

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**AN APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY APPROACH INTO THE
POST-MERGER CAMPBELL COLLECTIONS -
UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL.**

By

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ASOKA ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDITING



DECLARATION

This is to certify that I have English Language edited the proposal

An appreciative inquiry into the post-merger Campbell collections at UKZN.

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ABSTRACT

The study conducted was An Appreciative Inquiry approach into the post-merger Campbell Collections at UKZN. The study was meant to explore and discover the value of the Campbell Collections in the new merged institution, which is the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The study was appreciative in nature, and it took the complete interconnected elements that affect the system into consideration. Every year since 2004, when the University of Natal and the University of Durban Westville were officially declared as merged, there have been various changes that took place. The merger is one huge change project that the universities engaged in. Thus the concepts ‘merger’ and ‘change’ were used inter-changeably in the study. The background on the merger was brought into perspective, and an in-depth literature review on Appreciative Inquiry was conducted.

Appreciative Inquiry (AI) introduced to the study a research perspective that was very different in focus from more traditional approaches. AI is a highly participative, system-wide approach that seeks to identify and enhance the life-giving forces. It concentrates on things we want to increase to add value, and it is a radical approach to understanding the social world. It concentrates on exploring ideas that people have about what is valuable in what they do and then tries to work out ways in which this can be built on. The emphasis is strong on appreciating the activities and responses of people, rather than focusing on their problems. Appreciative Inquiry is declared to be a strong pillar of research which looks to build a productive link between people and the substance of what they talk about as past and present capacities. In general AI studies are carried out through the use of 4-D Cycles. The 4-Ds represent: discovery; dream; design and destiny. This study was conducted through the application of only two Ds which are discovery and dream phases. The questions used in data gathering were crafted based on affirmative topics to meet the principles of AI. The interview technique was employed and carried out in the form of individual/one-one interviews as well as through focus groups. All Campbell Collections’ staff members were invited to participate in the study, and a few former staff members were also part of the study. The strategic decisions made about whom to invite to take part in a study were based on their experience, familiarity, and understanding of Campbell Collections and the merger.

The study findings revealed the strengths and value of Campbell Collections as well as the impact of the merger, mainly in terms of decisions taken at the University’s executive level. One limitation of the study was that it was bound to Campbell Collections; therefore, the information generated could not be generalised and remained specific to the particular case studied. However, the same research can be studied further to evaluate the entire post-merger system of the University.

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List & définition of Acronymes

- (a) AI - Appréciative Inquiry
- (b) UKZN - University of KwaZulu-Natal
- © CC - Campbell Collections
- (d) KCAL - Killie Campbell Africana Library
- (e) KCL - Killie Campbell Library (Popular name for CC)
- (f) vs. - Opposite/against

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The theoretical framework of the study is Appreciative Inquiry. A theoretical/conceptual framework can be defined as guidelines that shape the research. Every study has to be based on a certain framework and the researcher based her study on the guidelines of Appreciative Inquiry.

1.1 Title of the Study

An Appreciative Inquiry Approach into the Post-merger Campbell Collections-University of KwaZulu-Natal

1.2 Study Overview

The study seeks to explore and discover the value of the Campbell Collections in the newly merged institution, which is the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). The Campbell Collection is divided into two components, which are the Killie Campbell Africana Library, and the museum component. Thus the collective name for the whole entity is the Campbell Collections. Since the day the institutions were merged, there have been various changes that have taken place. A definition of a merger would be to combine more than one entity with the same or similar goals and interests, especially so as to become part of a larger whole. Change is a route to becoming different and the merger was one huge change project that the university engaged in. Thus the phrase 'merger' and 'change' will be used interchangeably. The researcher will bring the merger background into perspective, and an in-depth literature review on Appreciative Inquiry will be conducted.

Merger Background

The concept 'merger' is core to the study. The AI approach is employed to investigate and strengthen the best of the Campbell Collections in the post-merger era. Thus it is significant to bring the merger background into perspective. Moreover, the 4D Cycle

which is the AI process is suitable for such huge projects like mergers, because it has the potential to help “strangers to become partners and unprecedented levels of cooperation emerge” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:36). Therefore, Appreciative Inquiry is a suitable approach to study the post-merger conditions of an organisation.

In 1994 the democratically elected South African Governmental inherited a legacy of almost fifty years of apartheid higher education policies and practices. A sound policy framework was needed in order to deal with an irrationally structured higher education system. According to a 2007 UKZN merger report, the Ministry of Education released proposals for “transformation and re-structuring of the institutional landscape of the higher education system in South Africa” (Makgoba, 2007:1). The theory behind the merger was to improve the quality of education, by ensuring that all institutions have equal share of resources. Transformation was aimed at dealing with the damages caused by apartheid especially for the disadvantaged institutions. For instance, racial boundaries set based on where certain racial groups lived. These proposals resulted in the consolidation of higher education institutions through mergers and incorporations. Four mergers took place at the beginning of 2004, a further four at the beginning of 2005, and one in 2006. The merger process reduced the number of institutions of higher learning from 35 Universities and Technikons to 23 institutions: 11 conventional Universities, six Comprehensive Universities, five Universities of Technology and one Technikon. The University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) was formally launched on 01 January 2004, following the merger of the University of Durban–Westville and the erstwhile University of Natal (Makgoba, 2007:4).

The merger was aimed at correcting the historical inequalities. Process implementation was left in the hands of the affected institutions and the Department of Education was just there to provide financial and technical support and guidance, in monitoring the implementation at the institutional level. The burden/challenges of managing implementation of mergers and incorporations were on the shoulders of the affected institutions.

Makgoba (2007:4) lists the merger objectives as follows:

- The main merger purpose is to defeat the apartheid division between historically white and historically black institutions
- It also aimed at promoting staff equity
- It hoped to make sure that the resources are effectively and efficiently used through reducing overlap and repetition in university programmes
- Combining existing programmes to enable a wider range of academic programmes to be offered in response to regional and national needs was essential in the merger process
- Merger of the institutions was a means to alleviate the effect of needless competition amongst the institutions

Institutions were structured in a way that makes each institution unique in terms of what is offering. Restructuring through combining a wider range of academic programs was hoped to make students not to compete against status and resources but to value courses offered in different institutions.

The Merger of the University of Natal and the University of Durban-Westville was indeed a success in spite of various challenges. In support of the UKZN merger success, the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (2008:4) lists the UKZN merger's achievements as follows: "vision and identity; stable integration into a new institution; established UKZN as a research-led institution and the college model at UKZN- a first in South Africa; transformation achieved at UKZN; creating an environment conducive to learning; diversity achieved at UKZN; governance and operations; and lastly funding". However, the Foundation acknowledges the fact that "besides many successes, human resources remain the largest outstanding challenge of the merger. The process of populating the new structures in the support sector has proven cumbersome and fraught

with difficulty” (*ibid.*). Thus despite the above-mentioned challenges, UKZN can be applauded for its achievements with regard to the merger and can proudly be listed amongst successful merger projects. There are numerous documented reports/writings on merger and acquisition failure rates. Carleton & Lineberry (2004:8-11) argue that in spite of failures “merger and acquisitions will continue to be the growth strategy, as they were in the 1990s”. They further comment on the cost implication as one main reason that makes it unacceptable. Moreover, the loss of key executives and valuable staff members (high performers and informal leaders) and the decrease in productivity becomes of concern. Cultural differences of the merging organisations are indisputably the main reason for merger failure, (Carleton & Lineberry 2004:8-11). Cultural clashes lead to internal disorder and hostility. New ways of doing things and talking about things produces resistance that results in a loss of time and enormous inefficiencies occur in the organisations concerned.

The clear differences between companies involved in a merger lie in their beliefs, values, customer care/service, and respect for each other, decision making, communication, management and supervision. Carleton & Lineberry (2004:15) argue that the issue of cultural dissonance is serious and dangerous but at the same time it is impossible to address in an effective and predictable (or acceptable?) manner. Participants concluded by saying that "cultural impacts on a merger or acquisition are inevitable". However cultural clashes that come with the merger are a few of the tests that organisations have to live with (*ibid.*). Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:36) state “the greatest challenge faced by merging organizations is the challenge of building relationships and bonds amongst people”. For example, in the pre-merger institutions staff, students, and overall systems were like strangers to each other. Thus for the merger process to begin and succeed the same strangers had to become partners and work together to achieve goals. There is the possibility that if Appreciative Inquiry techniques had been employed at the time, it would have helped UKZN avoid/reduce some of the still outstanding challenges like that of harmonisation.

1.3 Overview of the literature review on Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

This is an overview of the literature relating to AI in general, its principles, processes, how it works, and where it is applicable, and all the related elements are discussed in detail. The acronym AI for Appreciative Inquiry will be used throughout the study.

Watkins & Mohr (2001:14) defines AI as “a collaborative and highly participative, system wide approach seeking, identifying and enhancing the life giving forces”. They further state that “AI concentrates on things we want to increase to add value”. On the one hand Reed (2007: 2) says that “AI is a simple but radical approach to understanding the social world”. She further clarifies her definition, by adding that AI focuses on exploring ideas that people have about what is valuable and appreciated in what they do and then tries to work out ways in which this can be built on. Moreover she emphasises the importance of valuing the people’s feedback instead focusing on their difficulties (Reed, 2007:2). Watkins & Mohr (2001:14) further give their perception / viewpoint of AI as a pillar of research which

‘... looks for basic essentials to build a constructive association between people and the massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capacities: achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, innovations, strengths, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, high point moments, lived values, traditions, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, etc into deeper corporate spirit or soul-and visions of valued and possible futures’ (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:14).

According to Bushe (2001:12), “AI may be one of the most effective ways to begin the process of integrating two old teams into one new one”. His argument qualifies the AI approach as being suitable to explore the post-merger Campbell Collections. The Appreciative Inquiry approach is frequently performed through the application of 4-D models. The 4-D represents different phases of the AI approach and is as follows: ‘Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny’ (Reed 2007:32–33 & Lewis *et al*, 2008:44). Sullivan (2004:5) emphasises that AI researchers need “to take the context in which the 4-D Cycle is used, the particular needs and challenges of the situation into consideration”. However the study was conducted using two of the phases of AI, which are the Discovery and Dream phases, due to time constraints and the fact that this is a piece of exploratory research and not an actual intervention. It is important to note that

each AI phase could be an absolute research project in itself. Therefore, exploring only the two D's for the study, instead of going through all four stages does not make this research any less important. The researcher uses 'elements of AI' to demonstrate that not all phases were employed in the study. Bushe (2007:3) claims that the Discovery and Dream phases of AI "can lead people to replace cynicism with hope and when that happens amazing generativity (sic) comes on line". He also states that the rationale behind the dream phase "is to surface the common values and aspirations that enliven the system" (Bushe, 2007:5). According to him the generative dream phase will help people discover values and aspirations they might not know they have (*ibid.*).

The choice of the two D's is made based on their relevance and appropriateness to the study's focus. The Discovery and Dream phases are appropriate in the sense that data collection and narrative exploration can be achieved through Discovery; participants will get a chance to think about future possibilities in a Dream phase. According to Lewis *et al.* (2008:49) "discovery phase is about discovering the organization's key strengths and appreciating the best of what is", it is about recognising and knowing the history and the factors that give life to an organisation. The discovery phase focuses on investigating and exposing the exceptional traits of the organisation. In a way members get an opportunity to know the history of the place as well as positive possibilities, rather than problematic past events. Reed (2007:33) further states that "the product of the discovery phase forms the foundation for the dream phase".

Reed's (2007) writings on Appreciative Inquiry do support other AI authors consulted in the study. However her emphasis is on exploring in depth the issues that arise when AI is used as a research framework rather than an organisational development tool. Reed (2007) reflects on her experience of AI as a research methodology as well as the history and principles of AI, "research approach", "shaping the asking of questions", "gathering of information", and the "communication of ideas". She then explores the variety of ways to engage AI in change-focused research and practice from research question and design through data collection, data analysis, interpretation and dissemination of findings. In her writings she even captures the ways in which we can link AI with different research

paradigms and approaches. Thus the in-depth literature survey on AI will add significant value to the study, and the researcher will engage in detail with this in chapter 2.

1.4 Purpose Statement

The Campbell Collections was tremendously compromised by the merger. The merger which gave rise to the University of KwaZulu-Natal resulted in a change of policies. The consequences that arose from the new policies had negative impacts on the library, despite the physical relocation of staff. Campbell Collections lost quite a number of vital posts as a result of the merger, and is still fighting to have them back. Even the existing Head of Department posts was down-graded from a Professorial post (academic) to a general support staff post. Such acts were, and still are, very detrimental in terms of operations and work load. The situation did not end there; it is still impacting at the Campbell Collections. Currently the Campbell Collections is facing another challenge, since the University Head of Libraries has proposed streamlining of all special collections. That is problematic in the sense that such collections do not repeat any of their holdings. Therefore, it is going to be a huge challenge to have one set of personnel performing the same duties in all special collections. It means that the post-merger impact has not come to an end as yet.

The above problems and challenges are consequences of the merger. The study seeks to conduct an Appreciative Inquiry approach into the post-merger Campbell Collections at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. The study seeks to explore and enhance the positives, strengths and the value of the post-merger Campbell Collections. The study intends to achieve this by employing appreciative inquiry as the research methodology suitable for studying organisational development and organisational change.

There is a study that was conducted by Maureen Sullivan on libraries where the Appreciative Inquiry approach was employed. The researcher believes that this study conducted on libraries is significant. The rationale behind referencing that study is that

the researcher is involved in a similar setting and also employs an Appreciative Inquiry as a study approach. According to Sullivan (2004:1)

‘Library organizations, like so many other types of organizations today, face the need for significant transformation in the way they are organized, the work they do, the way in which they perform this work, and in how they meet the challenges of staying relevant and meeting the needs and the expectations of their various constituent groups’.

Sullivan (2004:1) also mentions that libraries have standing records of effectively dealing with “challenges and problems with such organizational development efforts as strategic planning, restructuring, redesigning work, and project management”. AI gives an option or alternative to the conventional approach, which employed a deficit-based approach where negatives and problems are the focal point. Instead AI offers “the quest for the best possible situation” Sullivan (2004:4). She further states that the study invited and introduced the library staff to ‘read the thin book of Appreciative Inquiry by Hammond 1996’. The whole aim of introducing the staff to this book is to help them get a significant preamble of what AI is and a general idea of the main concepts, including the set of assumptions. Sullivan (2004:4) argues that the application of AI approach in most libraries today require a major shift in the set of beliefs and assumptions about how to bring about change. She believes that a decision to make the positive a focal point calls for a profound and continuous commitment. The best use of AI in any organisational development strategy is very much dependent on the senior leadership commitment. She is certain that “leadership commitment could be developed through educating the leaders and stakeholders about the philosophy, rationale, supporting research, process, and benefits of AI as an approach to organizational development” (Sullivan, 2004:5). She further says that it is important “that senior leadership make the conscious commitment to focus on the positive as the basis for change” (Sullivan, 2004:5).

