planning journey effectively, public managers need to have good judgement skills and wisdom so that they may know the extent to which they ought to

push the political dimension in the creation of substantive value for the public they serve (Alford & Greve, 2017). This gives the managers the sense of goal focus, which in terms of (Zaidi *et al.*, 2018) who wrote about the goal theory, leads them to the inclination towards the goal. Furthermore, public institution goals should find room in the day of the politicians because they have power to change the course of direction (Kharroub & Mansour, 2019; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020).

According to Adetayo (2018), the setting of goals is an organisation-wide effort, which requires the sharing of future expectations. Goal orientation, therefore, is not for the planning practitioners only, but for all stakeholders affected by the public services or have interest in the organisation service. They all should make known their ambitions and thoughtfully corroborate their ideas of the future such that the goal speaks to the desires of all stakeholders.

#### **2.5.1.4 Leadership**

The idea of strategic planning entails the urge to direct the organisation towards reaching favourable objectives in the future (Michira & Anyieni, 2018). In their study, Jabbar and Hussein (2017) look at leadership in terms of the drive that leads the organisation towards the determination of the vision and mission, while facilitating the creation of strategies for achieving the long-term goal. The responsibility of leadership is therefore to provide subordinates with direction on the performance of organisational errands in an effective and efficient manner, which results in high organisational performance and attainment of objectives (Magiri *et al.*, 2018). Jabbar and Hussein (2017) therefore conclude that leadership is the thread that bridges the soul of the organisation and its body. Leaders

therefore ought to have the capability to change the people's way of thinking to identify the strategic gaps within the organisation and formulate effective ways of addressing the gaps.

In strategic planning, the leader's work is to sketch consciously the organisation's plan of action strategically to guide the team towards reaching set organisational goals (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). The leader, therefore, sets out the acceptable behaviour, which enforces the team to formulate the organisation's strategic plan as well as providing motivation for jointly working towards achieving strategic goals (Abdi & Sasaka, 2017). The leader, therefore, has a vital role to play in decision - making to ensure efficacy and organisational success.

According to Michira and Anyieni (2018), strategic leadership significantly influences the implementation of strategic plans. Strategic leadership refers to the ability of the leaders in an organisation to envision and anticipate the future while empowering others to share the vision (Arend, Zhao, Song & Im, 2017). Michira and Anyieni (2018) further regard strategic leadership as involving the management of the strategic activities, developing skills, and managing organisational relationships. Hence, leaders in public institutions should commit to the strategic plans crafted by their organisations and pursue these plans closely with the intent to execute activities that lead to organisational success.

The leader's role in strategic plan formulation also involves the setting of the premises for discourse towards generating innovative ideas and critically interrogating their feasibility (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). Therefore, it serves not to confuse leadership with controlling, which strictly dictates ideas and expects subordinates to follow (Weyama, 2018). Jabbar

and Hussein (2017) reiterates the need for leaders to set the premises for discussion and solicit as much information from employees and stakeholders as possible to make planning decisions based on the anonymously conceived ideas. In this context, leadership acts as setting the direction while the path to the organisation's destiny is a collaboration of ideas relating to the phenomenon within the organisation and inherent critical success factors.

A study by Weyama (2018) argues that strategic planning should involve detailed analysis of the external environment for identifying opportunities and threats as well as the internal environment for identifying the strengths and weaknesses. These could only come about when individuals with knowledge and experience with the organisation get the opportunity to influence decisions.

### **2.5.2 Strategic plan implementation phase**

The strategic plan formulation and implementation processes have an integral top - down relationship, which requires coordinated activities to succeed (Daniel, 2015). A study by Magiri *et al.* (2018) shows that the success of strategic plan formulation may mean nothing to the organisation when the formulated strategy and strategic plans are not effectively implemented.

Aydin *et al.* (2020) suggest that strategy implementation carries more value when compared to strategy formulation. Their opinion hinges on the fact that failure to implement strategy by staff and their management results in costs and damages that outweigh the costs of floppy strategy formulation processes. Hence, "...building a strategic action plan helps to segregate tasks, provide datelines, and estimate the cost,"

(Zaidi *et al.*, 2018, p. 2). The authors however advise that organisations craft clear strategic action plans to effectively implement the strategy. The action plans include aspects such as the responsible individuals to perform certain tasks, the timelines for achieving deliverables and the costs involved. According to Kachaner *et al.* (2016), without clear action plans and specific plans, the entire strategic planning process may not be effective. In addition, Alharthy *et al.* (2017) concludes that most of the strategic planning processes fail in the implementation phase.

Anchor and Aldehayyat (2016) hold the view that strategy implementation is the post – authorization stage of the strategic planning process. The implementation of strategy deals with the actual performance of the plans developed during the formulation phase (Gomera, Chinyamurindi & Mishi, 2018). During implementation, the personnel tasked with conducting specific activities allocates the resources assigned to the tasks towards delivering value for the organisation, its stakeholders, and customers. According to Hartley, Alford, Hughes and Yates (2015), the mandate of every public institution is to create and deliver value to the nation in the form of public goods and services.

The formulation of strategic plans contributes significantly to the achievement of the organisation’s objectives (Albon *et al.*, 2016; Leskaj, 2017). This is due to the holistic analysis of the organisation’s environment that the process of strategic planning facilitates. However, literature (Kachaner *et al.*, 2016; Leskaj, 2017; Andrews *et al.*, 2017) observes that despite the availability of well-designed strategic plans, some organisations continue to operate below their set strategic objectives. Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2020) attributes the failure to achieve strategic objectives to lack of or poor implementation of strategic plans. Hence, the presence of a good strategic plan has no value to the organisation unless

its implementation meets the performance behaviours envisaged. Consistently, Jabbar and Hussein (2017) confirm that formulated strategies are nothing without efficient implementation. Hence, Alharthy *et al.* (2017) view strategic plan implementation in terms of the multifaceted, changeable, repetitive approach that brings managers and employees together to design action plans as well as perform relevant action for achieving objectives.

Usually, the strategic planning process does not smoothly flow from the strategic plan formulation stage to the strategic plan implementation stage (Wolf & Floyd, 2017). According to Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2020), in some cases, the individuals involved in the strategic plan formulation process do not take part in the implementation process. This creates an information gap because the implementers may not have sufficient understanding of the deliverables and timelines. Kenno *et al.* (2020) also suggest that viewpoints at the time of formulation may alter due to environmental changes. They therefore urge organisations to endeavour holistically to link the two stages because strategic plans may only benefit the organisation after their effective implementation.

There is need for advancement of efforts to ensure effective implementation of strategies developed (Aydin, Nyadera & Önder, 2020). However, Gębczyńska (2016) points to research, which revealed that the 90% of companies failing in successfully implementing strategies make mistakes during the implementation stage as well as fail to transfer the strategy from managers to employees. According to Michira and Anyieni (2018), success in implementation remains a concern for many organisations, noting "... there is a high failure rate in the effective implementation of strategy" (p. 30). As a result, the variables

influencing the proper implementation of strategic plans ought to receive adequate attention from strategic plan implementers.

### **2.5.2.1 Employee empowerment**

Zaidi *et al.* (2018) view the involvement of employees in the activities of the organisation as critical to successful operations. The authors add that employee involvement motivates them to commit to the achievement of strategic objectives. However, involvement without adequate decision – making power may not yield results. Therefore, Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2020) urge organisations to empower employees to make decisions and to utilise their skills in implementing strategic plans as a means of enhancing their commitment to the achievement of objectives.

Magiri *et al.* (2018) calls for training of employees on strategic planning and all its components as a way of equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills needed in conducting strategic planning. In addition, Zaidi *et al.* (2018) observe that providing employees with adequate training towards empowering them to perform their duties leads to success in strategic plan implementation. According to Adetayo (2018), the training of employees on the issues, affecting strategic plan implementation creates an environment for successful strategic plan implementation.

Al-Dhaafri and Alosani (2020) note that other causes of failure in strategic plan implementation include staff resistance and lack of strategy implementation skills. Further, Adetayo (2018) recommends the involvement of employees at all stages of the strategic planning process, with their views taken into consideration. Top management may provide the direction for the organisation, but feedback from employees leads to

achievement of plans (Sosiawani, Ramli, Mustafa, & Yusoff, 2015). Management therefore ought to ensure that the vision of the organisation cascades to the employees so that they fully comprehend the organisation's intent as well as the contribution required from them to achieve organisational goals (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017). The availability of information on the reasons for taking certain actions significantly influences the employees' inclination to support organisational intentions and follow leadership cues.

Effective delegation of tasks to personnel promotes successful strategic plan implementation Michira and Anyieni (2018). A study by Zaidi *et al.* (2018) found that strategy implementation influences the entire focus of the organisation, resulting in effective performance and achievement of strategic objectives. According to Adetayo (2018), the strategic plan implementation phase of the strategic planning process demands for cooperation among the various stakeholders such as the employees, management and interested parties.

Magiri *et al.* (2018) observe that employee involvement in the strategic plan implementation phase enhances their performance during the implementation stage. Alharthy *et al.* (2017) also emphasize the fact that the effective conversion of strategy into practical actions taken in day-to-day functions of the organisation requires full involvement of employees and proper coordination of decision-making processes. It is therefore critical to empower employees and give them enough space to contribute to organisational planning and perform their duties. Organisations with empowered employees obtain value from investment in personnel because when the employees are empowered, they tend to be productive.

### **2.5.2.2 Resource capability**

Implementation of strategic plans requires the availability of necessary resources (Adetayo, 2018). The author further reiterates that the organisation “...exploit existing business opportunities by using the present resources while developing and generating a new set of resources to sustain its competitiveness in future market environments,” (p. 1258). According to Wolf and Floyd (2017), effective allocation of resources determines the success in implementing strategic plans. Further, inadequate resources negatively affect the implementation of strategic plans (Magiri *et al.*, 2018). This view is consistent with Leskaj (2017) who suggest that insufficient funding and untimely provision of resources hinders the implementation of strategies in public organisations.

In relation to the resource-based view, Adetayo (2018) reiterates that the resources that the organisation has, which competitors cannot easily imitate enhance the competitiveness of the organisation while the substitutable guarantees the organisation continuous existence. These resources include employee skills, managerial competences, organisational reputation, technological infrastructure, organisational culture and human networks (Davis & DeWitt, 2021; D’Oria, Crook, Ketchen Jr, Sirmon and Wright, 2021). As a result, organisations require adequate and unique resources that competitors cannot copy, or substitutes are critical to the growth and sustainability of the organisation. An organisation with skilled personnel, capable management, good reputation, plant and equipment, supportive culture and suitable technologies can achieve its objectives.

Regarding intangible resources such as skills, patents, and culture, reputation and intellectual abilities, Kamasak (2017) suggests that the organisation need to invest in their

acquisition and retention. However, they are difficult to imitate, which makes them invaluable to the success and competitiveness of the organisation (Barney, 1991; Kamasak, 2017). The value of human resources to an organisation lies in their unique competences that are relevant to the skills needs of the organisation. When skilled and competent individuals become loyal to the organisation, they contribute immensely to its success.

According to Abdi and Sasaka (2017), implementation of strategies and strategic plans depends on the commitment of top management to provide resources for allocation to priority activities. Irrespective of the quality of decisions and strategies made, the lack of resources such as qualified and committed human capital, finance, assets and time, strategy implementation is likely to fail.

Top management therefore plays the pivotal role of enforcing the strategic plan within the organisation (Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Abdi & Sasaka, 2017). Chepkosgei and Atambo (2018) further indicates that effective allocation of resources to priority strategic plans has a significant impact on strategic plan implementation. The later however emphasize that organisation successfully implement strategy when resources are properly utilised.

The role of resources in the implementation of strategic plans goes beyond the physical assets. According to Magiri *et al.* (2018), the human resources, which includes the employees at lower levels, also require adequate empowerment in the strategic plan implementation process to ensure that they add value to the processes. Empowering employees, in the view of Magiri *et al.* (2018) allows the employees to have full

knowledge of the organisation's strategic intent and actions they should take in pursuing the effective implementation of strategy.

From the perspective of researchers in public institutions (Leskaj, 2017; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020) there is a consensus that resources are either in short supply, misused or misallocated. Leskaj (2017) went further as to suggest that due to lack of accountability, public officials also tend to use public resources for personal edification. This shows that the public sector organisation has resource constraints, due to low budget allocation of self-infliction. Thus, there is a relationship between resource capability and the effectiveness of strategic planning processes in public institutions because; the implementation of strategy requires resources.

In their study relating to the failures in strategy implementation Baroto, Arvand and Ahmad (2014) suggest that 60% of organisations do not ensure that there is a linkage between the strategy and budgeting processes, Furthermore, 75% fail to link employees' incentives to their strategy and 86% of individuals owning business and their managers spend little time in strategy discussions.

Baroto *et al.* (2014) further state that 95% of distinctive staff in many organisations have limited knowledge of their organisational strategy. These studies noted that the challenges of strategy implementation comprise the prevalence of political interference, resources imitations and the global economic conditions, which in most cases are beyond the organisations' control.

In addition, Baroto *et al.* (2014) indicate that 66% of corporate strategies never achieved successful implementation while 70% to 90% of organisations operate below their

capacity due to failure to implement strategic plans successfully. The author further reiterates that inefficiency in strategic plan implementation results in deficient performance and unsustainability. This shows that the availability of resources has an influence on the implementation of strategy, calling for organisations to invest in resources in the quest to achieve effective implementation of strategies.

### **2.5.2.3 Monitoring and evaluation**

Attempts to implement strategic plans have proven futile in many organisations due to several reasons (Adetayo, 2018). Therefore, the author recommends monitoring and evaluation of the strategic plan implementation phase to ensure that the smooth execution of intended actions. Moreover, due to changes in the business environment, some plans may need slight adjustments to remain abreast with the internal and external factors affecting the organisation (Sosiawani *et al.*, 2015; Adetayo, 2018).

According to Michira and Anyieni (2018), monitoring and evaluation of the organisations' performance promotes effective implementation of strategic plans since it allows for timely identification of shortcomings and designing of corrective measures. Therefore, with monitoring and evaluation effectively done, management would obtain feedback on timely progress, paving way for the availing of corrective measures without sustaining serious deviations.

The coordination of resources in implementing strategies and strategic plans may be complex and time consuming (Abdi & Sasaka, 2017). Measures are therefore required to assess progress in the process. The plans themselves require assessment to ensure that they align to the overall objectives of the organisation (Abdi & Sasaka, 2017).

While informal appraisals may generate valuable information on the implementation of strategy and strategic plans, Gębczyńska (2016) urges organisations to evaluate strategy implementation formally and document feedback while timely communicating all aspects of the process. According to Kabeyi (2019), the process of strategy formulation and implementation ought to link through the evaluation strategy aimed at ensuring that the strengths of the strategic planning process does not remain some form of useless paperwork. Through the evaluation strategy, the organisation generates credible data for decision – making and align the strategy activities to the vision and societal needs.

Kabeyi (2019) further posits that for the organisation to comprehend the challenges of strategy implementation, it ought to implement rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. Such challenges may include the interference from politician, the unavailability of resources and the global economic factors beyond the organisation's control (Kabeyi, 2019). Monitoring and evaluation therefore provide the platform for staying connected with the internal and external environment as well as make required changes or adjustments towards the prevention of strategy failure. As a result, strategy implementation is incomplete without the adoption of the holistic approaches to monitoring and evaluation.

In the view of Sosiawani *et al.* (2015) the presence of monitoring and evaluation tools such as the balanced scorecard (BSC) review meetings and review of key performance indicators gives an obligation to the parties involved in strategic plan implementation to adhere to the planning scope to have feedback to present during reviews. Hence, by including monitoring and evaluation in the strategic planning process, the organisation leaves employees with the only option of committing to implementation of strategic plan.

A study by Abdi and Sasaka (2017) observe that strategic planning aims to provide managers with information on the probable causes of failure to meet objectives and performance standards. This opens room for investigating the performance indicators that managers may use in evaluating the achievement of set targets (Sosiawani *et al.*, 2015). Nevertheless, the evaluations can only yield results when assessors use the feedback; they generate to adjust the course of action towards achievement of targets. Gębczyńska (2016) therefore believes that organisations can close the disconnection between the strategic and organisational-level decision-making to facilitate effective feedback sharing among personnel at diverse levels. A comprehensive strategy for evaluating the strategy need to be in place to ensure the performance of formal evaluations.

The use of measuring tools such as the balanced scorecard gather valuable feedback on the progress in strategic plan implementation (Michira & Anyieni, 2018). In a study focusing on the reasons for organisations to fail in their efforts to implement strategies, Leskaj (2017) observe that poor and or lack of monitoring and evaluation of the strategy implementation processes leads to failure in efficient implementation.

Kabeyi (2019) insists that the performance of the organisation in the strategy implementation process ought to receive attention from management because when the organisation succeed in putting strategies into action, it would be able to achieve long-term goals. This is to say public administrators should spend sufficient time on monitoring progress on the implementation of strategic plans and regularly investigate deviations so that they may identify areas in need of adjustments on time to employ the necessary remedies.

#### **2.5.2.4 Political influence**

According to Leskaj (2017), political decision - making significantly influences the implementation of strategic plans. In the view of Kharroub and Mansour (2019), the influence of politics in the selection of employees to occupy critical positions within the organisation has an impact on the strategic planning processes because all positions within an organisation ought to be filled based on merit. As a result, Wolf and Floyd (2017) stress on the need to devise effective ways of creating shared understanding of the strategic plans between the politicians and the implementers.

Open communication of deliverables among planning officials, citizens, interest groups, private corporations and public departments facilitates collective commitment to effective strategic plan implementation (Vining, 2016; Leskaj, 2017). Political players therefore should acquit themselves with the organisation's strategic plan so that their influence add value to the strategy formulation and implementation processes (Kabeyi, 2019). That means, politics has the potential to contribute immensely to the development and implementation of strategies when the politician have a clear understanding of the focus of the organisation.

When political players' focus on enriching their personal well-being, they tend to lose focus of the vision of the organisation and began to seek ways of exploiting public resources (Kabeyi, 2019). This shows as stakeholders of the organisation, political players require adequate awareness of the strategic intent of the organisation. Kenno *et al.* (2020) conclude that the lack of focus on execution of strategy and robust strategic plan implementation processes as factors hindering effectiveness in strategy execution. The

author further points out that increased focus on the execution of strategic plans results in successful strategy implementation. In addition, top executives tend to spend less than 5% of their time on strategy execution, resulting in failure of good strategies (Vining, 2016; Fredriksson & Josef, 2016). However, Zaidi *et al.* (2018) view success in strategy implementation as a critical element in the strategic planning process because it converts strategies into action plans for achieving the goal of the organisation. Hence, organisations should not permit any influence to deter the presentation of the findings.

The study by Hartley, Alford, Hughes and Yates (2015) acting in a strategic manner within the public sector often demands that the public managers work within the political realm while not appearing to take the political stance as outlined within the constitutional mandate. To succeed in exhibiting this inclination, the political astuteness of the highest order ought to find acceptance from personnel (Alford & Greve, 2017). The managers therefore should work towards aligning the elements that promote strategic planning (Hartley *et al.*, 2015).

The political actors with direct and direct interest in the operations of the organisation require proper management by the public managers so that their influences in pursuit of their interests do not deter the strategic plan implementation. Public managers can achieve this outcome through maintaining open communication with their political leaders to give them information relating to the strategic intentions of the organisation.

## **2.6 Strategic planning in public institutions**

Since its emergence, the concept of strategic planning had found space within entities in various sectors of society, ranging from the security sector, the political arena and private

sector (Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Safari & Mazdeh, 2018). Having managed to receive acceptance in the competitive private sectors where entities sought to effectively compete for customers to gain market share while generating returns for the shareholders' investment (Jarzabkowski *et al.*, 2016) strategic planning also attracted the attention of public managers whose primary focus is the effective delivery of public services (Pascucci *et al.*, 2017; Leskaj, 2017).

Strategic planning in public sector organisations is equally valuable to the organisation and the recipients of its services. From the conclusions drawn by Pyun and Gamassou (2018), the complexity of the management of public sector entities demands for formality in planning to achieve the set standards of service delivery to the citizens while remaining within the constrained budget. The view of Leskaj (2017) that the lack of financial resources for funding their budgets found acceptance in Kabeyi (2019) who adds that strategic planning strongly depends on the availability of financial resources, which some of the organisations may lack.

Elbanna *et al.* (2016) state that formal strategic planning helps public institutions to plan for effectively utilising public resources in delivering value to the public. The study by Leskaj (2017) shows strategic planning has a key role in organisational success and survival among different organisations. This is because strategic planning connects the gap between the current situation and the desired future of the organisation (Nakayama, 2018; Umar *et al.*, 2020). According to Arend *et al.* (2017), the value of formality in strategic planning supersedes the cost of rigorously engaging in formal strategic planning processes.

The delivery of public value goes a long way in building the organisation's reputation among its stakeholders. In this view, Pyun and Gamassou (2018) accept the definition of strategic planning as coined by Mintzberg as the process through which organisations critically think about the future, encourage collective decision-making, and adopt a coordinated implementation approach. Therefore, while strategic planning definitions may vary in wording, the definitions relate to one common strategic objective.

“Strategic planning is a useful tool of help in managing the enterprise, especially if the strategy and strategic plans can be successfully deployed throughout the organisation,” (Adetayo, 2018, p. 1258). Arend *et al.* (2017) reveal that strategic planning plays a vital role in promoting consistent improvement in the performance of the organisation. Hence, the effectiveness of the strategic planning process culminates into the achievement of plans crafted during the process. Adetayo (2018) further accredits the strategic planning process as the backbone of successfully designed plans and organisational performance. Public institutions therefore ought to adopt strategic planning practices as a means of enhancing their service delivery as well as sustainability of operations amid difficulties posed by environmental forces.

By adopting strategic planning from the perspective of Nakayama (2018) organisations systematically predict the desirable future and then breaks down the broader vision into precise sequenced actions. Organisations implement these actions over time to achieve the vision of the organisation. In this regard, every action effectively performed would build into the overall goal of the organisation (Umar *et al.*, 2020). Hence, when successfully done, strategic planning enables the organisation to curb environmental challenges because the process takes into consideration all factors that influences the organisation.

Through effective strategic planning, organisations develop strategic plans that play a positive role in quality service delivery and proper resource utilisation (Chepkosgei & Atambo, 2018). Strategic planning and implementation are vital for achievement of quality services and effective use of resources.

Strategic plans give the means for translating visions, missions, values, and objectives into practical government programs aimed at meeting societal needs (Leskaj, 2017). Michira and Anyieni (2018) state that strategic planning should receive attention from leaders within an organisation because it is the process through which, they can have confidence in the processes their organisations engage in, knowing that they would have their foundation on critical thinking. According to Kariuki *et al.* (2016), organisations with effectively executed strategic plans achieve their long-term goals and perform much better than those organisations that do not plan strategically. Effective execution of strategic planning and implementation leads to improved organisational performance.

While the focus of strategic planning is to construct long - range plans, it does not do away with concern for uncertainty (Kenno *et al.*, 2020). Strategic planning uncovers the spectrum for the opportunities pursued by the organisation (Aydin *et al.*, 2020). In this regard, strategic planning enables public organisations to consider all avenues for achieving objectives. Pascuci *et al.* (2017) concludes that strategic planning may be an effective management tool for multi-sector organisations implemented in different circumstances. As a result, public organisations ought to embrace strategic planning.

By engaging in strategic plan formulation, public institutions create a platform for linking politicians' aspirations with the citizens desired in forming a shared plan with practical

deliverables (Pyun & Gamassou, 2018). Kenno *et al.* (2020) share the same idea and add that strategic planning in public institutions brings together the citizens, politicians, and public managers to find ways of prioritizing resources towards addressing societal problems collectively. Strategic planning therefore includes "...aspiration, the cognitive and the collective, the planned and the learned, the socioeconomic and the political, the public and the private, the vision and the action, the local and the global, legitimacy and a revised democratic tradition, values and facts, selectivity and interactivity, equality and power, long-term and short-term," (Albrecht and Balducci, 2013, p. 20). That means the through strategic planning, all departments and individuals get to share the intentions of the organisation as well as the attitudes required to achieve desired outcomes.

Strategic plans enable public managers to think critically, craft long-term plans and act constantly over an extended period (Pyun & Gamassou, 2018). Kenno *et al.* (2020) add that strategic plans provide the basis for taking certain positions in the face of alternatives. However, Aydin *et al.* (2020) argue that strategic plans that find their roots in in-depth comprehension of the environment have the likelihood to succeed. Therefore, the argument by Pyun and Gamassou (2018) advocating for the significance of thoroughly analysing the environment during strategic planning deserves consideration. This is consistent with the adoption of national development plans such as the millennium development goals, which aim to guide nations, regions, and continents towards collectively working for the achievement of common outcomes.

Wolf and Floyd (2017) suggest that government institutions would significantly benefit from engaging in strategic planning. That means that the utmost focus of strategic public and non-governmental business managers ought to remain the direction of organisational

performance by effective planning and implementation of strategic plans towards the attainment of competitive edge against rivals and quality service delivery. Strategic leaders, therefore, set their sight on the development of the capabilities of their personnel who are vital resource, through which business ideas become reality.

Strategic plans provide instruments for prioritizing key projects within the public sector, which saves the government resources (Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Adetayo, 2018). In the same way, Michira and Anyieni (2018) view strategic plans as pieces to a game and implemented in winning the game. Even though strategic plan implementation could be viewed as a progressive process of putting plans into action, there exists timelines for the achievement of specific objectives.

According to Elbanna *et al.* (2016), strategic plans culminate in the effective use of resources in fulfilling organisational objectives and their success lies in the achievement of the short-term actions that build into the long-term plan. Therefore, results confirm the success of strategic plans. According to Chepkosgei and Atambo (2018), strategic plans guide the organisation in its operations and create a forecast of the expected results. Therefore, strategic planning acts as the backbone for the strategic plan designing. The process should holistically scan the environmental factors affecting long-term planning to develop and implement value – adding plans.

Further analysis of the views of Wolf and Floyd (2017) leads to the understanding that strategic plans serve as communication tools that link the experiences, present situation, and future aspirations. In the opinion of Wolf and Floyd (2017) strategic planning calls for an organisation's stakeholders to get out of their comfort zones and engage in an

endeavour to critically analyse their ideas to take advantage of opportunities. Strategic planning therefore provides public organisations with the required opportunity to actively analyse the environment and prepare for any eventuality, which may deter the achievement of strategic objectives (Adetayo, 2018). The essential elements of the strategic planning process, therefore, include mission development, designing the vision statements, internal and external environmental scanning, developing strategic priorities, and designing a clear plan of action to be achieved within a specified period (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Wolf & Floyd, 2017). This shows the complexity of the process of strategic planning, calling for a systematic approach towards the process to guarantee the development of a good strategic plan.

Strategic plans are means of understanding and clearly articulating opportunities presented by the business environment. According to Kenno *et al.* (2020), the strategic plan informs the organisation personnel of the opportunities the organisation pursues and give clear actions that make it possible to take advantages of the opportunities. In keeping with Umar *et al.* (2020), the focus on opportunities and future orientation saves the organisation from the operational whirlwind, which results in constantly responding to uncertainties.

However, the benefits of strategic plans produce results when they are successfully implemented (Zaidi, Zawawi, Nordin & Ahnuar, 2018). As suggested by Wolf and Floyd (2017) the influence of strategic planning differs from organisation to organisation in harmony with the specification of variables, such as dimensions of organisational outcomes observed. Strategy implementation depends on the controls in place to guide the activities (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016). Wolf and Floyd (2017) also consider the formality in strategy formulation and implementation as key to public organisations.

According to Mubarak and Yusoff (2019), the formulation of strategy used to require more effort than implementation, but this notion has now changed with the implementation process' requirements increasing due to technological development as well as the need to satisfy the expectations of consumers. However, both the strategic plan formulation process and the strategic plan implementation process should get equal attention since they point to the effective utilisation of resources and attainment of value from the investment.

## **2.7 The resource-based view**

The resource-based view (RBV) refers to the strategic management model extensively applied in examining the significance of resources in driving competitive advantage (Nason & Wiklund, 2018). The RBV has its foundation on the notion that resources, and resource capabilities are diverse across other organisations, which means the application of the theory would make it possible to explain the success disparities among organisations (Alexy, West, Klapper & Reitzig, 2018; Gerbera, Lieberherr & Knoepfel, 2020). The view holds the belief that organisations have different assortments of resources at their disposal, which makes their ability to conduct similar activities dissimilar. Alexy *et al.* (2018) observe that the way in which an organisation uses its resources also differs from the other organisations within the industry. That explains the differences in performance of organisations even when they have the same kind of resources.

The influence of the RBV on academic research and strategic management within organisations continue increasing since the formalization of the theory through the revolutionary exertion of Wernerfelt (1984) and Barney (1991). RBV development aligns

with strategy and economics research (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Gerbera *et al.*, 2020). The operationalization of RBV in strategy research varied in its explanation of organisational performance, though it managed to attract attention towards the firm's capabilities (Wassmer *et al.*, 2017; Rockwell, 2019).