In the libraries study, it was also found that the “AI approach to personal and organization change is based on the assumption that questions and dialogue about strengths, successes, values, hopes, and dreams are themselves transformational” (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom, 2003:1). Sullivan (2004:5) bases her conclusions on her study findings. Sullivan mentions that practitioners and some libraries have not

understood the term ‘Organisational Development’ as a concise concept (2004:5). This comment alerted this researcher to the necessity to be cautious and to ensure that all concepts that are part of the study inquiry are fully understood by participants. The above study is very helpful since it shows the applicability of AI in various settings, like library organisations, community development, and small to larger organisations.

AI seems appropriate and fitting in this inquiry into the merger because of its nature, that makes it suitable for different purposes where change is involved. Sectors within the higher education were merged in response to a mandate released by the national Department of Education in December 2002. This was a huge, complex and time-consuming project which added an enormous burden on affected institutions, but it had positive outcomes. One can perceive the merger process as the tool which was used to achieve organisational development growth of previously disadvantaged institutions. The merging of higher education institutions was a challenging phase of transformation with a high level of resistance from both staff and students. Using the AI approach is suitable in such instances “because of its appropriateness when facing transformative changes in complex systems” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:24). They further demonstrate AI’s potential to grow in fields where numerous methods have been applied previously. AI’s focus on the positives of the past, present, aspirations, dreams, and desires for the future of the organisation cannot be over emphasised.

1.5 Overview of the Research Design

The research design is “a plan or a blueprint of how you intend conducting the research” Barbie & Mouton (2001:74). In other words it is a framework that guides the order for data collection and analysis. The components of the research design to be covered in chapter three are: ‘Research Approach/ Paradigm, Study Methodology, Methods of Data Collection, Analysis of data and Interpretation’. Again the researcher will also provide a full coverage of the 4D-Cycle in the research design chapter. All of the above will be discussed in detail in chapter three of the study.

1.6 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to the Campbell Collections, and it is hoped that the information generated will be helpful to the Campbell Collections itself, and that it will add value to other sectors undergoing transformation. The study is still significant to UKZN because the Campbell Collections is a subsystem of the main system (UKZN). The policies, processes and decisions adopted by the main system also impact both positively and negatively on the Campbell Collections. However, former Campbell Collections staff and current Campbell Collections employees participated in the study. University and Library management were not represented. This was a limitation in the sense that management has strong influence and power over policies, but could not participate and hear how much impact their decisions have had on the library. The reason for their absence was the study boundaries, because limitations of time confined the study to just some of the past and present staff of the Campbell Collections. Since this was not a planned intervention or a planned initiative arranged by the department but a learning piece of research to be completed in a specific period of time, the researcher could not complete the whole-system 4D Dialogue; instead she resorted to 2Ds only.

1.7 Chapter Outlines: Chapter one introduces the primary purpose of the study, which is to explore and enhance the positives, strengths and the value of the post-merger Campbell Collections. The introductory chapter also gives an overview of the research question. It also explains the significance of the study, limitation of the study, and the study focus. Finally, it offers a breakdown of the subsequent chapters.

Having given background on merger, the research practitioner will then conduct a detailed discussion on the Appreciative Inquiry approach in chapter 2. The literature review will hopefully provide an academic and general perspective to the study. Apart from the literature survey, field work was conducted by means of live interaction with research participants in their natural settings, telling stories and sharing their lived experiences in the form of focus group discussions as well as in individual (one-on-one) interviews. Thus in chapter three, the research methodology will broadly be discussed, including methods, techniques, and even study methodologies. The study to be conducted

will be based on the writings of Creswell, 1994 &1998; Barbie and Mouton, 2001; Riley, 1990 and Neuman, 1994 on the qualitative paradigm, and Appreciative Inquiry methodologies will be the dominant research approach for the study. The Appreciative Inquiry approach will also be employed in ‘data collection and analyses’.

In chapter four, findings will be analysed and discussed /interpreted in detail. The process of identifying themes was determined through the help of the participants. Themes actually emerged during the process.

Chapter five is the concluding chapter, which will provide a summary of the preceding chapters, and it will include recommendations for future research based on the 4D Cycle.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.1 Theories of Change

It was indicated earlier that the two concepts ‘merger’ and ‘change’ will be used interchangeably because of their relationship. Thus change theories are adapted to the study. Kritsonis (2004-2005:1) gives a summary of change theories. He also distinguishes features of the six theories. Kritsonis further illustrates how best one can promote and facilitate successful and sustainable change. Kritsonis (2004 & 2005:1) defines theories by the purpose they serve. He says theories serve as proof that change is a real occurrence. The theories mentioned are as follows: Lewin’s Three-Step Change Theory; Lippitt’s Phases of Change Theory; Prochaska and DiClementeas Change Theory; Social Cognitive Theory and the Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour. The above-mentioned theories are uniquely valuable and the researcher has given an overview of each theory below. However, the researcher dwells on Social Cognitive Theory since it closely addresses the interests of Appreciative Inquiry.

(Shapiro, 2005:3) gives three attributes of good theories which are as follows: They must be plausible. In a way evidence and common sense suggest that the specified activities will lead to the desired outcomes,

- They are doable/ practical
- They are testable

Lewin’s Three-Step Change Theory was introduced by Kurt Lewin (1951)

The Lewin’s Three-Step Change Theory analysis behaviour from a social scientists’ point of view. According to his theory behaviour is “a dynamic balance of forces working in opposing directions. Driving forces facilitate change because they push employees in the desired direction, the restraining forces hinder change because they push employees in the opposite direction” (Kritsonis, 2004 – 2005:1). Kritsonis (2004-2005:2) mentions that

Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory where, the first phase of changing behaviour is unfreezing the current situation. Increasing and focusing the "driving forces" that direct behaviour away from the current situation, decreasing forces that hinder movements from the current situation and then combining the two methods. Unfreezing phase is required to conquer the challenges of individual resistance and group conventionality.

"Lewin's second step in the process of behaviour change is movement" (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:2). It is compulsory in this phase to shift the chosen system to a fresh position by convincing employees to be of the same mind that the current situation is no longer advantageous to them, and encourage them to employ a different perspective on the problems. Organization leaders and executives should also be part of the change. The last step is refreezing. Refreezing is the most vital step after change has occurred so that it is sustainable and durable. It gives both 'driving' and 'restraining forces' some form of balance and stability. "Change will occur when the combined strength of one force is greater than the combined strength of the opposing set of forces" (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:2). This model just shows the effects of forces that either support or restrain change.

Lippit *et al* in (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:1-5) extend 'Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory' by creating a " 'seven-step theory' that focuses more on the role and responsibility of change agent than on the evolution of the change itself". Kritsonis (2004-2005:3) defines the seven-step theory with the following functions:

1. "Diagnose the problem
2. Assess the motivation and capacity for change
3. Assess resources and motivation of the change agent
4. Choose progressive change objects.
5. The role of the change agents should be selected and clearly understood by all parties so that expectations are clear.

6. Maintain the change. Communication, feedback, and group coordination are essential elements in this step of the change process.
7. Gradually terminate from the helping relationship”

The above stated functions are generally effective and basic when one intends to conduct a research. It cannot be overemphasized that a researcher needs to diagnose the problem, and be certain that whatever that s/he is interested in researching is the real problem. The Lewin's Three- Step Change theory functions becomes a good platform for change management. The researcher seems to believe that if the above functions are taken into consideration, the level of resistance would be reduced and change processes are likely to be a success in any organization or institution undergoing change.

Prochaska and DiClementeas' Change Theory

Prochaska and DiClementeas' Change Theory is cyclical. Cyclical means that it is recurring, process could be repeated since it is non-linear. Kritsonis (2004& 2005:6) maintains that this theory capitalises on failures and regrets, to change the desired behaviour. It further reveals the sequence of stages that people go through when change occurs (Kritsonis, 2004& 2005:3). The phases argued about are: “Precontemplation, contemplation, preparation, action and maintenance” (Kritsonis, 2004& 2005:3). This theory represents the above mentioned stages through a spiral model it creates. The movement of intentional change from precontemplation to contemplation of the issue is the first aspect of the model. Precontemplation is the phase where an individual does not acknowledge the problems, unless he/she engage in a change activity, whereas contemplation arises when the individual acknowledges the issue, (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:3). When individuals are conscious of the issue that is when they begin to consider changing their behaviour, however are unable to commit as yet. This means that individuals are less likely to resist change when they had been prepared for it. Once they absorb it they can easily commit. Kritsonis (2004-2005:4) declares that Prochaska and DiClementeas Change ‘Theory is preparation’, however individuals must be in the position to change their behaviour before preparation could occur. Once the preparation stage is completed, the action stage follows immediately. The final stage is maintenance.

That is where decisions and behaviours that support and strengthens change are taken to institute the new behavioural change to the individual's way of life (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:4).

Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour

This theory emphasis is on the behaviour produced. The outcome of the desired behaviour is determined by one's attitude. It also mentions that one's focus is influenced by the social environment. It further mentions major factors that shape behaviour. "This theory of a planned behaviour includes the concept of a perceived control over the opportunities, resources, and skills to perform desired behaviour", and this control is classified as self-efficacy (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:4).

Social Cognitive Theory

The 'Social Cognitive Theory' which is the researcher's theory of choice, values communication. It considers acquired knowledge and experiences, engaging in conversation and even observations to be the best ways in which individuals can learn (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:4). 'Social Cognitive theory' was known as a 'Social learning theory' before being renamed. It suggests that behaviour change is influenced by the environmental, individual' factors and elements of the behaviour itself (Robbins, cited in Kritsonis 2004-2005: 4). Behaviours are consequences of certain actions. Thus for social learning to occur, individuals must have positive expectations which prevail over negative expectations. Social cognitive theory introduces us to another concept of self-efficacy. This theory emphasises the importance of self-efficacy in individuals. "Self-efficacy is believed to be the most important characteristic that determines a person behavioural change".

'Self-efficacy is an individual's perceived capability of producing desired outcomes by taking necessary actions, and as such, it influences one's psychological functioning and performance behavior through choice of activities, the amount of effort put into chosen activities, and perseverance in one's chosen activities', Bandura (cited in Namok 2004).

The predictable results rely on people's expectations or "perceptions of being able to perform the behaviour in the first place". (Kritsonis 2004-2005: 4). He further says that people have to trust their potential to achieve the desired behaviours; moreover they should recognise the reason to do so. Therefore, social learning can only occur, when people are positive and eager regarding a particular, behaviour. Providing clear instructions and model the desired behaviour can increase self-efficacy. Individual behaviour change and individuals right attitudes are the basis of a successful organisational change.

The Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour & Social Cognitive Theory

There is something common between the above theories. They share a common belief that a behaviour change is dependent on the environment and they both emphasise the value of self- efficacy in individuals.

The reason behind choosing the Social Cognitive Theory is the perceived relationship it has to Appreciative Inquiry. The Social Cognitive Theory places particular emphasis on individual learning through direct experiences, human dialogue, interactions and observations, just as Appreciative Inquiry' believes in sharing experiences through interaction and dialogue.

2.2. Change Theories Discussion

Looking at change theories is significant for the study, because merger implies change, and AI is one of the interventions in dealing with change. Some of the above theories give ideas on what one could do for change to become a success.

All the above stated change theories are significant in defining and discussing change in general as well as behavior change. Different change theories are effective and applicable to different context of change. They offer various mechanisms that are helpful when change takes place. It was important for the researcher to give background of each theory

so as to better understand factors that pertain change. Each theory is unique and offers different methods. For instance the Lewin's Three Step Theory is rational and goal oriented (Kritsonis, 2004-2005:6). It values the effect/impact of driving and restraining forces on ones' behaviour. Above all, this theory brings the idea that if both forces are combined, then the desired behavior is achieved. Lippits Phases of Change-Theory neglect development of change and focus on the responsibility of change agent. Prochaska and DiClementeas' Change Theory concentrates on the phases undergone by individuals when change occurs. In other words this theory offers a coping mechanism or means of survival when change takes place, and does not focus on change itself. When analyzing these theories you find some similarities and differences, even though they are all change theories. However, in the process of change all the focus aspects are affected, thus it is essential to take them all into consideration when addressing or evaluating change. Even the other theories amongst those mentioned: The Theory of Reasoned Action and Planned Behaviour concentrate on factors that shape behavior, for instance attitude, social environment and self-efficacy. That takes us to Social Cognitive Theory which also values self-efficacy.

Social Cognitive Theory values learning by experiences, interaction/communication and observation. Social Cognitive Theory acknowledges the influence of internal and external environment on behaviour change. The Social Cognitive theory better explains, and interprets AI. Its central focus is on communication, experiences and engaging in conversations which is also an approach employed by Appreciative Inquiry approach. "Change theories can be identified either prospectively as part of planning an initiative or retrospectively as part of evaluative process" (Shapiro, 2005:2). Theories of change present a framework for distinguishing program approaches, and support various interventions. In a way "advancing research that both refines theory and improves practice" (Shapiro, 2005:2). In other words change theories help fill the gap between theory and practice when conducting change. Thus employing any of these theories to the studies of change is important. Campbell Collections has undergone a lot of changes as a result of the merger, and those changes had various impacts on Campbell's staff and daily operations. The characteristics of social learning theory form the basis of Appreciative

Inquiry approach. Acquired knowledge and experiences, engaging in conversation and even observations seem to be the best ways in which individuals can learn and it is supported by both Social Learning Theory and Appreciative Inquiry. Positive expectations are basic for social learning to occur, and they must prevail over negative expectations. Similarly, positives are fundamental in the AI approach.

2.3 Background of Appreciative Inquiry

Appreciative Inquiry is perceived to be a powerful means for whole-system organisational change (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:25). AI stems from a social constructionist point of view, which holds “the underlying beliefs that reality is formed through conversation and story telling, that language and communication facilitate meaning making, and that knowledge is generated and passed on through social interaction” (Barrett, 2006:192). Barrett further perceives AI as a formalised process for designing powerful conversations, (2006:192). “The dominant theoretical rationale of AI is post-modernism” which maintains that “there is nothing real about any social form; instead all organisations are arbitrary social constructions” (Bushe, 1998:2). However, our imaginations and our collective will limit our ability to create new improved organisations. The Social Constructionist principle says “the knowledge about organization and the destiny of the organization are interwoven” (Barrett, 2006:192). Meaning that one cannot fulfil organisations’ vocation unless s/he has a full knowledge of the organisation. Thus, it is also imperative that AI researchers receive adequate training or acquire reasonable knowledge on how to use the AI approach effectively. Training helps one to read, understand, and analyse organisations better as living, human constructions, in order to be successful at all situations. The manner in which “we act and the way we approach change in the system”, is generally affected by the perception and the beliefs we have about the organisation. Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, (2003:57 further say that the “constructionist principle places human communication and language at the heart of human organizing and change”.

Reed (2007:2) perceives AI to be “a simple but radical approach to understanding the social world”. Its focus is on investigating and discovering what is important and precious to people and capitalise on that to add value. “There is a strong emphasis on appreciating the activities and responses of people, rather than concentrating on their problems” (Reed, 2007:1-2). In support of AI definitions, Sullivan (2004:2) believes that AI is “an approach to planned change that begins with careful attention to and the identification of what has worked and what works in the present”. AI was formulated by David Cooperrider, then a graduate student, and his faculty mentor, Dr Suresh Srivastva, at the Weatherhead School of Management, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. “AI has developed into a highly successful and sustainable philosophy and practice for positive change” Lewis *et.al*, (2008:34). Basically AI asks questions that support an organisation’s ability to anticipate, and intensify positive potential. It thus enhances inquiry by means of the positive question, which can involve many people in any organization under review. According to Watkins & Mohr (2001:23-24) AI seeks a

‘...constructive union between a whole and a massive entirety of what people talk about as past and present capabilities, achievements, assets, unexplored potentials, strengths, innovations, elevated thoughts, opportunities, benchmarks, highpoint moments, lived values, tradition, strategic competencies, stories, expressions of wisdom, insight into deeper corporate spirit or soul and visions of valued and possible futures’.

Watkins & Mohr (2001: 22) declare AI as a “history of major shift in the practice for organizational development and transformation”. According to these scholars it was never predicted that AI would become a popular approach in human systems theory. They say that AI developed beyond expectations. It became a practical approach for the study of whole-system change. However, it still has theory building (organisational learning) at its core. They further state that “AI allows organizations to build their own generative theory for enabling transformational shifts by learning from their own positively exceptional moments” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001: 22). They also challenge us to think of AI as “a philosophy and orientation to change that can basically reshape the practice of organizational learning, design and development” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:22). At times AI is applied effectively as a micro-tool e.g. in team building. A team can be engaged in a process of inquiry to strengthen its capability to function effectively.

The real impact is observed when it is used “as a comprehensive orientation to change complex systems” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:22).

AI is said to be a unique approach, which stimulates curiosity since the results it produces are unquestionably positive. AI has introduced a new perspective to research and all the mentioned attributes of AI created a lot of enthusiasm for the researcher. This eagerness or interest was based on the confidence that the researcher had gained through knowledge acquired on the subject (AI). The researcher could foresee how interesting the study would be even for participants when the approach is properly conducted. Even the naming of AI is significant, for instance the expression ‘appreciative’ is derived from the business idea which says whenever the value of something increases it ‘appreciates’ as referred to in Chapter 1. We have previously referred to inquiry as an intervention in Chapter 1; the same concept is also defined “as the process of seeking to understand through asking questions” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:24). Various authors have interesting contributions to make to the Appreciative Inquiry definition, approach and methodology, and there has been some level of consistency in their contributions. According to Sullivan (2004:3), there are several studies conducted that support an Appreciative Inquiry. For example the ‘placebo effect research’ shows that if patients believe that they are receiving helpful medication, although they are given a placebo, their conditions and symptoms still improve. Another research was the ‘Pygmalion Effect studies’. In this study, groups of students in one class were randomly selected and divided into two groups. However teachers were informed that one group was clever and diligent whilst the other was labelled as the poor performers. Surprisingly, those who were labelled poor performers confirmed and did badly within a single semester, and the other group, which was labelled successful, did well. These studies showed the effect and impacts that “another person’s image and expectations can have on individual’s performance” (Sullivan, 2004:3).

‘AI has been applied around the world, in a variety of types of organizations, community organizations, and even in small group work. AI is now an established approach to organizational development that has been used successfully with diversity programs, team building, strategic planning, work redesign, restructuring, and transforming organizational culture’ (Sullivan, 2004:2).

On the other hand, Bushe (2007:1) argues that AI is not just about the positive. He expands on this by saying that ‘the core of AI is generativity’. AI can be generative in different ways. “It is a quest for new ideas, images, theories, and models that liberate our collective aspiration, alter the social construction of reality, and in the process, make available decisions and actions that were not available or did not occur to us before” (Bushe, 2007:1). His search “suggests that when AI is transformational it has both these qualities: it leads to new ideas, and it leads people to choose new actions” Bushe (2007:1). He further gives an example of “transformational change and contrasts that with another AI intervention that was a dismal failure, making the point that simply getting people to tell their stories may not accomplish much”. Moreover, he says that “AI does not magically overcome poor sponsorship, poor communications, insensitive facilitation or unaddressed organizational politics” (Bushe, 2007:1). In other words he is saying that AI does not automatically and miraculously solve organisational problems. However, he still values AI and maintains that it is distinct from other approaches. He strongly believes that “AI’s distinctive competence is an intervention into the social construction of reality. If successful, the organisation’s culture changes and stays changed” (Bushe, 2007:1). AI is not a linear approach to change; meaning that it is never finished even upon completion of the 4D Cycle. In particular inquiry, story telling, and narrative analysis are used to make decisions and to consider, introduce and recognise organisation changes, retelling the stories behind systemic changes that have since become the way of life.

AI gives credits to the people within organisations. It believes that people are valueless to the organisations. Therefore, for any organisations’ change processes to be successful, employees must be valued as the best agents of change. Lewis *et al* (2008:37) believe that organisational shift, from being perceived as a solid machine to one of a shapeless organism, implies the loss of control from the top. Rather systems moderate and adapt themselves to their environment. Organisation’s themselves can be considered to be socially constructed images. They further say that organisations are the product of what we make and remake. Similarly, our perspective and understanding of what change means is now different. Every so often problems occur when organisations are perceived

as machines, and those problems call for a degree of organisational attention which makes it difficult for it to embrace change as a positive activity (Lewis *et al*, 2008:15). To illustrate this they use a car as an example they say if a car is working well, we never worry about maintaining it until something goes wrong, and then we start dealing with the problem. This is similarly, to the way managers perceive their organisations; they view change as a disruption to the normal smooth running of the organisation. Their theory is that when someone wants to introduce some innovative change, “they have to first create an awareness of the problem” (Lewis, 2008:18). According to Cooperrider, this pattern of thinking usually leads to this perception of seeing organisations as problems.

‘With the organization -as-machine metaphor, organizations can be seen to consist of control processes and performance processes. Taylor’s model brings forth the separate and complementary roles of managers and workers. It says managers provide the controlling mind while workers perform, and the understanding of the two roles is often left unchallenged during organizational change’ (Lewis *et al*, 2008:18).

An alternative approach to organisations as machines is that of perceiving organisations as living-human systems. This approach values people in relationship with each other. It says that organisations without people working together would not exist. The expression ‘living-human-systems’ brings three definite features of organisations into perspective: organisations are alive rather than inanimate as the machine metaphor might suggest. Secondly, they are entities that are made up of people and they are composed of related elements. In other words organisations are people within them; we simply can not separate organisations from people, if we want organisational change, people should change first. Carleton and Lineberry (2004:36) in support of organisations-as-living-human-systems through the use of a systemic approach “recognize organizations as systems in which many factors have a bearing on why people behave the way they do in any given situation on any given day”. The basic key to effective change is to discover all factors that are driving the system, and plan to change those factors needed to support and sustain the desired performance. Organisations are complex systems, and mergers involve joining common as well as different systems to strengthen merged existing and form new and effective systems. One element of a system does impact the whole system

because everything in the organisation is interconnected (Carleton and Lineberry, 2004:23). “Understanding systems and their consequences for management is a critical skill for managing an organization at any time, but it becomes particularly critical when attempting to institute a merger or acquisition” (*ibid*).

Like many other approaches, there are principles and core processes underlying Appreciative Inquiry. Like any home or organisation, if one lives in a home or is part of any organisation, that person is surely guided or bound by the principles and laws of the environment he/she lives within. The same is true of AI since it is said to be an improvisational approach and must therefore be guided by a series of questions like:

- What is the overall change agenda?
- What form of engagement will best suit your needs?
- What is the overall plan?
- What is to be done at each phase of the 4-D Cycle?

Watkins & Mohr (2001:36), with Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003) agree on the value of AI principles and they believe they are significant; however Whitney & Trosten-Bloom added three more principles to the existing five principles. The first five principles are the product of the early writing of Cooperrider & Srivastva (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:53). The above authors add that the principles come very handy when teaching or introducing AI. Principles also help to differentiate AI from other approaches. Principles further provide guidance when designing Appreciative Inquiry initiatives, and they help maintain AI integrity (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:53). “The practise of Appreciative Inquiry is informed by a series of eight principles-essential beliefs and values about human organising and change” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:51). Through AI principles one get to know and understands the ways in which positive change works. The Appreciative Inquiry principles are as follows:

- Social constructionist
- The principle of simultaneity

- Anticipatory principle
- The poetic principle
- Positive principle
- The Wholeness principle
- The Enactment principle
- The free choice principle

Five Core Processes of AI discussed by Watkins & Mohr (2001:39) are as follows:

- focus on ‘positive’ as a core value, and focus on inquiry,
- Inquire into stories of life-giving forces,
- Locate themes that appear in the stories and select topics from the themes for further inquiry,
- Create shared images for a preferred future,
- Find innovative ways to create that preferred future.

The Constructionist principle

This principle believes that worlds are socially constructed. It suggests that words, and language are powerful words with power to create, are not just the simple description of reality (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:53). They add that “the constructionist principle places human communication and language at the centre of human organising and change”. The constructionist principle views language as a means by which people generate knowledge and construct meaning. Organisations are also the product of language. “Organisational change occurs through language, story telling, and human communication” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:57).

The Principle of Simultaneity

Watkins & Mohr (2001:38) bring the second principle, which is a principle of simultaneity into perspective: this principle “recognizes that inquiry and change are not separate but are simultaneous”, they look at inquiry as an intervention. “The things people think and talk about, discover and learn, and that informs dialogue and inspires images of the future”. The simultaneity principle holds the idea that change occurs the moment we ask a question. In the words of therapist Marilee Goldberg, “the moment of questioning is also a moment of choice, which usually holds the greatest leverage for effective action and positive change” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:58). According to them that justifies that “inquiry and change are simultaneous and that inquiry is the intervention”, and perhaps the most effective means to transformation. The art of questioning is essential in AI. The first question we ask lays down the foundation of what we find out, and whatever we “discover creates the stories that lead to dialogue regarding the means by which the organization will build its future”(ibid).

The Anticipatory principle

This holds the idea that the shared thoughts and our discussion and dialogues about the future are the main significant resource for creating organisation change (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:38). Whitney & Trosten–Bloom (2003:54) believe that people shift towards their perceived future. This principle is more future orientated and quite significant when facilitating the dream phase, where discussions and thoughts of the perceived future are articulated.

The Poetic principle is the fourth principle as listed by Watkins & Mohr. The Poetic principle recognises human organisations as open books and never-ending sources of study and learning.

‘An organizations’ story is continually being co-authored by the people within the organization as well as those outside who interact with it. The organization’s past, present and future are endless sources of learning, inspiration or interpretation, just as good as poem is open to endless interpretation’ (2001:38).

There will always be changes in organisations, since organisations are made up of people and it is in nature of people to change. Therefore, people will always have opportunities to learn and give meaning to their organisations.

The Positive Principle

Watkins & Mohr (2001:38) believe that “drive for change requires large amounts of both positive effect and social bonding”, for example hope, inspiration, and happiness are vital. The use of positive questions is the recommended way with the Appreciative Inquiry approach. Such questions serve as a guide to group processes or organisation change attempts, and they lead to long-lasting and effective change. The research conducted by Isen 2000 (cited in Bushe, 2007:3) supports this principle, it “shows that people experiencing positive feelings are more flexible, creative, integrative, open to information and efficient in their thinking”. Organisations with positive people are likely to grow because people within the organisations invent new things. Therefore they are less likely to resist change. Furthermore Fredrickson (cited in Bushe 2007:3) clarifies this by developing a theory of positive emotions. Her studies revealed that the positive focus in AI does produce positive feelings, enhance the positive talk, and makes generative thinking and acting more likely. Whereas Bushe’s, 1995 argument tends to differ because he says “the positive in AI is linked not to feelings but to intent” (cited in Bushe 2007:3). However, “an inquiry into empowerment will have a completely different long-term, sustainable impact for positive action than will a study of low morale done with an idea that those conditions can be cured” (Watkins & Mohr, 2001:38). Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:68) say, in addition that the more we inquire, the more we bring positive core to life – eventually shifting people’s attention away from problems as the motivation for change, towards unfolding gifts, capabilities, potentials, dreams, and visions. They further argue that discovering the things that give life to an organisation is at the heart of Appreciative Inquiry practice. “Appreciative Inquiry is not a search for positive as opposed to negative, or good as opposed to bad”(Whitney & -Trosten Bloom, 2003:68). Instead it is an investigation of what encourages people to perform better and excel in

organisations, what excites, energises, and inspires employees, customers, suppliers and the organisations' community. It is highly possible that the change will be sustainable when people within the organisations are positive, happy and inspired.

The wholeness principle.

This principle guides participants to focus on higher ground rather than on the common ground. Focusing on higher ground means reaching consensus on the shared values and told stories, not focusing on differences.

‘The experience of wholeness and healing emerges not in the discovery of commonalities, but rather in understanding, accepting and enjoying differences. The sense of understanding the whole story-with all its differences and distinctions-brings with it a kind of contentment that does not require agreement. Thus, it creates a context in which people can safely focus on issues of higher purpose and greater good for the whole’ (Whitney & Trosten – Bloom, 2003:70).

They further state that the practice of AI brings a whole system together. It destroys obstacles through appreciative interviews, and lays a foundation for building respect, breaking stereotypes, and renewing relationships. When people meet others in the whole-system dialogue (interacting through conversations and group discussions), normally wrong assumptions fall away, they realise that other people are not really what they thought them to be, and respect grows for differences in background, practice and vision.

The Enactment Principle

According to this principle transformation occurs when we start living our future dreams in the present. It says that “positive change comes about as images and visions of a more desired future are enacted in the present” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:72). The “well-known expression of this idea comes from the Indian Leader Mahatma Gandhi’s assertion: ‘be the change you want to see’ ”. This means that the imaginary life that one wants to see in future, one has to live it now. He believed that a peaceful world in the future could only be achieved through just, peaceful action in the present. This hero was a living model, an enactment of his deepest beliefs and dreams for the future. The same with Dr Martin Luther King. He led American people towards greater justice, equality,

and respect for all, always emphasising the belief that the only way to change the world is to live the difference. Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:73) see the idea of enactment, as a simple yet a paradoxical/ironic practice, where one lives his/her dream today. Thus organisational change requires that change processes should model the desired future.