From an organisational economics perspective, the RBV integrated agency theory as well as the transaction cost theory (TCT) (Davidson, De Filippi & Potts, 2018). The idea was to ensure that organisations benefit from the investments in the resources they create or acquire. The TCT provides a superior appreciation of the roles and origins of diverse market features for trading services with external environments (Davidson *et al.*, 2018; Rindfleisch, 2020). Survival of the organisations is hinged upon the availability of resources and the efficient allocation of those resources to achieve their strategic objectives.

Efficient and effective use of the scarce resources enables the organisations to enhance their performances. Proper utilisation of the resources is a driver to the achievement of organisational objectives. Resources need to be aligned to the fulfilment of strategic objectives (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Gerbera *et al.*, 2020). In this study, the resource-based view is looked at with a view to determine how effective the resources are used towards the achievement of strategic planning in the public sector in Namibia. Nason and Wiklund (2018) are of the view that the RBV is centred upon the allocation and efficient and effective utilisation of the resources to achieve the desired competencies and outcomes.

The effective utilisation of the available resources makes other Ministries to perform better the others. The organisation's resources are specific to the organisation in terms of

quantity and quality, allowing the organisation to withstand its competitive advantage and superior performance for protracted period (Benkler, 2017; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Rindfleisch, 2020). Different organisations hold different resources quantities, qualities and capabilities; however, the success of each organisation is dependent upon the use of the scarce resources available to achieve the desired outcomes.

The RBV endeavours to elucidate the role that resources play in the creation of opportunities for growth, effective performance, and competitiveness (Alexy *et al.*, 2018). However, the RBV emphasizes that organisation's resources ought to have features to create the advantage. Citing Barney (1991), Rindfleisch (2020) propose four attributes that the unique organisation's resources must have:

Firstly, the resources need to propose value to the organisation in that they should exploit available opportunities while neutralizing threats within the firm's environment. The resources also ought to have unique features that are rare to the existing and potential competitors, while being imperfectly imitable. Lastly, no strategically comparable replacements for the resources valuable to the organisation should be accessible to other organisations easily because substitute resources could render the firm's resources obsolete.

In terms of the firm resources' imperfect imitability, one or combinations of the three attributes; firm's ability to obtain the resource depends on exceptional historic conditions and the connection between resources controlled by the organisation. In addition, the organisation's persistent competitive advantage is causally uncertain, and the resource creating the organisation's advantage is communally intricate (Alexy *et al.*, 2018).

Using the four resource attributes enables leaders and managers to assess the suitability of the resources that the organisation has as well as the resources that the organisation would require in the future to achieve its operational targets. The RBV therefore presents an articulate systematic way of integrating the organisation's environment and its performance indicators (Nason & Wiklund, 2018). Adopting a RBV approach in making business decisions therefore affords the organisation the unique chance to take advantage of its available resources as well as create future resources in delivering value.

The resource-based view (RBV) focuses on the value of organisational resources among other factors with an influence on organisational performance. The theory holds that the organisation's success depends on the ability to access, create, and retain specific resources such as the physical resources, the human resources, and organisational resources (Wernerfelt, 1984; Barney, 1991; Barney *et al.*, 2001; Nason & Wiklund, 2018). David and David (2017) refers to firm structure, information systems, patents, trademarks, copyrights, culture and reputation as critical organisational resources a firm should create and maintain to achieve competitive advantage. Intangible resources are more important for gaining and sustaining competitive advantage.

The resources that benefit the organisation on the long-term are those that the organisation can retain for a lengthy period, which other organisations may not imitate (Alexy *et al.*, 2018). With reference to social media, Gao, Tate, Zhang, Chen and Liang (2018) observe that the value of organisational resources, their inimitability and rarity builds brand sustainability, which significantly increase organisational performance and sustainability. The RBV is therefore applicable to industries because all organisations use resources to create goods and services.

Hughes, Morgan, Hodgkinson, Kouropalatis and Lindgreen (2020) observe that resources are critical inputs to the organisation's capability to implement processes. Particularly, the rarity of the resource that the organisation requires to develop and implement the strategies in the face of rapid changing environments could enhance achievement of strategic objectives. The study by Tietjen and Jørgensen (2016) affirm the significance of resources in planning for success, with the view that the entire planning process require capable planners, appropriate resources, and willingness from employees to invest their skills in achieving the outcomes of the plans. RBV therefore influence the development of feasible plans, execution of the plans as well as evaluation of the comprehensive planning cycle.

According to Alexy *et al.* (2018), resources may exist in various categories, which include the human resources, financial resources, and organisational infrastructure. The human resources are the personnel of the organisation, their unique skills, experience, and competencies. The financial resources relate to the funding capabilities, which come from the ability of the organisation to generate sufficient funds, maintain substantial revenue streams to fund current and future operations (Nason & Wiklund, 2018). Alexy *et al.* (2018) further show that the organisation's infrastructure relates to the immovable and movable assets that the organisation currently has as well as the assets the organisation have capacity to develop in the future. In addition, infrastructure resources relate to the technologies and physical assets the organisation uses to produce goods and services (Eresia-Eke & Soriakumar, 2021). Organisations with adequate resources and have the capacity to maintain their current resources are therefore likely to achieve their current strategies while their ability to access resources in the future enables them to sustain their strategy implementation.

## 2.8 Strategic planning and the resource-based view

Public institutions formulate and implement strategies to guide their energies towards the improvement of service delivery (Iacovino *et al.*, 2017). Public strategic planning is however complex, due to resource constraints and conflicting interests in these institutions (Lee, McGuire & Kim, 2018). There is a need for collaborative effort by administrative, political, and societal actors to facilitate shared vision (Johnsen, 2018). Developing and implementing strategies in an environment filled with conflicting interests requires more focus on the expertise that goes into the development of strategy and the resources allocated to the implementation process. There are noticeable improvements in strategic planning studies (George *et al.*, 2018). However, few took the activity-based approach and resource-based view focusing on responsive strategizing processes and monitoring the strategy process (Lee *et al.*, 2018).

Among the essential resources required in strategy implementation are employees, whose skills lead to development of feasible plans and strategies (Michira & Anyieni, 2018). While other organisations may have, the skilled employees that can contribute to decision-making, certain organisations struggle to compete for skilled personnel on the job market (Barley, Treem & Kuhn, 2016). For example, the study by Zhang, Jiang, Wu & Li, (2019) conclude that obtaining skilled employees with the necessary skills to drive the organisation's strategy is difficult for small businesses and public institutions. Regarding the small businesses' failure to attract skilled employees, studies argue that the small businesses do not have the financial capacity to compensate talented employees for their services (Wassmer, Li & Madhok, 2017; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). On the other hand, public institutions' woes regarding talent attraction result from either financial constraint,

shortcomings in recruitment practices and external factors such as political influence on individuals occupying critical positions (Roudgar, 2018). Talented personnel are therefore scarce in key positions within the public sectors.

Michira and Anyieni (2018) recommend full involvement and participation of personnel at all levels during decision-making and strategic plan formulation to succeed in strategic plan implementation. Personnel are critical resources in any organisation because they have unique capabilities that technologies and other infrastructure do not have (Kharroub & Mansour, 2019; Collins, 2021). The expertise of each employee within the organisation is therefore critical to the development and implementation of strategy and strategic plans. The quality of the plans developed by the organisations depends on the capability of the individuals involved in the strategy process (Varsani, 2018; Alomran, 2019). Consideration of the people involved in strategic planning is a critical component of the strategy process because the lack of strategic competence within the organisational personnel could lead to inadequate quality strategic plans.

According to Jabbar and Hussein (2017), the effectiveness of strategic planning requires good leadership responsible for the guiding of the process of developing strategies towards the achievement of the vision. Leaders are critical resources in the strategic planning process for their influence on the process guides the entire organisation towards the development and implementation of strategy. Strategy formulation therefore seeks to provide the roadmap for reaching the organisation's vision and the roadmap should clearly focus on core competences that enable the organisation to achieve its purpose (Adetayo, 2018; Chen *et al.*, 2018). It is however the duty of the organisation's leadership to ensure that the strategy process link with the vision. Nakayama (2018) regards strategic

leadership an essential contribution to successful strategic formulation and implementation. That means strategic planning ought to be holistic and encompass all facets of the economy.

According to Nakayama (2018), while the prevalent of consultant strategists may significantly influence the creation of good strategies, the involvement of other stakeholders such as the community and employees should never fall away. That means the consultant in strategic planning should function as enablers rather than replacement to the individuals that have in-depth knowledge of the organisation. Particularly, in public institutions, citizens remain key stakeholders in the strategic plan formulation and implementation process (Kharroub & Mansour, 2019). Jabbar and Hussein (2017) further urge the leaders in an organisation to play the role of guidance in the strategic planning process while their subordinates' contributions find place in the determination of alternatives to the aged ways of doing business. A study by Otieno, Munyua and Olubandwa (2016) concludes that the best way to plan in a public institution is to ensure that stakeholders participate in the planning processes and their voice inform decision-making. Therefore, public organisations institutions ought to allow for citizen participation in their decision-making processes and consider their views when developing strategic plans.

The study by Sulemana *et al.* (2018) establish that stakeholders may contribute significantly to the monitoring and evaluation of progress if they participate through the regular stakeholder review meetings. This shows that it is beneficial for a public institution to hold regular review meetings where stakeholders obtain feedback on the progress on implementation of strategy and supply alternative to processes that do not fall within the

set performance targets. The skills of the stakeholders with noteworthy influence on the public strategic processes are critical to the strategic planning processes in public institutions (Sulemana *et al.*, 2018). The review of the strategy process is an essential component of in ensuring that the process can create value (Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016). Lieberman, Balasubramanian and Garcia-Castro (2017) observe that the creation of value is the centre of the strategy process because it results in achievement of strategic objectives.

Studies (Weiss, 2016; Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Andrews *et al.*, 2017) suggest that public institutions could do well in terms of strategic planning when they implement formal strategic planning processes. The authors emphasize that the results of formal strategic planning suffice in the commitment of public managers to pursue strategic issues and aligning their operations to public policy and priorities of the organisation. Remarkably, existing literature submits that strategy execution is pointedly more challenging than strategy design, as some organisations struggle to implement strategies accurately (Köseoglu, Yazici & Okumus, 2018; Hwabamungu, Brown & Williams 2018) consequently hampering organisational performance. The phenomenon is more prominent in public sector institutions (Hwabamungu *et al.*, 2018; Kinyua, Njeri & Mukirikanyaru 2018). To achieve the full benefits of conducting formal strategic planning processes, managers in the public sector should conduct the process in ways that improve the participation of personnel at all levels (Akvesi, 2019; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020; Lee, 2020). Senior public administrators ought to engage their personnel in strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The study by Alford and Greve (2017) propose that in public sector, strategy should move forward from remaining aligned to the aspect of corporate planning models. Strategy should incorporate diverse activities that bring management and employees towards participating with passion in the quest to guide the organisation to success. Management ought therefore to focus on strategic approaches that focus on the outcomes while paying attention to developing their organisations in the direction that forms and shapes the value position of the public institution (Wolf & Floyd, 2017; Chen *et al.*, 2018). Elbanna *et al.* (2016) further encourage the engagement of stakeholders with their counterparts, including the citizens. In addition, politicians, who are also stakeholders in public institutions, should understand the strategic intent of the organisation. Public managers therefore should follow the more balanced path, taking themselves as partners in the creation of value creation.

Adetayo (2018) recommends that top management actively participate in the strategic planning processes to attain the outlined organisational objectives. Top management should set the example in terms of the commitment to the development, pursuit of strategic plans and realization of strategic objectives (George *et al.*, 2016a; Magiri *et al.*, 2018; Kharroub & Mansour, 2019; Lee, Rocco & Shuck, 2020). This shows that the effective formulation and implementation of strategic plans require the commitment of top management, who are the individuals with decision-making powers within the organisation. According to Adetayo (2018), the role of leaders and top management in strategic planning is that of ensuring that the rest of the employees align their efforts to short – term and long-term goals of the organisation. Hence, their appreciation of strategic plan cascades down to their subordinates, and to the lowest members of the organisation.

They therefore should pay attention to the extent to which their employees relate to their own orientation to strategic planning and strategic plans.

## **2.9 The conceptual framework**

A study by Kabeyi (2019) shows that strategic planning and management enables the organisation to prepare for sustaining itself as well as overcome competition. The study confirms the importance of strategic planning for organisations in the private sector, the public sector, and non-profit organisations. One of the key components that Kabeyi (2019) stresses in strategic planning is self-assessment toward realising the inherent capabilities of the organisation to formulate, execute and evaluate its strategy. That explains the need for investing in rigorous forecasting, budgeting, and provision of resources (Chen *et al.*, 2018; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Alomran, 2019; Dakare, Adebisi & Amole, 2019). Strategic planning creates the premise for detailed forecasting, budgeting, and resource allocation (Karna, Richter & Riesenkampff, 2016; Zahra, Neubaum & Hayton, 2020; Collins, 2021). Organisations in the public and private sector conduct strategic planning to facilitate the understanding of their environment and taking actions in pursuit of strategic objectives.

In terms of the resources required for strategic planning and implementation, Kabeyi (2019) considers human capital as crucial. By human capital, Kabeyi (2019) refers to the recruitment of suitably qualified employees, developing employees to meet organisational requirements, retaining motivated employees, and ensuring that all individuals take an active part in organisational strategy.

In relation to the RBV, Collins (2021) asserts that employees as an organisation's resources ought to have the necessary and superior competencies to add value to the performance of the organisation. Personalities of individuals, intellectual abilities, expert knowledge of employees and their ability to collaborate efforts in promoting achievement of organisational goals makes employees indispensable (Akvesi, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2019). Persistent consideration of the calibre of employees the organisation has and can acquire is essential in strategic planning among public institutions.

Addressing the causes of some issues in strategy implementation, Alomran (2019) cited inadequacies in employee capabilities. The study by Barley, Treem and Kuhn (2016) recommends continuous training of top management and other staff members as an intervention for ensuring effectiveness in purposeful strategy implementation. Understanding the role of collaborative actions in the creation of value is essential in achieving strategies (Wassmer *et al.*, 2017; Zahra *et al.*, 2020). This is to say that organisations that combine their actions towards strategic processes are likely to succeed.

Unless an organisation establishes the capacity to identify the essential resources needed to implement its strategies and collaborate such resources uniquely in the pursuit of strategic objectives, its strategies and plans remain mere ambitions (Karna *et al.*, 2016; Nason & Wiklund, 2018). Strategy studies therefore commend the alignment of organisational ambitions to the resources possessed by the organisation as well as the ability to create adequate resources to sustain implementation of strategies continuously (Kim & Ployhart, 2018). RBV as a theory proposes making resources central to development and execution of feasible strategies.

The systematic review of literature by Parker, Ntounis, Millington, Quin and Castillo-Villar (2017) shows that the resources needed in strategic planning and implementation increase in line with the future organisational aspirations. The RBV suggests that an organisation constantly examines adequacy of resources as well as creation of resources required to sustain its functions (Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Nagano, 2019; Al-Doori & Areiqat, 2019). These resources are the skills of personnel, organisational infrastructure, financial resources, organisational culture and information systems. Along this observation, Chen *et al.* (2018) concludes that the complexity and time-intensity of the strategic planning process demands for strong focus on the realistic nature of the strategic plans and strategy developed. The concern of the resources required in strategic planning should persist throughout the process, while informing all strategic decisions made.

Achievement of strategies by countries such as the USA and China after World War II has been pivoted on the ability to build adequate infrastructure for formulating as well as implementing strategic interests (Roudgar, 2018; Al-Doori & Areiqat, 2019). Availability of infrastructure makes it feasible for the decision-makers to assign ideas to actionable actions (Varsani, 2018).

A study by Al-Doori and Areiqat (2019) point physical assets, technologies and coordination platforms are essential in strategy because they enable the organisation to put plans into actions as they address the needs of society. Adopting a RBV stance means the entity makes the availability of adequate infrastructure the focal point in decision-making and continue to create capabilities to develop superior infrastructure for production and delivery of goods or services (Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Dakare *et al.*,

2019). Having appropriate infrastructure is crucial for the provision of goods and services and public administrators ought to devote efforts developing superior infrastructure.

Funding is another crucial aspect in the development and implementation of strategy (Al-Doori & Areiqat, 2019). Financial resources are essential in the development of strategy because they increase organisational capability to engage competent individuals in making business decisions (Dakare *et al.*, 2019). Funding also enables rigorous analysis of the sectorial environment where the organisation operates (Rockwell, 2019).

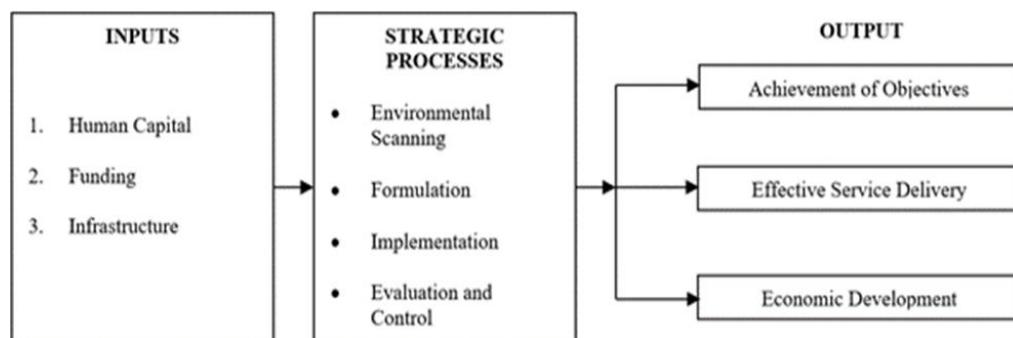
Pursuing a strategic path demands for constant financing of strategic milestones, replacement of aging physical resources as well as creating innovative technologies for remaining abreast with the organisation's strategic intentions (Karna *et al.*, 2016; Yu, Downes, Carter & O'Boyle, 2016; Dakare *et al.*, 2019). Strategizing therefore require consideration of the sources of funding and maintaining a steady supply of funds.

Studies show that development, implementation and evaluation of strategies and strategic plan enables organisations to achieve their strategic objectives (Magiri *et al.*, 2018; Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Weyama, 2018; Zaidi *et al.*, 2018; Aydin *et al.*, 2020). Strategic planning is a continuous articulation, implementation, and evaluation of strategic activities at all organisational levels (Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Brorström, 2019).

From a public sector perspective, the objective of any institution is to achieve effective service delivery and economic development (Iacovino, Barsanti & Cinquini, 2017; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Johnsen, 2018). Achievement of strategic objectives require critical consideration of resources such human capital, funding, and infrastructure (Nason &

Wiklund, 2018; Dakare *et al.*, 2019). Strategies are implemented through converting plans into actions, requiring competent personnel, funding and equipment.

Evaluation and control are important components of the strategy process because they identify gaps in the process and provide mechanisms for bridging the gaps timely (Zaidi *et al.*, 2018; Kabeyi, 2019). Strategic evaluation and control assess strategic plans and monitor organizational performance along with the actual performance. When there deviations, the prescribed remedial actions come into effect (David & David, 2017; Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Kabeyi, 2019). In order to ensure effectiveness of strategies and take corrective actions when required, ongoing assessment of the strategy performance is necessary. Figure 2.3 below presents the conceptual framework that formed the basis of the current study, developed as a major contribution of the study.



**Figure 1.3: The conceptual framework**

*Source: Adopted from Kreutzer et al. (2015)*

## 2.10 Current strategic planning from the Namibian context

Strategy implementation within the Namibian public sector institutions has faced inadequate structures, personnel competencies, financial resources, human resources, and

logistical infrastructure and communication systems to support the implementation of the strategy (Maritz, 2019). Strategic plans within the public sector are adversely affected due to scarcity of resources (Jellenz *et al.*, 2020). Shortage of resources creates a wide gap during the strategy planning and implementation phases. It is, however, critical to focus on the gaps that are created in both the strategy planning and strategy implementation stages. Resources are crucial throughout the strategic planning and implementation processes; hence the need to carry out this study focusing on the resource-based view targeting the strategy planning and implementation process.

A study by Filippus and Schultz (2019) reflected that competent personnel are needed within the Namibian public sector. Human resource capital with the essential strategic planning expertise is highly needed in the Namibian public sector. However, the study is focused on the strategy execution phase and does not address human input in the strategy process. Another study by Semente and Nandjungu (2020) also focused on the implementation of strategy as a tool for good governance, growth and economic development. Developing and implementing strategy is essential for the Namibian public sector since it would enable the sector to grow and achieve its developmental objectives. Nevertheless, studies show that strategic processes within the Namibian public institutions do not achieve their objectives (Shopati, Mitonga & Isaacs, 2017; Shopati *et al.*, 2018; Semente & Nandjungu, 2020). Shopati *et al.* (2018) state that despite having the best strategies, Namibia faces challenges in implementing its strategic decisions. Based on this backdrop, it is therefore critical that this study be carried out to address this gap faced by the Namibian public sector due to unavailability of resources within the public sector.

## **2.11 Summary**

This chapter reviewed the literature providing the basis of the study. The chapter presented the evolution of strategy and strategic planning, the concept of strategic planning as well as the strategic planning techniques. The review shows that strategic planning is essential to the achievement of organisational strategic objectives. In addition, the process of strategic planning and implementation was examined, which is a concept adopted in both the private and public sector. With the understanding that resources are essential in formulation, execution and evaluation of strategic planning, the review discussed the significance of adopting the RBV in strategic planning, leading to the proposition of the conceptual framework. The following chapter deals with the methodology followed in conducting the study.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The study sought to develop a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector. In the current chapter, the researcher outlined in detail the path taken in conducting the study in line with the research problem and questions. Research methodology is the logical speculative analysis of methods implemented in a study (Rahman, 2017). The methodology therefore provided the theoretical groundwork for understanding practical methods suitable for application in the study. According to a study by Mohajan (2018), each study ought to have a disciplined, systematic, and explicit methodology to produce desired and appropriate findings.

Research methodology as a generic research strategy, defines the way towards undertaking a study, which makes it an integral component of the study by ensuring consistency among selected research tools, techniques and the underlying philosophy (Melnikovas, 2018). The research methodology therefore provided the premise for the researcher to select tools, techniques for conducting the study as well as adopt a philosophical assumption, which led to generation of knowledge.

This chapter serves the purpose of articulating the philosophical inclination to the research, the research approach, and the research design and research method. The chapter also details the population of the study, the sampling techniques and sample size, data collection tools, data collection procedure and the techniques for data analysis. Khaldi (2017) observes that research is the process of acquiring knowledge through a systematic

and orderly manner. The chapter further presents the means for confirming the trustworthiness of the study, which replaces validity and reliability.

In addition, ethical standards observed in conducting the study are discussed before ending the chapter with a summary. In keeping with the conclusions from a study by Abutabenjeh and Iaradat (2018), the credibility of research work hinges on the processes implemented in conducting the study and a vague methodology usually leads to unreliable conclusions and recommendations. This methodology discussion therefore serves to indicate the path followed and the procedure followed in conducting the enquiry that led to the development of the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector.

### **3.2 The research philosophy**

The starting point for research methodology is the description of the philosophy upon which the researcher positions the study (Melnikovas, 2018). The philosophy is important because it determines the way the enquirer views the nature of knowledge and its development (Khaldi, 2017). The philosophy therefore helps the researcher to select the knowledge required to solve the research problem, the existence of such knowledge and the means of accessing the knowledge. In research, philosophy refers to the beliefs and assumptions regarding the development of knowledge (Ryan, 2018). These beliefs and assumptions relate to the actions of the researcher towards the generation of knowledge, solving a problem or confirming a theory (Khaldi, 2017).

The research philosophy relies on the notion that the researcher makes critical decisions and assumptions at various stages of the study, such as the epistemological assumption,

which determines human understanding, ontological assumptions influenced by encountered realities as well as the axiological assumptions based on the degree to which the researcher's personal values influence the research process (Melnikovas, 2018; Ryan, 2018).

According Khaldi (2017) the path the researcher takes in discovering new knowledge depends on the philosophical views that the researcher chooses to adhere to as well as the variable under investigation. The research philosophy is therefore the basis upon which the researcher decides on the research strategy, the research problem as well as the data collection tools, procedure and analysis.

From the historic school of thought, research philosophies exist as either positivism and interpretivism or pragmatism and realism (Melnikovas, 2018). Interpretivism, also known as constructivism, holds the view that individuals pursue understanding of their surrounding environment to develop subjective meanings through experiences (Don-Solomon & Eke, 2018). The positivist holds the belief that knowledge is a result of observation and objective reasoning while the interpretivist holds that knowledge and truth emanates from subjective reasoning (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). However, pragmatism holds on the assumption that the researcher reserves the tenacity to choose any or both positivist and interpretivist stances if the chosen option suits best the specific research question (Melnikovas, 2018). The author further points that the realist's position observes that knowledge is an outcome of discovering generative apparatuses. According to Ragab and Arisha (2018), the pragmatic viewpoint leads to the adoption of multiple beliefs toward the generation of knowledge, particularly when in-depth understanding is at the core of the study.

In constructivism, the researcher looks at complexities of views rather than narrowing the meanings into fewer categories (Melnikovas, 2018). The study adopted the constructivism philosophical stance to generate the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. This was done through interactions with the individuals involved in strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The crux of the research was to depend on comprehensive information from the participants' opinions and experiences with strategic planning and implementation within their institutions to develop theory inductively.

According to a study by Charmaz (2016), when the researcher's aim is to make sense of the meanings from the understanding of the world by others, the philosophical lens to adopt is constructivism because it permits interpretation of participants' experiences in generation of knowledge. The view therefore helps the researcher to ground theory in the understanding of the context within a phenomenon (Don-Solomon & Eke, 2018; McCall & Edwards, 2021). The constructivist's view enabled the researcher to ground the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the comprehension of the Namibian public sector context.

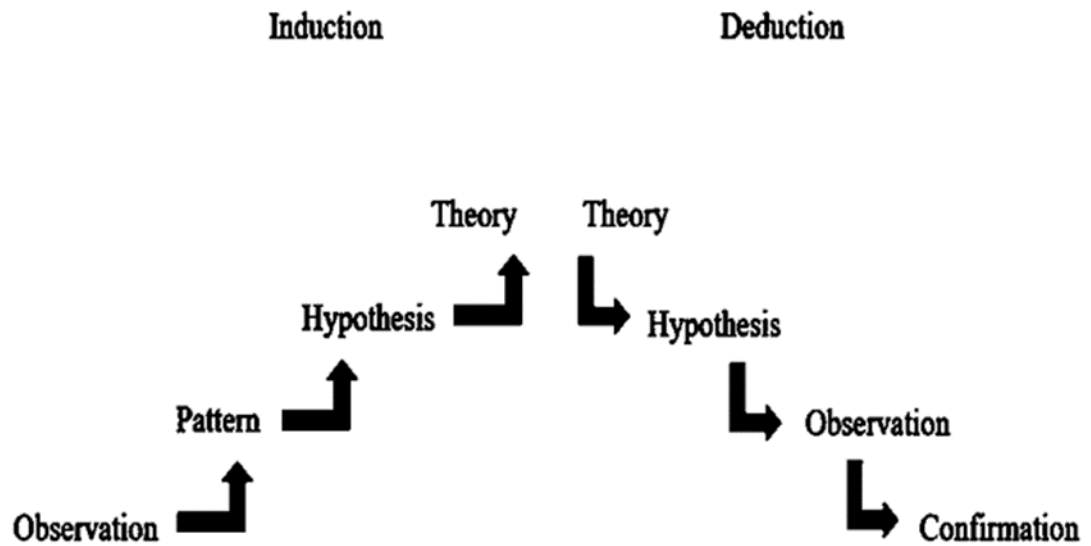
### **3.3 Research approach**

There are two research approaches that researchers base their enquiries as focal points of conducting research (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). The choice of the approach or approaches to adopt depends on the purpose of the enquiry conducted (Khaldi, 2017). Each researcher therefore should understand the nature of the two approaches to select the appropriate one. To develop new theory, the researcher follows the inductive approach, which tends to rely

more on the understanding of a particular research phenomenon from within its own context (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). According to Ragab and Arisha (2018), the inductive approach to research follows a flexible structure in an investigation of a particular problem. The inductive approach uses the understanding of the researched phenomenon to generate the theory.

On the contrary, the deductive approach uses deductive reasoning, starts with the suggestion of an existing theory and devises an appropriate research method for assessing the theory (Khaldi, 2017). Unlike the inductive approach, the deductive approach adopts a highly structured research methodology for investigating causal relationships that exist between variables (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). The structured nature of deductive approaches eliminates the involvement of the inquirer in the inquiry. The assumption in deduction is that reality is dogmatic and can be revealed through objective tests that proves the existence of the truth within the phenomenon.

Results from a deductive approach tend to apply to wider audiences and phenomena and are generalisable (Melnikovas, 2018). According to Ragab and Arisha (2018), the fundamental distinction between the deductive and inductive approach lies in the fact that the deductive approach commences with a theory, evaluated to reach a conclusion while the inductive approach begins with an observation that leads to development of a theory. That means, induction involves the participation of the inquirer in observing realities embedded within the phenomenon. Figure 3.1 below illustrates the contrast between the deductive and inductive approaches.