Free Choice principle.

This principle reveals that individuals and institutions best succeed when trusted with liberty to choose the nature and degree of their involvement. “Free choice builds enthusiasm and commitment to the organization and fosters high performance” (Whitney & Trosten–Bloom, 2003: 75). The free choice principle is evident in the field of change management. This field has evolved significantly over the 25 years of practicing. There has been a shift from top-down processes to total employee’s participation.

The above-mentioned principles and AI processes play a significant role in AI. These principles developed as successful practice, reveal a new and different understanding of how positive change works. They resulted from the “three generalized streams of thoughts which are social constructionism, image theory, and grounded research” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:52). “Images we hold of the future influence the decisions and actions we take in the present” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:52). According to grounded research every research is an intervention, on the other hand inquiry is also an intervention, therefore inquiry also informs research (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:52). Inquiry informs research in the sense that it produces the data required. Inquiry is an investigation process so as the research. Both the inquiry and research in general are conducted in order to bring about understanding of occurrences and to get solutions to problems. However, inquiry to the study at hand was not interventional, but served as a research tool. AI engages and connects participants to think of their organization’s area of focus, key to success as well as their strengths (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:52). They believe that “human organizing and change is a positive, socially interactive process of discovering and crafting life-affirming, guiding images of the future” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:51-52). The reason AI

principles are listed and described in this study is because they are useful when employing AI as a research approach.

2.4 Use of Appreciative Inquiry

Choosing to employ AI in any organisation is the fundamental key decision. “Beyond the decision to proceed with AI, organizations make a variety of big picture decisions that focus the initiative and the scope of the project, creating a strategy for the overall effort” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:104). AI is appropriate and helpful when designing initiatives; they direct one in inventing activities and processes that both meet the needs of ones organisation and maintain integrity of Appreciative Inquiry (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:51-52). Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:36) argue that AI is appropriate in the process of planning, decision making and innovations. It can be used when crafting inspiring and generative visions. AI as an intervention is effective in organisations where transformation take place. Therefore, it is suitable in mergers and when forming alliances. Mergers and alliances are critical processes because there are lots of changes and uncertainties involved. The reasons behind uncertainties is change of policies which brings about change in structures, alignments of duties, takeovers, geographical movements of employees and even salary adjustments, etc. Thus AI offers an appreciative approach which gives organisational members assurance and encouragement by motivating them to keep focus on the positive and move away from the perceived problems and challenges that accompany mergers and alliances.

2.5 Appreciative Inquiry vs. Traditional Approaches

According to Whitney & Trosten–Bloom (2003:147), AI differs from other approaches, because of their positive approach to situations. These interviews become a platform for persons to express themselves and to be listened to. When AI interviews are well-conducted “they ignite curiosity and the spirit of learning, and in so doing they enhance organisational knowledge and wisdom” (*ibid.*). With AI interviews, organisation’s positive core is enhanced by developing stories that show the outstanding force and

potential (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:147). With traditional approaches it is different; the purpose of conducting interviews is to uncover problems. There are various other practices in the organizational development stream which AI as an approach to organisational change values and utilises. This is a clear indication that the AI approach itself is open to learning, since it values and borrows from others' strengths. For example, it borrowed from organisational learning. In this field they "came to value the practice of dialogue for awakening the flow of collective meaning making and enhancing organizational learning" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:60). AI differs by giving a radically new direction in principles and practice to the field of research.

AI is founded on the theory of 'social constructionism' and is characterised by three features. Firstly it is fully affirmative, is inquiry-based and lastly it is improvisational (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:10). Being fully affirmative in its' approach, when doing organisational analysis, does not focus on failures, root causes of problems, gaps, threats and the like. Instead all its processes and activities focus on the organisation at its best-history, present and future prospect. "Problem analytic methodologies are based on deficit discourse, stories, understanding, and rich vocabulary of why things fail" (*ibid.*). Traditional approaches deny people opportunities of knowing and drawing upon their positive capabilities, because of their nature, which focuses on problems rather than possibilities. Cooperrider & Whitney cited in (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:11) agree that such an approach results in decreased organisational capacity. The second distinctive feature of AI is that it is inquiry-based. The art of questioning is in the heart of AI. It is able to create absolute positive questions and to interview numerous people with questions of organisational significance and vitality (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:12). Traditional researchers criticise Appreciative Inquiry approach for its focus on positive, neglecting real problems of organisations. In response Watkins & Mohr (2001:7) argue that AI does not deny or disregard problems, but it approaches them from the positive orientated angle. AI practitioners believe that "if you want to transform a situation, a relationship, an organization, or community, focusing on strengths is much more effective than focusing on problems"(Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:18). In other words AI does not allow problems to be used as the basis of analysis or action.

When problems arise during the study, they suggest that we listen, validate them as lived experiences and seek to reframe them. The problems reframing capacity is central to AI (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:18). The other reason why AI succeeds is because it respects people. It never treats people like machines. It also “let[s] leaders create natural human organizations – rich knowledge, strength-based, and adaptable learning organizations” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:19). Cooperrider & Srivastva (1987:2) presented “Appreciative Inquiry as a form of action-research (AR) that meets the criteria of science as spelled out in generative-theoretical terms”. AI is criticized for being an action-research that never embarks on the business of problem-solving as action research does. On the other hand AR is ‘diagnostic intervention approach’, which seeks to identify problems and assist in tackling those problems. AR is action orientated, and it neglects theory, as a result the power of theory is underestimated by many. Therefore, ‘AR is criticized for focusing on action at the expense of theory. Cooperrider & Srivastva further state that ‘theory is an enabling agent of social transformation’ (1987:2).

2.6 Appreciative Inquiry Research Process

Research is a way of trying to understand the world through asking questions and even through observations. Each stage of AI engages a combination of one-to-one interviews. Appreciative Inquiry could “show family resemblance to different research models” and it can be linked to different ideas across the variety of methodologies, since it does not belong to any specific school of thought (Reed,2007:45). Meaning it has some traits found in many other approaches but does not absolutely fit with them. For example many approaches use the technique of asking interviews during data gathering just like AI. Even some of the research processes are common, but AI still remain distinct because of its positive focus.AI is respected for its unique approach to development and it is this originality that makes AI a challenge to place in existing frameworks of research (Reed, 2007:46). Reed (2007:46) argues that “Using AI as a research method however may mean shifting the emphasis of thinking to processes of inquiry that is the way in which information is gathered and interpreted”. She further mentions that the main questions asked in OD may be ‘what effect did it have?’ whereas the question in AI would be ‘How

was it done?’ AI has to do with asking questions, “the co-evolutionary search for the best in people, their organisations, and the relevant world around them” (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999, cited in Reed, 2007:46).

AI rises above being the best OD approach suitable for taking organisations to the next levels. “It also has the potential to contribute to research-derived knowledge, in ways that stem from the observation that its methodology can serve to place other research findings and methodological debates in sharper focus” (Reed, 2007:47).

Appreciative interviews are primary elements of the AI process. That brings this discussion to the two key concepts which are: the appreciative perspective and the Appreciative Inquiry. The two concepts differ in the sense that appreciative perspective focuses on recognition, values and affirmation, whilst AI means a search, a willingness to discover and an openness to learn (Whitney & Trosten – Bloom, 2003:12). Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003:14) argue that the AI approach changes and improvises in various modes. Each one is a new creation, a trial that ‘brings out the best of human organizing’. “It starts with a comprehensive idea but no one knows the outcome. Many times inconceivable results are astonishing just like musical improvisation” (*ibid*). Their argument is that AI is not tightly structured but set on ethics and usually follows the structure of the 4-D cycle.

CHAPTER 3: Study Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The Appreciative Inquiry approach was chosen to explore the institutional merger impact on the Campbell Collections. This exploration was carried out in the context of a number of methodologies and approaches. There are numerous approaches that are suitable and employable in this study, more especially in the data collection processes a combination of one-on-one, group interviews and even the use of organisation's documents. The study acknowledged the merger as a complex transformation transit phase that the institutions of higher learning (e.g. UKZN) had to undergo, which directly and indirectly impacted on its departments, and other structures. Thus the study carried out at Campbell Collections was exploratory and evaluative to an extent.

The study had to be manageable, so the Campbell Collections was chosen on the basis of its size, and its potential to give the data required. Again Campbell Collections was advantageous to the researcher since she was familiar with its systems. It was possible for the researcher to conduct interviews, access documents relating to the organisation and organisation merger, and to let the participants talk openly during the interviews. This chapter reports on the research methodology, methods, and techniques used for this study.

How was Appreciative Inquiry used

The researcher engaged herself in the two phases as highlighted earlier which are discovery and dream phases. It is essential to note that AI was used in the study as a research tool through the application of the discovery and dream phases. The AI approach was employed as a tool to gather data not as an intervention to Campbell Collections. AI was used as a research tool in order to show that someone might use AI data produced in a small organization like Campbell Collections. Data was gathered in both stages which are discovery and dream through inquiring by asking questions. Reed argues that “using

AI as a research method, means shifting the emphasis of thinking to the processes of inquiry, which is the way in which information is gathered and interpreted” (2003:46).

3.2 Research Approach/ Paradigm

Using AI enables one to approach change from a holistic frame of reference, and a holistic approach is the core of systems thinking. Watkins & Mohr (2001:19), state that AI “can help you discover and tap rich, inspiring ‘high point’ accounts of personal or collective capacity and links this ‘positive core’ to any change agenda”. It can also play a vital role in enabling organisations to embrace new paradigms. In AI people are central to inquiry just like with interpretive approach which “give pride of place to people”. Again interpretive systems approach sees people as creatures that have free will, “rather than as being subject to forces beyond their control, and this implies they must be centrally involved in any attempts to change and improves the systems they create” (Jackson, 2000:211). Thus the above common characteristics fit AI within an interpretive paradigm which is embedded in a qualitative paradigm. In subjectivism emphasis is on personal interpretation, personal feelings (i.e. experience) or responses as opposed to external facts or evidence. Reed (2007:54) suggests that “the research framework that most closely reflects the central interest of AI is qualitative in the sense that they (sic) deal with naturally occurring phenomena rather than controlled experimentation, and they (sic) are more open-ended rather than structured, in data they (sic) collect”. This study is appreciative in nature, however, does borrow from qualitative research due to the shared characteristics.

3.3 Study Methodology

Barbie & Mouton (2001:75) say that research methodology “focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used”. Methodology concerns itself with looking at the principles behind the method to be used. Jackson (2000:11) says methodology “is, therefore a higher-order term than methods and indeed procedures, models, tools, and techniques, the use of all which can be facilitated, organized and reflected upon methodology”. Methodology could be defined as the study of methods /

techniques employed when conducting research. The researcher supports the definition forwarded by Jackson that methodology is a higher-order term; it's like an umbrella term of which all others fit. According to Dlundla (2006:58) any project has a defined goal/objective, and "that objective is pursued, guided by the researcher's paradigm and this informs a methodology, methods and techniques". Meaning that, the methodology of the study is chosen according to the needs of the study, and its appropriateness to the study purpose. The methodologies and methods in the study were employed in a manner that suits the 4 D-cycle with specific emphasis on the Discovery and Dream phases.

Definition of terms

The researcher believes it is important to set clear distinction between these concepts: Methodologies, methods, paradigms and approach. Methodology is clearly defined above. Methods are different techniques and processes applied when conducting the study, for example in the researcher's study there were AI individual interviews, focus groups, the use of Campbell Collections documents and literature reviews. However, the methods that were employed were aligned to the chosen study paradigm. Paradigm is a general perspective of the research. For example when designing the study, the researcher started by choosing the topic and the paradigm of study. The paradigm selected guided the researcher on the methods that are suitable for the study. The study conducted was based on the qualitative paradigm because its nature complements the AI approach. 'Approach' could be understood to be a methodology adopted to conduct the study. It involves the selection of questions, conceptual frameworks to be adopted and research methods that are suitable for the study.

3.3.1 Overview of Qualitative Approach

According to Neuman (1994:331) qualitative researchers argue that social context is fundamental for understanding the social world. He further elaborates on social context by saying that 'qualitative researchers carefully consider what came before or what surrounds the focus of the study'. Keeping research participants in their familiar surroundings enable them to engage openly and freely with the interviewer. This implies that qualitative social research depends mainly on the interpretive and critical approaches

to social science (a non-positivist perspective). In practice the researchers follow a non-linear and cyclical path when conducting research.

‘A cyclical research path makes successive passes through steps, sometimes moving backward and sideways before moving on. It is more of a spiral, moving slowly upward but not directly. With each cycle or repetition, a researcher collects new data and gains new insight’ (Neuman 1994:331).

Neuman (1994:331) states that the “qualitative research paradigm refers to the generic research approach in social research according to which research takes its departure point as the insider perspective on social action”. The common characteristic between qualitative research and Appreciative Inquiry is that both believe in the insider’s perspective. They believe that the researcher should be the instrument who engages with research participants in discussing a phenomenon. The qualitative approach emphasis is on methods of observation and analysis that remains connected to the research subject. Data analysis in qualitative research “is however a continuous process, it’s an ongoing, emerging, iterative or non-linear process” (Henning 2004:127). AI shares the same idea on data analysis, AI researchers believe it is important to analyse data while proceeding with data gathering, because it would be cumbersome. Qualitative data are coded and arranged into themes that indicate certain patterns which the researcher interprets and uses to make recommendations.

Morse & Richards (2006:6) strongly support the triangulation method. Triangulation could be generally defined as a combination of different research methods/approaches into a study. Neuman (1994:336) argue that qualitative researchers do not assume there is a single view of reality, but believe that different methods reveal different perspectives.

3.3.2 Overview of Appreciative Inquiry Approach

Appreciative inquiry invites a different way of thinking about change. “AI focuses on the language, discourse and stories within the organization and such change in style and focus can be unsettling for the organization by virtue of its unfamiliarity” (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:45). They further argue that change has become a sign for good management, sometimes without a proper plan of what it hopes to deliver. This becomes a huge

challenge for the organisation's subordinate members when even the top team is not clear of the goals of the change process (*ibid.*). According to Reed (2007:56), appreciative inquiry is one approach appropriate to organisational change, and it borrows from the strengths of many other practices in the field of organisational development. For example, AI learnt about the power of the self-organising processes from Harrison Owen, the creator of open space technology. AI is particular on how its summits and large group meetings were/are conducted. The practice for designing and facilitating large meetings was borrowed from the ground-breaking work of the mother of whole-scale change Kathleen Dannemiller and her colleagues at Dannemiller Tyson Associates. It also learnt of the concept of organisational learning from Peter Senge and his colleagues. AI values learning, it promotes learning through past and present experiences, dialogues and interactions. In AI work, the cycles of reflection and the activities go together; if we start appreciating our strengths, our forward movement gets affected positively. AI maintains a particular strong belief in people's perceptions and attitudes shaping their world.

Whilst honouring contributions made in the field of organisational development, as stated above, the researcher believes that AI brings new direction to the field in terms of principles and practice which are grounded in the theory and practice of social construction. Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:10) mention that AI differs in three ways: it is fully affirmative, it is inquiry based, and it is improvisational. Today's world problems require a different approach due to their peculiar nature. The world, which is made up of people, institutions, structures, etc., is becoming more and more complex by the day and this begs an approach that can accommodate holistic thinking in addressing events, patterns and the systemic structure of 'messy' situations.

Procedures undertaken by the study

This is what the researcher did in the discovery phase: She crafted questions as per AI requirements. The crafted questions were based on affirmative topics. The researcher facilitated the interview, asking questions using an interview schedule prepared prior to the interview. All the interviews questions (appended in the appendix) stem from the affirmative topics. The researcher introduced the questions first by reading affirmative

topics and then the opening statements to the research participants. By doing that the researcher was preparing participants for the study questions. That was the technique employed by the researcher in the discovery and dream phase data gathering process. In the focus group interview sessions, all participants had equal chances to participate. There were much live interactions during the interviews, and there were follow-ups and comments.

Appreciative Inquiry through discovery and dream phase

It been mentioned several times in the preceding chapters that only two out of the four Ds inform the study, that is the discovery and dream phases. It is mentioned that AI was used as a research tool through the application of the two above mentioned phases. The AI approach was employed as a tool to gather data not as an intervention for the Campbell Collections. Data was gathered in both the discovery and dream phases. The two phases opted for were engaged on the very same day of each interview session. However, discovery was the first phase engaged in. Questions were asked and when the researcher was satisfied about the data collected, she then lead participants to the dream phase where another kind of data came out. The study could not go further than the two phases due to time constraints as highlighted in the preceding chapters, and the fact that it is not an intervention but a research tool for data gathering. AI was used as a tool that framed or structured the study, which in turn yielded data that serve the intentions of AI, which is about finding out the organizations' areas of excellence. In general, the reason behind conducting any kind of research is to explore, evaluate and even to validate. All that is achieved through various forms of data gathering. Thus the two phases employed in the study were suitable for data gathering process. It appeared earlier in the study that each phase in AI can be a complete research, meaning that a researcher can choose to engage in one phase depending on what s/he wants to achieve and that one phase could make a full research. Therefore employing only two D's in the study is justifiable since it is only a research process not a complete intervention. The study size and time constraints were also the reasons that influenced the researcher's choice of the two phases.

From a theoretical point of view AI researchers should be able to obtain positive data (positive orientated) which is the expected type of data when doing AI studies using AI

techniques and both discovery and dream phases are sufficient to generate enough data. Applying the AI theoretical insights to the study gave a new research experience to the researcher, and the outcome of the interview process did produce positive data.

3.3.3 Case study methodology

A case study design was employed in this study. The post- merger Campbell Collections was the case to be studied. A case study is defined as “an intensive investigation of a single unit” Handel 1991, Runyan 1982, Yin 1994 (cited in Barbie & Mouton, 2001: 281). A case study meets the characteristics of a qualitative paradigm, and it “provides an explanation of the observed phenomena and demonstrates understanding of the subject of the investigation in its context and environment”, meaning that what happens needs to be understood in relation to where it happens (Barbie & Mouton, 2001: 281). They further claim that a case study is appropriate in different ways: it is useful when studying complexity, which is often an intrinsic part of the business and management research process; investigating issues that impact human beings and complex organisational processes requires a more holistic perspective which is accommodated in a case study design and these objectives can be achieved more effectively in this way than through other approaches. A case study methodology warns researchers carefully to consider what they treat as a case in the first instance (Reed, 2007:141). She believes that a case can be a setting, a practice, group of people or an experience. Barbie & Mouton (2001:279) adds that case study designs are more often than not used when a researcher is interested in a more clearly delineated entity (such as a specific household, family, institution or organisation). Therefore, the above stated characteristics of a case study design are enough justification for why was it employed in this study. However, the case study approach has been criticised for having no scientific value, since there is no pre-test possible, and few variables are measured post-test (Campbell & Stanley 1996 cited in Barbie & Mouton 2001:280). The criticism that a case study has no scientific value does not make the case study methodology any less important. All methodologies have strengths and weaknesses, even scientific ones do. The important thing about case studies is that their investigations are intensive even if they pertain to a single entity. For

example the researcher conducted an intensive study at Campbell Collections, so all the attention was on this one investigation and there were no interferences from other aspects. Therefore one can only conclude based on the study findings that other merged departments at UKZN had faced the similar situations, since there is no scientific evidence possible, and the study cannot be compared to any other study conducted at the same time. However, the study could be developed and also be used to evaluate other departments throughout UKZN and other merged places.

Snap shot of Campbell Collections

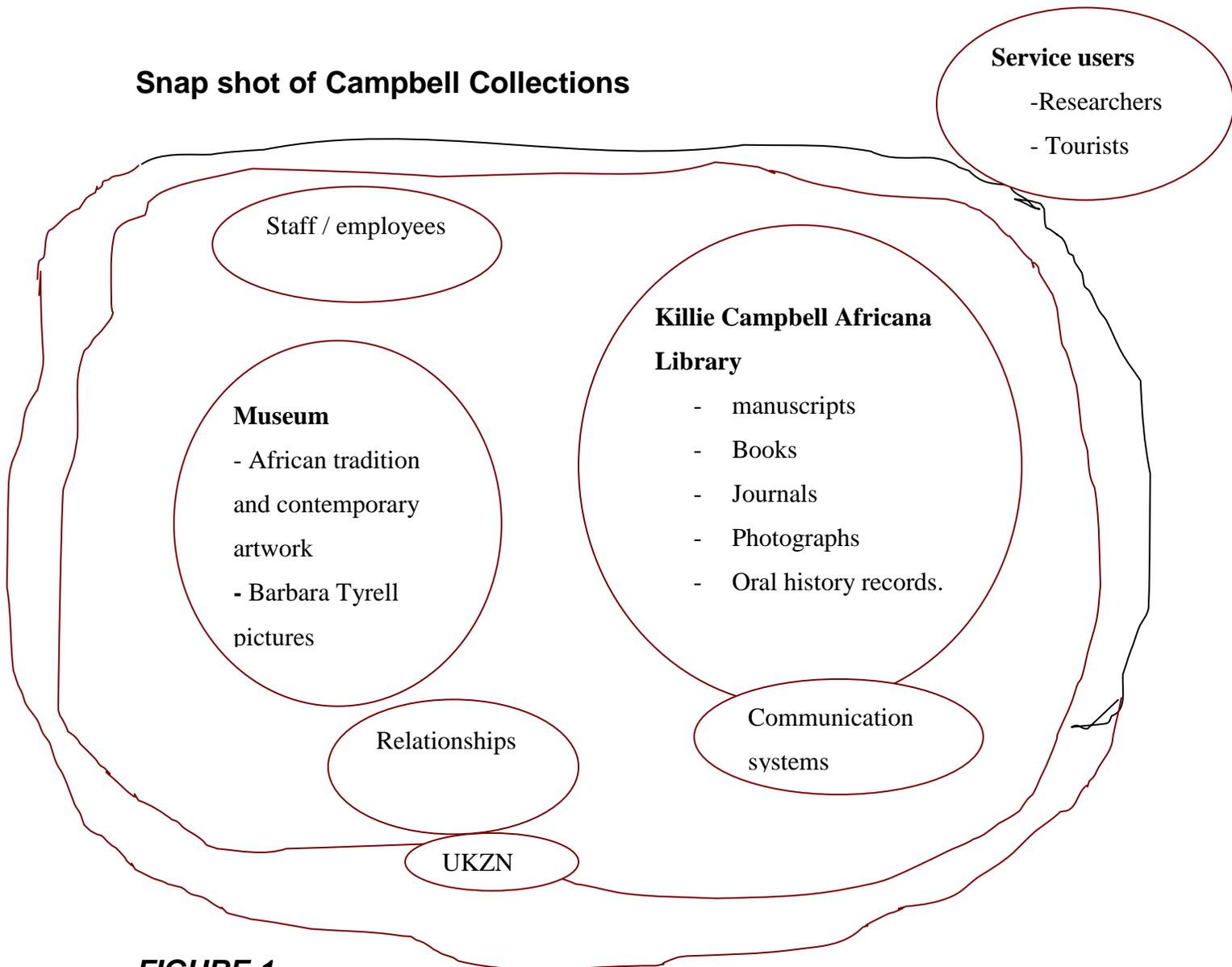


FIGURE 1

Source - Open University.

The above is a snapshot representing the systems of the Campbell Collections. The name of the organisation where the study is conducted is the Campbell Collections. The Killie Campbell Africana Library is one component of the Campbell Collections and the other component is the museum. Also the participants in the study were from both components. The researcher will refer to the study of the Campbell Collections so as to avoid excluding the museum part.

3.4 Research Design

Research design is a plan or a strategic framework for action for how one intends to carry out the study (Barbie & Mouton, 2001:74). This plan guides the “arrangements of conditions for data collection and analysis” (*ibid*). Therefore, this section focuses on research methods and techniques employed in this study.

3.4.1 Sampling

In general, sampling would refer to the researchers’ way of choosing study participants. Barbie & Mouton (2001:164) define sampling as “the process of selecting observations”. Neuman (1994:201) refers to “sampling, like random assignment, as a process of systematically selecting cases for inclusion in a research project”. Both author’s definitions complement each other. Neuman further mentions the two types of sampling, which are ‘probability, and non-probability sampling’. “Probability sampling is based on principles of randomness from probability theory”, whereas non-probability sampling is not based on those principles (Neuman, 1994:205). Random sampling simply means that subjects are selected not in a systematic way. There are no thoughtful decisions made on whom to participate in a study. However, in Appreciative Inquiry, the notion of sampling does not fit; and random selection of participants is not a characteristic of AI. Random selection refers to a particular, scientific procedure which allows the researcher to control the possibility of specific individuals being selected for the study, (Neuman, 1994:201). In AI the element of control is absent, and “strategic decisions are made about whom to invite to take part in a study, depending on experience, familiarity, and understanding the researcher thinks they might have”(Reed, 2006:71). Thus this comes closer to ideas of the qualitative research, where sampling is described as purposeful or theoretical. The notion of theoretical sampling fits better with the idea of AI as a strategic activity, in which ideas are developed as the study progresses (*ibid*).

Choosing study participants

It is a requirement that study participants are knowledgeable about the subject or issue under discussion. Secondly, they must share common interests. The researcher decided

who was to participate in the study. The decisions taken made it possible for all Campbell Collections' staff members to participate in the study. These participants had been with the organisation for quite a number of years in the pre- and post-merger eras. The participants were from both the Killie Campbell Africana Library (KCAL) and the museum component. Other participants who are no longer with the organisation, but who served in the pre- and post-merged organisation, and who left in the past few years, were also invited to participate. One researcher who is a PHD student was also invited to participate in the study. This particular participant was invited on the basis that he started visiting the library component whilst doing his honours degree. It was exciting to see almost all potential participants responding positively to the invitations, except for one.

Reed (2007:72) argues that “all forms of sampling have a tendency to avoid discussing the distinction between inviting participation and actually taking part”. She further challenges AI researchers not to allow negative feedback from targeted participants to hinder the study. Case study methodology espouses the concept of inclusivity which stresses the importance of identifying the dynamics, limitations of the case and the implications of setting limits for the ways that the case is defined and explored. Another model to add to the debate on inclusivity is that of critical theory, which argues that one purpose of research is to challenge accepted and taken-for-granted ideas. Following this, there is a strong argument that invitation to participate in an AI study should be made to people who have diverse positions and views, to increase opportunity to hear different voices and ideas (Reed, 2007:72). However, the extent of inclusivity may be decided by the researcher or whoever is initiating the research process.

We introduced, in chapter 1, the famous four D's in AI which are Discovery, Dream, Design and Destiny, and we elaborated a little on the Discovery and Dream phases. Each phase of AI can be a complete process; it can give complete data when properly implemented. Depending on what the AI researcher wants to achieve. Lewis *et al* (2008:48) talk about 5 Ds; they introduced a Defining phase, which they believe should be first. They argue that before the change process can begin, organisations need to define the focus of inquiry, or the type of change required. They also believe that AI as a

strategy “is well suited to emergent change, where the answer and the possible future state are unclear” (*ibid.*). Defining change is a key component of the process and could be seen as stage one of an assignment. Lewis *et al* (2008:48) propose six criteria in drafting the definition for change that the commissioning team may focus on:

- The process needs to allow the issues to unfold as the inquiry proceeds, so high-level objectives at this stage are better than goals set by the management;
- The team needs to retain an open mind about the actions to follow;
- The process must allow room for development and refinement;
- Outcomes need to be positively orientated not problem-based and
- All stakeholders need to be involved from across the system when defining an inquiry.

3.4.2. Discovery

The discovery phase is about discovering the organization’s strength and appreciating the best moments of the organization (Lewis *et al.* 2008:49). It is about searching and revealing the unique qualities of the organisation: its leadership, history, reasons for existing, or values, which have contributed to its life and success. This phase becomes an opportunity for members of the organisation to know the history of the organisation as a history of the positive possibilities rather than as a litany of problematic past events, crises and forgotten or irrelevant events. It is in this phase, where information/data is gathered through conducting Appreciative Inquiry interviews, that identification of common themes and stories emerges through “mapping the elements that emerged from the interview, and then communicating these stories and their meta-themes back to the wider group” Lewis *et al.*, (2008:49). They further say that planning the discovery phase can be short and this can be accomplished in a week or alternatively it can be done in a month. It can, however, also be done in a single day if all the key stakeholders can be brought together in a room. There are six key steps of discovery phase suggested:

- Agreeing the focus of inquiry, the one do the introduction to context, explain the reason for the meeting and the means to undertake interviews;
- Plan the interviews by preparing interview questions and writing them down;

- Collecting key stories discovered during the process that demonstrate organisation functioning at its best;
- Map the findings around themes, which may include resources, capabilities, relationships, partnerships and positive hopes and
- Identify factors that have sustained the organisation over time.

Lewis *et al.* (2008:50) argue that the above elements are not the only way to approach this, but they have worked well for them.

Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:50) give the eight broad activities involved in Discovery phase which are as follows: “Crafting of interview questions; Developing interview guide; Creating a plan for an interview; Communicate the inquiry strategy; Train interviewers; Disseminate stories and best practices; Make meaning and map the positive Core”.