**Figure 3.1: Comparison between induction and deduction**

*Source: Ragab and Arisha (2018, p. 5)*

By carefully analysing figure 3.1 above, inductive reasoning adopts the bottom-up approach while the deductive reasoning follows a top-down approach. According to Ragab and Arisha (2018), the researcher may choose to follow both approaches in one study, where the study begins from an inductive reasoning perspective and ends with the confirmation of the developed theory. To develop the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector, the inductive approach was adopted.

Developing theory requires understanding the phenomenon through the experiences and views of the participants with comprehensive familiarity with the situation (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; Ragab & Arisha, 2018; Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). The inductive approach was implemented through grounded theory by allowing the individuals

responsible for strategic planning processes to contribute to the development of the resource-based approach for public sector strategic planning and implementation.

### **3.4 Research design**

Research design refers to the plan, structure, and strategy, which the researcher implements in investigating to answer the research question, solve the research problem or achieve the research objective (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). According to (Mohajan, 2018), research design explains the way through which the researcher intends to pursue the research goal while setting out the specific details for the enquiry. Through the design, the researcher can make critical decisions on the procedure for conducting the study. The design therefore pertains to the logistical study framework, procedures for measurement, sampling strategy, the frame for analysis and the research timelines (Khaldi, 2017).

The decision on a proper and fitting research design is critical in guiding the researcher towards arriving at credible and valid findings, conclusions, and recommendations. On the other hand, loose designs lead to misleading conclusions, which is tantamount to a waste of the resources employed in conducting the study (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Hence, researchers ought to devise a workable, articulate, and manageable research design to conduct fruitful studies.

Abutabenjeh and Iaradat (2018) refers to research design as the blueprint towards guiding the entire research process by outlining the direction the study follows, beginning with the designing of the purpose to the achievement of the research outcomes. There is consensus among scholars on the main types of research designs, with descriptive, explanatory, and exploratory designs commonly surfacing in many studies (Maxwell, 2016; Khaldi, 2017;

Ragab & Arisha, 2018; Creswell & Hirose, 2019). Other designs include correlational designs, which aim to establish existing relationships between various aspects of a phenomenon (Ryan, 2018). Case studies aim to dig deeper into the problem affecting a phenomenon (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). In addition, applied studies, which investigate the systems inherent within an entity (Melnikovas, 2018) and grounded theory research that builds theory from data (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018). Researchers therefore have a variety of designs to select when planning and conducting research.

While the descriptive designs attempt to describe the situation, problem, community, or a phenomenon to give meaning to the nature of the issue, the explanatory designs seek to give clarity to the existence of relationships between two or more aspects of a phenomenon (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). The exploratory design on the other hand, undertakes to explore the situation in which little is known from an objective point of view (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Adopting the exploratory design permits the revelation of hidden facts through in-depth investigations of issues that are specific to the researched context.

The constructivist grounded theory integrates the researcher's views with participants' experiences with rooted, hidden complexes, conditions and relationships while making sense of the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2016; Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; McCall & Edwards, 2021). Charmaz (2017) alludes that constructivist grounded theory focuses on developing a detailed understanding of underlying social or psychological processes within the context of exhaustive examination of social interactions and experiences. Adoption of the constructivist grounded theory design therefore leads to grounding theory in the data collected from the research Namibia public sector.

### **3.5 Research methods**

Research methods relate to the techniques researchers implement in the collection and analysis of research data (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Depending on the nature of the research objective or problem, the researcher decides on the data required for the study (Maxwell, 2016; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017; Mohajan, 2018). The researcher makes the critical decision on the appropriate method for gathering and analysing data, based on the data needed for the study (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). That means time and effort are needed when deciding on the appropriate method for any study.

According to Khaldi (2017), research methods exist as either qualitative or quantitative. The distinction between the two being that quantitative research method investigates the phenomenon by collecting quantifiable numerical data that is statistically analysed and qualitative research method relies on feelings and words analysed through themes and patterns (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). The choice of the method therefore depends on the nature of data the researcher intends to collect. Selecting the method that do not suit the data needed to reach the desired conclusions and recommendations tends to limit the quality of research findings.

Maxwell (2016) observes that both qualitative and quantitative methods have strengths and weaknesses, which requires that the researcher select the method with the most benefits for the study. Hence, the justification of using either the qualitative or the quantitative methods is on the ability to yield relevant results. While their strengths may lead to achievement of research objectives, their weaknesses limit their capability to produce feasible findings and recommendations (Rahman, 2017). Researchers therefore

ought to weigh the options before settling for a preferred method as the method chosen determines the data collected as well as the nature of results obtained.

Qualitative methods include as research designs: grounded theory, phenomenological studies, and case studies, which makes them less generalisable (Mohajan, 2017). As a result, qualitative methods tend to produce findings applicable to a smaller population, sharing the same characteristics as dictated by the study's context (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). This makes qualitative methods suitable for in-depth studies where the researcher seeks to discover deeper meanings from studying a phenomenon and applying the findings to its context. In this regard, qualitative methods best suits in research aiming to uncover underlying meanings within a social phenomenon where knowledge generation is of paramount importance (Ryan, 2018). Studies aiming to contribute to knowledge by generating new theory tend to adopt qualitative methods.

On the other hand, quantitative methods apply when one is seeking to provide answers to questions of relationships existing between variables using mathematical models (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). In this context, quantitative research methods produce predictive, confirmatory, and explanatory findings generalisable to a wider audience (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Quantitative methods include as research designs: surveys, structured observations and experiments that result in the confirmation or rejection of a hypothesis (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). As a result, quantitative methods suit research where enormous quantities of data are required and generalised to a wider population. The quantitative method is therefore a useful method in contributing to knowledge by statistically testing and confirming existing theory. Table 3.1 below illustrates the fundamental strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methods.

**Table 3.1: Strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods**

	Qualitative methods	Quantitative methods
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Data based on participant’s own constructs</li> <li>- In-depth study of cases</li> <li>- Capable of describing a difficult phenomenon</li> <li>- Gives understanding of people’s personal experience</li> <li>- Give detailed description of human interactions</li> <li>- Ability to describe personal construct interpretations</li> <li>- Determine reasons for occurrence within a phenomenon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Testing existing theory</li> <li>- Validating existing theory</li> <li>- Findings are generalizable</li> <li>- Eliminate the influence of variables</li> <li>- Discover cause – and – effect relationships</li> <li>- Data collection is less time consuming</li> <li>- Data analysis is less time consuming</li> <li>- Precise results are generated</li> <li>- Results are independent of researcher</li> <li>- Data collected from large sample</li> </ul>
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Usually, non-generalizable findings</li> <li>- Difficult in testing theories and hypothesis</li> <li>- Time consuming in data collection</li> <li>- Time consuming in data analysis</li> <li>- Possibility of the researcher’s influence on the results leads to personal biases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Theories developed not necessarily true reflections of local constituencies</li> <li>- Misses out real situation within the phenomena due to focus on testing existing theory</li> <li>- Usually, produces too abstract knowledge</li> <li>- Findings and recommendations sometimes too generic for applying to a specific context</li> </ul>

*Source: Ragab and Arisha (2018, p. 8)*

Building on the pragmatist foundation, research may adopt a position, which does not lean on either the qualitative or the quantitative methods as a better option than the other does, but as complementary, giving rise to the mixed methods research (Maxwell, 2016). Mixed methods research combines the elements of qualitative methods and quantitative methods to offset their individual weaknesses (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). In this view, the qualitative data complements the quantitative with a profound meaning and perception into phenomena, while quantitative methods validate the qualitative enquiry through the statistically tested findings (Maxwell, 2016). Using quantitative and qualitative methods in one study can be seen as a way of making sure the limitations of one method are compensated by the other method.

**Table 3.2: Mixed methods research**

Mixed method	Description	Purpose
Convergent parallel	- Qualitative and quantitative data collected using similar variables. Data is analysed separately before a comparison.	Results corroboration
Explanatory sequential	- Begins with collection and analysis of quantitative data. - Collects and analyses qualitative data to explain and interpret findings from quantitative data.	Seeks deeper understanding of the results
Exploratory sequential	- Begins with collection and analysis of qualitative data. - Design the tool for collecting quantitative data using results from the first stage. Collects data from a large sample to generalize findings to a larger audience.	Seeks to produce generalizable findings
Embedded	- Collects and analyses data simultaneously using a larger design	Serves to assess an intervention within applied contexts
Transformative	- Involves the incorporation of the elements of explanatory, convergent, or exploratory sequential designs in a social justice framework.	Marginalized group studies
Multiphase	- Involves conducting various mixed methods research in one project.	Used in long term evaluations

*Source: Source: Ragab and Arisha (2018, p. 10)*

As Creswell and Hirose (2019) confirm, the decision to adopt a particular research method depends on the data required to achieve the objectives of the study. For this study, the qualitative method was deemed suitable because the intention was to develop the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector from the perceptions of the directors responsible for strategic planning and implementation within their respective institutions. The qualitative method was implemented using grounded theory with the objective of grounding the resource-based approach for strategic planning in the data collected from the Namibian public sector. Interactions with the directors yielded data that informed the development of the resource-

based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector.

A study by McCall and Edwards (2021) implementing grounded theory in qualitative studies afforded the researcher the opportunity to gather in-depth data from interactions with participants towards developing new theory. Grounded theory formed the foundation for gaining understanding of a situation through its experiences. Detailed information about the strategic planning processes within the Namibian public sector was therefore collected through continuous interplay with the directors tasked with the institutions' strategic planning processes.

### **3.5.1 Grounded theory**

Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed grounded theory to provide a logical procedure for gathering and analysing qualitative data. The roots of grounded theory are in discovery of behaviour, actions and expressions of individuals studied (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Charmaz, 2016). Specifically, the goal of grounded theory is to explore a phenomenon for deeper understanding and drawing theory from situations where less knowledge exists (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). Implementing grounded theory facilitates the generation of applicable theory from studying reality through individuals involved in the situation.

For this study, the goal was to generate understanding from the experiences of the individuals responsible for strategic planning and strategy implementation within the Namibian public sector. The grounded theory was suitable because it allowed the individuals to express their opinions and experiences with no limitation to predetermined assumptions. Individuals were engaged in rigorous discussions on their experiences with

strategic planning processes to allow them to reflect on the realities pertaining to strategic processes as well as achievement of the strategic objectives set. The individuals were given opportunities to collect their thoughts and give detailed and afterthought opinions to ensure they had stated all aspect they deemed valuable to the discussions.

Studies on the implementation of grounded theory show that it generates theory throughout the research process, which makes the theory an output of the constant interaction between analysis and collection of data (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Charmaz, 2017; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). The continuous analysis of collected data during the study allows for identification of information gaps, addressed by re-engaging the involved individuals. According to Charmaz (2017), grounded theory derives its strength in allowing understanding to emerge from experiences with the situations as well as exploring further for less understood facts.

Grounded theory helps the enquirer to apply real experiences to develop the theory. In this study, grounded theory provided the opportunity for continuous interaction with the participants with detailed understanding of the strategic processes in the Namibian public sector, and building understanding based on their real experiences. Grounded theory was to build up on the theory pertaining to a resources-based approach to strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. Theory building depended on the deliberations that took place with the participants.

### **3.5.2 Advantages of implementing grounded theory**

One of the advantages in implementing grounded theory is its ability to generate deeper understanding of a complex situation (Charmaz, 2020). Grounded theory allows an

opportunity to collect detailed information within an occurrence, which helps in understanding the context of the studied situation. Through the open interactions with data and the phenomenon, facts can be collected (Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Mfinanga, Maroso & Bishibura, 2019; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). Open interaction with information facilitated identifying unknown and unpopular facts on a phenomenon. In this case, openly interacting with the individuals responsible for strategies within the institutions generated real data from which the resource-based approach was developed.

Another advantage achieved through grounded theory was obtaining real facts from the people experienced in the daily occurrences within the Namibian public institutions. Obtaining data from individuals' experiences with the daily activities provides a chance for gathering facts and developing theory on reality rather than assumptions (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Makri & Neely, 2021). Keeping in touch with the data collected during the study also helps in understanding the way the participants view the situation (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Mfinanga et al., 2019). That also helped in ensuring that interpretations that build into the theory developed remain rooted in the data. The grounded theory approach helped in understanding truthfulness among the participants because it was possible for the researcher to compare feedback timeously.

### **3.5.3 Principles of grounded theory followed in the study**

Collected data were coded in three stages, which are the open coding, the axial coding and the selective coding. In grounded theory, open coding, often used at the initial coding is the first stage in coding collected data (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). The open coding step breaks down data into discrete labels, called codes (Makri &

Neely, 2021). Codes were identified from the voices of the participants and were grouped according to the research questions. The researcher made use of in-vivo for coding by coding the exact words of the participants, obtained from the statements the participants made. Birks and Mills (2015) show that making direct reference to the words and phrases made by the participants in initial coding lead to capture of facts contained in the data.

As data were analysed concurrently with collection, constant comparison was done to sort and organise the data according to the similar attributes. Glaser and Strauss (1978) urge the use of constant comparison to compare with data to identify all information with similar attributes to the coding categories. Constant comparison helped in assigning codes to groups where they were best fitted as well as identifying gaps in the data collected. Relating coded information to raw data also helped in maintaining the voice of the participants and avoiding personal bias from the researcher.

The next step in coding data was axial coding when connections between the ideas in coded data were done. The open coded codes were studied for their significance to the research. Axial coding follows the open coding process in grounded theory and identify codes that are central and important to the study (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Birks & Mills, 2015; Charmaz, 2020). Open codes were read along their underlying data to discover the ways they could be abstracted in further categories. Codes that resembled each other and the redundant ones were merged, given new names.

The last coding step was selective coding, which is the pinnacle of the data collection and analysis process. According to Charmaz and Thornberg (2020), selective coding is the zenith of the grounded theory because it enables the researcher to merge similar coded

data into major ideas that inform new theory. This stage integrated the categories developed in axial coding into the cohesive theory. The codes from axial coding were elaborated through constant comparison and validated by the raw data before being theoretically integrated into overarching theory consistently with the research focus, which was to develop a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector.

Through memos, theoretical notes were made to reflect on the coding process and take an analytical stance of the coded data. Memos also enabled the researcher to keep a record of the analysis process and view the connections in the data. Memos are written notes for the researcher's use in reflecting on the coding process and personal ideas, allowing for keeping track of the material studied (Glaser & Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). The writing of memos accompanied the coding process, with the notes made assisting in the detailing of the coding decisions. Diagrams were produced showing the steps of coding from the initial open codes to the axial codes and finally, the selective code, which were developed into the themes and sub-themes emerging from the data.

### **3.6 Population, sampling, and sample size**

#### **3.6.1 Population of study**

One of key decisions that the researcher must make when designing the research plan is the population, which pertains to the individuals in a group sharing the same characteristics of interest (Asiamah, Mensah & Oteng-Abayie, 2017). Findings of a research derive their attributes from the population, by means of their linkage through

selected participants or the entire group (Mohajan, 2018). Asiamah *et al.* (2017) therefore relates to population as the premises of the evidence-based results of a study.

Without a clearly defined population, researchers face high chances of reaching ambiguous findings, which leads to the discrediting of the entire research process (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). Asiamah *et al.* (2017) further reiterates that, as the prime source of research data, population significantly influence credibility of the research. Hence, the decision of a population in research remains paramount to the entire research process.

In addition to the itching for researchers to understand sufficiently their population, they ought to articulate pithily and plainly the population to convince their audience that the selected population fits the study (Asiamah *et al.*, 2017). The researchers however, caution that knowing the population and revealing it objectively remains crucial responsibilities resting on the researchers' shoulders, which call for ardent effort.

To determine the population correctly, the researcher should identify the study's unit of analysis (Eyisi, 2016; Asiamah *et al.*, 2017). The unit of analysis for a study refers to the entity that the researcher makes conclusions about at the end of the study (Levitt, Motulsky, Wertz, Morrow & Ponterotto, 2017; Sim, Saunders, Waterfield & Kingstone, 2018). For some studies, the unit of analysis could refer to the individuals while in some studies the unit of analysis consists of the entities in their totality (Sim *et al.*, 2018). For the current study, the unit of analysis was the individual institutions within the Namibian public sector, which are the ministries that make up the sector.

The determination of the unit of analysis was because the study sought to develop a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector, which means, the public institutions within the sector are the entities that the research looks at and make conclusions about at the end of the research. Grouped together, the twenty-three public institutions made up the population of the study.

The determination of the population aligns to the assertion of Asiamah *et al.* (2017) that the population is a group of individuals or objects that share the same characteristics. The Namibian public institutions share the same characteristics in that they all have an obligation to engage in strategic planning and implementation to allocate public resources towards contributing to economic development. The population of the study was therefore twenty-three ministries within the Namibian public sector.

### **3.6.2 Sampling and sample size**

Sampling refers to the process adopted in the decision of taking a small section of cases purported to represent the population (Ragab & Arisha, 2018; Majid, 2018). Due to circumstances such as the resource constraints, time constraints and research scope, which makes collecting data from the larger population unfeasible, researchers resort to sampling the population into a smaller group of individuals (Melnikovas, 2018). Thus, researchers in studies with large population need to be aware of the nature and techniques suitable for sampling their population.

According to Ragab and Arisha (2018), the sampling procedure adopted should be capable of choosing the best-suited individuals for the study. While sampling has its foundation on the techniques available for use in sampling, the willingness of population members to

participate in a study also plays a role in sampling (Asiamah *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, sampling does not simply reduce the number of participants, but decides on the individuals capable of providing adequate and reliable data for reaching feasible conclusions.

A study by Majid (2018) observes that the sampling approach adopted in a study hangs on the population characteristics, the research design and method. Two categories of sampling techniques exist, and researchers choose the one that suits the study (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Within the probability sampling category are the techniques that offer the cases within a population an equal or proportional chance of selection into the sample (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). However, in non-probability sampling techniques, selection into the sample depends on the decision of the researcher or other circumstances such as the availability of the individuals at the time of data collection (Majid, 2018).

Majid (2018) emphasises that with the clear understanding that the purpose of sampling is to determine the sample size, the sampling process should result in the achievement of the desired sample. Sharma (2017) urges researchers to consider sampling the population, only when it is impossible to reach all population cases. Table 3.3 below illustrates the various techniques existing within the probability sampling and the non-probability sampling category.

Probability sampling tends to find its popularity in quantitative studies, which make use of large sample sizes (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). On the other hand, non-probability sampling suits well in qualitative studies where the sample is determined by the researcher (Majid, 2018).

However, the decision on the appropriate sampling method to use should be well thought out to ensure that the sample is both a true representation of the population and capable of giving valid and sufficient information for the achievement of the research objective (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Hence, in some cases, the researchers utilise more than one sampling method to ensure that they have achieved the desired sample size and select the individuals who are well informed in the field of study (Majid, 2018).

**Table 3.3: Sampling techniques**

Category	Technique	Description
Probability	Simple random	Involves the selection of the cases randomly and providing each case with an equal chance to participate in the study.
	Systematic	The selection of the sample at a regular interval
	Stratified random	Involves dividing the study population into groups based on their unique attributes, followed by application of the random sampling to various groups.
	Cluster	Involves the division of the population into various groups on the bases of their naturally occurring attributes. The researcher proceeds to apply random sampling in the selection of clusters. The research data comes from the individuals in the selected clusters.
	Multi-stage	The technique uses a series of sampling frames by categorizing the population into clusters and sub-clusters before using random sampling in choosing sub-clusters randomly. Chosen clusters then provide data for the study.
Non-probability	Quota	Involves the selection of sample cases proportional to their cluster groups. The researcher predefines quotas to ensure that each group has fair and proportional representation in the sample.
	Purposive or judgmental	Involves the use of the researcher's personal judgment to decide on individuals with adequate knowledge and experience, which allows them to give data suitable for meeting the research objectives.
	Snowball	The researcher contacts a selection of few individuals, who in turn nominate individuals they deem capable of providing reliable data. The process continues until the researcher collects data from the desired sample size.
	Self-selection	The researcher gives the participants the prerogative to voice their desire to participate in the study.
	Convenience or haphazard	The researcher collects data from the individuals with ease access randomly. Once the researcher reaches the sample size, the data collection process stops.

*Source: Source: Taherdoost (2016, p. 20)*

In view of the inductive nature of the study, which required collecting and analysing data through grounded theory, the purposive sampling method was used for selecting the sample from the population. Using the researcher's judgement to determine the sample was crucial because of the need to identify the institutions with current strategic plans, which increased the chances of interacting with the participants that participated in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the strategies and strategic plans. Grounded theory requires identification of participants with extensive understanding of the context (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; McCall & Edwards, 2021). Purposive sampling helped in identifying the officials that dealt with the strategic planning and implementation processes within the ministries. The sampling frame was the individual ministries from which the sampling units were drawn. Seven sampling frames were drawn from the twenty-three ministries within the Namibian public sector. These ministries were accessible in the government directory available from the Ministry of Information, Communication and Technology.

### **3.6.3 Sample size**

The directors that are responsible for strategic planning from the selected ministries constituted the sample of the study. The purposive sampling technique was used to select them since they are the custodians of strategic planning and implementation in their respective ministries, and had the relevant information needed for the study. The sample size of the study was seven participants.

The sample of seven was adequate for this study because the intent was to collect detailed information from each participant. As a result, there was repeated interactions with the

participants. In studies of qualitative nature, the focus of qualitative research is sample adequacy and not sample (Natoli, Jackling, Siddique, 2015; Aguboshim, 2021). The seven participants were adequate because they had the necessary information required for the study.

### **3.7 Research instrument**

After finalizing the decision on the sampling method and the sample size, the researcher proceeds to the designing of the instruments for data collection (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). Research instruments are the tools used for collecting data (Majid, 2018). Single method research such as a qualitative or quantitative methods research, usually uses a single instrument for data collection (Ragab & Arisha, 2018). The sample subjects also determine the instruments used for data collection (Sharma, 2017). However, in mixed methods research, the common phenomenon is using more than one data collection instrument, one for qualitative data and the other for quantitative data (Maxwell, 2016).

Nonetheless, researchers using mixed methods also have the option to use one instrument, provided the tool has various sections for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data (Khaldi, 2017). The fundamental factor to consider is the ability of the preferred instrument to collect sufficient data for the study (Maxwell, 2016; Majid, 2018). Researchers therefore need to understand the nature of the data required and choose an instrument or a combination of tools capable for collecting sufficient and useful data.

Questionnaires, interview guide, video recording devices, audio recording devices and cameras are some of the instruments that researchers could use for data collection (Eyisi, 2016; Sim *et al.*, 2018). However, the common instruments used in collecting data are

questionnaires and interview guides (Khaldi, 2017). While questionnaires are most suitable for collecting quantitative data, they also feature in qualitative data collection (Majid, 2018). That means that the researcher could make use of the questionnaire for a quantitative or qualitative study. The variation is that the questionnaire used in collecting quantitative data comprises of structured questions while the questionnaire for qualitative data collection contains non-structured questions (Khaldi, 2017). On the contrary, the interview guide is suitable for collecting qualitative data because it applies when the researcher engages the participants in open discussions (Eyisi, 2016). This explains the reason researcher opts for interview guides in qualitative data collection and questionnaires for quantitative data collection.

The research instrument used for this study was the interview guide, made up of non-structured questions. The interview guide was considered suitable because the study collected data through grounded theory, which requires in-depth discussions between the researcher and the participants. In grounded theory, the researcher collects qualitative data on the experiences, opinions, and interactions with the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2016; Charmaz, 2017; Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; McCall & Edwards, 2021). The interview guide therefore serves as the guideline for the researcher's line of questioning to ensure that the discussions align to the study (Charmaz, 2017).

The interview guide comprised of nine non-structured questions based on the research questions and focusing on developing a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The questions on the interview guide therefore sought to gather data on the consideration of resources in strategic planning and implementation by public institutions.

### **3.8 Data collection procedure**

The data collection procedure is critical in enabling the researcher to gather adequate data within the specified timelines and budget (Mohajan, 2018). The procedure for collecting data is crucial because it shows the path followed in planning data collection, collecting data, and determining sufficiency of the collected data (Saunders *et al.*, 2018). Procedure is therefore a critical component of the research methodology section. As a result, researchers ought to lay out a clear plan for collecting data as well as setting out the actual activities done during data collection (Abutabenjeh & Iaradat, 2018). In grounded theory, the clarity of the data collection procedure increases the credibility of the data collected as well as the findings drawn from the data (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020).

The researcher collected data from the seven sampled public institutions through grounded theory and used an interview guide. The process began with making appointments with the participants representing the directors that are responsible for strategic planning within the sampled institutions. Initial interviews commenced fourteen days after making the appointment to avoid inconveniencing the participants. Face-to-face interviews were held with three participants while online interviews were held with the other four participants on zoom. The face-to-face interviews took place at the participants' offices situated in Windhoek. On average, the interviews lasted for forty-five minutes.

Directors responsible for strategic planning were targeted from each institution, which means that the researcher intended to interview seven participants, with the option of increasing the number, if there would be room to gain new insights from other individuals. Collecting data through grounded theory demands that the researcher continues collecting

data from more participants as long as there is still valuable information to inform the theory (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; McCall & Edwards, 2021).

For this study, the researcher interviewed seven purposively selected participants. During the interviews, open-ended questions were asked, and participants expressed their experiences, views and opinions openly. Where gaps in information were immediately clear, further probing questioning took place. Care was taken to avoid judgemental or conclusive question. Participants were given unique codes to avoid mentioning their names during data presentation. For example, the first participant was referred to as public institution officer interviewed first and abbreviated to PIO01. Table 3.4 below illustrates the pseudonyms used to identify participants.

**Table 3.4: Participants’ pseudonyms**

<b>Participant description</b>	<b>Shortened description</b>	<b>Interviews</b>
Public institution officer interviewed first	PIO01	2
Public institution officer interviewed second	PIO02	2
Public institution officer interviewed third	PIO03	1
Public institution officer interviewed fourth	PIO04	3
Public institution officer interviewed fifth	PIO05	2
Public institution officer interviewed sixth	PIO06	2
Public institution officer interviewed seventh	PIO07	3

***Source: Researcher’s Own Construct***

In addition to continuing collecting data from more participants to gain more insight regarding the consideration of the quality and quantity of resources as well as the ability to create resources required for strategic planning and implementation, the researcher re-interviewed the participants deemed to have relevant data and could contribute more to the study. Collecting data using grounded theory requires that the researcher look out for

participants with the ability to provide more information and re-interview them to fill up all gaps in the data collected (McCall & Edwards, 2021).

The researcher therefore analyses the data collected immediately and approaches the participants for further discussions until they achieve data saturation (Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020). Data saturation happens when the researcher has collected sufficient data and begins to receive the same information from the data sources (Eyisi, 2016; Saunders *et al.*, 2018). Theoretical saturation was achieved when the categories identified in the data were no longer altering the comprehension of the studied phenomenon. During data collection, the researcher conducted multiple interviews with seven of the participants. At the point where information gathered fitted into the existing categories, data collection was stopped.

At the end of each interview, the researcher informed the interviewee of a follow-up interview. The rationale for interviewing participants more than once was to obtain more information to fill the gaps identified in the data collected and coded. Participants were willing to engage in the interview process more than once as long as they were given notices on time about the intended interviews. All participants got the opportunity to review the data they provided to confirm data accuracy.

### **3.9 Pilot study**

A pilot study is a feasibility test conducted to confirm the possibility of administering the research instruments in a full-scale study (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). The pilot study also serves to confirm practicality in collecting and analysing data within a reasonable period (Fauzi & Pradipta, 2018). For this study, the researcher conducted the pilot study by

holding interviews with three participants from three public institutions that did not make part of the sampled institutions. The intention was to confirm feasibility of holding interviews within forty-five minutes as well as securing repeat interviews from the participants. The other aspect assessed was the ability of the participants to provide relevant answers to the questions on the interview guide.

Creswell and Hirose (2019) urge researchers to conduct pilot studies and adjust their procedures to achieve desired research outcomes. Minor adjustments were made to the interview questions to ensure that interview and probing questions could be addressed within the prescribed forty-five minutes. The results of the pilot study are discussed in chapter four, giving clarity of the research preparation process.

### **3.10 Data analysis**

Research data has no significance to the study unless it is critically analysed and interpreted to give meaning towards solving the research problem (Fauzi & Pradipta, 2018). Various data analysis techniques therefore exist for researchers to apply in analysing the data they collect during a study (Mohajan, 2018). A study by Akinyode and Khan (2018) shows that data analysis should follow systematic procedures to produce applicable outcomes from research studies. The authors further observe that in subjective qualitative research, data analysis leads to a deeper explanation of the meanings emerging from the data, resulting in achievement of the views of the participants.

From a quantitative data analysis perspective, the use of statistical and scientific methods relies on the use of numbers in informing decision-making (Mohajan, 2018). In this

context, numerical data and statistics inform the researcher of the relationships existing between variables (Eyisi, 2016).

For this constructivist grounded theory inductive study, the method used for analysing data was grounded theory. Grounded theory focuses on building theory from the data collected from the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2016). In the view of Flynn and Korcuska (2018), the analysis conducted through grounded theory generates knowledge from the context, which grounds the theory in the data. In view of this understanding, the analysis of data began with openly coding data from the initial interviews. Open coding refers to categorisation of ideas and assigning unique identifiers to the ideas (Charmaz, 2017). As more data were collected, ideas emerging from the data were allocated relevant codes while more emerging codes were created. The analysis of data closely followed the data collection process, allowing the researcher to get involved with the data collected and ground the resource-based approach framework for strategic planning in the Namibian public sector in the collected data.

Following the identification of the initial codes from open coding, axial coding was done to identify the connections between open codes. The codes from axial coding were corroborated by the raw data before being theoretically integrated into predominant themes and sub-themes for the development of a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The entire analysis process was documented through memos with diagrams produced to show the steps of coding from the initial open codes to the axial codes and finally, the selective code.

To complement the data analysis process and use computer aided analysis to confirm the themes, NVivo 12 was used in recoding the data. Cluster analysis was conducted to visualize patterns in the data through grouping codes that shared similar words, attribute, and meanings. Cluster analysis in NVivo assist the researcher to visualise the patterns by creating groups of codes with similar words and values (Dalkin, Forster, Hodgson, Lhussier & Carr, 2021). The cluster diagrams produced provide graphical representation of the top-level codes and child node, leading to the adoption of the selective codes because they were consistent.

According to Hayashi, Abib and Hoppen (2019), there is need to relate the themes emerging from analysis of data to the raw data to ensure that the results represent the voice of the participants and not that of the researcher. Themes were interrelated, with similar themes integrated to avoid repetition. Three themes emerged with three sub-themes under each major theme. The themes and sub-themes were discussed with one interviewed participant from each of the seven sampled public institutions for them to verify that the themes were consistent with the data they provided. This is consistent with the opinion of Eyisi (2016) that allowing representatives of participants to review the themes adds credibility to the study.

After confirming the themes, the researcher proceeded to interpret the themes and sub-themes towards developing the resource-based approach for strategic planning. The interpretation process included narrations, supported by direct quotations from the participants. Indirect quotations were also used during the interpretation of the themes and sub-themes. Hayashi *et al.* (2019) asserts that data interpretation in qualitative studies requires consistent reference to the voice of the participants to avoid relying on the views

of the researcher. In grounded theory, reliance on the voice of the participants is critical in ensuring that the theory developed emerges from data and the research context (Charmaz, 2016; Flynn & Korcuska, 2018; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020; McCall & Edwards, 2021). Consistent reference to the data in determining themes and sub-themes ensured that theory emerged from data collected from the Namibian public institutions.

### **3.11 The measure of trustworthiness**

According to Hayashi *et al.* (2019), the subjective nature of a qualitative study requires that the findings of the study rely on the data collected and not the influence of the researcher. A study by McCall and Edwards (2021) also observes that participants' perceptions should inform the findings of the study. Instead of confirming validity and reliability as in quantitative studies, qualitative researchers ought to achieve trustworthiness of the study and this is achieved through maintaining credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Hayashi *et al.*, 2019).

#### **3.11.1 Credibility**

For this study, triangulation by asking the same initial questions to all participants and allowing participants to confirm accuracy of provided information ensured credibility. The reliance of in-vivo coding, which took careful consideration of the participants' words as contained in the transcripts ensured that the results are credible. Allowing participants to clarify their views as captured by the researcher and giving any additional information that they could have missed out also increased credibility. That is because the clarity of data captured helped in obtaining context specific results.

### **3.11.2 Transferability**

By drawing questions from the study, research questions and reviewed literature as well as purposively identifying participants, maximised the possibility of collecting data relevant to the contexts, leading to achievement of transferability. A pilot study was also conducted to assess the feasibility of the interview guide in producing realistic, valid, and unbiased data.

### **3.11.3 Dependability**

The researcher implemented a logical process of analysing data. The process was clearly outlined to ensure traceability of the data analysis, interpretation, and research reporting process to achieve dependability. In addition, the constant comparison of the coded data and the raw data in the data analysis process confirmed the patterns identified throughout the study of data.

### **3.11.4 Confirmability**

In-depth descriptions of data were done with specific references to the participants' voice consistently throughout the analysis. According to Hayashi *et al.* (2019), referring to the voice of the participants in data interpretation increases the degree of confirmability. In addition, direct and indirect quotations from participants were used to substantiate the interpretation of the themes and sub-themes, leading to confirmability.

### **3.12 Safeguarded personal biases**

The issue of personal bias is inherent in qualitative research and researchers need to take steps to ensure that their personal biases do not deter objectivity of the study (Galdas, 2017). To safeguard personal bias, the researcher constantly referred the ideas emerging from the study to the raw data collected from the participants. When probing during data collection, care was made to ask further questions for clarity and not to coerce participants to speak along the researcher's personal preferences. In addition, participants were given latitude to view interpretations, so that they confirm the accuracy of the results. The use of computer aided analysis to confirm the coded data and relationships within the data legitimised the coded data. Alternative angles of viewing interpretations were also approached to determine whether there was not undue influence on the results.

### **3.12 Research ethics**

Awareness of the ethical principles and the nature of the concerns about ethics in research are critical in ensuring the credibility of the research findings and recommendations (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). Mohajan (2018) urges researchers to adhere to research ethics at all times throughout the research journey. Hence, the researcher observed the ethical principles in conducting this study. The research commenced after securing ethical clearance from the University of Namibia and the researcher strictly followed the ethical guidelines as stipulated in the clearance document.

The researcher obtained informed written consent to carry out research on the sampled public institutions through their executive directors. Participants also gave the researcher informed written consent before taking part in the study. According to Akaranga and

Makau (2016), informed consent means that the participant or the participating entity agrees to take part in a study willingly and with sufficient information about the research. Participants therefore provided the researcher with signed consent letters confirming their willingness to participate in the study.

The researcher further clearly notified participants of their voluntary participation and liberty to withdraw their participation at any time without any victimisation. The participants faced no harm in any form as a result of their participation in the study. According to Mohajan (2018), harm occurs in various forms such as embarrassment, stress, discomfort, pain or conflict. Researchers are therefore urged to guard against any nature of harm befalling participants during the study (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). In order to maintaining confidentiality of all information and data collected and used for the study, the researcher kept data in a lockable safe throughout the study.

In the view of Akaranga and Makau (2016) the researcher has the duty to maintain confidentiality during the research and keep data safe. The researcher will destroy all data in accordance with the institution's policy for disposing of data used in a research study. Further, for the purpose of preseving the anonymity of participants, the researcher ensured that participants participated anonymously, with no data collected being associated with the sources. As such, participants' identities remained anonymous.

### **3.13 Summary**

Chapter three (3) outlined in detail the path taken in conducting the study to address the research problem and questions. The chapter discussed the research philosophy adopted; the research approach followed as well as the research design adopted towards conducting

the enquiry. Research methods were also discussed in the chapter, leading to the determination of the population of the study, the sampling procedure, and the sample size. The chapter further discussed the research instrument used in collecting data as well the procedure implemented in the collection of data from the participants through grounded theory. Chapter three (3) continued with the discussion of the analysis of data, the measurement of trustworthiness and the research ethics observed. This section concludes the chapter, and the next chapter will present the results and discussion of the results under literature control, to reveal the findings.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to develop a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation for the Namibian public sector. This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the results that emerged from the data collected through grounded theory. The chapter covered the discussion of data saturation, the description of unique identification codes assigned to participants, description of the participants' demographic information, the results from the pilot study, discussion of the results in relation to the research questions, discussion of the themes and sub-themes emerging from the data analysis.

The discussion of themes and sub-themes includes references to the literature that informed the study's background as well as that which was examined in chapter two. In addition, the discussion relies on the direct quotations from the interviewed participants, for evidence in support of the interpretations made. Indirect references to the participants' voice also gave the discussion depth. The emerging themes were discussed in line with the main research question and the contribution of the study to the body of knowledge. In conclusion, the chapter is summed up by the discussion of the results.

### **4.2 Identifying participants during the discussion of the results**

Conducting research based on anonymity demands that the participants' identities remain unknown (Surmiak, 2018). Mentioning of individuals that provide data in research is prohibited. Surmiak (2018) further discourages linking data sources to the information

they give. Maintaining this critical ethical principle required using pseudonyms when quoting participants directly and indirectly. Quoting participants when discussing results from qualitative data provides evidence that the assumptions made relate to raw data collected from the sources (Saunders *et al.*, 2018). The pseudonyms used in this study exhibited three characteristics of the participants, which are the link to a public institution, participant in the study and interview sequence. For example, the first participant was referred to as public institution officer interviewed first and abbreviated to PIOI01. Table 4.1 below illustrates the pseudonyms used to identify participants.

**Table 4.1: Participants’ pseudonyms**

<b>Participant description</b>	<b>Shortened description</b>	<b>Interviews</b>
Public institution officer interviewed first	PIO01	2
Public institution officer interviewed second	PIO02	2
Public institution officer interviewed third	PIO03	1
Public institution officer interviewed fourth	PIO04	3
Public institution officer interviewed fifth	PIO05	2
Public institution officer interviewed sixth	PIO06	2
Public institution officer interviewed seventh	PIO07	3

As table 4.1 above illustrates, four participants participated in interviews twice, while two participants participated three times and another one participant, participated one time. The aim of continuous interaction with the participants was to ensure collection of all the information required for drawing feasible research conclusions regarding the development of a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The initial interviews were on average, forty-five minutes. The follow-up interviews were shorter, averaging twenty-five minutes because discussions were specific. The participants were willing to participate more than once.

### **4.3 Data saturation**

Out of the seven participants, six were interviewed more than once, with three participants being interviewed twice, two participants being interviewed thrice, and two participants being interviewed four times. The decision to maintain contact with these participants was to get all the information they had and was useful for the study. For example, the participants who were contacted three times and four times were able to provide new information every time they were approached. Participants also had the opportunity to provide further information they thought would enhance understanding of their views or add to the information provided orally. As a result, four participants provided the researcher with further information through emails. All the seven participants had the opportunity to verify the information they provided.

After interaction with four participants, repeated responses were obtained, and the focus became to gain clarity of data collected. In addition, follow – up interactions with participants served to validate previous opinions, which increased credibility of the data collected. Two of the participants interviewed also provided information on the strategic planning and implementation processes through emails after they had indicated that they were not able to give such information during the interviews.

### **4.4 Results from the pilot study**

Before conducting the pilot study, the interview guide comprising of ten initial interview questions was scrutinized by three subject matter experts. Two subject matter experts recommended adopting the interview guide without any amendments while one recommended splitting the question that read, “To what extent does the quality and

quantity of resources affect the implementation of your strategy development plans?” After carefully considering the recommendation, the question was split into two. The two questions that came out of this question are question one and question two, with the first question reading, “To what extent does the quality of resources affect the implementation of your strategy development plans?” The other question read, “To what extent does the quantity of resources affect the implementation of your strategy development plans?” The final interview guide contained eleven questions. The guide was also proof-read for spelling errors and ensure questions were clear.

The next stage was conducting the pilot study through interviews with three participants selected from public institutions. The participants who took part in the pilot study did not form part of the seven that participated in the main study. Data provided by the participants was used solely for determining whether the questions could generate relevant data for the study. Hence, at the close of each pilot interview, the participants were asked to indicate if they understood the questions properly as well as whether their responses to the questions were based on their experiences and opinions. The analysis of the pilot data was also aimed at determining whether data collected had the potential to answer the research questions and contribute to the development of a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector.

The pilot interviews were also timed to determine whether it would be feasible to conduct interviews within the intended forty-five-minute period. The first pilot interview lasted for thirty-nine minutes while the second interview lasted for forty-four minutes, and the last interview lasted for forty-nine minutes. That means, the average time for both interviews were forty-four minutes. This gave an indication that the interviews could be

conducted within forty-five minutes. The results revealed that nine of the ten guiding questions were understandable to the three participants. The other question, which two of the participants thought was not clear was revised before the main study was conducted.

## **4.5 Data coding**

### **4.5.1 Open coding**

The coding process began as soon as the first interview was completed. Openly coding data enabled the inquiry to identify insights on the studied context without depending on preconceived data labels. Studying data for categories of key facts also helped in going beyond perceived realities to the observing the Namibian public sector's strategic planning and implementation processes from the lens of the participants, which led to development of the resource-based approach from constructs drawn from the sector.

Open coding was done by reading data several times and creating tentative labels of pieces of data that summed up what the participant was saying. The voices of the participants were the sources of the ideas informing each code. Open codes were created for each question. As more interviews were conducted, data were read, and more codes were added. For clarity, properties of each code and the participants' words were also recorded through in-vivo. When similar properties were identified from further analysis of data, they were added to the existing codes. New open codes were created when the properties were different. An account of the reasons for creating new codes or adding attributes to the existing codes were provided in the form of notes that would help in further study of the codes. Theoretical saturation occurred when no new properties were discovered.

#### 4.5.1.1 How does the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning in the Namibian public sector?

**Table 4.2: Open codes for research question one**

Open code	Properties	Participants' exact words
Resources quality	Competence of people; make good decisions; innovation; unskilled personnel; failure to strategize; quality, quality ideas; importance of quality; compromised.	Skilled personnel produce innovative ideas; which require quality; quality strategies require quality thinking; quality of individuals; keep developing talent and value experience; skilled employees; experienced employees; revamping the aging equipment; individuals take quality seriously; quality specifications of our resources is crucial; quality is compromised; aged machines are now of low quality
Feasible strategies	Reliable strategies; consultations; critical thinking; strategies and plans; severely affected; exaggerated strategies; understanding of process	Adoption of feasible strategic plans and strategies; analysis and practical thinking; achieve its strategies and plans; strategic activities are severely delayed; general thinking leads to development of exaggerated strategies and plans; developing feasible strategies require; understanding of strategy is essential in developing feasible strategies
Availability of resources	Focus on resources; limitations of resources; supply of finance; resources are important; no funds, skilled people or vehicles; blinded by general thinking; resources focus	Strict focus on the resources available; resources are important in implementing plans; there is nothing else to take home because; strategies are difficult to implement with the quality and quantity of our resources receives no attention to the authorities to address the funding challenges; sometimes blinded by general thinking, overstated strategies; putting the assets at the forefront of our planning; we will develop feasible objectives
Quantity of resources	Adequate; enough money; equipped; little resources; shortage of employees; amounts needed; equipment quality; enough human resources	Quantities of resources are required; enough money is needed to finance the strategic plan activities; people commit...sufficiently equipped; little resources to cope with growth; difficult to implement with the quality and quantity of our resources; shortages of staff result in poor strategy implementation; the mounts required; the quality of the equipment in the field; number of resources that the institution has; quantity of resources helps in performing the strategic tasks; sufficient human resources are essential
Budget on objectives	Make feasible budgets; objectives of the ministry plan on mandate	Make budgets based on the objectives; setting up strategic objectives that lead to the fulfilment of the ministry's mandate; mandate of the ministry that determines the strategic planning and implementation processes; starting point should be the decision-making phase;
Monitor flow of resources	Monitor resources: part of planning; sufficient resources; continuous employee engagement	Supply of financial resources would demand that we keep the granting authority up to speed with our plans for them to plan on intervals of releasing funds to the institution; Resources form part of the planning process; Ensuring that we can have sufficient resources at all times; The question is the actual practice of engaging employees

Table 4.2 above illustrates the open codes identified from the first research question and their properties. Examples of the participants' words that informed the properties and the codes are also included. Resources quality, feasible strategies, availability of resources, quantity of resources, budget on objectives and monitor flow of resources were the open codes identified within the first research question.

#### 4.5.1.2 What is the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector?

**Table 4.3: Open codes for research question two**

Open code	Properties	Participants' exact words
Constraints	Do not have; skills constraints; contribute to failure; focus on the goal lead to disregard of the resources limitations; shortages; competition for resources; capacity determine quality of strategies;	Planners do not have the best of skills; failure when they lack the desired skills; when they do not have the necessary skills, they break them; employees tasked with the implementation of strategic activities also contribute to failure when they lack the desired skills; goal of the ministry blinds us from seeing the need for limiting our plans to the finances available; take this scarce input to its strategic processes; shortages in public resources; compete for talent; capacity of the people that develop the strategic plans determines the quality of strategies and plans drawn; resource constraints limit us,
Capacity of people	Ability of the people; experience; capable team lead to success; decision making capacity	Capacity of the people that develop the strategic plans determines the quality of the strategies and plans drawn; people with experience; strategies that do not work; the problem is those other stakeholders with authority and influence; quality decisions are crucial in strategic
Types of resources	Consider the kinds of resources; understand resources understand that nature of the resources, funding and machinery;	Closer look at the kinds resources; challenges...face is understanding of what exactly are the resources; political leadership; money, employees and equipment all need to be in adequate quantities if any institution is to achieve its strategic plans; other resources such as funding and machines; there is little one can achieve with...inadequate funding
Resources needed for strategy	Needed resources; Lack of skills; Limit plans to the resources; sufficient funding;	Resources they need to create strategies that they can implement; skills shortage continues to plague the...market; limit its planning scope to the infrastructure the country has; maintaining skills is a challenge and to deal
Failed strategies	Drop ideas; chances of strategy failure; fail for lack of funds; focus on the resources lead to feasibility;	End is simply dropping the ideas along the ways and go with what we can achieve with the little resources available; they create chances of failure; no way to achieve objectives; close focus on the quality; strategic and plans would be feasible
Preciseness of the plans	Goal orientation; Provide resources for to objectives;	Sit and plan based on what we want to do; plan document should dictate the resources;
Competent personnel	Employees that leave; vacant positions; skills and experience; improvement; retention;	Some skilled people that we had when we planned left before we even start implementing; but the fact is that there is little one can achieve with vacant positions; compiling clear strategies require skills and experience; need to improve our people skills;
Damages to equipment	Lack of skills; property damages	Unskilled personnel who cause massive damages to the equipment,
Linkage	Lacking link; find the needed resources; prioritising; knowledge of appropriate resources;	Misalignment in this regard is questionable; align objectives and resources; the resources are not present when planning, a process to acquire the resources needs to start; resources to the priority objectives; human ability and the number of priorities; realizing the required resources is also not an easy task, which is the reason why sometimes resources are misaligned;

As indicated on table 4.3 above, the open codes identified from the second research question were constraints, capacity of people, types of resources, resources needed for strategy, failed strategies, preciseness of the plans, competent personnel, damages to equipment and linkage.

### 4.5.1.3 What are the elements that add on to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector?

**Table 4.4: Open code for research question three**

Open code	Properties	Participants' exact words
Resources allocated	Need allocation; efficient allocation; good people; funds allocated; mishandling; allocate per plan; face consequences	Where do they need to be allocated; the skills are there but they need efficient allocation; allocate good people; match the huge goals that we put up; funds allocated to us over five years; mishandling; allocating resources; concern in the public sector; face profound consequences for misallocating public resources; misuse and lack of accountability
Class of resources	More class of resources; categories; understand resources; decision makers; human resources, finances and other assets	More than just one class of resources required in strategic planning; people, finance and assets; the facilities, the ideas, the funds; able to define the resources they need; institutional leaders in the institution do not have a clue about the resources needed; chief resources to be considered first, are people that make the decisions
Finance	Of finance; figures; funding of strategy; funding is essential; budgeting resources needs	People think of finance; all about the figures on the budget; financing our strategy; there is no question on the importance of finance in strategic planning and implementation; finances to implement; sufficient amounts to conduct its...effectively; idea of the figures of budgeted amounts for the ministries before the strategies; shortages in financial and physical resources lead to unfinished projects
Supply of resources	Provide resources; resources; approach funders; continuous supply; acquire resources; treasury; supply problems; sources of resources;	The outcomes because they provide the resources; reluctance to link the strategies to the infrastructure available and can be obtained during the formulation phase, during implementation and when reviewing; focus is having good plans and when the plans fail, they are abandoned; in order for them to look for them; flowing smoothly from the treasury to institutional strategic plans; serious glitches in the process; number of resources, we are likely to obtain; have access;
Politics	Political leaders; Influence of; Decisions	Political leaders; Influence the leadership; Political leadership plays...role in the decisions; Public administrators and not the other way
Resources capabilities	Focus, rarity; attract and retain; quality and quantity, resources, losing people untimely; inadequate resources;	Resources capabilities; talent is rare; we require is a strategy for bringing in quality skills, improve them and retain them; right quality and quantity of resources; people, the assets and finances; need to have the superior quality resources; do not pay the organisation back because they leave prematurely; blame the resources that we do not have;
Entire process	Strategy process; closer look at resources; get sufficient resources for entire process; resources throughout process	In formulation and implementation of our strategies is critical for us; Take a closer look at the resources; getting the resources we need to be able to conduct our strategic planning processes; Strategic planning function from start to finish; strategic planning steps; Environmental scanning is done to the time strategies are reviewed,
Stakeholders	Influence of stakeholders; communicate needed resources to stakeholders; involvement of all in;	Involves stakeholders; require proper communication; quality is scarce retain the skilled people; champion strategic planning...processes; teams that facilitate strategic planning need to have the right composition; the people that sit at the table where funding is decided;
Management	Resources management; quality of the resources; prudent on resources; control; scarcity; responsibility of administrators	Manage them effectively; Accessing the specific qualities needed is a challenge for the public sector; Making long-term decisions for a public institution; Institutions should consider when conducting strategic planning and implementation; Be realistic; Internal controls; Management of the resources; proper management; little available resources; Public administrators can manage the resources

Table 4.4 above shows open codes identified from the third research question and they were resources allocated, the class of resources, finance, and supply of resources, politics, resources capabilities, stakeholders and management.

#### 4.5.1.4 How could the Namibian public sector embrace the resources component in their strategic planning and implementation?

**Table 4.5: Open code for research question four**

Open code	Properties	Participants' exact words
Align plans to resources	On the onset; link plan to resources; mismatch in planning and funding; alignment of plans and resources; malfeasance, responsible planning	Happen at the onset; plan and then think of resources; our mandate; funding of such strategies comes into play; aligning these scarce resources can increase our chances of achieving strategic plans; resources to our personal interests; restrict...planning to...resources; develop plans and objectives that we can implement; irresponsible to plan on a vehicle that is broken beyond repair;
Resources are important	Resources influence; inputs to strategy; needed when implementing; all resources; direct link to resources	Influence of resources on strategies; Strategy process; Look at when we go for implementation and scratch here and there to see what we have; Human activity, funding and equipment... basis of our plans; With strategy, planning, operations have a direct link to resources
Human resources	Are important; people skills of employees; skills of the people; lack of skills; failing to retain qualified people; required skills	Resources...sources of success in any strategy; human resources...are important in strategizing; essential in getting skilled employees; skills of the people involved in crafting the strategies is something we must look at; talent is lacking...strategic planning processes; from the human resources point of view; capable of handling the work challenges; people with the required expertise
Equipment	Are important; quality of assets; physical assets old equipment; unusable; broken machines;	Equipment...are important; resources are the sources of success; quality of such assets; building the infrastructure required; equipment is aged; overstating the strategic plans; cannot use equipment; machines do not work; lack the quality
Infrastructure	Development of; upgrading of; critical neglected; considered after failure; broken vehicles; technology; revamping infrastructure;	Talking about key infrastructure development; references to upgrading infrastructure; people cannot do anything with no tools to use; not look at the infrastructural requirement; providing feedback on reasons for failure; parked...garage waiting to be repaired or written off; easily done using some of the latest technologies; technological resources are silent in our processes
Manage resources	Materials to useful resources; resources; mismanagement; reliable source; reliable supply; wastage	Transformed into products; serious mismatches; commitment of resources; exact number of resources; people in charge; avoid mismanagement of resources; establishing internal controls; source of supply; human resources; wastage in assets
Funds	Are important, finances are critical; money allocated; repairs; donations; money	Finances are important is strategizing; finances are critical and in a public setting; money allocated to; funds redirected to repairs or purchases of new materials; a donor funded ministry; money is
Value strategy processes	Value this process; understanding; strategy; provide resources	Institutions begin to value this process; understanding strategic planning; goals, objectives and mission require competency and experience; achieve strategies by simply planning
Begin with resources	Skills; goodness of goals; planning along resources; consider resources from the beginning; avoid idealising, link resources to strategy	Need to consider at the onset is the skills to implement plans and objectives; convincing...authority...accept the plans; position our planning within our means; yield phenomenal results when the objectives aligned with the resources needed to do the actual performance; have to wait for the budget; plan based on what we have; produce satisfactory results; resources assigned to such plans;

As indicated on table 4.5 above, the open codes discovered from the forth research question were align plans to resources, resources are important, human resources, equipment, infrastructure, manage resources, funds, value strategy processes and begin with resources.

### 4.5.2 Axial coding

Axial coding consisted of the intensive study of the open codes and their properties to identify the relationships and connections. Related codes with related properties were grouped together and given a title that summed up the categorized codes. The axial coding allowed for further comparison of the analysed data with the transcripts.

**Table 4.6: Axial codes based on the identified open codes**

Open codes	Axial codes
Capacity of people	Human resources
Types of resources	
Human resources	Financial resources
Finance	
Funds	
Budget on objectives	Physical infrastructure
Damages to equipment	
Equipment	
Class of resources	Quality of resources
Infrastructure	
Resources quality	Quantity of resources
Competent personnel	
Quantity of resources	Sources of resources
Supply of resources	
Availability of resources	Resource constraints
Constraints	
Failed strategies	
Resources capabilities	Allocation of resources
Resources needed for strategy	
Resources allocated	
Resources are important	Linking objectives and resources
Linkage	
Feasible strategies	Management of institutional resources
Management	
Stakeholders	
Politics	Managing continuity in supply of resources
Manage resources	
Monitor flow of resources	
Entire process	Planning according to resources
Value strategy processes	
Begin with resources	
Preciseness of the plans	
Align plans to resources	

As indicated on table 4.6 above, the open codes were categorized according to their similarities. Constant comparison was done to ensure that the codes that are similar be put in the same axial code group. Open codes like type of resources and class of resources were identified to be applicable to the axial codes human resources, financial resources

and physical resources. These codes are closely related, and further analysis would group them within the same category as subthemes. The open code quantity of resources was dominant and the codes it related to were assigned to other groups such as human resources. As a result, quantity of resources was informed by a single open code. The next step was to conduct selective coding to draw theoretical codes from the axial codes.

### 4.5.3 Selective coding

**Table 4.7: Axial codes and selective codes based on the open codes**

Open codes	Axial codes	Selective codes
Capacity of people Types of resources Human resources	Human resources	Classification of resources
Finance Funds Budget on objectives	Financial resources	
Damages to equipment Equipment Class of resources Infrastructure	Physical infrastructure	
Resources quality Competent personnel	Quality of resources	Resource capabilities
Quantity of resources	Quantity of resources	
Supply of resources Availability of resources	Sources of resources	
Constraints Failed strategies Resources capabilities	Resource constraints	
Resources needed for strategy Resources allocated Resources are important	Allocation of resources	Constant consideration of resources
Linkage Feasible strategies	Linking objectives and resources	
Management Stakeholders Politics Manage resources	Management of institutional resources	
Monitor flow of resources Entire process Value strategy processes	Managing continuity in supply of resources	
Begin with resources Preciseness of the plans Align plans to resources	Planning according to resources	

Table 4.7 above show the selective codes constructed from a combination of the related axial codes to form theoretical assumptions regarding the development of the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The selective codes were compared with the original data several time to ensure that

they directly related to the views. Constant comparison was done to relate the selective codes to the transcripts, the open codes and their properties as well as the research questions.

Further coding was done through NVivo 12 for computer-aided analysis. Cluster analysis of the coded data was done, assigning codes to categories according to the relationships. The top-level codes, which are the themes, emerged and they were the same as the selective codes identified. The child codes from NVivo 12 were also consistent with the axial codes. The results confirmed that the intensive coding process had captured all of the participants' views. The use of in-vivo, was crucial in making sure that the exact words of the participants were captured. Figure 4.1 below illustrates the NVivo generated top-level codes and child codes.