3.4.3 Dream phase

This is the second phase as per the 4D Cycle, which is about revealing individuals’ thoughts and ideas for their future within the organisation as well as those of the organisation. The research evidence revealed that the persistent uses of positive language produces desired outcomes (Lewis *et al.* 2008:54). What comes out of one’s mouth is a reflection of the inner dialogue that one has with one’s heart and mind, and the positive or involuntary view that one holds of oneself in the world. It was mentioned earlier on that in all phases of AI interviews are fundamental. Therefore this phase frequently begins in the interview process. The dream phase is more future orientated, thus the use of imaginative questions inspires memory of forgotten hopes and dreams. In this phase people are encourage to talk about positive experiences and dreams. Appreciative Inquiry encouraged people to be positive about the future (Lewis *et al.* 2008:54). By nature people talk and exchange ideas and it is normal for them to do so. AI takes advantage of this. The Dream phase is grounded in the history of the organisation, rather than being unbounded thinking and this phase is very practical. This phase builds on the best aspects of the organisation found during discovery phase, and projects this into their wishes,

hopes and ambitions for the organisation's prospect (Lewis *et al.* 2008:55). The two above phases are closely linked to each other; they reconnect and are dependent on each other. Discovery to dream is the state where the discovery phase results are reconnected and the organisational future is discussed (*ibid.*). There are seven suggested steps involved in dream phase namely: "Reflecting on focal question; Engaging in dream dialogue; Clarifying collective dream; Creatively enacting the dream; Determine common themes; Create an organisational dream map and Documenting the dream" (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:188).

3.4.4 Design phase

Lewis *et al* (2008:58) say that, in support of this phase, people must agree on a common future dream and action. The Groups' team-spirit is key to this phase as with previous phases, "and then with engagement with the wider system overtime through mini-workshops or an online group"(*ibid.*). This phased approach is based on the four-day system-wide event. The one way to bring to life the design phase is through encouraging variety and diversity in applying the process (Lewis *et al.*, 2008:58). It is recommended that one makes the decisions on what, who, and how of Design at the beginning of Design phase. Again there are four steps that provide a framework for Design Phase. The first step is Identifying a significant social structural design, followed by Selecting appropriately planned design elements, Identify organisational design preferences, and Crafting provocative propositions (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:206). Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:207) say a social architecture "is a model of organising that implies a set of essential design elements". They add that "social structure might include any of the following design elements: vision, purpose, strategy, structure, leadership, decision-making, communication, systems, relationship, roles, knowledge management, policies, procedures, product and services". The final phase for AI is destiny.

3.4.5 Destiny phase

In this phase the challenge is on planning and organising action groups to take forward the activities that came out during the preceding stages (Lewis *et al*, 2008:60). This is the final stage of AI. However, as was mentioned earlier, Appreciative Inquiry does not end

upon completion of the 4-D Cycle. This phase is a celebration of new learning, and the beginning of a new shift. The final phase of the Appreciative Inquiry 4D-Cycle has three dimensions. The first dimension focus is on recognition and celebrating learning and transformation in the process. The first dimension supports the unplanned changes that are developing throughout the organisation. The second dimension “is the formation of cross-functional, cross-level projects and innovation teams”(ibid). The last one involves “systemic application of AI to program, processes, and systems throughout the entire organisation” (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:217). The destiny phase has step by step framework which is as follows: “Review, communicate and celebrate accomplishments, Generate a list of potential actions, Self-organise for inspired action projects, Support success of self organised projects, and Systemic application of Appreciative Inquiry”(Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003:219).

The Appreciative Inquiry approach is not a rigid approach; it is a flexible approach that suits various situations. Though there are steps forwarded for each phase, the reason behind it is to ensure that they are appropriately executed. AI processes are non linear but are cyclical. The above stages are so well organised, and it is important to implement them according to their sequence because others are prerequisite of others, though each phase is capable to be a complete research without engaging to other phases of the cycle. It was noted that in the Campbell Collections’ study only two phases were employed in the research process, due to time constraints and also the purpose of conducting the study was only research not as an intervention. However, the same research could be developed further to add value to Campbell Collections and the UKZN at large.

3.5 Methods of data collection / Research Techniques

Earlier on in this chapter study methodology and meta-methodology, was discussed and that brings us to research methods. Jackson (2000:11) says that “the terms method, methodology and meta-methodology are therefore, in a hierarchical relationship to one another”. Research methods include tools or processes and techniques used in collecting research data. The study was conducted using in-depth individual interviews with a guided questionnaire, a focus group interview, as well as the use of documents. All

techniques used for data collection were influenced by the AI processes (Discovery & Dream phases), even to the way the interviews questions were crafted.

Combining research techniques, methods and methodologies is called triangulation. The various techniques and methodologies used in the study were basically selected in order to achieve various aims throughout the process. However, various authors' definitions of triangulation seem to differ from one another or do not fully complement each other. For example, Patton (2002:47) says triangulation means the use of various methods or data, including combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study. Neuman (1994:151) explains triangulation from a social research perspective to mean "using different type of measures, or data collection techniques, in order to examine the same variable". Riley (1990:119) says that triangulation expresses the idea of collecting data from multiple sources in order to get similar stories. On the other hand, Morse & Richards (2002:6) argue that triangulation is using various research methods when re-doing the completed studies conducted on the same topic. Denzin's definition involves the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data (cited in Patton 2002:247). Denzin (1989:236) refers to triangulation as "a plan of action that combines methods and researchers in the same study to partially overcome the deficiencies that flow from one investigator or method". Even though the definitions are not compatible, the purpose of using triangulation is common. According to Patton (2002:248) and Neuman (1994:151) the purpose is to shed light on, confirm, verify and test for consistency, and eradicate all the short-falls that result from using a single method. "Triangulation is considered to be one of the best ways to enhance validity and reliability in qualitative research" (Barbie & Mouton, 2001:175). This study opted for a triangulation method, which, in this case, was the combination of Appreciating Inquiry approaches, and techniques of data collections with an aim of collecting reliable data that can be trusted. One-on-one interviews were scheduled to accommodate some target participants who are no longer with/working at Campbell Collections.

3.5.1 Appreciative Interviews

According to Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2003:147) “appreciative interviews are an essential success factor for any Appreciative process”. Appreciative interviews were also part of the discussion in chapter two, however it should be emphasised that such interviews capture the best in people and organisations. They also “ignite the spirit of learning and in so doing they enhance knowledge and wisdom”. AI interviews look for events and examples of things at their best and are founded on the theory of strength and life. Secondly, the relationship and connection between interviewer and interviewee is highly important, are developed through understanding, and the interviewee responses engender feelings to the one listening. Even AI questions are based on affirmative topics; therefore the notion of an insider perspective put the researcher at an advantage. The researcher crafted AI questions accordingly as per AI in the discovery phase.

Like many other methods, one-on-one interviews and group interviews have advantages as well as disadvantages. The group interviews had their own challenges. Barbie & Mouton, (2001:289) look at the qualitative interview as a dialogue in which the interviewer creates a general direction for the conversation. They also mention the value of using probes when interviewing. Probes are an effective means to obtain more in-depth answers without biasing later answers. The researcher developed a structure with the aim of establishing direction but allowing topics to emerge from participant’s responses. Qualitative research interviewing is much like a normal conversation, so that Barbie & Mouton find it necessary to remind the researcher that this is the interview and not a normal conversation.

3.5.2 One-on-one Interviews

Barbie & Mouton (2001:291) declared the basic individual interview to be one of the most frequently used methods of data collection within the qualitative approach and this is supported by the AI approach. This kind of interview is an open interview with a plan of inquiry with no specific pre-planned questions. An in-depth individual interview is defined as the process where the researcher is only interested in the process by which the content of the conversation has come into being (Barbie & Mouton, 2001:291). Indeed

the study's Discovery and Dream phases were successful through the use of one-on-one interview technique. For example, one-to-one interviews have the highest response rate and allow the researcher to ask complex questions. They give a researcher an opportunity to observe and take note of every element in the surroundings, even the non-verbal communication. This technique also permits conducting telephone interviews, and that advantage was taken and utilised in the study due to physical unavailability of some participants, whom the researcher thought would add value to the study. However there were challenges as well.

Challenges of one-on-one interviews

Bailey (1989:282) mentions the challenges encountered when using one-on-one interviews. The interviewee's ability of thinking might be affected by factors such as fatigue, stress, illness, etc. Due to the above factors respondent may not be at his / her best. Therefore, it may be necessary for the interviewer to phrase the same question differently for different respondents, or even to ask different questions. While this flexibility can be an advantage, it can be disadvantageous if it makes it difficult for the researcher to compare respondents' answers.

3.5.3 Focus groups

On the one hand focus group interviewing benefited the study, since it was an opportunity to study a large amount of interaction, and group discussions provided direct evidence of common and different opinions and experiences (as suggested by Barbie & Mouton, 2001:293). Whitney & Trosten-Bloom (2004:116-119) in support of group interviews, say it 'allows all group members to hear one another's ideas, get to know one another, and discover their group's positive core and best practices'. Well planned focus groups have the advantage of producing a good deal of data on a specific issue in a short period of time. In focus group interviewing discussions are moderated by the facilitator and according to the AI teachings participants should lead the process. Discussions that one has in the study are 'focused' in the sense that they concentrate on specific issues. The focus of the discussion is pre-determined and the discussion itself organized to

address certain aspects of that focus, in this context to uncover the best of the organization from the Appreciative Inquiry point of view.

Disadvantages of Focus groups

The process of getting people together is difficult, and time-consuming. The control by the facilitator is lower in focus groups than in individual interviews. Another challenge is that people might fear to express themselves and thus conform to other people's opinions. Confidentiality is another concern in focus groups. Group participants may fear that others will reveal outside the group what they said.

Interview process

An interview guide was prepared prior to the interview. The purpose of the interview guide was to guide/lead a researcher to obtain discovery data. There were questions asked during the interviews, both in individual as well as in group interviews that were created in line with AI teachings, which propose that they must be created out of affirmative topics. Whitney & Bloom (2004:148) mentioned that the Discovery phase revolves around appreciative interviews. They further say that it involves writing questions and interview guides; conducting interviews, disseminating stories, determining best practices, and making sense of what has been learnt. The researcher did not receive any training on conducting AI interviews as recommended by AI practitioners. However, engaging with AI literature played a significant role towards researcher's achievements. The commitment from research participants also helped a lot in carrying out of other stages of the research process. Key decisions in discovery are often made as the processes progresses. Some decisions, however, had to be made prior to the study, for example the decision on who should be invited to participate in the study and the time frame for the study. With the first group, getting people together was not difficult, but with the second group it took the researcher a month to get the participants together even though they were all working together. As a result the study progress was delayed. Focus groups were sometimes challenged by being interviewed in unnatural social settings (Barbie & Mouton, 2001:292).

There were two group interviews conducted in the study, each consisted of four staff members. For the group interviews, the data gathered was recorded both by hand as well as tape recorder. The first group interview conducted took two-and-a-half hours to complete, whereas the second group took just a little over an hour to complete. The three one-on-one Appreciative interviews conducted took an hour-and-a-half each to complete using face-to-face dialogue. Barbie & Mouton (2001:292) declare that “One-on-one interviews are generally conducted by the members of the organization’ which amounts to an insider perspective”. Locating themes that appear in the stories is one technique that AI prepared its researcher with. Watkins & Mohr (2001: 114 -116) emphasise the importance of looking for life-giving topics in the interview data and of expanding the positive discussion about these topics to people throughout the organisation. This helps the organisation because its future will be built on those themes and images.

3.6 Methods Analysis and Interpretation

Data was analysed thorough examination of information gathered and generated. The researcher planned to collect further data whilst doing the analysis. In Appreciative Inquiry, data analysis is understood as a process of making sense of issues prompted by questions and by the stories told. According to Reed (2007: 137), “the process of making sense of the information can be thought of as a way of sorting it so that it can be easily communicated”. The reason behind the processing of ‘raw’ data is so that it can be summarised and communicated, because by nature “raw data is lengthy and cumbersome”. The concept ‘raw data’ refers to data that is non-processed or not yet analysed. Thus data needs to be refined and simplified in order to make sense to the reader, otherwise everything would be there but make no sense. It would just be a record of things people said and of things observed. “Making sense of information then is a process of examining and organizing it so that it can be experienced and discussed by others” (Reed 2007:137). Savin-Baden (2004), (cited in Reed, 2007:138), argues that making sense of information goes past mechanistic breaking down of information to the creation of meaning. “The purpose of making sense of information in AI is to organize it

in ways that will help researchers understand what people feel they have achieved and how this might be helped to happen again” Reed (2007:139).

The interviews conducted were recorded on audio-cassettes, at the same time the researcher was taking notes, as a backup to the recordings. Immediately after the interviews all the cassettes were properly labelled and kept in a safe place waiting for transcriptions to be made. Riley (1990:25) argues that making a transcript is not an easy task. It requires a great deal of concentration, patience and a lot of time. She also emphasised the importance of writing the actual words spoken by the informants, however repetitive and ungrammatical (*ibid.*). It is also important to reference information as you go along and to add any background noises and note movements or facial expression if you can remember these. According to Riley, (1990:56) “Data collection and analysis should go hand in hand as a parallel task”. It is not advisable for a researcher to wait to obtain a complete data record before starting analysis. When doing analysis it is crucial to look for common points, looking for surprises. Concentrating on a single aspect of data and focusing on it may be very interesting and this may provide some thoughts for wider analysis. However, giving one aspect only detailed attention may confuse subsequent work on the rest of the material, in cases where one may have started with ‘atypical’ data (Riley, 1990:61).

Reed (2007:138) further says the process of making sense of this information is often challenging and unclear, “it is sometimes difficult to follow the steps that have been undertaken, and when the study comes to draw conclusions, it is difficult to decide whether they are justified or reasonable”. With 4-D Cycle it is useful to determine how making sense of the information at hand can fit in with the principles of AI. The links between the stages of AI and the questions asked should reveal how these play out in practice. In the case of the study conducted, the 4 – D cycle was considered important. There are aides proposed which might shape the sense-making stage of the AI research project. These aides are as per the 4-D and 4-I cycles. Some authors chose to name the cycle 4-I cycle not 4-D cycle like many other authors and the study researcher. It is essential to ensure that methods are dynamic and clear, so that “any contribution to

theory can be made from a sound and clear basis” (Reed, 2007:151). Transparency is fundamental to AI data analysis, meaning that the processes of analysis have to be explicit in accounts of the study, so the audience can decide for themselves if the conclusions drawn are justified or not (Reed, 2007:152).