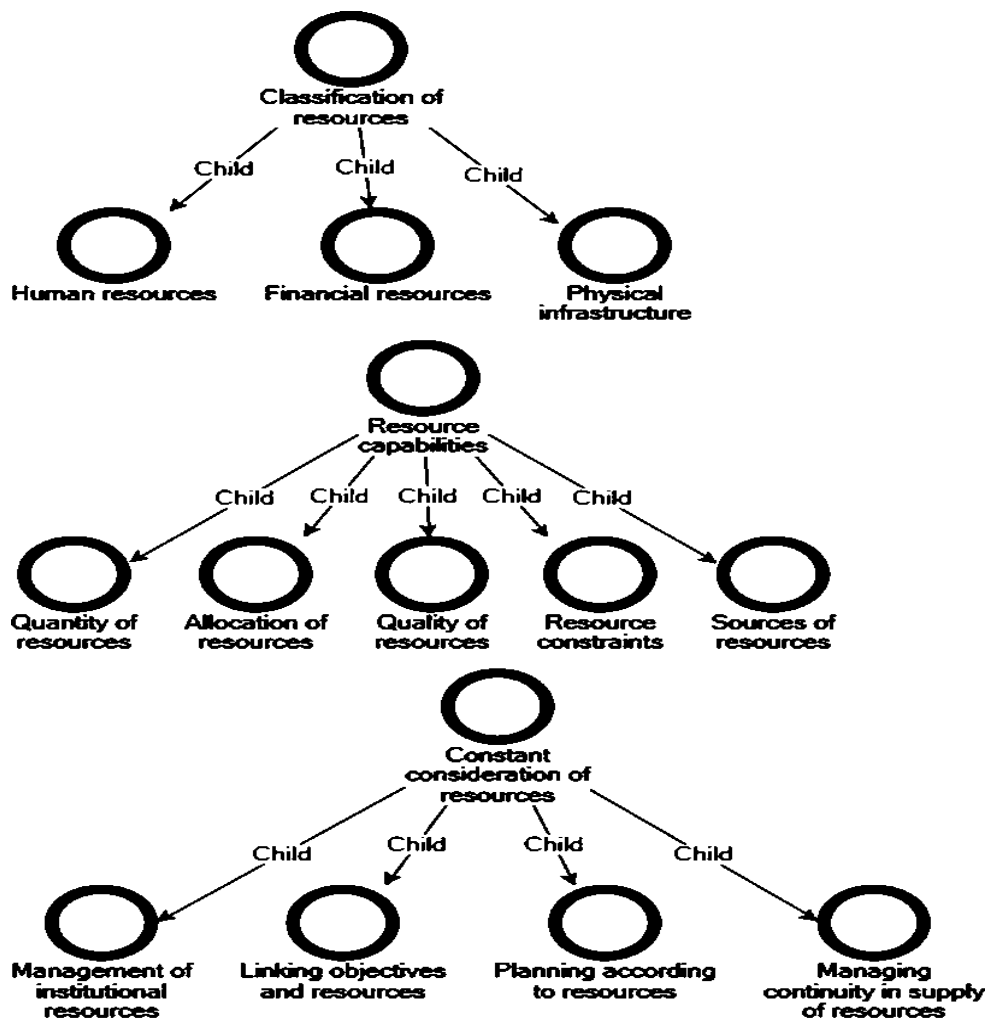


Figure 4.1: NVivo generated top-level codes and child codes

Figure 4.1 above show the circle graph output from the cluster analysis, depicting the visualized patterns identify in the coded data. The results show the grouping of codes that share similar words, attributes. The top-level codes classification of resources, resource capabilities and constant consideration of resources are the major themes, and the child codes are the sub-themes.

#### **4.6 Identification and discussion of the themes**

Themes emerged from intensive and systematic analysis of data. Data was first open coded by interacting with transcripts. The open-coded data was further coded through axial coding to discover the relationships and similarities between the open codes. The axial codes were compared with the data transcripts and raw data through selective coding. The selective codes were the grouping of axial code according to their relatedness. NVivo 12 was also used to complement the data analysis process. There was consistence in the selective codes which were the themes from data coding and the top-level codes from NVivo.

Three themes that emerged from the data. The first theme was classification of resources, with subthemes human resources, financial resources and physical infrastructure. The second theme was resource capabilities, the subthemes, quality of resources, quantity of resources, sources of resources, resource constraints and allocation of resources. The third theme was constant consideration of resources, and it is the subthemes under this theme were linking objectives and resources, management of institutional resources, managing continuity in supply of resources, planning according to resources. Table 4.2 below shows the final list of themes and their sub-themes.

**Table 4.8: Themes and sub-themes**

Theme	Sub-themes
Classification of resources	Human resources Financial resources Physical infrastructure
Resource capabilities	Quality of resources Quantity of resources Sources of resources Resource constraints Allocation of resources
Constant consideration of resources	Linking objectives and resources Management of institutional resources Managing continuity in supply of resources Planning according to resources

#### **4.6.1 Theme 1: Classification of resources**

The first major theme that emerged from the data was the classification of resources. The theme emerged from the selective grouping of axial codes and the codes human resources, financial resources and physical infrastructure shared similar theoretical characteristics. The view of the interviewed participants was that strategic planning and implementation rely heavily on the understanding of the classes of resources required for formulating strategy, implementing strategy as well as review strategies. Similarly, literature observe the appropriateness of resources as crucial in achieving the objectives of strategy formulation and implementation (Pascuci *et al.*, 2017; Varsani, 2018). Participants interviewed were of the opinion that the individuals tasked with the responsibility of formulating strategies should know the resources they need to produce feasible strategies as well as implement them and implement them effectively. For example, participant PIO01 stated that,

*“There is need for strategy formulators to take a closer look at the various kinds of resources they need to create strategies that they can implement. This is something that should happen at the onset, rather than plan and then think of resources when documents are on the shelves.”*

*“One of the challenges that we face is understanding of what exactly are the resources that we need and where do they need to be allocated,”* participant PIO05 indicated.

*“There is need for government to understand that there are more than just one class of resources required in strategic planning. I say so because all people think of is finance... hence it is all about the figures on the budget,”* explained participant PIO07.

Participant PIO02 also explained the significance of resources in strategic planning one by one, detailing that, human resources are responsible for making decisions, performing the actual implementation activities and evaluation of the strategy process. Like the view of participant PIO04, participant PIO02 also stated that funding is important because it helps the organisation to acquire the needed infrastructure. There was consistency in the views of the participants that financial resources are fundamental in the acquisition of other resources such as infrastructure and human capital. The views of the participants were consistent with the conclusions from numerous studies that organisations require finance to acquire other resources necessary in implementation of strategy (Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Roudgar, 2018; Dakare *et al.*, 2019; Boselie *et al.*, 2021). Hence, when responding to the questions on the quantity of resources influence on organisational strategies, participants were quick to mention financial resources, human resources, and infrastructure.

*“The influence of resources on strategies is immense,”* confirmed participant PIO02.

*“What I can say is that resources are the sources of success in any strategy,”* stated participant PIO04, adding that funding enable organisations to attract the right talent while human resource maintain the organisation’s infrastructure.

*“Human resources, equipment and finances are important is strategizing,”* stated participant PIO05.

*“When talking of resources, it is important to understand that nature of the resources and the quality of such assets. I want to call them assets because they are inputs in the strategy process. People, physical assets and finances are critical and in a public setting, political direction should not be undermined at all,”* explained participant PIO06.

*“Of course, the amount of money allocated to ministries, is essential in getting skilled employees and building the infrastructure required to deliver public service,”* echoed participant PIO07.

It emerged from the data that public institutions in Namibia struggle with the classification of resources, particularly regarding the resource requirements for the various stages of the strategic planning and implementation processes. For instance, all seven interviewed participants indicated that over and above the human resources, the financial resources and the physical infrastructure, political leadership in the allocation of these resources was a critical component in public strategic planning and implementation. Interviewed participants stated,

*“In fact, I would mention that political leadership is one aspect that the public sector institutions like our ministry require to achieve strategies and strategic plans,”* stated participant PIO01.

*“Political leaders are vital in the formulation and implementation of strategies because they influence the leadership of ministries. The services provided by the ministries are also more critical to political appointees than they are to the administrators,”* explained participant PIO02.

*“Where do we place politics?”* Questioned participant PIO03, adding that *“political leaders may not be accurately classified as human resources, but are humans. I think when looking at formulating strategies and taking turns during implementation, political decisions are important.”*

*“We have come to the understanding that the public sector should include political influence, especially leadership as an additional resource every time resources are mentioned because political leadership plays a crucial role in the decisions, the processes and the outcomes because they provide the resources.”* Explained participant PIO04.

An intensive analysis of the major theme, classes of resources emerged four sub-themes discussed within the ambit of this major theme. These sub-themes are human resources, financial resources, and physical infrastructure. The interviewed participants indicated that the focus on resources in strategic planning and implementation is fundamental in formulation of feasible strategies and plans. The observation aligns with the reviewed literature pointing to resources as essential components in the formulation of achievable strategies (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Eresia-Eke & Soriakumar, 2021). Planning in line with the

resources that the organisation has and can acquire during the target period emerged as a principal factor in strategic planning and implementation.

*“Focusing on resources capabilities in formulation and implementation of our strategies is critical for us. However, we are sometimes blinded by general thinking, resulting in some overstated strategies,”* explained participant PIO01.

When asked for the reason some strategic actions end up being dropped after realisation that they would not be achieved during the stated period, participant PIO02 replied, *“... like I said, general thinking leads to development of exaggerated strategies and plans. And when you do not take a closer look at the resources, the end is simply dropping the ideas along the ways and go with what we can achieve with the little resources available.”*

Participant PIO05 also spoke along the same line stating that, *“... because we sit and plan based on what we want to do, then present the plans to the gate keepers, who also just look at the preciseness of the plans, we document things that are beyond our ability in terms of resources”*.

*“Regarding the people aspect, it is sad that some skilled people that we had when we planned left before we even start implementing,”* participant PIO06 indicated and added that these are some of the resources challenges that the public sector continue to experience in their strategic planning and implementation. Participant PIO07 also pointed out shortages of promotional roles in the ministry creates a challenge for employees that invest their funds in personal development. At the end, these employees would have the only option to leave the organisation in search for better opportunities that compensate their investments in personal development. From the participants’ views, it was clear that

the public sector institutions require devoting their attention to the linking of all strategic plan activities to the resources that they can access and use during the strategy period.

#### **4.6.1.1 Sub-theme: Human resources**

Human resources emerged as a major category of resources requiring much consideration when conducting strategic planning processes for the public sector institutions. Starting from the first round of data collection, participants advocated for valuation of human resources required to formulate and implement strategies at the beginning of the strategic planning processes. One of the reasons mentioned by the participants for focusing on the human resources was the rarity of talent possessed by different individuals. Human resources are a rare class of resources that remains difficult to acquire and retain amid the growing shortage within the labour market (Magiri *et al.*, 2018). Participants such as PIO02 emphasised that developing feasible strategies and plans also require talent.

*“What one need to understand when talking of strategy is that it is a complex concept that not everyone can develop. The skills of the people involved in crafting the strategies is something we must look at,”* suggested participant PIO01.

*“Talent is rare and every other organisation desire to have the best, more so when we talk of sophisticated topics like strategic planning,”* indicated participant PIO03. The participant added that, *“... what we mean is that we only need people with experience and knowledge of strategy in the process... the issue is collecting, scrutinising, and selecting valuable information in environmental scanning is an art that require skills.”* When further asked whether such skills were available, PIO03 generalised that there is a tendency in public institutions for people that acquire unique skills to leave the sector for

lucrative opportunities. When the people leave the institutions after acquiring skills, they create skills gaps that are difficult to fill. Studies also indicate that show that the idea of skills gaps in public sector institutions remains a reality (Melton & Meier, 2016; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Pereverza *et al.*, 2019). Participants' views therefore colluded with the voice of the consulted literature.

The quality of the people involved in strategy formulation came out intensely as well, with participants voicing that some shortcomings in public strategic planning and implementation are results of the viability of the strategies developed. According to Parker *et al.* (2017), viability of strategies is a factor to consider when seeking producing achievable strategies. The interviewed participants urged public institutions to ensure that strategic planning and implementation oversight is a function under capable individuals. When asked if they thought the current individuals met the quality requirements to influence development of feasible strategies, four of the participants thought their organisations had capable individuals while three suggested that there was need for relooking at the individuals. Interestingly, one of the three participants was suggested personal limitations in overseeing the strategic planning and implementation function.

*“Not to undermine anyone, but developing feasible strategies require skills, ... I cannot really tell, but I may not also have the required expertise to head the team. Issues with the implementation of plans come from the suitability of such plans in the first place,”* indicated participant PIO01.

*“You see, people are important because if they decide on strategies that do not work, they create chances of failure,”* participant PIO03 suggested. Participant PIO03 added that,

*“We have a good team and a capable leader. The problem is those other stakeholders with authority and influence.”*

*“I cannot really conclude that responsible individuals have what it takes to develop feasible strategies because the next question would seek reasons why strategies fail. All that one can say with confidence is that talent is lacking in many areas of our strategic planning processes,”* explained participant PIO04.

*“We do have the necessary talent to control strategic planning and implementation, but the process involves many stakeholders,”* indicated participant PIO05.

*“It is a worthy opinion in my view for our organisation to assess the competencies of individuals involved in strategic plan formulation ... the skills are there but they need efficient allocation because when people take responsibility of unpopular areas, they fail,”* explained participant PIO06.

Participant PIO07 pointed out that, *“... understanding strategic planning and implementation processes is essential in developing feasible strategies, which is the reason some of our strategies never understand something clearly at last of the day. The problem is with the source of the strategies and unless the institutions begin to value this process and allocate good people, there is no hope.”*

Discussions with the participants also focussed on perceptions, views, and experiences of the participants with the human resources category of resources that are crucial in the strategic planning and implementation process. From the RBV perspective, human resources are the value that the people offer to the organisation (Alexy *et al.*, 2018;

Rindfleisch, 2020). The understanding of the participants also aligned to this view, putting more emphasis on the availability of skilled people to formulate strategies, public institutions' abilities to develop and keep skilled employees and motivating them to give their best towards the achievement of the organisational strategies. For example, participant PIO02 lamented the increase in labour turnover, particularly when it comes to skilled people leaving untimely.

*"From the human resources point of view, people leave as soon as they complete their masters and doctoral degrees, creating serious skills gaps,"* stated participant PIO02.

*"One thing that we need to consider at the onset is the skills to implement the plans and objectives,"* suggested participant PIO05.

It emerged from the analysis of data that strategic plans are drawn with the assumption that skills are adequate in most public institutions. Nonetheless, when asked whether they consider skilled employees specifically when scanning the environment, participants indicated that the focus is on the positions rather than the incumbents holding the positions. Participants such as PIO01, PIO02, PIO03 and PIO06 confirmed that deciding an activity based on the position created a problem of achieving the actual performance because the position holder may not have the necessary skills to execute the activity. For instance, participant PIO02 argued that some of the institutional strategic objectives are jeopardised by *"unskilled personnel who cause massive damages to the equipment, which result in funds redirected to repairs or purchases of new materials"*.

Participant PIO05 indicated pointed to the quantity of government property such as vehicles that languish in garages with no one to repair them. Along the same line of

thought was participant PIO07, who argued that there is no point in indicating capable employees under the strength column of the SWOT analysis when most of the personnel do not have the right skills. Participants thought that political influence on public sector institutions is reason some people employed in the sector do not have the necessary skills. The observation is like the conclusion by some of the literature reviewed, stating that when politics influence organisational functions, unskilled employees may find their way into strategic positions where they would not add the desired value (Johnsen, 2018; Roudgar, 2018). Participant PIO04 was precise in stating that,

*“... employees tasked with the implementation of strategic activities also contribute to failure when they lack the desired skills. Employees are stewards of the property belonging to government and when they do not have the necessary skills, they break them.”*

*“The assumption is that people employed in the public sector have the necessary skills to serve the citizens. But I can tell you that some names have influence in the acquisition of talent,”* stated participant PIO05, whom when further asked to give more details went on to explain that some incompetent employees have political connections and even though they cannot fulfil their roles, their political connections keep them in the job. According to Kharroub and Mansour (2019), political influence is a challenge to the strategic planning process because it allows people with no or limited skills to take charge of critical functions. Discussions on quality of human resources in terms of skills also show that public institutions strategies need to include the acquisition, development, and retention of skilled employees.

*“Yes, we may argue that skills shortage continues to plague the labour market and so on and so on. However, there are good employees out there who need the opportunities. What we require is a strategy for bringing in quality skills, improve them and retain them,”* suggested participant PIO06. The same participant went on to further argue that if resources are to influence strategy, there is need to take all the aspects of the personnel into consideration when determining the resources required for strategic planning and implementation. Other participants also discussed the skills of employees as the characteristics that makes employees valuable resources. The RBV views employees as critical resources by looking at the human skills that other organisations cannot easily imitate, the uniqueness of the skills and the ability to maintain a skilled workforce (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Palladan & Adamu, 2018; Gerbera *et al.*, 2020). Interviewed participants were articulate in stressing the value of unique skills needed to influence achievement of strategies within their institutions.

#### **4.6.1.2 Sub-theme: Financial resources**

The most considered resources among all organisational resources, financial resources dominated the discussion with the participants. At every given point during the several encounters with the participants, they mentioned financial resources as critical in strategic planning and implementation within the public sector. Financial resources therefore emerged as one of the sub-themes within the domain of classes of resources. Literature show that finance is essential in formulating strategies as well as implementing them effectively (Naidoo *et al.*, 2016; Doner & Ross-Schneider, 2016; Schellens & Gisladottir, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2020). Participants vigorously emphasized that the public sector should have the required resources for implementing their strategies. Participant PIO01 indicated

that the state institutions are custodians of the resources that generate revenue that the government use in delivering public value. The question is therefore,

*“How does it appear like we are a donor funded ministry,”* questioned participant PIO01.

*“Our ministry, for one should have sufficient funds for financing our strategy. There is no question on the importance of finance in strategic planning and implementation,”* stated participant PIO04.

*“Money is the most important resources that we must look at when we do our planning,”* suggested participant PIO05. The same participant further responded to the questions of whether there is consideration of funding when planning. The response was inconclusive at first with the participant suggesting that the planning process *“... sometime...,”* take finances into consideration, *“... though with no specifics as to the mounts required,”* explained participant PIO05. After the interviewer asked for clarity as to the way by which one would state that planners have financial capabilities in mind when planning, participant responded by saying,

*“... the truth is that planning focuses on setting up strategic objectives that lead to the fulfilment of the ministry’s mandate. We then make budgets based on the objectives, and then approach the National Planning Commission for funding.”*

Debate around the consideration of finances continued with all participants, with the desire to understand whether consideration of financial resources takes place during the formulation of strategic plans as well as the ministerial strategies. Like participant PIO05, other participants indicated that that the mandate was the focal point for strategizing and

finances would be considered after the plans are suggested. This indication however did not refute the fact that financial resources are essential in strategy formulation and implementation within the public sector. In the words of participant PIO01, the idea that the mandate of the institution was fundamental was clear.

*“As a nation, we have the raw material that simply need to be transformed into products that brings in funds for utilisation in pursuit of national goals,”* explained participant PIO02. In line with the same idea was the observation by Naidoo *et al.* (2016) that the development of an economy requires turning raw materials into revenue generation products. Participants viewed the mandate of their institutions as fundamental.

*“... it is the mandate of the ministry that determines the strategic planning and implementation processes as well as the strategies that we develop,”* stated participant PIO01.

*“... according to our mandate of course and then the funding of such strategies comes into play,”* participant PIO03 indicated.

Participant PIO04 indicated that, *“I do not dispute the fact that sometime, or should I be honest to say that the focus on the goal of the ministry blinds us from seeing the need for limiting our plans to the finances available”*. Participant PIO04 added that the benefit of aligning the strategies to the financial resources would enable the institution to prioritise critical areas and postpone the activities that would not be feasible during the current period. Along with this idea, participant PIO06 felt that suggested that basing strategies and plans on the resources that the organisation have and can create during the target period would result in achievement of strategic objectives, improved service delivery and

institutional reputation. The idea also colludes with the examined literature stating that formulating achievement of strategies depends on the organisation's ability to access resources required in implementation (Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Magiri *et al.*, 2018; Narikae & Lewa, 2018). Participant PIO07 also stated that financial resources play a role in promoting the achievement of public strategic objectives.

*"It is not an overemphasis to note that we need the finances to implement our strategies. Aligning these scarce resources can increase our chances of achieving strategic plans,"* explained participant PIO04.

*"We do not really take this aspect serious, but I am convinced that aligning the financial resources available to the strategies during formulation would result in consistent achievement of strategies,"* confirmed participant PIO06. Participant PIO06 proceeded to explain that *"... aligning resources and strategies during strategy formulation and all the way through to implementation can help us to agree on the strategic plan that we can implement during the five-year period and exclude the ones we are not able to accomplish to the next period"*.

*"Financial resources play a critical role in the achievement of strategies and unless the ministry begins to take this scarce input to its strategic processes, there is no way we can achieve objectives,"* suggested participant PIO07.

#### **4.6.1.3 Sub-theme: Physical infrastructure**

Another important observation made regarding the resources required to achieve public strategies and plans was the availability of infrastructure such as the premises, equipment,

technologies, and logistical systems. From the opinions of the interviewed participants, consideration of infrastructure that influence strategy directly receives little to no attention in the strategy planning and implementation processes. Literature, however, show that infrastructure is essential in strategic planning (Winder & Le Heron, 2017; Opatha & Hewapathirana, 2019). Participants like PIO01 continuously emphasised that the infrastructure that the institution have is not sufficient and receive no attention apart from hollow talks during conferences. Participants had the following to say about the status of infrastructure.

*“The only time you here leaders talking about key infrastructure development is when they refer to offices that the elite occupy, only when confronted during hollow press conferences do, we hear the influential people making references to upgrading infrastructure,”* stated participant PIO01.

*“Equipment is aged and assuming that it is still able to work leads to overstating the strategic plans and goals... only to realise that we cannot use the equipment available,”* stated participant PIO02.

*“This is an area that need relooking at because, people cannot do anything with no tools to use... the assumption is that there is planning is what brings the equipment needed for actioning the plans. Hence, we place focus on convincing those in authority to accept the plans and not look at the infrastructural requirements,”* explained participant PIO03.

Participant PIO04 indicated that *“The strategic planning and implementation processes give attention to infrastructure, but the problem is that most of the time this is done is when providing feedback on reasons for failure”*.

When asked for reasons why there seem to be no emphasis put on the availability of infrastructure in the strategy formulation stage, participant PIO05 indicated that the institutions exaggerate its value because of depleted assets. For example, participant PIO05 indicated that most of the vehicles in the books of the ministry are “... *parked in some garage waiting to be repaired or written off*”. The same participant suggested that it would serve the purpose if the strategies formulated were aligned with the specific assets before they reach the approval stage. Sharing the same idea, participant PIO06 stated that funds continue to go into waste in paying salaries of people that are not productive because of lack of machinery to conduct their strategic tasks.

*“... because strategies and plans create the need to have people stationed in communities across the country, money is wasted in compensating these people while they do nothing. All because the machines do not work, the vehicles are at garages,”* explained participant PIO06.

*“... one can observe a reluctance to link the strategies to the infrastructure available and can be obtained during the formulation phase, during implementation and when reviewing progress. Nevertheless, the focus is having good plans and when the plans fail, they are abandoned,”* stated participant PIO07.

Interactions with the participants cantered at obtaining detailed accounts of the various infrastructure classes required in the formulation, implementation and review of the strategies and strategic plans. While equipment was extensively discussed during the initial interactions, discussions expanded to premises, technologies, and logistical systems. Participants viewed these as essential in the formulation and implementation of

strategies and strategic plans. Reviewed literature (Mboti, 2018; Oliveira & Hersperger, 2018) show that formulating and implementing public strategies and plans demands for developing the needed infrastructure to ensure that individuals conduct their activities efficiently and effectively.

*“... as I have indicated in our earlier discussion, we need to position our planning within our means because the equipment we have does not match the huge goals that we put up,”* explained participant PIO01.

*“One would conclude that as a developing country, Namibia should limit its planning scope to the infrastructure the country has,”* suggested participant PIO03.

*“It is also a matter of the quality of the equipment in the field,”* stated participant PIO05.

It emerged that the public institutions are under pressure to plan on the grounds that they would get the funding to purchase equipment from the budget allocation. This is however farfetched because budget decisions do not consider the plans but the political decisions and institutional priorities. For example, participant PIO01 argued that despite some institutions' contribution to the state revenue, they are allocated lower budgets, which do not cover their strategic intentions. The view show that there is no consideration from the sources of resources regarding the inputs that generate revenue for the budgets. Participant PIO02 stated that there is an incongruity between the strategic plans and the budget allocated to a ministry, leading to abandonment of projects within the plan. Studies however recommend top government leaders to ensure that their specific institutions get adequate financial resources for them to invest in new equipment, as well as funding of operations that generate more revenue for the state.

There was also collective understanding among the participants interviewed regarding the technologies that the public sector must use in strategic planning and implementation. The failure of the sector to adopt innovative technologies that makes strategic planning processes simpler, faster, and more analytical was cause for concern for participants PIO01, participant PIO03 and participant PIO07.

*“The guideline is ok because it tells us what to do, and when, but some of these activities can be easily done using some of the latest technologies,”* suggested participant PIO01.

*“What worries me is that technological resources are silent in our processes. Imagine having to do everything manually, which takes time and is also prone to human errors,”* participant PIO02 stated.

*“... it is understandable that we consider ourselves as developing nations, but it is time that we look at introducing some technology in our activities and this should be part of the strategy or at the very least inform the strategy,”* participant PIO07 suggested. Participant PIO07 added that the adoption of technology at a smaller scale would serve the institutions finances and create room for allocating resources to other critical areas.

With two participants showing less undemanding of the infrastructure in terms of logistical systems, the other five participants suggested that much of the failure in strategic planning and implementation was linked to limitations in logistics systems. Hence, planning as if the institutions have the logistics required to facilitate the movement of goods and services was discouraged. Participant PIO02 particularly pointed out that some of the strategic plans remain stagnant because the facilities for delivery of goods and services are not adequate. In participant PIO04's view, it is reasonable to allocate projects

to local entities and individuals, but after ascertaining that they have the capacity to complete the projects.

#### **4.6.2 Theme 2: Resource capabilities**

The next theme identified as the analysis of the data collected progressed was the public institutions' resources capabilities. Participants interviewed gave a clear indication that resources play a crucial role in the execution of strategies and strategic plans. The views of the participants confirmed the conclusions in literature that organisations require resources to implement strategies (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Pederzini, 2016; Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Höglund *et al.*, 2018; Jellenz *et al.*, 2020; Nayeemunnisa & Gomathi, 2020). Participants emphasised the availability of proper and adequate resources as crucial in organisational functions, including the formulation and implementation of strategies. Consistently, the RBV coins that resources that meet specific quantities and the specifications are crucial for organisational functions (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Gerbera *et al.*, 2020). Participant PIO06 was when stating that the value of resources that public institutions have received little attention from the authorities.

*“There is no other way to succeed in any function of the organisation other than having the right quality and quantity of resources,”* indicated participant PIO01.

*“It is the number of resources that the institution has to utilise that determine its capacity to conduct business,”* participant PIO02 stated and added, *“... when it comes to developing strategies and implementing them, you definitely need the people, the assets and the finances”*.

Participant PIO04 suggested “... every organisation need to have the superior quality resources, in sufficient amounts to conduct its functions effectively”.

*“Just as I have indicated in the beginning, the issues to look at are the quality of individuals responsible for developing strategic plans and implementing them, then we look at the facilities used for making ideas a reality and lastly you think of the people that have influence on the organisation,”* explained participant PIO05.

From the perspective of participants PIO03 and PIO07, the ability of the individuals tasked to ensure success in strategic planning and implementation to define resources they need is essential. According to participant PIO07, it is the ability to specify the exact quality and quantity of resources needed in conducting the strategic processes of the organisation that helps institutions to determine the actual resources they need to develop and implement strategies effectively.

Studies also indicate that the ability to define the quality and quantity of resources required for strategy formulation, implementation and review is important during the strategic planning and implementation processes (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Chen *et al.*, 2018). That is an indication that the resources that an institution have play a crucial function in strategic planning and implementation. Referring to the capabilities of an institution in terms of the resources, participants mentioned quality of resources, the quantity of the resources, the sustainability of the sources of the resources, resources constraints and the ability to allocate resources to priority areas.

*“One has got to be able to define the resources they need in order for them to look for them as well as manage them effectively,”* echoed participant PIO03.

*“... I am convinced that the majority of the institutional leaders in the institution do not have a clue about the resources needed,”* suggested participant PIO04 and when asked to elaborate, went on to say, *“... people think that numbers are the human resources, but numbers of the people employed by an entity is just a number. The people that we call human capital are those that are capable of handling the work challenges,”* continued participant PIO04.

Participant PIO06 also added that, *“... getting the resources we need to be able to conduct our strategic planning processes effectively require proper communication of what we need from the state”*.

Participant PIO07 argued that the resources that come in the form of human capital should take the front role of combining the other resources, which means that they should be highly regarded. However, literature indicated that the value of resources within an organisation is incomparable because each resource serves a particular purpose. The availability, quality, quantity, and proper allocation to productive activities emerged as fundamental from participants PIO01.

Ability to maintain a steady supply of resources to fund an economic activity is important because it enable the organisation to operate effectively. The quality of resources available for the organisation, the quantity of resources, the sources of resources emerged as some of the sub-themes within the ambit of the major theme resource capabilities. Resource constraints and the as their allocation within the strategic areas of the organisation also form part of the organisation.

#### 4.6.2.1 Sub-theme: Quality of resources

The analysis of the collected data revealed that the quality specifications are critical in the usefulness of the resources, their ability to contribute to strategic planning and implementation effectiveness and production of quality goods or services. Participants indicated that they understood the quality of resources need by their institutions. However, the participants all indicated that other individuals did not possess the necessary skills required in implementing strategic plans while others could lack the necessary interest in the quality of resources. According to Alexy *et al.* (2018), resources quality makes the organisation's resources unique or inferior from others. This understanding was also clear from the part of the participants, leading to a suggestion from the participants for improvement in quality orientation at all institutional levels within the public sector.

*"... indeed, some of the individuals take quality seriously,"* confirmed participant PIO01, adding that *"... our institution deals with critical issues and the quality specifications of our resources is crucial. One however, wonders why sometimes quality is compromised."*

Participant PIO02 indicated that *"... the quality of resources is a born of contention when it comes to resources assigned to strategic planning and implementation. With human resources, we know what is needed but simply do not have the people with the required expertise."*

*"... yes, quality is necessary, but accessing the specific qualities needed is a challenge for the public sector,"* explained participant PIO05.

*“... making long-term decisions for a public institution, particularly one like our organisation require experience. Such quality is scarce and need collective effort to develop and retain the skilled people,”* stated participant PIO06.

In terms of the quality of human resources needed in strategy formulation, Wolf and Floyd (2017) observe that the decisions made in strategy formulation require skilled and experienced personnel. Participant PIO07 also confirmed the need for quality in making strategic decisions as well as implementing the plans in a way that is consistent with the vision of the organisation. However, participant PIO07 felt that *“... people whom the organisation develops do not pay the organisation back because they leave prematurely”*.

Speaking about the machinery that the institutions in the public sector, participant PIO02 made the general statement that the machinery lacked the quality of properties belonging to the state. Participant PIO03 particularly mentioned the aged machinery and the broken machinery as being of low quality. Discussions with the other participants also revealed that quality was compromised, leading to failure to implement the strategic plans. The confirmation from the participants that the institutions they represented did not have the necessary quality resources show that public administrators do not give the resources the necessary attention they deserve when they conduct strategic planning and implementation processes.

Studies however suggest that the quality of the resources is essential in implementing strategic planning and implementation processes effectively (Elbanna *et al.*, 2016; Benkler, 2017; Adetayo, 2018; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Varsani, 2018; Alomran, 2019).

Participant PIO02 stated that “... *the quality of resources is an issue that the institutions should consider when conducting strategic planning and implementation*”.

“... *our machineries lack the quality standard for implementing strategies within the public sector,*” explained participant PIO02.

“... *aged machines are now of low quality,*” stated participant PIO03.

Participant PIO03 stated that “... *machines that are old and broken cannot be used for anything that is productive*”.

“... *we need to concentrate on revamping our infrastructure, including the machines and vehicles because they should form part of our strategic planning,*” suggested participant PIO05.

“... *with a close focus on the quality of resources, strategic and plans would be feasible because they would be,*” suggested participant PIO07.

The discussion with the participants on the quality of resources within public institutions revealed that feasibility of strategies in the public sector require critical consideration of resources quality. Conducting strategic planning with a deeper understanding of the quality of resources required to develop and implement the strategic plans and strategies lead to effectiveness in strategic planning and implementation in the public sector. The views of the participants about the value of quality on strategy implementation was also echoed by Abdi and Sasaka (2017). An approach that focuses on the quality of resources would therefore lead to feasible strategies and strategic plans.

#### 4.6.2.2 Sub-theme: Quantity of resources

Discussions with the participants also focused on the resources that the public have in terms of the quantity. One of the revelations from the data provided by the participants from their experiences and understanding was that the resources were not sufficient. Scarcity of resources in public institutions is a common phenomenon among many government organisations (Leskaj, 2017). Quantity of resources was therefore one of the sub-themes within the theme resource capabilities. Insufficiency in resources was echoed by all the participant, with participant PIO04 indicating that scarcity of resources has a negative impact of feasibility of strategic and strategic plans. Other participants also suggested that their institutions did not have sufficient resources. However, none of the interviewed participants confirmed that resources quantity was directly considered during formulation of strategic plans or when they were documented. In fact, participants stated that in some circumstances, resources are considered under strengths.

*“... quantity of resources helps in performing the strategic tasks. That is something that none can dispute,”* confirmed participants PIO01.

*“... money, employees and equipment all need to be in adequate quantities if any institution is to achieve its strategic plans. The starting point should be the decision-making phase because that is where the plans are made,”* explained participant PIO03.

Participant PIO04 responded to the question about the impact of the quality of resources on feasibility of strategies by stating that *“... sufficient human resources are essential and so are other resources such as funding and machines. Indeed, these are issues that we look at when we go for implementation and scratch here and there to see what we have.”*

Participant PIO07 was specific in stating that “... *we can spend time talking about the causes of strategy issues. But the fact is that there is little one can achieve with vacant positions and inadequate funding.*”

The views of the participants were consistent with the conclusions resented by various literature studied when they pointed to the value that allocating more money and assets to strategic priorities as the driver for achieving strategic planning objectives. Rindfleisch (2020) indicate that implementation of any activity requires enough resources. Another earlier study by Elbanna *et al.* (2016) also show that ensuring that sufficient resources lead to development and implementation of public strategies. Participant PIO01 supported the idea by suggesting that it would serve the purpose when the institution would look at the quantity of resources available against the resources that can be accessed during the strategic planning period. The idea of planning and then begin searching for funding, employees, or machinery for completing the process was strongly downplayed by the participants.

Participant PIO01 recommended that “... *quantify the resources first and plan according to what the ministry have*”.

“... *the institution cannot achieve anything by planning to please readers of the plans. Rather, be realistic about what can be done with the little resources we have,*” suggested participant PIO02. Giving more details regarding the aspect of pleasing the readers, participant PIO02 stated that exaggerating strategic plan objectives usually serves the purpose of giving the institutions’ leadership and other stakeholders the impression that the institution has the capacity to achieve high performance.

Participant PIO02 stated “... *the reason is simple. It is to give a view that we are doing well, and we can see the bright future. However, when time comes for implementing, we blame the resources that we do not have, and everyone understands.*”

Participant PIO04 held the view, arguing that “... *instead of creating room for failure by making exaggerated assumptions, strategic planning processes will yield phenomenal results when the objectives aligned with the resources needed to do the actual performance*”.

“... *in all honest, the best way to go is to look at what we have or can have on the shorter and longer runs before we conclude on the strategic planning processes,*” suggested participant PIO05

Participant PIO07 held that “... *is that as much as we do not have information about the funds allocated to us over five years, my belief is that such projections are necessary because it creates a picture of what to expect*”.

Results indicated that the development and implementation of strategies require resources in sufficient quantities. The participants indicated clearly that some of the plans that are appearing to be way beyond their implementation timelines lack the resources such as funding, human capital, and equipment. Participant PIO06 further indicated that some of the contractors accused of failing to complete work on time take the blame to save their investments while know that the issue lies with the supply of resources. Studies indicate that insufficient resources affect implementation of strategies negatively (Leskaj, 2017). The recommendation made by the participants was that every plan that the public institution approves should be assigned the skilled individuals to executed and manage,

the funds for dealing with running costs and the equipment. In addition, participants recommended that public officials commit to the use of resources for the specific tasks they are assigned to rather than redirecting them to other areas.

#### **4.6.2.3 Sub-theme: Sources of resources**

The sources of the resources that the public institutions use in the development and implementation of strategic plans was another issue discussed intensively with the participants. Participants were of the view that while it appears that the flow of resources to institutions within the Namibian public sector strategic planning processes, the reality on the ground is different. Specifically, participant PIO01 indicated that the main source of the resources is unpredictable and cited having to plan for five years and get budget allocation annually. Continuous supply of resources is essential in the development and implementation of strategies (Karna *et al.*, 2016; Yu *et al.*, 2016; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Al-Doori & Areigat, 2019). Participant PIO02 also shared similar understanding, suggesting that the best way to go would be for the authorities in charge of funding to commit to certain amounts for the duration of the strategic plan period. This idea was also discussed at length with participant PIO05, concluding that allocating the budgets for a longer period would significantly help in achievement of strategic planning and implementation processes.

*“... we all think that resources like finance and human resources are flowing smoothly from the treasury to institutional strategic plans, but I can tell you that there are serious glitches in the process,”* argued participant PIO01.

*“... one has to understand that the plan is for five years. Four years when we consider that the strategy process for the next period begins during the fourth year. The obstacle is that the budgeting comes yearly, creating profoundly serious mismatches between the plans and the resources,”* explained participant PIO02.

Participant PIO02 added that *“... it would serve the purpose if there was a commitment to the resources for the entire five-year period. The resources can be provided on a regular basis, but they need to be predetermined, giving the institution some leverage to demand its share. This is what we do with the donor funds because once they make a commitment, one can approach them for the funds when needed.”*

Participant PIO03 also suggested that a commitment from resources sources would help *“... developing plans that are achievable because we know the exact number of resources, we are likely to obtain”*.

The commitment of resources on the longer term was observed to be an effective way of addressing resources shortages during the strategic plan implementation stages. Similarly, Abdi and Sasaka (2017) suggest that when top management commit to the provision of adequate resources, there is a likelihood of achieving strategy and plans within the public sector. Speaking of the supply of human resources, participant PIO05 suggested that *“... instead of having a vacant position for a year or so, it is rather better to abolish the position and plan knowing that there is no one to conduct certain tasks. That helps in allocating responsibilities to others as well as simply reducing the magnitude for the activities.”*

Participant PIO07 also argued against creating an impression that a position would be filled, or a vehicle would be repaired when in fact, which would not happen. Participant PIO07 referred to “... *the vehicles accounted for are either broken or even missing. At least, the last two or so years has seen some improvements with the repairing of government infrastructure, vehicles, and machinery. But there is a long way before we can conclude the chapter.*”

The results indicated that the supply of the resources for the public institutions is the national treasury. The frequency and quantity of the resources allocated to the institutions were the significant issues raised by the participants. An ordinary understanding that developing feasible strategic plans require adequate resources with the necessary skills, while the implementation and evaluation would be in vain with limited resources. The views of the participants concur with literature indicating that achievement of objectives within the public sector require critical consideration for the human capital, funding, and infrastructure (Iacovino *et al.*, 2017; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Dakare *et al.*, 2019). Development of feasible strategies that the public sector can implement towards achieving economic development require a closer consideration of the resources that the institutions allocate to strategic activities.

#### **4.6.2.4 Sub-theme: Resource constraints**

Another sub-theme within the ambit of resources capabilities was resources constraints, which the participants indicated was the factor to consider at every level of the public sector. To begin with, the participants confirmed the general understanding that resources are insufficient in every sphere of the economy. Studies also show that constraints in terms

of resources such as funding hinders the success of strategic planning and implementation processes in public and private organisations (Leskaj, 2017; Magiri *et al.*, 2018). When asked to explain the meaning of resources constraints from the global view, participant PIO03 indicated that most of the resources are consumed in operations, demanding for constant supply. Participant PIO06 also indicated that resources such as human skills and competences may be limited in terms of the specific competences needed for a particular activity. Participant PIO07 also indicated that resources constraints may occur when they are availed late. Consistently, another observation made by Leskaj (2017) was that untimely allocation of resources to priority objectives affect their effectiveness.

Participant PIO01 replied to the questions about the resources that the institutions have by stating that “... *resources are not enough for all. With vacant positions, broken machinery and limited financial resources, one can tell that there are not enough.*”

Participant PIO02 also indicated that “... *in terms of donor funding, we are ok because those ones do not really finance much. So, the strategic areas funded from donor funds are covered. The issue is on or main strategic intentions because we have to wait for the budget.*”

“... *machines are old and there is not much to spare for purchasing new machines. Sometimes we must use one machine where there should be many. With finances and human resources, the same situation prevails,*” explained participant PIO03.

Participant PIO04 suggested that “... *the questions we are addressing here should be addressed by the people in charge of the sector, to show critical concern to the assets,*

*people and money. There is just not enough. Plans are good, at least in my view, but they need people, funds and physical assets to implement.”*

In terms of participant PIO05’s view, “... *there are not enough resources within the public sector. Particularly, one need to be specific in stating that the resources are lacking in critical areas because from a political point of view, one would say that those are given enough.”*

*“... there is a crisis because we have raw materials that are not really useful unless we have turned them into finished products, or even cash,”* stated participant PIO07.

Asked for their opinions on the way the constraints in resources could be addressed, participants thought that political intent towards strategic planning was required to ensure that strategizing does not remain the responsibility of people with no access to the resources. From the first participant to the last, the same line of thinking was observed with participants suggesting that the plans drawn should determine the quality and quantity of resources supplied as well as the time when they are supplied. Nevertheless, participants such as PIO02 thought that such an approach require political leadership and support. Roudgar (2018) observe that political influence plays a role in the access of public administrators to resources. Pyun and Gamassou (2018) state that strategic plaining processes should bring together the political stakeholders and administrators so that they share the resources needed in developing and implementing strategies.

*“... this one is simpler on paper, but one must say it. The decision on the quality of resources and their quantity should be from the public administrators and not the other way,”* suggested participant PIO03.

Participant PIO05 suggested that the “... *plans contained within the strategic plan document should dictate the resources supplied because as it is, strategic plans do not determine the resources*”.

“... *My option in this case is that the people concerned with the strategic planning should have access to the resources needed ... indeed the internal controls should be implemented to avoid mismanagement of resources,*” suggested participant PIO07.

Resource constraints was discovered to be detrimental to the development of feasible strategic plans as well as the implementation of strategy. It was also indicated that success in strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector would require adjustments to the way the quality and quantity of resources are determined with the strategic plans being the right tools to rely on when providing resources. In addition, the administrators would suit to be the ones that decide the strategic processes and resources supplied to strategic activities.

#### **4.6.2.5 Sub-theme: Allocation of resources**

The last sub-theme within the major theme resources capabilities was the way in which the resources are allocated. Participants did not shy away from indicating that some of the challenges faced regarding the resources supplied to strategic planning and implementation was related to the way resources are internally allocated to strategic priorities. Misallocation of resources and maleficence were among therefore top items mentioned within the domain of allocation of resources.

Participant PIO04 was particular in stating that public officials contribute to the failure of strategic planning and implementation objectives when they misuse public resources or use them for personal edification. A study by Afonina (2015) shows that an institution's ability to use resources effectively gives meaning to the strategic planning and implementation processes. According to Wolf and Floyd (2017), allocating organisational resources effectively and efficiently is key to successful strategic planning and implementation.

*"... in most cases, the resources are limited but we also play our part by corruptly assigning public resources to our personal interests,"* stated participant PIO01.

*"... under anonymity, one is tempted to confirm that there is a lot of mishandling of public resources,"* stated participant PIO02.

*"Consistency in allocating resources as prescribed in the strategic plans is another cause for concern in the public sector,"* participant PIO03 stated and added that the problem is that *"... those with more power are the ones that are likely to commit these acts, making it difficult for the low-level personnel to raise such concerns. However, such misallocations also contribute to the shortages of resources for public strategic planning processes."* There is consensus among academics (Leskaj, 2017; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020) about the shortages in supply of resources for the public sector. Such resources are also misallocated to areas that may not necessarily be of priority (Leskaj, 2017). Participants also indicated that there is need to ensure that all resources budgeted for the sector should be used for their intended purposes. For example, participant PIO06 suggested the need for measures to deter people from misallocating public resources.

*“People need to face profound consequences for misallocating public resources, especially when they do so for their personal benefits,”* suggested participant PIO06.

*“... establishing internal controls that identify misallocations is necessary,”* stated participant PIO07.

Allocation of resources was observed to be a crucial aspect in the development of strategic plans because alignment of strategies to resources helps those that plan to make informed forecasting. Participants indicated shortcomings with the allocation of public resources and proposed measures such as punitive remedies for the individuals that make themselves guilty of wrongly allocating public resources. Support should however be given to the individuals that make efforts to perform the daunting task of effectively allocating public resources. Studies show that allocating public resources is a complex endeavour that require skill and commitment from the public officials (Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015; Höglund *et al.*, 2018). Participants recommended the adoption of an approach that prescribes the support for public officials when dealing with the resources assigned to their strategic planning and implementation processes.

#### **4.6.3 Theme 3: Constant consideration of resources**

Another major theme that emerged from the study was the idea of constant consideration of resources in the strategic planning and implementation processes. The underpinning fact within the issue of consistently considering the resources during strategic planning and implementation was that plans are results of skilled and competent individuals. All the seven participants echoed this idea during the interactions with the interviewer, where participants were concerned that when competent skills are neglected during planning, the

plans would not be feasible. The study by Nason and Wiklund (2018) shows that competencies of personnel are critical in bringing best ideas to the discussion table, paving way for the development of achievable plans. Participant PIO03 indicated that the starting point is considering the skills, experience, and competencies, which are essential elements within the human resources to consider when developing strategies. Other participants also made the presented the following sentiments.

*“The point of departure here is to have competent people with necessary experience to champion strategic planning and implementation processes,”* suggested participant PIO01.

Participant PIO02 indicated *“... the chief resources to be considered first, are people that make the decisions because reviewing the current goals, objectives and mission require competency and experience”*.

*“There is hope of achieving the goal at the end, but the beginning is assembling competent individuals to produce strategies. If they understand what strategizing all is about, they will be resources focused and not just cloud the documents with bid ideas,”* explained participant PIO05.

The competencies of personnel became a focal point in the discussions with the participants such as PIO04 emphasizing continuing to assign experienced and competent people to all strategic activities. Participant PIO06 went on to argue that there is no reason the Namibian public institution should not have competent employees. Echoing the sentiments that employees are the most important resources the institution should have, participant PIO07 indicated that continuous assignment of skilled employees is crucial

throughout the strategic planning and implementation process. Consistently, Collins (2021) avows that an institution's employees are the crucial resources and should have the essential and grander capabilities that contributes to the execution of strategies and strategic plans.

*"... competent employees are to be availed to the entire strategic planning processes,"* participant PIO01 stated.

Participant PIO02 suggested *"... employees are crucial in achieving strategic objectives"*.

The understanding of participant PIO03 about the nature of human resources was advanced, such that the same indicated that employees' intellectual abilities and practical understanding of the activities assigned to them contribute the execution of objectives. Similarly, Akwesi (2019) show that the personalities of individuals, as well as their intellectual abilities are essential in the execution of strategies. The idea was also expressed by Zhang *et al.* (2019) who add that employees' knowledge of the activities they engage in help in achieving efficiency and effectiveness. Determined attention to the talent of employees in public institutions have and can secure to execute their strategies are indispensable in their strategic planning and implementation.

*"... on that basis, human resources need to be a part of the strategic planning function from start to finish,"* stated participant PIO05.

Regarding the other resources such as the funding and infrastructure, participants were of the view that while these need to be planned for and allocated when the implementation phase begun, securing their availability before confirming the strategies and plans is

fundamental. Participant PIO03 went on to question whether an institution's plan qualify as a strategic plan when not based on the resources because the participant's understanding of strategic planning appeared to relate to setting action plans for utilising resources to achieve long-term goals. This view was consistent with scholars that conceptualize strategic planning as embracing distinctive courses of action in the allocation of unique resources to activities that contribute to the realisation of objectives (Jarzabkowski & Kaplan, 2015; Safari & Mazdeh, 2018).

Participant PIO01 called for "*... making finances available a topic of discussion for all the strategic planning steps*".

*"The ministry needs to plan based on what we have and can get, rather than only coming up with ideas that end up frustrating the people assigned to the operational departments,"* suggested participant PIO02.

*"The institutions can achieve strategies by simply planning to use the resources in a proper way towards meeting its long-term mandate. That is in short, what is strategic planning,"* explained participant PIO03.

*"Strategic plans need resources and the government need to strictly restrict their planning to the available resources; both human resources, finances and other assets,"* participant PIO06 suggested.

The views of the participants show a clear understanding that the Namibian public sector strategic planning and implementation processes would produce feasible strategic objectives and plans with constant consideration of resources throughout the processes.

The ability of an institution to access resources, manage their allocation, and use throughout the strategic planning and implementation process ensures achievement of strategic objectives (Varsani, 2018; Al-Doori & Areigat, 2019). Hence, participants recommended planning in line with the resources obtainable, ensuring linkage between resources and objectives, managing the continuous supply of resources as well as their allocation to strategic priorities. The sub-themes planning according to resources, linking objectives to resources, managing continuity in supply of resources, and managing of institutional resources emerged within the theme constant consideration of resources.

#### **4.6.3.1 Sub-theme: Planning according to resources**

Planning according to the resources available to the institutions as well as the resources that the institutions could obtain during the strategic planning period was one of the prominent ideas under the subject of constant consideration of resources. Having emphasized the importance of resources to the strategic planning and implementation processes, participants suggested that success in strategizing required planning with the resources in mind. The views of the participants were in line with the literature reviewed during the study, which indicate that resources should be considered during planning activities (Bento *et al.*, 2017; Pascuci *et al.*, 2017; Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018; Johnsen, 2018). Participants expressed that with adequate resources, the institutions would achieve their strategic objectives.

*“Yes, resources are crucial in strategic planning,”* confirmed participant PIO01.

*“It can almost be stated with confidence that resources are never sufficient. That is the reason strategic planning becomes crucial; to decide on the most effective and efficient way of allocating the scarce resources,”* explained participant PIO02.

*“I can attest that with adequate focus on the resources we have, we would obviously develop plans and objectives that we can implement, and of course go ahead and implement them effectively,”* explained participant PIO04.

Participant PIO06 indicated that *“... the importance of human activity, funding and equipment mean they should form the basis of our plans”*.

In view of the understanding that the institution represented by participant PIO02 seemed to fail to achieve strategic objectives due to skills shortages, participant PIO02 suggested that including skills audit to the SWOT analysis would help in developing plans that suited its skills set. Participant PIO01 thought that there were many strategic positions that needed to be filled to ensure that plans developed are transformed into results. Apart from participant PIO06, who suggested that the institution’s problem with personnel was leadership only, other participants recommended reducing the magnitude of plans to the skills available. According to Magiri *et al.* (2018), human capital, which includes the employees at all levels, also require suitable empowerment in the strategic plan implementation process for them to contribute to strategic processes meaningfully.

*“Teams that facilitate strategic planning need to have the right composition, skills and experience to produce feasible strategic objectives,”* participant PIO03 stated and added that *“... stakeholders should also understand the information that they need to make informed decisions, while the implementation teams must have the expertise”*. Melton and

Meier (2016) hold the same views, arguing that skills, competencies, and intellectual abilities of human resources to make meaningful contribution to feasibility of strategies and plans require stakeholders play a part in providing information.

Participant PIO04 concluded the final interview by explaining that “... *because of shortages in public resources, making strategic plans that are not too extravagant is what I believe would lead to feasible strategies within the institution*”.

“... *so, the understanding here is before starting to plan, account for the skills needed to plan, to carry out the plans and review the plans. Another issue is training the people because a mixture of skills simply creates more problems,*” suggested participant PIO07.

Regarding planning according to the available funds and the capacity to generate more funds to sustain the implementation of the strategic plans, participants had diverse views. However, the conclusion was similar because consensus was that feasibility of the plans is fundamental. Once again, it is interesting to confirm that literature also advocates for development of feasible strategies and plans (Jabbar & Hussein, 2017; Michira & Anyieni, 2018; Ongeti & Machuki, 2018). The views of participant PIO01 was that the State treasury should allocate funds to the institutions before they develop strategic plans, so that the planning processes have some funding basis to consider. Participant PIO03 shared the idea, adding that the secured funding should not follow the current mid-term or annual budgeting system. Funds need to be secured for the five-year period. Two more participants suggested long-term budget commitments from the government.

*“... unfortunately, the people that sit at the table where funding is decided, do not seem to comprehend the concepts properly because it would help to have the funds allocated to the institutions known before strategic plans are finalized,”* participant PIO01 suggested.

*“... it is better to have an idea of the figures of budgeted amounts for the ministries before the strategies are drawn, even though there would be some adjustments, those can be compensated for by making estimates,”* participant PIO05 suggested.

Participant PIO06 however was of a unique perspective, suggesting that the allocated funds should be disclosed after knowing the components of the strategic plans. However, Participant PIO06 emphasized that such allocations should meet the funding requirements for the strategic plans. It is clear from the understanding of the participants that they all shared the view that the funds allocated to strategic plan should be adequate to cover the implementation. For issues such as the equipment, logistics and premises, the participants argued that there was no need to plan on something that the institutions did not have. Participant PIO07 went on to suggest that the only circumstances allowing the planning teams to plan for unavailable infrastructure would be when assured of the finances to fund the acquisition of such infrastructure.

*“... to me, it is irresponsible to plan on a vehicle that is either broken beyond repair or not there at all,”* indicated participant PIO02, going on to suggest that the teams within the institutions lack the necessary authority to contest some of the directions given when formulating strategies.

*“Planning with not enough equipment or confirmation of the availability of funds to purchase the equipment does not show wisdom,”* explained participant PIO02.

*“My take is that since it is undependable to plan on inaccessible equipment or any other assets that the organisation need to develop and implement strategies. That is as good as setting oneself for failure,”* participant PIO04 explained and added that the institution needs to be practical about the available infrastructure as well as *“... the status of the equipment. It is shocking that some machinery that has since stopped working is still being considered as part of the institutional assets.”*

The understanding idea on planning according to resources is that a thorough consideration of the available human, financial and infrastructural resources is necessary. According to Michira and Anyieni (2018), it is important for the organisation to ensure that there are adequate human resources as well as funds and physical equipment for the development or implementation of strategic plan. Consistently, Chen *et al.* (2018) state that the planning process should begin with the consideration of the available resources for implementation of the plans. Along this understanding, participants encouraged a shift in the current strategic planning processes to include the emphasis on making consideration the resources as part of planning. When concluding the last discussion, participant PIO07 reiterated the point that a strategic planning process with the resources as determining factors would lead to achievement of strategic objectives.

#### **4.6.3.2 Sub-theme: Linking strategic objectives to resources**

The alignment of strategic objectives and the capacity of the organisation to acquire the necessary resources became one of the prominent discussions with the participants. Particularly participant PIO02 confirmed that in the scenarios when the resources were adequately supplied for the implementation of an objective, results were good. During the

second interaction with participant PIO06, it became clear from the participant's suggestion that resources and strategies were supposed to be aligned to achieve strategic planning implementation. The link between the resources and strategies is crucial to strategic plan implementation (Chepkosgei & Atambo, 2018). The view of participant PIO07 was amusing, pointing that the objectives require particularity in terms of the resources needed and available to implement them. While other participants were clear in questioning the concerns about misalignment of resources, they confirmed participation in the processes that produced the strategic plans in question.

*"... I believe that one should not be deterred from engaging in strategic planning because of limitations with the results,"* participant PIO01 suggested, adding that *"... when the adequate resources are available, there is a high chance that the strategies and objectives will produce satisfactory results"*.

Participant PIO02 attested that *"... we always achieved the strategic plans when we had sufficient resources assigned to such plans"*.

*"... its arguable that we participate in some, if not all of the strategic planning sessions where resources are mentioned sparingly. However, there is no doubt that misalignment in this regard is a questionable phenomenon,"* participant PIO04 indicated.

*"... this is a requirement that have been raised in some corners; to align the objectives and the resources. Where the resources are not present at the time of planning, a process to acquire the resources needs to start,"* explained participant PIO06.

The views of the participants were consistent with studies suggesting that the strategic planning endeavour by public institution should focus on assigning public resources to public strategic plans (Pederzini, 2016; Höglund *et al.*, 2018). Studies like that of Höglund *et al.* (2018) also have the overwhelming mandate of aligning the scarce public resources in the pursuit of addressing economic challenges. Participants also indicated their understanding of the fact that the process of strategizing within the public sectors has challenges. Consistently, studies show that public managers encounter challenges in formulating, executing, and evaluating strategies as they allocate the scarce public resources efficiently to accomplish the short and long-term institutional objectives (Höglund *et al.*, 2018; Humer & Granqvist, 2020). With specific reference to the Namibian institution that participant PIO05 represented, the participant indicated that,

*“... as we strive to achieve economic growth and sustainability, allocating resources to the priority objectives becomes a challenge because of a range of factors like human ability and the number of priorities.”*

*“... realising the required resources is also not an easy task, which is the reason why sometimes resources are misaligned,”* explained participant PIO07.

The participant’s view was like studies suggesting that guiding a developing economy towards the achievement of national goals require ensuring that the resources focus on activities (Mohammad, 2018; Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Jellenz, 2020; Lee *et al.*, 2020). Participant PIO02 indicated that the institution could play a crucial role in economic development when public resources focus on developmental priorities. While not particularly accusing anyone of misalignment or misallocation of resources, participant

PIO04 suggested the prevalence in resources going into wrong hands and projects needs to be put to an end. A direct link between the resources and the priority strategic areas of the economy contributes to the achievement of objectives.

#### **4.6.3.3 Sub-theme: Managing continuity in supply of resources**

Having concluded that the institutions faced resources scarcity, the results indicate the need for managing the supply of resources. The conclusion that resources are scarce concurs with the views of scholars stating that despite the efforts to enhance the supply of resources, they remain in short supply (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018; Lee *et al.*, 2018; Roudgar, 2018).

There was consistency among the opinions of the participants on the supply of the resources for allocation into the strategic planning and implementation processes created an issue because of the competition for resources, the instability in supply as well as the status in which the resources existed. Participants also suggested that the continuous supply of human resources needs effective management because people leave the organisation or become obsolete. In addition, the physical resources also need to be maintained, while the financial resources come from the government.

From the opinion of participant PIO01, “... *the institution needs to ensure that it has a reliable source of supply for human resources, equipment as well as funds for the success of strategic planning*”.

“... *one of the reasons we rely on donor funding for some projects is that we do not have a reliable supply of finances because at any budget allocation, the amount could reduce,*”

stated participant PIO02, adding that “... *we compete for talent with the other institutions and private entities*”.

Participant PIO04 stated that “... *it is my understanding that maintaining skills is a challenge and to deal with this challenge require seconding junior employees for that they take over when the old employees leave*”.