CHAPTER 4: Data Analysis

4.1. Narrative Analysis of the study

Affirmative topic: Client service & Centre Utilisation

Response by participants

The stories shared by the participants show that Campbell Collections is popular and highly utilized by the academic and non-academic researchers both local and international. It appears that Campbell Collections is highly admired for its distinguished service delivery and its unique holdings. The resources in the Campbell Collections are very rare, and most of them are not available anywhere else. One participant mentioned how honoured Campbell Collection is to have excellent dedicated staff with a vested interest in the place and in its history. In the stories staff members also recognised the strength of the collections and the valuable resource that they represent. Staff has different areas of expertise. For instance, there are oral historians with strong history background, there are also researchers working on different projects, including indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), etc. Generally participants saw Campbell Collection as an organisation with great value, major strengths and a potential to expand. Another participant raised the issue of leadership, that at some point in time when they (Campbell Collections staff) were managed by the research department, they were doing so well. According to her the Director at a particular time, was very democratic in terms of his leadership style and empowering at the same time. She further mentioned that they had opportunities for staff development, as she was granted the opportunity to go to the United States, to Chicago to advance her exhibition knowledge. The leadership at the time also allowed them to initiate and to be involved in projects, and such experiences were very fulfilling.

A third of the research participants (two out of six) have served the same employer, the same department for a number of years, one for 30 years and the other for 16 years. The rest of the participants of the same group, have been with the Campbell in the pre- and post-merger eras. Considering the long service for the two participants, they were asked

about the things that kept them motivated all these years. It appeared that both then and now they are motivated by the nature of jobs they do. The researchers and the tourists that come to utilize the place, the collections they keep, the ability to deliver to service users, the good staff working relationships, and the knowledge that they are working with a unique collection are the best motivators. Another participant from another group interviewed added that she is even motivated by Killie Campbell herself, because of her resourcefulness, attitude and respect for all people across racial categories. The unique collection they talked about consists of photographs, journals, manuscript, public works, newspapers, maps, art work, and even furniture. One participant said that the Campbell Collection is recognised by academics as the 'Jewel' of the university. Even the people researching their genealogies come to Campbell Collections for help. Those are some of the things contributing to the centre's uniqueness. The other issue mentioned was the issue of technology. Most participants said that there has been so much appreciation received with regards to Campbell's new website. The comments were from local persons and even from abroad, and that on its own has opened the lines for so many queries. As a result there are many queries flooding in, because people can access the site and see what the holdings are even from abroad. The study also revealed that in the past, long before the merger, the senior librarian and the senior museum officer were active, going to radio stations inviting people to come to visit the place. Another participant emphasised that carrying brochures when attending meetings with associates had become a great platform for publicity.

Affirmative topic: Merger / change impact & adaptability

Participants' responses

It appeared that only a few participants learnt some things as a result of the merger, which they hope to use in their future development. Data gathered revealed more challenges than positive impact that the merger had on the Campbell Collections. One participant mentioned that Campbell Collections and similar components were all renamed to be Special Collections. She further said that the naming was appropriate and it was a good initiative, however, there was nothing implemented thereafter. The good about the idea of Special Collections, was that it gave staff from various components of

the Special Collections an opportunity to know each other. Meetings were held with an aim of strengthening relationships, sharing ideas, and for networking. The first meeting was held at Campbell Collections in 2006, two meetings took place in 2007 and then that was it, no further developments after that. The participants stated that besides the above-mentioned positive merger impact, there was much more impact in terms of policy changes, most of which were disadvantageous to the place. For example a change in leadership as part of the policy changes. They strongly feel that the new leadership does not have a vested interest in the centre. Research participants also told the stories of their involvements with other disciplines and institutions as a result of organisational (UKZN) growth, connecting those stories to what they have or do in Campbell Collections. They also remarked that formally linking the centre to other bodies such as the Heritage and Tourism department, Architecture, schools teachers, mathematics and even the biology departments could promote an interest in looking into the historical aspect of their disciplines and this in turn could widen an appreciation of our cultural heritage.

The whole process of data generation was conducted as per the AI approach. The Appreciative Inquiry practice perspective on the Discovery phase is that it “generates new stories in the system” (Lewis, *et al.* 2008:98). Therefore, the data gathered was achieved through stories told in response to questions asked. The main purpose of this phase was to explore, and uncover the exceptional qualities of the Campbell Collection. Lewis *et al.* (2008:98) further state that stories are strong foundations for change in an organisation. The last part of the Appreciative Inquiry cycle in this particular study was a Dream phase. That is where participants articulated their dreams, hopes and aspirations concerning the Campbell Collections. Again this phase is grounded in the organisation’s history, rather than in unbounded thinking (Lewis *et al.* 2008:55). The needs identified in the Dreaming phase were as follows:

- They wish to attract back people who had the Campbell Collection’s interests at heart and who had a commitment to the place (in terms of staffing).
- The Campbell Collection’s vision to be created by people with vested interest in the place.

- It is their desire that the University's top management reconsider the decision taken to put Campbell Collections under the library (which was detrimental to the centre), and to put it back to research since the library rules and policies do not suite the Campbell Collections.
- Leadership of the Campbell Collections should become more democratic in working with people at all levels. They must employ a more democratic structure, and must all be in the same team. There is an urgent need to come up with a suitable management style.
- There should be more information written on and published about the Killie Campbell Africana Library and the museum (Campbell Collections).
- Employees must commit themselves more to working together
- There must be an organisation and staff audit review.
- The links that the Campbell Collection has with other learning institutions, departments, and associations should be formalised.
- Campbell Collections needs to be well known and so advertising it must be formalised
- There should be a restructuring of the special collections through staff consultation as soon as possible.
- There should be an extended space for the museum storage to keep exhibitions of artworks and photographs so as to attract people.
- The university should provide more extensive funding (with a more proactive funding structure).
- The participants wish to have an advisory board or a board of directors that will protect their interests.

The last question was crafted to allow participants to articulate their ambitions, desires, recommendations and even their dissatisfactions. Since the nature of the study is appreciative, there is no room for dissatisfactions and problems. Therefore, responses highlighting challenges had to be reframed according to AI and they can be helpful if the

study is taken further to the next phase according to the 4-D Cycle which is the design phase. The dream phase created an environment that was conducive enough for participants to speak their hearts out. The researcher conducted interviews in the Discovery and Dream phases. It appeared in the previous chapter that interviews are essential in all AI phases, the questions asked inspired participants to imagine, revive forgotten hopes and dreams. The discoveries from the preceding phase became the foundation of the dream phase. The researcher achieved what was intended for the study through abiding to AI teachings, for instance following steps and processes highlighted in chapter 3. Participants utilised the platform to express their inner dialogues, and they took the study very serious with the hope that if it is taken further and developed as the intervention at Campbell Collections so much value will be added to the centre.

4.1.1 Themes and Patterns

The themes generated in the analysis phase are diagrammatically represented in the figure number 3 appended. The purpose of using this model was to illustrate the systems present at Campbell Collections, show the complexity of the problem, and the themes mapped out by the study participants. “Viewing organizations as systems clearly provides a much richer picture of organizations than that supplied by traditional and human relations models” (Jackson, 2000:125). The Systems approach looks at all the subsystems, their inter-relationships, and the interactions between subsystems and the environment. Themes and patterns were mapped out by researcher assisted by the research participants.

Themes and patterns identified

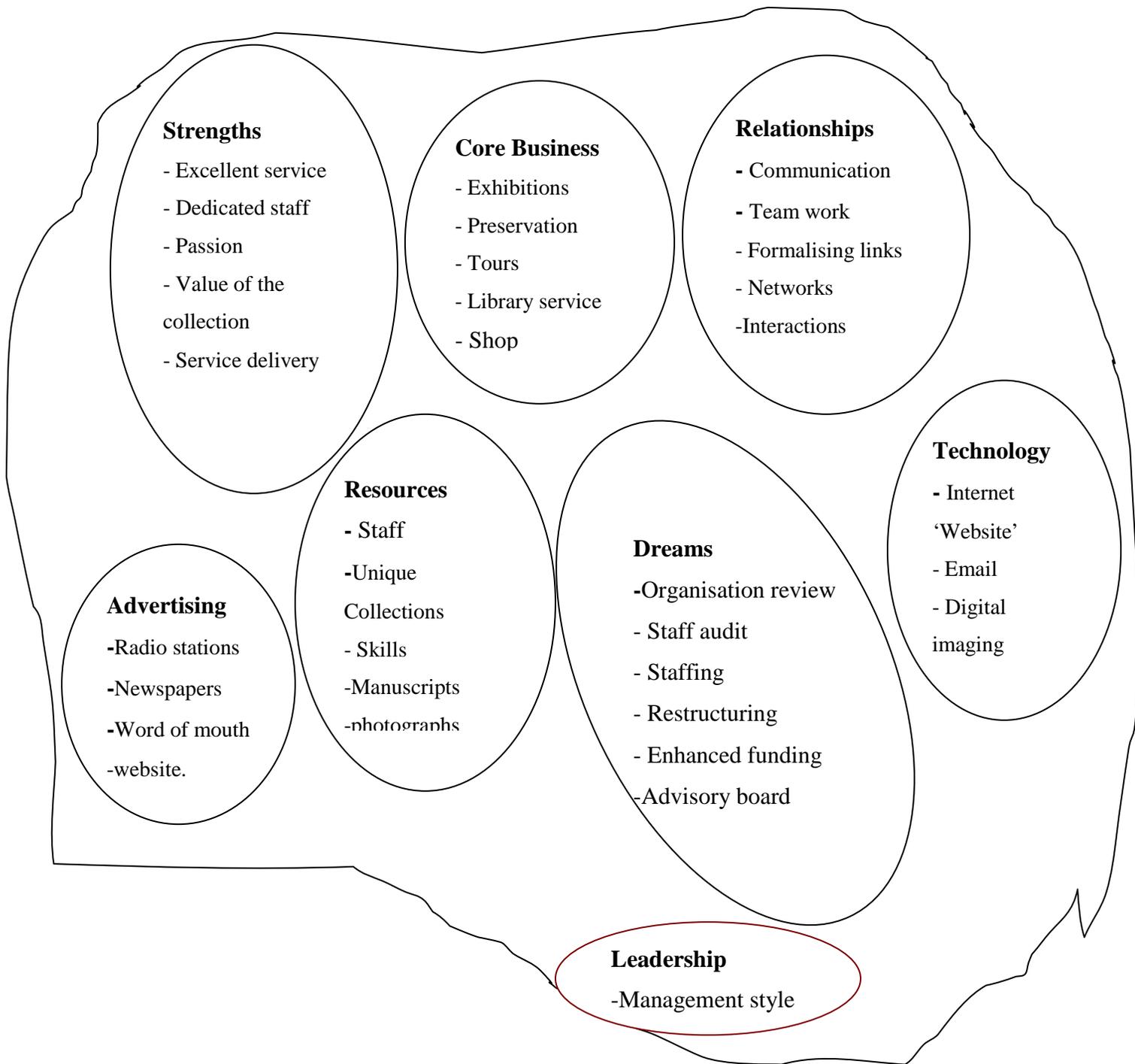


FIGURE NO.3

4.1.2. Reflection

The researcher's experience of participating in the study was worthwhile. Various authors mention the significance of context, and the functions when collecting data. The researcher found the context in which the data was collected added value to the data. For example the two group interviews were conducted in the same place (staff tea room), in a relaxed non-threatening setting that they are familiar with. Participants were freely interacting as if they were having tea or lunch, however the researcher kept channelling them to respond to questions asked. The process was cyclical, when people happen to remember something that has already been discussed, they were still at liberty to share that experience with the group. People at times would laugh, argue and most of the times were supportive of each other. Even with one-on-one interviews the setting played a major role. The researcher's familiarity with the participants also made it easier for them.

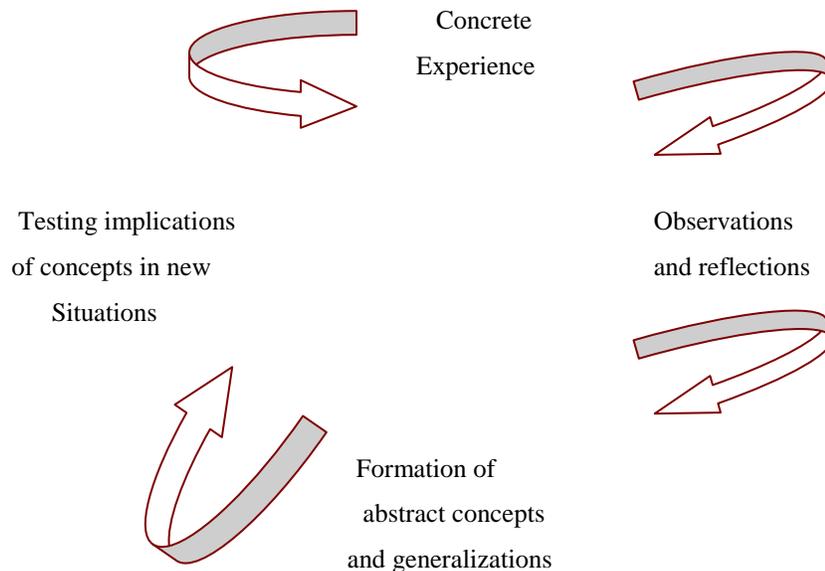


FIGURE NO. 4 - Kolb's experiential learning model

The researcher's understanding of learning was also influenced by the above model. David Kolb's (1984) cited in Keynes (1999:6) says that "learning from experience is not always simple, sometimes we do not learn from our experiences". However, learning remains a core process of human development from a simple readjustment to major

change. The learning was achieved through experience with the study as well as through the observations throughout the process.

The themes generated speak volumes for what the Campbell Collection is, and how valuable it is to the staff and service users. They speak volumes in the sense that they give the core business of the place studied, its strengths and even its future aspiration and dream. It was very interesting to see the consistency in data collected, in both group interviews and one-on-one interviews. There were more similarities than differences. The pattern followed by participant responses was cumulative and supporting what was shared by the other persons. It was also interesting to see other people nodding their heads while other persons shared their story. Nodding meant that they were in agreement with the speaker.

4.2 Personal Learning & Interpretation

The researcher learnt that it is possible to use the Appreciative Inquiry approach when dealing with people or organisations that understand their core business. She also learnt the power of combining methods and approaches when conducting the study. There is so much knowledge that was shared through the formalised interactions. The researcher feels that communication is a powerful tool that can help organisations to succeed in processing change and in sustaining it.

Appreciative Inquiry strengths compared to conventional approaches

Appreciative Inquiry research techniques and methods are similar to most conventional approaches. For example they have individual face-to-face, telephonic, focus groups interviews just like many conventional methods. However, they still differ from them. Their focus and framing is what make AI to differ significantly. AI focal point and framing through discovery and dream phases yield data that differs from conventional methods. AI interests are on gathering positive data whereas traditional methods focal point is on uncovering problems. Therefore the researcher simply approached the case studied (Campbell Collections) from a different angle than what a conventional researcher would do. Campbell Collections is a general case which could be studied by

any researcher but the results produced using conventional approach which is deficit – based will differ from the data collected through using AI.