“... *perhaps, the supply of financial resources would demand that we keep the granting authority up to speed with our plans for them to plan on intervals of releasing funds to the institution,*” suggested participant PIO06.

Speaking of the management of resources supply, participant PIO07 stated “... *the thinking is to ensure that resources form part of the planning process, ensuring that we can have sufficient resources at all times*”.

Another angle presented by the participant regarding the management of the supply of the resources was maintaining an environment where the leaders within the organisation would understand the need for resources. For example, participant suggested that making sure that the top management understand the scope of the planning process would help in achieving their support. According to Melnikovas (2018), continuous supply of resources is crucial to the execution of strategy.

Participant PIO03 proposed the provision of feedback to the top management as a well of involving them in the activities of the institution as well as the resources constrains. As directors of the organisation, top managers use the feedback obtained from the employees to make decisions on progress as well as the resources required to achieve plans

(Sosiawani *et al.*, 2015; Gębczyńska, 2016; Michira & Anyieni, 2018). By keeping the institutions, leadership informed of the performance of the institutions regarding the implementation of strategies improves the supply of goods.

#### **4.6.3.4 Sub-theme: Managing of institutional resources**

The other sub-theme that emerged from the data was managing of institutional resources. While the process of strategic planning and implementation focus on the use of the resources, the management of the available resources as well as the processes for pursuing strategic objectives enable the entity to achieve its planning programs (Pyun & Gamassou, 2018). The interviewed participants suggested that managing the institutional resources within the public sector is a challenge. The view is consistent with Höglund *et al.* (2018) who state that public administrators encounter challenges in not only formulating, executing, and evaluating strategies, but is managing and allocating scarce public resources proficiently to accomplish the short and long-term organisational objectives. Participant PIO06 was articulate in stating that while individuals involved in strategic planning could blame availability or scarcity of resources on others, they have the mandate to manage the resources they have effectively.

*“... management of the resources assigned to the strategic processes within the organisation is our responsibility,”* participant PIO03 stated.

Participant PIO04 stated *“... indeed, the idea of wastage in assets should worry the people responsible for executing strategies”*.

The view of participant PIO05 was even more hilarious, suggesting that “... *even scarce resources need proper management if one is to achieve value from the little available resources*”.

Participant PIO07 indicated “... *strategic planning is one of the most effective ways that public administrators can manage the resources entrusted to their care*”.

Participants further indicated that one of the responsibilities of individuals tasked to conduct strategic planning and implementation is to make sure that the resources they have are used for what they are intended. For example, participant PIO01 indicated that allowing the resources to be used for wrong purposes or for self-interest by anyone would amount to maleficence. Speaking along the same way with participant PIO01, participant PIO03 suggested that the scarcity of resources is sometime aggravated by the lack of effective management of the available resources. The observation by the participants aligns with literature indicating that there is a consensus that resources are either in short supply, misused or misallocated (Leskaj, 2017; Al-Dhaafri & Alosani, 2020).

Participant PIO02 attributed “... *the misuse and misallocation of public resources to the lack of accountability*”.

The idea is also like Leskaj (2017) who state that due to lack of accountability, public officials also tend to use public resources for personal edification. Management of public resources therefore ensure maintaining a steady supply of the resources as well as effective implementation of strategies. The participant indicated that achieving the best out of the use of available resources as well as maintaining the availability of resources would result in achievement of strategic objectives.

#### **4.7 Discussion of the findings in relation to the research questions**

This section addresses the results in relation to how the data collected from the participants through grounded theory answered the research questions. The goal of the study was to interact with the sources of data to extract information towards developing the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. Developing understanding and knowledge through grounded theory demands that the enquiry zooms into the phenomenon through the lens of individuals with in-depth understanding and experience of the phenomenon (Charmaz, 2016; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2020).

The discussion zooms into the views of the participants that the researcher interacted with as well as their experiences with the strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector. Focus begins with the way the results from the analysed data addressed the main research question and proceed to address the specific research questions.

##### **4.7.1 How does a resource-based approach to strategic planning lead to effective strategies in the Namibian public sector?**

The main research question looked at how the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would lead to effective strategies in the Namibian public sector. Following a rigorous investigation, involving constant interaction with individuals responsible for strategic planning and implementation within public institutions, it emerged that a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation lead to effective strategies within the Namibian public sector. There was consistence in the

opinions of the interviewed participants on the fact that putting resources at the forefront of strategic processes within the public institutions would enhance chances of creating feasible strategies as well as implementing them efficiently.

From the first encounters with the participants to the end of the interactions with the participants, the idea that an approach to strategic planning and implementation that emphasises on the availability of resources, ability to generate resources and allocate resources effectively would help public strategic processes. For example, participant PIO01 indicated that the strategies and plans within the public sector fail because of lack of resources as well as creating strategies that are beyond the institutions' resources capacity. According to Boselie *et al.* (2021), planning based on the resources needed to execute the plans is essential in promoting success in strategic plan implementation. Participant PIO05 also laid the blame for failure to effectively conduct strategic planning processes on the fact that generalised thinking, which pays no attention to specific resources capabilities.

*“Strategies are as good as the quality and quantity of the resources allocated to strategic issues,”* confirmed participant PIO01.

*“Strategic process giving due attention to resources that we need to implement the plans will help us in achieving our strategic planning objectives,”* stated participant PIO02.

According to the opinion of participant PIO03, *“... it may not actually be the lack of resources, but just failing to treat the resources needed strategic planning and implementation seriously. There is no doubt that taking a serious stance towards a consideration of the resources in planning and implementation will lead to successes.”*

*“What we are looking at here is a situation where people develop ideas rather than plans... ideas that are good on paper and sometimes so complicated that you marvel at the expertise of the thinkers. Yet, with no resources, they remain ideas that the generations to come would criticise to their fullest effect,”* explained participant PIO04.

*“One thing that we need to agree upon is that basing all forms of planning within the ministry on the resources that the institution have almost guarantees success in the strategic planning processes,”* stated participant PIO05.

Participant PIO06 also indicated that *“... planning goes beyond producing ideas but putting the plans into action. That act of putting resources to work is what we are talking about here.”*

*“A stance that makes human resources, equipment, money and people skills to work in strategic planning leads to the development of strategies that the institution is able to implement,”* indicated participant PIO07.

The participants were asked to indicate the reasons why they did not promote the emphasis on the resources during the strategic planning and implementation, given that the public institutions depended on them in developing and overseeing strategic planning and implementation processes. In response, the interviewed participants thought that the adoption of processual strategic planning and implementation processes with disregard to the resources that make planning effective seemed to have an impact on failure in giving credence to the resources involved. Consistently, studies show that giving little value to the resources leads to inefficiencies in strategic planning processes (Elbanna & Fadol, 2016; Jellenz *et al.*, 2020).

Participant PIO03 indicated “... *there is a lot of wishful thinking within the institution, which takes away the focus of people from the reality that strategies come to life when resources are sufficient*”. The other participants also thought along the same way, indicating that in most cases ambitious thinking outweighed consideration of the reality regarding the applicability and suitability of the strategies. The assertion by participants was also in accordance with the reviewed literature such as Elbanna and Fadol (2016) which indicated that idealised thinking among organisations remains a common phenomenon. As the participants noted, Babafemi (2015) indicate that a lack of focus on the viability to the strategies reduces the chances of success in strategic planning and implementation.

During the third interaction between participant PIO03 and the enquirer, the focus was on seeking understanding of the reason the institution depending on government funding was categorised as having meagre physical resources and unskilled employees. Misallocation of finances, less funds allocated to the institution and a deliberate lack of interest in giving due diligence to the resources requirements for achieving strategic objectives flooded the participant’s explanations. The same sentiments came from participant PIO05 and participant PIO06. From participant PIO07’s own experience, a clear and enforceable stance on the consideration of resources required in strategic planning and implementation is lacking in the entire public sector.

*“Yes, I can confirm the fact that the employees in our institution lack the skills requires to even compare them with the ones in the public sector. Physical assets are either little or obsolete because no one is concerned about resources, maybe because people focus on*

*channelling resources to their interests or the budget is just too low,” explained participant PIO03.*

Participant PIO04 also spoke of misallocation, stating “... *the common trend is that when people have nothing to benefit personally, they do not care about the resources they have*”.

*“Improved focus on resources at strategy formulation will help us to come up with feasible strategies and remove those strategies that would not be achievable within the scope of our assets, people and finances,”* suggested participant PIO05.

*“We can have achievable strategies and feasible plans when we plan according to our capacity. My proposition is that when we do SWOT, we dig deeper into the resources that are there and usable... also look at the ability we have to keep getting funding, skilled employees and other resources,”* explained participant PIO06.

Participant PIO07 also contributed by stating, “... *one may not see how this would happen but enforcing the development of strategies that are linked to available resources would help ministries to achieve their strategies. This ongoing issue of planning for the sake of planning and then pray that the finance minister will prescribe miraculous figure simply will not work.*”

It is clear from the opinions and experience of the participants interviewed that a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would lead to the development of feasible strategies and strategic plans for the Namibian public sector. Participants show their understanding of the value of resources in formulating achievable strategies as well

as ensuring that the developed strategies and plans are implemented effectively. According to Gerbera *et al.* (2020), resources in their various features are essential in the formulation and implementation of strategies. With reference to the public strategic planning and implementation, participants observed the alignment of strategies to available resources as crucial. Similarly, literature view the link between public strategies and the resources available as important in strategic plan formulation and implementation (Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Dharyanti *et al.*, 2019).

#### **4.7.2 How does the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning in the Namibian public sector?**

The first specific research question sought to uncover the way through which the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning in the Namibian public sector. The results confirmed that the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector. The interviewed participants indicated that quality of resources have an impact on strategic planning and implementation at all levels of the process. Similarly, studies consulted during the study conclude that the quality of resources have a direct influence on the strategies formulated as well as the implementation of strategies (Elbanna & Fadol, 2016; Bryson *et al.*, 2018). For instance, the quality of the human resources involved in the formulation of strategies and implementation of the strategies determine the quality of the strategies as well as the results obtained from implementing such strategies.

Participant PIO01 pointed that *“Skilled personnel produce innovative ideas that lead to adoption of feasible strategic plans and strategies. The opposite may seem harsh, but that is the fact... unskilled individuals cannot produce reliable strategies.”*

*“Practicable strategies are fruits of rigorous consultations, analyses and practical thinking, which require quality,”* stated participant PIO02.

*“Quality ideas that lead to quality strategies require talent,”* participant PIO04 indicated and continued to suggest that talented personnel are not easy to find on the job market.

*“Adequate quantities of resources are required in strategy implementation,”* stated participant PIO05.

*“Obviously, with the strict focus of the resources available for strategy implementation, the ministry would be able to achieve its strategies and plans,”* explained participant PIO06.

Participant PIO05 suggested that the reason some of the strategies produced by public institutions fail is that they are copies and pasted from general strategy documents, with little thinking influencing them. The point that participant PIO05 was making revolved around the lack of capable individuals to look at strategic planning processes with the lens of an expert. The result is that the formulated strategies and strategic plans would lack the applicability to the institution. Limitations in resources negatively affect strategy formulation (Rahman, 2019). The idea that limitations in resources negatively affect strategic planning came out vividly from discussions with all the participants.

*“One of the interventions that can help the institution to achieve its strategies is making sure that skilled employees form part of its strategic focus, reward good talent, keep developing talent and value experience,”* suggested participant PIO05.

*“... experienced employees, stable supply of finance and revamping of the aging equipment will be instrumental in strategic planning processes because these resources are important in implementing plans,”* participant PIO07 stated.

The quality of resources determines the quality of the strategies and strategic plans that the public sector develops. The participants argued that there is no way unqualified people can produce quality decisions. Participants recommended upskilling personnel within the public sector to improve the quality of decisions that goes into their strategic planning and implementation activities. Studies also encourage institutions train and empower their people to effectively engage in strategic planning and implementation (Magiri *et al.*, 2018; Al-Dhaafi and Alosani (2020). Further, the use of aged and broken machinery affects the quality of the end products or services.

*“To be honest, apart for the talk of the objectives, there is nothing else to take home because strategies are difficult to implement with the quality and quantity of our resources,”* explained participant PIO03.

Participant PIO05 stated, *“... shortages of staff result in poor strategy implementation”*.

*“Strategic activities are severely delayed when there are no funds, skilled people or vehicles,”* participant PIO06 indicated. PIO06 also argued that the problem of resources

shortages “... is a well-documented fact, which receives no attention to the authorities to address the funding challenges”.

Regarding the quantity of the resources, it was clear that some strategic areas within the public sector were derailed or abandoned because the resources were not sufficient. Leskaj (2017) indicates that insufficient quantities of resources such as finances, human skills and equipment hinders the implementation of public strategic plans and objectives. Lack of adequate funding, talented personnel and equipment within the public institutions limit their capabilities in implementing their strategic plans.

Participant PIO01 stated, “... enough money is needed to finance the strategic plan activities”.

“How do people commit when they are not sufficiently equipped?” questioned participant PIO04.

“Namibia is a small economy, with little resources to cope with our growth ambitions,” suggested participant PIO05. When further asked whether there was any chance that the public sector in Namibia could achieve its strategic planning objectives, participant PIO05 replied, “... to achieve any goal or strategy, the state should make plans that it can implement”.

“... we need to accept that we do not have the money to fund the massive plans we come up with. The acceptance of the reality will help us to plan for what we have and can achieve. Only then will we begin to see consistent growth and effective execution of our strategies,” explained participant PIO07.

From the views of the participants, it was obvious that the quality and quantity of resources negatively affect strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. Every participant also indicated that the country have limited resources, most of which are of low quality. They also indicated that they were aware that strategic planning objectives were not achieved.

#### **4.7.3 What is the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector?**

In terms of the question seeking understanding of the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector, the results show that resources constraints negatively affected the viability of the strategies in the Namibian public sector because resources are central to the strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation. According to Rahman (2019), limitation in resources have a negative impact on strategic planning processes. One of the issues participants emphasized was the competencies of teams that compile the information used in strategy formulation. In this regard, the participants interviewed suggested that the feasibility of the strategies developed depends on the quality of thinking that goes into planning processes. For example, participant PIO01 indicated that,

*“... ordinarily, the capacity of the people that develop the strategic plans determines the quality of the strategies and plans drawn.”*

Participant PIO02 also stated, *“... quality decisions are crucial in strategic planning and when the planners do not have the best of skills, it is almost obvious that the plans would fall short of the expectations”*.

*“... compiling clear and reasonable strategies require skills and experience,”* participant PIO04 indicated. When asked whether the institution have the skills necessary to produce clear strategies, responded by stating, *“... one may not really tell without looking at the strategies, but I believe that we need to improve our people skills, retain talent and appreciate the efforts that people put in strategy development as well as implementation”*.

*“... shortages in skilled personnel creates a serious challenge to the strategic planning processes. Particularly, the fact that strategizing requires the contribution of many individuals, the need for developing employees becomes essential,”* explained participant PIO06.

Arguing that the public sector still has a long way towards attracting talent, participant PIO07 indicated *“... it is difficult for us to recruit and retain people with the necessary skills. Sometimes, we have people come in with high hopes, but they soon leave, creating gaps that are difficult to close. Public institutions probably need to work towards creating an environment that attract and retain talent.”*

Participants further indicated that the prevalence of unfinished projects is a result of shortages in resources. Producing the projects that take years to complete, or sometimes face abandonment is a result of resources constraints. Resources such a finance and equipment are critical to achievement of strategies and strategic plans. Interviewed participants stated that the fact that the strategies were developed with little regard to the funds available or could be available led to exaggerated strategic plans, which could not be achieved within the specified period. The views of the participants align to literature stating that funding constraints derail completion of strategies (Lee *et al.*, 2020).

Participants argued that finances are essential in acquisition of equipment, repair or replacement of worn-out equipment and payment of contractors. Without finances, it would not be possible to complete the projects. Failure to complete projects directly affect strategy implementation negatively.

Participant PIO01 indicated that *“shortages in financial and physical resources lead to all the unfinished projects, which are part of the plans in the strategic plan. Some of them are carried forward from previous periods.”*

*“... one need to understand that when the resources are scarce, the organisation should plan according to the available resources,”* stated participant PIO03.

*“Resource constraints limit us. Without sufficient resources we will always fall short of our strategic plans,”* argued participant PIO04.

Participant PIO06 was also particular in stating that *“... there is no doubt that some of our plans are very good, but they remain plans because we do not get sufficient funds to finance their execution”*.

The question of the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector was addressed clearly. It is understood that constraints in resources hinder the development of strategies because shortages in human capital leads to development of strategies and plans by individuals that do not have the necessary skills. Literature reviewed emphasise that the human input into the strategic planning process has a direct influence on the quality of the strategies developed (Melton & Meier, 2016; Alford & Greve, 2017). In addition, coupled with the shortages of other resources such as

funding and infrastructure, the capacity of the public sector to implement strategies reduces. Participants therefore recommended taking a stronger stance on developing long-term plans with direct consideration of the resources they have at hand or can create during the strategy period.

#### **4.7.4 What are the elements that add on to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector?**

To answer the research question on the elements that add on to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector, the results echoed resources are the most critical elements in achievement of strategic planning objectives within the Namibian public sector. During the discussions with the participants, it was clear that while all other elements essential in strategic planning have a relationship with the resources. For example, participants suggested that effective environmental scanning helps in determining the environmental forces affecting the direction of the organisation. However, there was consistent in the argument that the outcome of the analysis of the environment is the determination of the resources available and the resources required to implement strategies.

Participant PIO01 suggested that “... *everything to do with strategy, planning, operations have a direct link to resources*”.

Participant PIO02 indicated that “... *from the time environmental scanning is done to the time strategies are reviewed, resources are crucial. While the analysis of the situation is also an important part of strategic planning, the resources put into the process are equally important.*”

*“... one need to understand that human skills and experience brings out the best information about the environment,”* stated participant PIO03.

*“... the quality of the information drawn from environmental scanning is critical to the success of strategic planning and implementation because it enables us to draw accurate strategies and plan knowing exactly what we are facing,”* echoed participant PIO05.

Participant PIO07 suggested that *“... the feedback obtained from previous periods, stakeholders and the analysis of environmental factors plays a role in achieving objectives”*.

Regarding elements such as the involvement of stakeholders in the planning and implementation processes, it emerged that the quality of employee and leader skills as part of the stakeholder is essential. Participants indicated that all human related contribution to strategic planning was essential. Some participants further mentioned the influence of political appointees as a crucial element in strategic planning and implementation, since the individuals at political level determine the resources assigned to the ministry. Participant PIO02 stated that,

*“... stakeholders are important in achievement of strategies within public institutions.”*

*“It is the quality of the people that contribute to the entire process as well as their level of involvement,”* stated participant PIO04.

Participant PIO05 suggested that *“... the human element stands out. People are involved at every level of the planning process, meaning their skills and competences play a role.”*

*“Even the individuals operating at political levels are also influential in the achievement strategies in our institution. Hence, one would call for strategic appointment to such positions to ensure that there is always strategic leadership,”* explained participant PIO06.

*“... political representation is one of the elements that can play a role in promoting successful strategic planning because individuals at political level are responsible for sourcing of financial resources,”* participant PIO07 indicated.

In terms of clarity of institutional goals, the participants pointed that following a goal required understanding. It therefore emerged that clear goals are outputs of quality thinking and designing of organisational direction. Contextualising the idea, participant PIO02 indicated that we require resolute and talented individuals to review goals. Speaking along the same idea, participant PIO05 stated that the institution’s leadership tasked with the determination of long-term goals need experience and skills to produce lucid goals.

*“Clear goals that everyone understands. However, this is achieved when we have talented and resolute personnel,”* stated participant PIO02.

*“The public sector requires clear goals... some of the combining of institutions should be accompanied by a review of goals because there is a lot to confusion as to what some departments stand for,”* participant PIO04 stated. PIO04 added that *“... now when strategies come into play, people with no clue are tasked to deal with activities they are not accustomed to”*.

*“Goals must be clear for public strategies to be achieved, and those at the helm of the institutions need to be adequately skilled as far as crafting long-term goals is concerned,”* explained participant PIO05.

*“... having clear goals is in my view very important in achievement of strategic plan objectives in any organisation, including public institutions,”* participant PIO07 explained.

Another element that came out from the data was the sharing of the institutional vision. Participants raised concerns with the policies that various sectors enact, suggesting that some of the policies hinder strategic planning processes. This assumption also aligns with the observation by Humer and Granqvist (2020) who argue that some of the sectorial policies in developing countries do not support strategic planning and implementation.

Apart from participant PIO06 who insistently declined to comment on whether the institutional vision was discussed with the employees at operational levels, other participants indicated that they have no recollection of incidences when they have discussed the vision with anybody. Referring to two ministries integrated, participant PIO03 raised concerns regarding the understanding of leadership on the importance of the vision in strategic planning and implementation. In this participant’s view, the strategy of the organisation as well as its strategic plan focus on achieving the vision.

*“... the thing is, the vision of the entity should be understood by all,”* participant PIO01 stated.

*“The vision is published on posters of course, but that means nothing unless rigorous discussions of the vision are conducted to ensure that everyone understands it. That is what shared vision entails,”* explained participant PIO02.

Participant PIO03 raised concern on *“... after combining our institutions and reassigning some division head to roles, one wonders whether these people even understand what they have to do or they would need time to learn; let alone understand the vision and strategies”*.

*“Sharing the vision is another element that one can think of when achievement of public strategies is concerned. The question is the actual practice of engaging employees,”* participant PIO04 indicated and proceeded to explain that *“... probably there is a general reluctance to interact with personnel that we need to address”*.

*“... the position I take is not to comment on the subject, but with the vision shared and understood by all personnel, strategies would be effectively implemented. Nevertheless, focussing on policy issues that are sometimes silent on the issue of strategy also affect development and execution of strategies,”* indicated participant PIO06.

Participant PIO07 stated *“... shared vision is an essential element in strategic planning and implementation because strategies and plans are implemented in pursuit of the vision”*.

Data analysis revealed that the elements that have an impact of the achievement of strategic planning objectives can be tied up to the resources that the public sector uses.

Elements such as understanding of the environment where the sector operates, the influence from political players, other stakeholders' contribution to the strategic planning processes and the ability of the institutional leaders to share the vision with personnel can be tied to the resources that the institutions require for strategic planning processes. Hence, studies suggest that resources play a vital role in the development and execution of strategies (Checkland *et al.*, 2018; Jellenz *et al.*, 2020).

The question regarding the elements that add on to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector. Institutions operating within the public sector have a responsibility to ensure that they appreciate the quality, quantity, and availability of the resources they need to develop and implement strategic objectives towards enhancing their efforts to deliver value to the public (Humer & Granqvist, 2020).

#### **4.7.5 How could the Namibian public sector embrace the resources component in their strategic planning and implementation?**

The fourth research question sought to discover the way through which the Namibian public sector could embrace resources as critical components in strategic planning and implementation. The results indicated that the Namibian public sector needed a standard framework that all institutions within the sector would adopt in strategic planning and implementation. The framework based on resources availability, quantity, quality, and effective utilisation would foster appreciation of resources as critical components in strategic planning and implementation. The interviewed participants confirmed the adoption of the standard strategic planning and implementation process prescribed for

public sector. Nevertheless, the process is generic, not paying any special attention to the sector's resources capability.

*"The ministry follows the general strategic planning guideline for all public institutions,"* stated participant PIO01. When further asked whether the guideline emphasised on planning according to the available resources and the ability to generate resources, participant PIO01 replied, *"Not at all. Focus on the resources is on the implementation, which is why some plans are dropped during the implementation phase."*

*"From looking at the strategic planning guideline, not much weight is placed on resources,"* stated participant PIO02.

*"Probably providing a guideline that imposes those planning to consider the human, financial and infrastructural resources will help in both making resources capacity fundamental as well as achievement of public strategies,"* participant PIO03 suggested.

*"It all depends on leadership understanding of the importance of making plans in serious thought of the resources. Obviously, putting the assets at the forefront of our planning will mean taking baby steps in the beginning, but we will develop plans that we are able to implement,"* explained participant PIO05.

Participant PIO06 was of the view that *"... the starting point is an understanding of the value of quality and quantity of resources in the entire process of strategizing"*.

Embracing resources as a key component in strategic planning and implementation therefore requires a resource-bases approach that the public sector in Namibia adopts. The

comprehension of the value of resources in achieving strategies and plans by institutional leaders.

Participant PIO07 indicated the need for leadership support in adopting a resource focused approach when developing strategies because they are the providers of such resources. The views of participant PIO07 was consistent with studies that show the support of leadership in providing resources as essential in achievement of strategies and strategic plans (George *et al.*, 2016a; Magiri *et al.*, 2018; Kharroub & Mansour, 2019; Lee, Rocco & Shuck, 2020).

#### **4.8 Contribution of the results to knowledge**

The results contributed to knowledge by revealing that the Namibian public institutions need to adjust their strategic planning and implementation processes from the generic strategic planning processes a resource focused approach to strategic planning and implementation process. Through the interactions with the individuals with understanding and experience with the strategic planning processes within the Namibian public sector, it became clear that resources needed for developing feasible plans and strategies are limited. The resources needed for implementing the strategies are also limited, which makes it crucial to plan with a deeper understanding of the resources available. Particularly, the skills and competencies of the individuals that participate in developing strategies need to be confirmed, ensuring that talented individuals take part.

The results revealed the types of the resources needed at each level of the strategic planning process as well as the nature in which these resources exist. In terms of the human resources, it is now clearer that human capital should be viewed in terms of the availability

of the individuals, the skills that the individuals have, their experiences and willingness to commit to the organisation for the duration of the strategic plan period. The approach to strategic planning that focus on human resources should therefore consider the talent at the beginning of the planning processes, during the implementation process as well as during the review of the strategies. In addition, the ability to replace the talented individuals that leave the organisation was also emphasised.

Regarding the funding of strategic planning and implementation processes, the findings revealed that a commitment to fund the strategic plans in the long term was the solution to shortcomings in achievement of strategic objectives. Data revealed that having a long-term plan that is only guaranteed funding on annual basis creates room for failure. Hence, there was a call for a commitment of the funds for the entire period, even though the actual funds would be provided periodically. An approach to strategic planning and implementation emphasising strict consideration of financial resources during development, implementation and review of the strategies would therefore result in creation of strategic plans and strategies that can be achieved towards achievement economic development.

Strategic planning and implementation also depend on the infrastructure that the Namibian public sector has and can maintain during the strategic planning period. Having understood that the Namibian public sector is resource constrained, with aging machinery, broken machinery and inferior logistical systems, the results determined that strategic planning processes would yield results desired when the status of the institutions' infrastructure would be considered from the beginning of the processes to the end of the cycle. Though the current process outlines the steps followed in planning processes,

developing strategies with little understanding of the nature of the machinery required for strategy implementation only results in failure to achieve strategic objectives. The resource focussed strategic planning process is the contribution that the results make, which leads to direct alignment of resources and strategies. From the beginning of the strategic planning processes, strategies and plans that are beyond the institutional resources scope need not to be part of the current strategic plan.

#### **4.9 Summary**

This chapter provided a detailed discussion of the results that emerged from the data collected through grounded theory. The chapter covered the discussions of data saturation, which aimed to show that data collection attempted to get all the relevant information from the data sources. In addition, the description of unique identification codes assigned to participants was done, followed by the description of the participants' demographic information.

The following section discussed the results from the pilot study. The discussion of the themes and sub-themes emerging from data analysis followed before discussing the findings in relation to the research questions and focusing on the contribution of the results to knowledge. Finally, the chapter closed with the summary. The discussion of the methodology implemented in conducting the study follows in the next chapter, which is the fifth chapter.

## **CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The study focused on developing a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector. The current chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the analysis of data collected through grounded theory. This chapter begins by summing up the main findings emerging from the study followed by the discussion of the practical and theoretical implications. The chapter proceeds to the presentation as well as the articulation of the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation. Recommendations for addressing the problem follows before discussing the avenues for further research. A summary of chapter five concludes the chapter as well as the study.

### **5.2 Summary of the main findings**

#### **5.2.1 Summary by research questions**

Before articulating the findings as related to the primary data collected through interaction with individuals responsible for strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector, the research questions are revisited. The main research question looked at how the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would lead to effective strategies in the Namibian public sector. The main question was addressed by indicating that a resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation leads to effective strategies within the Namibian public sector. There was consistency in the opinions of the interviewed participants on the fact that putting

resources at the forefront of strategic processes within the public institutions would enhance chances of creating feasible strategies as well as implementing them efficiently.

The first specific research question intended to identify the way through which the quantity and quality of resources affect strategic planning in the Namibian public sector. The findings confirmed that the quantity and quality of resources affects strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector. The participants indicated that quality of resources has an impact on strategic planning and implementation at all levels of the process. Regarding the quantity of resources allocated to strategic planning and implementation, it emerged that developing strategies that speak to the available resources leads to feasibility of strategies and achievement of strategic objectives. Achieving strategic objectives within the public sector leads to national development.

The second research question sought to understand the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector. The findings show that resource constraints negatively affected the viability of the strategies in the Namibian public sector because resources are central to strategy formulation, strategy implementation and strategy evaluation. The question of the impact of resource constraints on the viability of strategies in the Namibian public sector was addressed clearly. It is understood that constraints in resources hinder the development of strategies because shortages in human capital lead to development of strategies and plans by individuals that do not have the necessary skills.

To answer the third research question on the elements that add on to the achievement of successful strategic planning objectives in the Namibian public sector, the results echoed that resources are the most critical elements in the achievement of strategic planning objectives within the Namibian public sector. During the discussions with the participants, it was clear that all other elements essential in strategic planning have a relationship with the resources. For example, participants suggested that effective environmental scanning helps in determining the environmental forces affecting the direction of the organisation. However, there was consistency in the argument that the outcome of the analysis of the environment is the determination of the resources available and the resources required to implement strategies.

Lastly, the fourth research question sought to discover the way through which the Namibian public sector could embrace resources as critical components in strategic planning and implementation. The results indicated that the Namibian public sector needed a standard framework that all institutions within the sector would adopt in strategic planning and implementation. The framework based on resources availability, quantity, quality, and effective utilisation would foster appreciation of resources as critical components in strategic planning and implementation.

### **5.2.2 Findings from primary data**

Primary data collected from the Namibian public sector revealed that the sector's institutions strive to achieve their strategic goals by engaging in strategic planning and implementation processes. Findings indicated that the sector follows a logical and formal strategic planning and implementation process that involves the scanning of the

environment, engagements with stakeholders for feedback as well as formulation of strategies and strategic plans. The process also outlines the steps in strategic plan implementation and review of the strategies. The strategic planning and implementation processes implemented within the Namibian public sector is usually a five-year cycle.

The findings further indicated that despite efforts by the Namibian public sector to develop feasible strategies and plans for implementation towards achieving economic development, the sector struggles to implement its strategies effectively. It was discovered that, as a developing economy, the Namibian public sector faces resource constraints that in turn affect the quality of the strategic plans and objectives developed. Primary data collected revealed that the Namibian public sector lacks resources in the form of human capital, financial resources, and infrastructural resources. Nevertheless, findings indicated that these resources are crucial in the development of feasible strategies as well as their effective implementation.

Regarding the human capital that is essential for development of feasible strategic plans, findings indicated that skilled personnel, with the necessary skills and motivation are vital. The results however also show that these skilled and talented individuals are in short supply on the job market while the ones that the organisations have leave when they acquire more knowledge. When skilled employees leave, the institutions would resort to either replacing the skills with new employees with inferior experience and skills, resulting in the development of plans that are difficult to implement. The findings therefore indicated that focus on the availability of human resources is an essential move by the institution towards delivering value through people.

The findings also confirmed that financial resources are vital to the development and implementation of strategic plans. Findings revealed that funds are needed to maintain the strategic planning and implementation processes. Without funding, the Namibian public sector foregoes some of its strategic priorities as well as postpone some activities, which delay the delivery of public value. The findings therefore indicated that financial resources are important in strategic planning and implementation.

The findings further show that the Namibian public sector needs adequate infrastructure for conducting strategic planning and implementation. Findings indicated that planning would be in vain when there is not enough or suitable facilities for implementing the plans. The categories of infrastructure identified from the study included equipment, machines, vehicles, technologies, and the logistical arrangements that enable the production and delivery of goods and services. Findings revealed that the quality of the infrastructure available for the Namibian public sector to use in the development and execution of strategic plans does not meet the magnitude of the plans. This is because of the aging and wearing and tearing of the facilities. In addition, there are shortages in facilities such as equipment, technologies, and vehicles.

In view of the limitations in resources within the Namibian public sector, the findings revealed the need for developing strategies with close consideration of the resources available as well as those resources the sector can create or access. Findings therefore indicated that the developed strategic plans and strategies should align with the resources. Developing strategic plans that align to the available resources leads to adoption of feasible strategic plans that the institutions can implement within the period. Nevertheless, exaggerated strategic plan and strategies result in failure to implement strategies.

### **5.2.3 Main findings**

Following an intensive study of the data collected from the participants and the literature reviewed, the findings drawn show that the Namibian public sector requires the adoption of the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation. The findings emerge from the reality that developing, implementing, and reviewing strategic planning and implementation processes requires quality resources, supplied in adequate quantities. Findings revealed that Namibia, being a developing economy faces resource constraints with the potential to limit the magnitude of its strategic plans. Developing strategies under resource constraints in terms of the competencies and experience of planning teams requires scrutiny of the feasibility of the strategic plans and the strategies.

Findings also revealed that the strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector does not consider the limited resources needed to execute the plans towards achieving objectives. The sector therefore develops strategic plans that it does not implement effectively. From interaction with the data, it was clear that the cause of limitations in achieving the strategic objectives is the lack of resources. However, the findings indicated that aligning the resources required for executing the strategic plans and the objectives at every stage of the planning process would lead to achievement of the sector's strategic objectives.

Instead of planning without careful consideration of the available resources, the resources that the institutions can generate or commitment from the government to supply resources leads to ordinary strategic plans, which are difficult to implement. On the other hand, planning with a dedicated focus on the resources results in developing feasible strategies

because plans would be linked to inputs needed for implementing them. It also means that the institutions would understand the resources they require to effectively conduct their strategic planning and implementation, the means to create the resources they need as well as the knowledge of the sources of the resources.

The findings indicated that though the resources are limited within the Namibian public sector, misuse of public resources was also rampant. It was indicated that resources are misused through allocation to areas where the resources are not assigned or that they are used for officials' personal interests. A resource-based approach to planning that emphasises the clear definition of the resources needed, the allocation of such resources and monitoring of the use of resources would lead to allocation of accountability to the individuals involved in the strategic planning and implementation processes. Thus, a resource-based approach would lead to development of strategic plans that can be implemented within the scope of the resources available.

Findings further confirmed that the quantity and quality of resources affects strategic planning and implementation processes within the Namibian public sector. That is because the quality of the employees partaking in the formulation of strategies and their implementation determines the quality of the strategies. The results indicate that the quality of strategies produced is of acceptable quality and should lead to achievement of institutional goals. Strategic planning and implementation requires consideration of the organisation's capabilities in terms of accessing resources, continuously creating required resources as well as allocating the resources to strategic activities.

## **5.3 Implications of the findings**

### **5.3.1 Practical implications of the findings**

The findings observed from the study have practical and theoretical implications. Firstly, the findings reveal a need for the adoption of a strategic planning and implementation approach that considers resources from the beginning to the end. From a practical perspective, the findings require a shift in the way the Namibian public sector institutions develop and implement strategies and strategic plans. Emphasising on the availability of resources leads to development of feasible strategies and plans that the institutions can implement effectively. The implications are consistent with literature reiterating that the effective implementation of strategies requires adequate resources (Ayoubi *et al.*, 2018; Johnsen, 2018; Bryson *et al.*, 2018; Varsani, 2018). Development of strategic plans and strategies within the Namibian public sector requires sufficient consideration of resources. A consideration of resources that the public sector in Namibia has would enable public institutions to develop plans that are in line with the resources they have.

In addition, by taking a careful consideration of the resources that the institutions can allocate to strategic plan implementation, the institutions position themselves in a favourable position to execute their developed plans. Institutions with the right quantities of resources are likely to achieve their strategic plans as well as implement plans within the planned period (Benkler, 2017; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Rindfleisch, 2020). However, when the plans do not align with the available resources, they would most likely fail. That explains the struggles that the public institutions within the Namibian public sector face in achieving their strategic objectives.

Regarding the findings relating to the quality of the resources, it became known that low quality resources lead to development of unachievable strategies and plans, as well as failure to meet the quality specification of the services and public goods. The quality of resources has a direct relationship with the implementation of organisational strategic objectives (George *et al.*, 2016a; Arshad *et al.*, 2017; Kabui *et al.*, 2018; Aydin *et al.*, 2020).

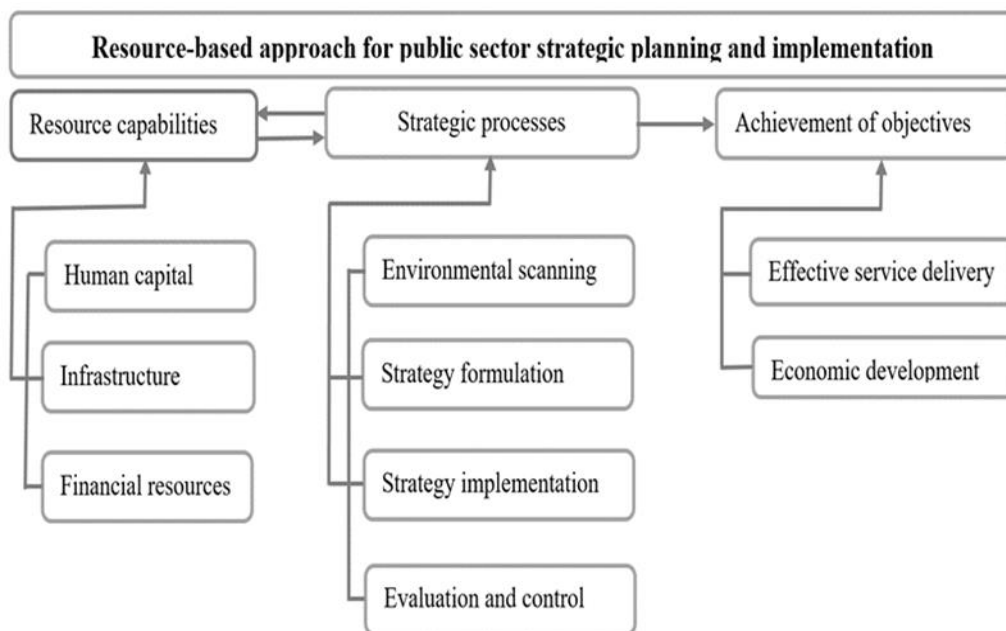
The sector's inability to sustain its talent, machinery and technologies leads to challenges in developing and implementing strategies. Further, exaggerating the quality of its resources lead the Namibian public sector to develop idealised strategies and plans that the sector is not able to execute effectively. Elbanna *et al.* (2016) suggests that the organisation ought to define the quality and quantity of such resources as well as ensure that the resources are readily available when needed. Putting the quality of its resources into context when planning would result in development of feasible strategies.

### **5.3.2 Theoretical implications of the study**

The theoretical implications of the study relate to their original contribution to academic discourse by developing the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation for the public sector. The findings show that the adoption of the resource-based approach enhances the focus of public institutions on the resources they have as well as their ability to sustain the supply of resources to their strategic planning and implementation processes. Similarly, studies show that the ability of an institution to access and create resources is fundamental to all organisational operations (Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Nason & Wiklund, 2018; Rindfleisch, 2020). The findings show that resources

should be fundamental to all strategic decisions. Consideration of resources throughout the strategic planning and implementation process avoids developing exaggerated strategies and strategic plans.

The findings further open an avenue for interrogating the value of resources in strategic decision-making, development of strategies, development of feasible strategic plans and their effective implementation within the public sector. The findings address the gaps in literature regarding the focus on resources when developing and implementing strategic plans. Scholars and practitioners can refer to the resource-based approach in advocating for consideration of resources when developing and implementing strategic plans for the public sector in developing economies. The resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation outlines the value of different classes of resources to the strategic planning processes as well as the outcome derived from allocating resources to strategic planning. Figure 5.1 below presents the developed resource-based approach.



**Figure 5.1: Resource-based approach**

As illustrated on figure 5.1 the resource-based approach is a three-phased approach, with inputs, processes, and outcomes. The inputs are the resources in their various classes while the processes are the strategic planning activities, and the outcomes are the expected results of applying resources to strategic processes. Human capital exists in the form of skills, talent, competencies, experience, and motivation. These are elements of human capital that play a significant role in environmental scanning, in formulation of strategies and plans, implementing the plans and strategies as well as evaluation and control. With skilled and competent personnel involved in the strategic planning processes, the public sector can achieve strategic objectives as well as deliver services effectively and achieve economic development. The resource-based approach therefore proposes that human capable individuals take charge of strategic planning processes. On the other hand, the strategic objectives and plans developed should be linked to the available personnel.

In terms of funding, the environmental scanning requires funding to conduct a full analysis of the environment. The environmental scanning process should expand to the consideration of available funds, sustainability of funding throughout the planning cycle. Strategies formulated should link directly to the available funds and the anticipated funds.

During implementation, there is need to allocate funds to the strategic priorities, such that adequate personnel, equipment and technologies are assigned the implementation processes. In addition, sources of funding ought to be secured for evaluating progress of the strategic planning and implementation. Effective monitoring and evaluation leads to timely identification of deviations and adjustments. Hence, when strategic planning and implementation processes consider the funding capacity, there is a high chance of achieving strategic objectives, effective service delivery and economic development.

The resource-based approach also shows that infrastructure is crucial in environmental scanning, formulation, implementation as well as evaluation and control. Infrastructure elements include the equipment, machinery, facilities, the technologies, and the coordination. During environmental scanning, consideration should also focus on infrastructure available as well as the ability of the institutions to develop adequate infrastructure to formulate and implement the strategic plans. The allocation of infrastructure to strategic priorities is also essential as far as the resource-based approach is concerned. Evaluation of the strategic planning processes focuses on ensuring that there is adequate infrastructure throughout the strategic planning and implementation process. The resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation places attention on all classes of resources necessary for developing feasible strategic plans and objectives as well as implementing them effectively.

### **5.3.3 Policy implications of the study**

The study developed a resource-based approach framework for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector, which requires adjustments in the strategic processes within the Namibian public sector. In this case, the findings of the study have implications to policy on development and implementation of strategies within the Namibian public sector. The findings creates the need for policymakers to review the regulatory framework that enforces public institutions to engage in periodic strategic processes and include the resource-based approach as a tool for effective strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector.

The study informs policymakers to enact policies aligned to the resource-based approach framework for strategic planning processes within the Namibian public sector, which pays particular attention on the resources. By policymakers enacting regulatory frameworks for strategic processes that place emphasis on the consideration of human resources, financial resources and physical infrastructure, they would be creating room for the achievement of public strategic objectives. The result of the enactment and enforcement of policy, which favour resources capabilities in planning, will be achievement of national development goals.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

After a thorough study of the data collected through grounded theory, the study shows that the Namibian public sector requires a holistic strategic planning and implementation approach that puts resources at the core. The study of literature also indicated that resources play a pivotal role in the development and implementation of strategies (Tietjen & Jørgensen, 2016; Alexy *et al.*, 2018; Gao *et al.*, 2018; Hughes *et al.*, 2020; Eresia-Eke & Soriakumar, 2021). Strategic planning and implementation is an integral function within the public sector, particularly when it relates to the achievement of economic development. The findings from the study revealed that the Namibian public sector has resource constraints, which require paying attention to the ability of the sector to access the resources they need in developing and implementing strategies as well as sustain supply of such resources throughout the strategic planning cycle. The study therefore make the following recommendations that could be implemented towards improving the strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector.

#### **5.4.1 Adoption of the resource-based approach framework**

The study recommends that the Namibian public sector adopts the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation. After discovering that the sector faces resource constraints, which affect development and implementation of strategies and strategic plans, the resource-based approach would create better awareness of the resources that the sector has and develop strategies that are within the scope of its resources. The benefit of a resource-based approach is that it emphasises on the heterogeneity of resources available as well as capacity to create needed resources.

#### **5.4.2 Emphasise the role of resources in strategic planning and implementation**

The study also recommends emphasising the value and role of resources in the development of plans and strategies. Making sure that the institutional leadership and the sources of resources understand the role that resources would play in the development of feasible strategies and plans has the potential to promote an environment where needed resources are made available and unrealistic ones are dropped or postponed.

#### **5.4.3 Prioritise the quality of resources allocated to strategic priorities**

The study recommends that the public sector in Namibia prioritise the quality of resources it allocates to strategic purposes. Competent human resources with the necessary skills and experience should be assigned to the sectors' strategic areas. Working and quality machinery should also be allocated to the strategic planning and implementation processes.

In addition, only competent contractors should be hired for activities that require contracting. The consideration and allocation of quality resources leads to development of feasible strategies that the sector can implement effectively.

#### **5.4.4 Prioritise the quantity of resources allocated to strategic priorities**

The study also recommends that the quantity of resources allocated to strategic planning and implementation be emphasised. That means, the strategic plans developed, and the strategies adopted ought to align to the available resources as well as the resources that the institutions could create or acquire during the strategic planning and implementation cycle. It emerged that developing strategic plans that are beyond the resource quantities available has always resulted in failure to implement such strategic plans.

#### **5.4.5 Commitment of resources on the long-term**

Following the realisation that allocating resources to long-term plans and strategies on a short-term basis lead to constraints causing failure to allocate the needed resources, the study recommends that the sector budgets resources for implementing strategies for the duration of the plans. A commitment of funding for the entire strategic plan period would enable the institutions to develop feasible strategies and provide adequate human and physical resources towards ensuring efficient implementation of the plan.

#### **5.4.6 Use resources in priority areas throughout the strategic planning process**

Allocating and using resources in priority areas throughout the strategic planning and implementation process is essential. The study recommends that resources within the institutions be used for the intended purposes as well as efficiently. The public institutions

should plan in such a way that the resources are attached to plans, and not redirected during the strategic planning process.

### **5.5 Limitations of the present study**

The limitation of the present study was that the study used qualitative data collected from purposively selected officials responsible for strategic planning and implementation within their respective public institutions.

### **5.5 Areas for further study**

The study developed the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation, based on the data collected through interaction with the directors responsible for the public strategic planning. The study used qualitative data to develop the approach, creating the opportunity for further study to evaluate the variables identified. A quantitative study would expand the sample to the individuals that engage with the actual performance during the strategy implementation. A study focused on a wider sample would be more generalizable to the global context.

### **5.6 Study Summary**

The purpose of this study was to develop the resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector. The study adopted the constructivist grounded theory design to collect data from Namibian public sector institutions. Directors responsible for strategic planning and implementation processes within the public sector in Namibia. Through extensive interactions with the seven participants, it emerged that resources are critical to the Namibian public sector's strategic

planning and implementation processes. Nevertheless, as a developing nation, Namibia faces resource constraints that affect the development and implementation of its strategies and strategic plans.

The study concluded that the resources that are required for effective strategic planning and implementation within the Namibian public sector are the human resources, the financial resources and infrastructure. It was discovered that the quality of these resources falls short of the desired standards, with the sector struggling to attract and retain qualified and experienced personnel. With an increase in aging machinery and equipment, the sector spends its limited financial resources on repairing old equipment. The quality of the resources within the Namibian public sector therefore hinders achievement of strategic objectives. The study also discovered that the sector faces shortages of resources as well as the ability to sustain supply of resources to the development and implementation of strategies and strategic plans.

Following an intensive examination of the findings, the resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation was developed for application within the Namibian public sector. The approach emphasises consideration of resources quality, quantity, and ability to sustain the supply of resources throughout the strategic planning and implementation process. The approach also stresses development of strategic plans and strategies that are linked to the available resources that the institutions have and can create during the strategy cycle. The application of the resource-based approach would require emphasis on the role of resources in strategic planning and implementation. In addition, that the public sector prioritises the quality and quantity of resources allocated to strategic priorities, commitment of resources on the long-term as well as utilising resources in

priority areas throughout the strategic planning process. The resource-based approach to strategic planning and implementation would enhance the development of feasible strategies and their implementation towards the achievement of strategic objectives, effective public service delivery and economic development.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: Interview guide (initial questions)**

#### **Section A: Demographic details of the participant**

Age: (range) \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ years

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Highest qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

Years of experience: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you responsible for strategic planning processes? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Section B: Guiding interview questions**

1. To what extent does the quality of resources affect the implementation of your strategy development plans?
2. To what extent does the quantity of resources affect the implementation of your strategy development plans?
3. Which processes do you follow in strategic planning at your organisation?
4. In your organisations, who are the individuals involved in the strategic processes decision-making processes?
5. How does the resources that your organisation has influence the organisation's strategy?
6. At what stage of the strategic planning processes are the resources available considered?
7. Are the resources that are needed for the strategy well budgeted for and allocated in accordance with the strategic plans?
8. How does the organisation source resources needed to execute strategies?
9. Explain how the organisation links the set objectives to resources available.
10. Which interventions, if needed are required to mitigate resources constraints constantly throughout formulation and implementation of strategies
11. What do you consider as critical elements contributing to achievement of strategic objectives?

Thank you!










## Appendix B: Similarity report



### Document Information

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### Sources included in the report

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SA	<b>K00244729 Dissertation 2021 Limerick Institute of Technology Department of Applied Social Sciences 16th May 2021.pdf</b> Document K00244729 Dissertation 2021 Limerick Institute of Technology Department of Applied Social Sciences 16th May 2021.pdf (D105093536)	 3
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SA	<b>A00053795_MBL607_Assignment_1.docx</b> Document A00053795_MBL607_Assignment_1.docx (D122083274)	 1

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<b>SA</b>	<b>B9RS112 Dissertation (B9RS112_1920_TMD)-Jericho Kashiya research Poster Msc Dissertation.pptx</b> Document B9RS112 Dissertation (B9RS112_1920_TMD)-Jericho Kashiya research Poster Msc Dissertation.pptx (D78958815)	 1
<b>SA</b>	<b>Mansberger_01.docx</b> Document Mansberger_01.docx (D21852233)	 1
<b>SA</b>	<b>University of Namibia / Literature Review.docx</b> Document Literature Review.docx (D40695727) Submitted by: ckaereho@unam.na Receiver: ckaereho.unam@analysis.arkund.com	 1

## Appendix C: NBS research permission letter



08 September 2021

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN


**Re: DBA, Student – Mr. Michael Moyo Student Number-201614460**

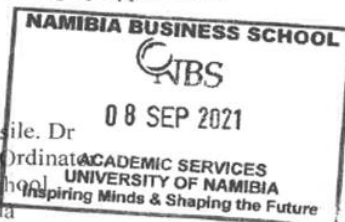
As part of our DBA Programme, students are expected to submit a research report after completion of their course-work. They need to explore in detail, some concepts and issues pertaining management strategies. To do that effectively, they need to conduct interviews and obtain practical examples.

Mr. Moyo has chosen your organization to approach for information. It is against this background that I wish to kindly request you to assist Mr. Moyo with the information he requires. Accept our assurance that the data will be used for academic purposes only. A copy of the completed document will be available at the Namibia Business School for perusal. His research synopsis indicates that his topic touches on “Developing a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibia public sector”.

Your kind assistance is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

  
Greenfield Mwakipesile, Dr  
Senior Research Co-Ordinator  
Namibia Business School  
University of Namibia  
Tel: +246 61 413 500  
Fax: +246 61 413 512  
Email: [mwakipg@nbs.edu.na](mailto:mwakipg@nbs.edu.na)



340 MandumeNdemufayo Ave. – Private Bag 16004 – Pionierspark – Windhoek – Website: [www.nbs.edu.na](http://www.nbs.edu.na)  
Tel: + 264 (61) 413500 – Fax +264 (61) 413512 – E-mail: [info@nbs.edu.na](mailto:info@nbs.edu.na)

## **Appendix D: Research permission letter**

From: **David Lyeengolo** <David.Lyeengolo@opm.gov.na>  
Date: Thu, Oct 14, 2021 at 10:03 AM  
Subject: Research  
To: mchlmoyo@gmail.com <mchlmoyo@gmail.com>

Good day,

Your request to conduct academic research within Namibian Public Sector has been received. Kindly be informed that OPM only give permission to the applicant who only seek to conduct research in OPM. You are hereby advised to approach those seven selected Ministries and seek their permission to conduct research within their Ministries

Kind regards

**David Lyeengolo**

Learning and Development Officer  
Department of Administration & IT Management

Tel: +2642872149  
Office: Parliament Gardens, 55  
Love Street

REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA Windhoek  
Website: [www.opm.gov.na](http://www.opm.gov.na)



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

**MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, FORESTRY AND TOURISM**

Tel: (00 264) 61 284 2111  
Fax: (00 264) 61 232 057  
Email: [albinus.indongo@mef.gov.na](mailto:albinus.indongo@mef.gov.na)  
Enq: A. Indongo

Cnr Robert Mugabe &  
Dr Kenneth Kaunda Street  
Private Bag 13306  
Windhoek  
Namibia

21 September 2021

Mr. Michael Moyo  
P.O. Box 5071  
Windhoek

Dear Mr. Moyo,

**RE: RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTER**

Your letter dated 15 September 2021 has reference.

The Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) is hereby granting you permission to collect data from our institution for your research project. For further communication and scheduling of your interviews, your contact person at MEFT is Mr. Albinus Indongo, contact details: [albinus.indongo@mef.gov.na](mailto:albinus.indongo@mef.gov.na) or Tel: 061 284 2078 / cell: 0812877575.

We are looking forward to your research findings and be assured of our support.

Sincerely Yours,

  
TEOFILUS NGHITILA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



**“Stop the poaching of our rhinos”**

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Executive Director



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM

Tel.: (061) 2087649

Office of the Executive Director  
Government Office Park  
Private Bag 13184  
WINDHOEK

Enquiries: J. Nglishekwa  
Tel: +264 61 296 5329  
e-mail: Jacobine.Nglishekwa@mlr.gov.na  
Ref: 17/15/P

12 October 2021

Mr. Michael Moyo  
University of Namibia  
Private Bag 13301  
WINDHOEK

Dear Mr Moyo,

**REQUEST OF APPROVAL TO CONDUCT YOUR RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE  
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, WATER AND LAND REFORM**

It is my pleasure to inform you that approval to your request to conduct a research project for the Doctor of Business Administration within the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform has been granted. The approved title is "Developing a Resource-Based Approach for Strategic Planning and Implementation in the Namibian Sector".

I wish you success in your studies.

Phillip C. //Khaiseb  
Chairperson: MTC  
Recommended / ~~Not Recommended~~

*October 13, 2021*

Date:

Penda Ithindi  
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Approved / ~~Not Approved~~



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT

Tel: +264 (0)61 - 208 811  
Fax: +264 (0)61 - 228 560  
Telex: (50908) 709  
Telegram: NAMTRANS

Private bag 13341, Ausspannplatz  
6719 Bell Street, Snyman Circle  
Windhoek, Namibia

Our Ref:.....

Your Ref:.....

Enquiries: Kwenani  
Tel: 061-208 843

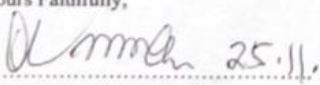
Mr. Michael Moyo  
P.o Box 5071  
Windhoek  
Namibia

Dear Mr. Moyo,

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AT THE  
MINISTRY OF WORKS AND TRANSPORT**

1. We refer to your letter dated 15 September 2021 regarding the above mentioned subject.
2. Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research for Doctoral Degree in Business Administration.: Thesis entitled '**Developing a Resource- based Approach for Strategic Planning and Implementation in the Namibian Public Sector**': -A case study of the Ministry of Works and Transport.
3. While conducting research at this Ministry you are requested to perform your research in a professional manner, including observing confidentiality during the period of research. In addition, the information that you will gather, must be used for research purpose only and findings to be shared with the Ministry.
4. I wish you the best and trust that you will succeed in your studies.

Yours Faithfully,

  
ESTHER N. KAAPANDA  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



*"Effective and Efficient Delivery of Service"*

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Executive Director

## Appendix E: Draft informed consent

Dear Michael Moyo

Re: Consent to take part in your study

I hereby confirm that I have been informed of the purpose of the study titled “**Developing a resource-based approach for strategic planning and implementation in the Namibian public sector**”.

I further confirm by signing below as indication of my voluntary willingness to participate in the study by providing data through interviews. The conditions of my participation in the study are that;

1. I participate anonymously
2. The data I provide is treated confidentially
3. The data collected is used for this academic research only
4. I retain my right to withdraw participation at any time before or during the interviews

Kind regards,

.....  
Participant

Signed at .....

## Appendix F: Language editing certificate



The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile

ThD, MBA, HBS | mwakipg@outlook.com

### CONTACT

PO Box 99539,  
UNAM,  
Namibia

### LANGUAGE & COPY-EDITING CERTIFICATE

20<sup>th</sup> December 2021

**RE: LANGUAGE, COPYEDITING AND PROOFREADING OF MICHAEL MOYO'S DISSERTATION FOR THE DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE OF THE NAMIBIA BUSINESS SCHOOL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAMIBIA**

This certificate serves to confirm that I copyedited and proofread **MICHAEL MOYO's** Thesis for the **DOCTOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION DEGREE** entitled: **DEVELOPING A RESOURCE-BASED APPROACH FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION IN THE NAMIBIAN PUBLIC SECTOR**

I declare that I professionally copyedited and proofread the thesis and removed mistakes and errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation. In some cases, I improved sentence construction without changing the content provided by the student. I also removed some typographical errors from the thesis and formatted the thesis so that it complies with the University of Namibia's guidelines.

I am a trained language and copy editor and have edited many Postgraduate Diploma, Masters' Thesis, Dissertations and Doctoral Dissertations for students studying with universities in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, South Africa and abroad. I have also copy-edited company documents for companies in the region and abroad.

Please feel free to contact me should the need arise.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile".

The Rev. Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile



[greenfield.mwakipesile](mailto:greenfield.mwakipesile)



[@mwakipg](https://twitter.com/mwakipg)



+264813901701



[Dr. Greenfield Mwakipesile](#)