4.2.1 Relationships

Relationships are vital in all structures, and they are the nucleus of every organisation. The relationship category included the working together of staff of Campbell Collections in terms of team work, communication and interpersonal relationships amongst staff and researchers (service users). The observation process revealed that there is a good working relationship amongst the employees, and the communication systems amongst staff and service users are viable. However, the relationship between the organisation and the University's top management is not satisfactory, since there has not been any monitoring and evaluation of the post-merger Campbell Collections.

Indeed the merger did have an impact on the Campbell Collections. It affected the centre in ways that were both positive and negative. Campbell Collections benefited in terms of getting new networks, and acknowledgement of its strengths. However, the good initiative proposed by the merger committee concerning Special Collections was never implemented and the new systems of management were detrimental to the centre.

4.2.2 Strengths

The study revealed that the post-merger Campbell Collections unit is still powerful, it has great strength. There is an amazing passion and dedication observed that the staff has for the centre. They are very committed to their work, and they communicated the dreams they have for their organisation. The other motivating factor observed in the study was the nature of holdings/resources that the organisation has; it is so rare and valuable to have such a wealth of specialised holdings. Relationships amongst staff and researchers seem vital for the organisation's wellbeing.

4.2.3 Core Business

The study revealed that Campbell Collections is very rich in terms of its holdings; its collections are very rare. It has a strong collection of traditional African exhibits. It has a

proud record of preservation, a fine library, a shop, various specialist collections, manuscripts, photographs, old maps, etc. The Campbell Collection is well known for its excellence in service delivery. There is a huge potential to expand, which was revealed in the study.

4.2.4 Issues that emerged

Other issues that emerged from the study were issues of leadership/management style and of decision making. Even though the participants were appreciative of Campbell Collections, they clearly had issues with the leadership of the centre and with the post-merger reporting systems. The observation shows the need for a new leadership with a new management style. Currently Campbell Collections at the University level is led by librarians who fail to recognise Campbell Collections as a museum and a research centre.

The current leadership do not show any interest in the centre, the decisions that they take make Campbell staff think that it is because they do not want to acknowledge the value of Campbell Collections. As a result it is difficult for them to see how disadvantageous their decisions are to the place. The value of Campbell Collections does not seem to be alive in the current leadership. The other communicated need was for a staff audit and an organisation review. Basically, it was felt that there had been inappropriate decisions made regarding the post-merger Campbell Collections.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Conclusion

This is a concluding chapter, which hopes to give a summary of all the preceding chapters and highlight the challenges and limitations of the study. There will also be recommendations forwarded based on the 4-D Cycle.

The title of the study is *An Appreciative Inquiry approach into the post-merger Campbell Collections - University of KwaZulu-Natal*. The theoretical framework of the study is Appreciative Inquiry (AI). AI “is a method of changing social systems, in an attempt to generate a collective image of a new and better future by exploring the best of what is and has been”(Bushe, 1995:2). Systems thinking tools were incorporated into the study because it is suitable for exploring complex situations. It involves an holistic approach that looks at the behaviour of wholes, and many inter-connections between the components, using a variety of methods (Keynes, 199:24).

AI helped the researcher frame the study according to its objectives. AI can generate positive results when it is properly and carefully used as the research tool. It could also be the best intervention for all kinds of organizations (big and small) and even for individuals because it has no boundaries; it is applicable to different nature of change that is from individual’s level to bigger units. The data generated showed a great potential for AI as a research tool for change if organizations are in need for change. AI literature and research experience, from planning to interviews, provided the researcher with new research perspectives which are positive orientated. For instance the researcher was familiar with the problem-based research she never anticipated that there could be any other viewpoint that could be employed in research other conducting research using traditional methods. It is amazing to see how much impact framing the study according to AI objectives can have in the study findings.

The intention of the study, which is tapping the best of Campbell Collections was achieved. Positive data was generated through discovery and dream phases. The data collected would not have been the same if it was not as per AI framing. The research process became an exciting exercise for the participants and the researcher, and the participants became more vocal as the discussions proceeded. The whole study process was a learning curve for all participants. Participants were amused to realize their strengths and potential that Campbell Collections have. They were also surprised to realize that there are positive effects that merger had at Campbell Collections since the negatives outweighed the positives in their perception. The negative impacts that resulted from merger had overshadowed the good. Thus AI became a useful research tool that challenged and enabled them to think of the positives. Campbell Collections is so valuable, and has so much potential, according to findings. Therefore AI remains the good research tool for data gathering, and indeed can be the best intervention suitable for various structures and institutions. Having got data from AI framework is not enough; the next cycle could work as an intervention.

The study objective was to explore and enhance the positives, strengths and the value of the post-merger Campbell Collections. The strengths, best attributes, and the value of Campbell Collections were revealed. All was achieved through appreciative interviews. Below is the summary of the Campbell Collections discoveries. Campbell Collections has a unique collection of photographs, journals, manuscripts, public works (e.g. Architectural buildings), newspapers, maps, art works, and even furniture. This research centre is highly utilised by the academic and non-academic researchers, both local and international. The Campbell Collections is respected for its distinguished service delivery compared to other institutions and libraries offering a similar service. The evidence to the mentioned discoveries is documented in departmental reports, statistical reports, some evidence is found in collection itself and the rest could be from the word of mouth. Campbell Collections has strong human resources which are its employees, who have a vested interest in the place and in its history. The place is of great value, having many strengths and a potential to expand. The former leadership was very democratic and empowering in pre-merger times. The other strength of Campbell Collections is that

people love their job and are motivated by the nature of jobs they do, however monetary satisfaction is a challenge. Lastly Campbell Collections has an excellent website, which is one means of attracting more service users.

The data gathered during the dream phase show the detriments that came with the merger. Even though the focus was not on problems, but people did get carried away to talk about their personal and organizational problems and resentments towards the merger. However the researcher learnt that even though it is an AI study, she should not shut them out but must be strategic in not allowing them to dwell on such resentments because it will create a negative culture that will destroy the study intentions. The study at Campbell Collections did reveal that there is still a lot of resentment towards the merger, but the data that emerged suggests that an AI intervention could be of immense benefit to strengthening the positives that do exist. The intentions of AI have been declared that it is about finding out the organizations' areas of excellence. For instance, the data gathered in the case studied could come handy for future AI intervention to strengthen the areas of excellence that were found and to improve on areas of weakness

It was important that the researcher relate the study to the merger because it is not just an absolute Appreciative Inquiry of Campbell Collections, but it is in relation to the effects of the merger. In the broader view the main purpose of the merger was to do away with apartheid differences between previously advantaged and disadvantaged institutions, and it was also aimed at promoting staff equity.

The study results show that the merger had both a positive and a negative impact on the Campbell Collections. However, the UKZN merger has been declared by Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (2008:8) to be one of the successful mergers, despite the outstanding challenges. Whether one is pleased or not with the merger, one cannot ultimately deny its success, because at present there is no University of Natal or Durban Westville anymore. In other words in a broader perspective the UKZN merger was successful, however there are challenges that remain. The consolation is that UKZN is now the Premier University of African Scholarship that is recognised globally. However,

the researcher cannot firmly state if the vision is equal to reality. That is a huge achievement that UKZN merger did not add to the merger failure statistics of the country. An AI intervention at the Campbell Collections can be used as a case study for wider university. Based on literature and data gathered, there are many positives to work with. Data reveals a need for strengthening the merger. An AI intervention is healthy for the organizations like Campbell Collections given the data that emerged in dream phase.

5.2 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to the Campbell Collections; therefore, the information generated is applicable to that centre. However, the same research can be studied further to evaluate the entire post-merger system of the University. The second challenge was the nature of inquiry. AI was a new concept to all research participants. As a result, it took longer than expected, because there had to be a paradigm shift from the traditional way of conducting research. Participants still wanted to voice their resentment regarding the merger, and to convey their problems and dissatisfactions.

5.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that the nature of inquiry be encouraged in academic institutions and that there should be more papers published on Appreciative Inquiry research, which will add to the body of knowledge, especially in the South African context. Indeed according to findings of the study as narrated in chapter 4, it could be claimed that the process of discovering information and the dreaming phase were very fruitful and inspiring to participants and to the researcher. However, it is also recommended that the University of KwaZulu-Natal management looks at the case studied and builds on it to evaluate the merger process and improve aspects where the system has been shown to be deficient. It is also recommended that future researchers complete all the 4/5 D cycle phases for more extensive research. Hopefully that would yield more valuable results.

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APPENDIX

Modified Appreciative Inquiry Cycle Questionnaires

Topics covered in the Discovery and Dream phases were as follows:

- ❖ Client service;
- ❖ Merger/change impact & adaptability and
- ❖ Centre utilization.

Affirmative Topic: Client service

- ❖ Universities and other institutions of higher learning are the best sources of knowledge. The kind of services they deliver/offer to the community at large play a significant role in the enrolment. One remarkable thing in all organisations which attracts people with interest in the place is the manner in which they are treated / serviced when they require any kind of information. How do you rate the client service of the unit?

- ❖ Describe the time when you attracted more researchers and visitors to the library and museum? What was the high point of that experience? What was your contribution?

- ❖ What resources does Killie Campbell have that would benefit the university community at large? How do you ensure that you maintain the unique status as a research library? What keeps you motivated in your work?

Affirmative Topic: Merger / change impact & adaptability

- ❖ The merger of the former University of Natal & Durban Westville resulted in some positive influences on the new institution. For example, the merger gave us the opportunity to access knowledge from places we never knew existed, like Killie Campbell. What are the things that the merger positively impacted on the Killie Campbell? What are the best impacts in terms of value as a centre? How best can Killie Campbell strengthen the relationship it has/should be having with

other libraries and museums within the University of KwaZulu-Natal? What are effective means of accepting and adapting to change?

- ❖ A merger could be understood as a shape of change or organisational development. On the other hand change could be thought of as a platform for new learning. There is some good that unfolds in organisations and individuals as change occurs. Change forces us to acknowledge the best we had before change took place; we get to know the strengths of our organisations, employees, even our potential. How best can we learn from the merger process?

Affirmative topic: Centre Utilization

Killie Campbell library is famous with international visitors and researchers, local historians and others from the surroundings. They value its holdings and the beautiful place where it is situated. What factors contributed to the value of Killie Campbell? How best can you market it to the local people, and other university staff and students from other disciplines other than history students – mention three things?

An Appreciative Inquiry of the post-merger Campbell Collections was conducted. There was an interview guide prepared and used for the information generating process. The analysis was based on the data gathered from the two groups interviewed, and three one-on-one interviews. The questions used in the study were crafted as per AI recommendation of affirmative topic, they are as follows:

Rich picture: Represent the complexity of the systems merged

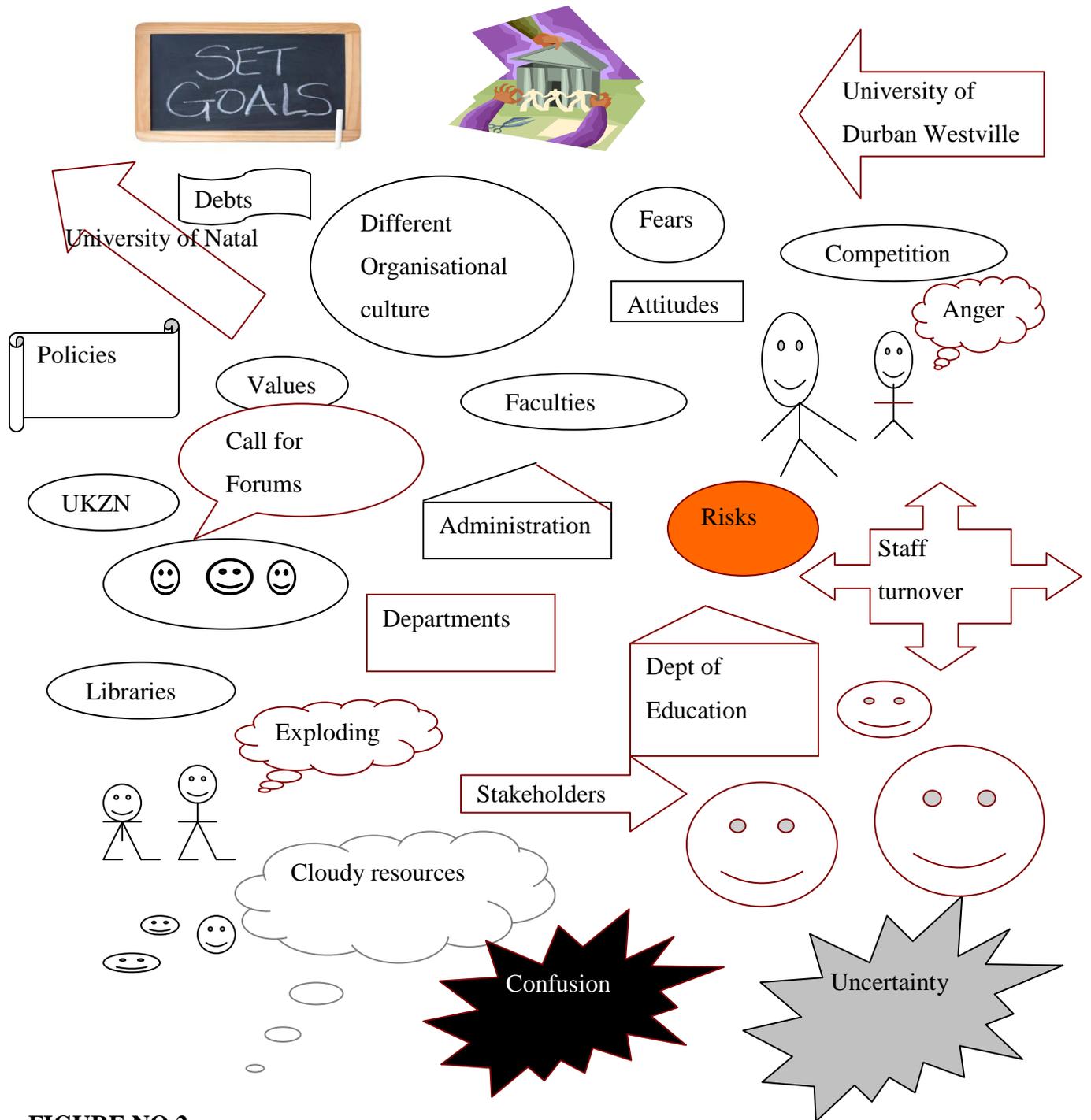


FIGURE NO.2