THE TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME
IN THE CENTRAL REGION
OF THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

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ABSTRACT

The problem which led to this study was the restructuring of teacher education. There was a need to evaluate the existing teacher education programmes with the aim of developing and enriching them. This study aims at establishing how effective the school-based student teaching programme in colleges of education in the Eastern Cape is, with regard to the organisation, implementation, learning areas and duration of the programme.

It appeared from the literature that the problems experienced with student teaching in general relate to quality, supervision, evaluation and the curriculum. These areas were included in a questionnaire which was used during the study. A survey was conducted among lecturers, student teachers and school teachers in order to gain a broader understanding of the programme. The empirical research revealed that the problems experienced by the target population in these colleges are related to those experienced in other countries.

The results of the survey have implications for the three colleges, the schools where student teachers do their teaching practice and teacher education in general. These implications are discussed and some recommendations for further development of the programmes are made

OPSOMMING

Die probleem wat aanleiding gegee het tot hierdie studie was die herstrukturering van onderwyseropleiding. Die behoefte het ontstaan om die bestaande onderwys- opleidingsprogramme te evalueer met die doel om hulle te ontwikkel en te verryk. Met hierdie studie word beoog om vas te stel hoe effektief die skoolgebaseerde student- onderwyser-opleidingsprogram in onderwyskolleges in die Oos-Kaap is, met betrekking tot hul organisasie, implementering, leerareas en die duur van die programme.

Uit die literatuurstudie het dit geblyk dat die probleme wat algemeen ondervind word in onderwysopleiding, te make het met gehalte, toesighouding, evaluering en die kurrikulum. Hierdie onderwerpe is ingesluit in 'n vraelys wat tydens die studie gebruik is. Die opname is gedoen onder dosente, student-onderwysers en onderwysers om 'n breër perspektief van die program te kry. Die empiriese studie dui daarop dat die probleme wat by die drie Oos- Kaapse kolleges ervaar word, nie juis verskil van dié in ander lande nie.

Die resultate van die ondersoek hou implikasies in vir die drie kolleges wat betrek is; vir skole waar die student-onderwysers hulle prakties doen en vir onderwyseropleiding in die algemeen. Die implikasies word bespreek en voorstelle word gemaak vir die verdere ontwikkeling van die programme.

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CHAPTER ONE

TEACHER EDUCATION AS A VITAL COMPONENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Higher Education is considered a very important activity in modern society because it is a system that is intended to equip a country's citizens with the necessary knowledge, skills and values to play a wide range of social roles. The system has the potential to prepare the ground for future growth and development of the people, so that they can become effective, innovative, reflective and critical citizens. The vision of higher education in South Africa is comprehensive transformation of the system to ensure that it can succeed in stimulating, directing and utilizing the creative and intellectual energies of the active population. A comprehensive transformation calls for the restructuring and development of programmes that should continue to create, transmit and evaluate knowledge (Department of Education and Training, 1996a:3).

Teacher education is one of the important fields of Higher Education. There are 281 institutions that offer initial teacher education in South Africa (National Teacher Audit Report, 1996:2). Included in this number of institutions, are technikons, universities, and colleges of education, private colleges, non-governmental organisations and provincial education departments. The broad aim of teacher education as stated in the Committee for Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) document, is "to educate and train teachers to teach effectively in order to facilitate learning" (COTEP, 1996:6). The goals of teacher education are driven by the vision of a flourishing democracy that is able to provide quality education and training for all the citizens.

Discussing the importance and role of higher education in relation to quality education, Niemi and Kohonen (1995:84) maintain that the costs of higher education are continuously rising and institutions are increasingly under pressure to account for the outcomes of educational programmes and for the services they offer.

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The education and training that is proposed in higher and teacher education, is aimed at bringing about a community of committed, competent and reflective teaching professionals who can organise systematic learning and help to establish and sustain peaceful learning environments (Department of Education and Training, 1996b:9).

For institutions to contribute meaningfully towards the realisation of the higher education vision, that of providing quality education and training to all citizens, they have to develop teacher education programmes that are relevant and effective (both pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes). Such programmes should aim at empowering educators. Teacher empowerment is essential, particularly because educators are to be agents of reconstruction and development of the education system in order to redress the inequities in society that resulted from the past education system. Adaptation to modern society would be facilitated by such empowerment (COTEP, 1996:7). Furthermore, educators would be empowered to establish and maintain a culture of teaching and learning that is characterised by competent acquisition of life skills, knowledge and advancement of acceptable values, attitudes and dispositions (COTEP, 1996:7).

As teacher education strives for excellence in the production of qualified educators who are able to "demonstrate the ability to apply, extend and meaningfully synthesize various forms of knowledge to develop skills" (Department of Education and Training, 1996a:5), the question arises whether existing teacher education programmes in South African colleges are effective in preparing and producing that kind of educators.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The broad aim of teacher education as laid down in the Committee for Teacher Education Policy (COTEP) document, is: "… to educate and train teachers to teach effectively in order to facilitate learning" (COTEP, 1996:6). The preparation of future educators consists of both a theoretical and a practical component. The importance of the practical component of teacher education is emphasised by the Technical Committee for the Revision of Norms and Standards (TCRNS, 1998:127). The primary purpose of giving students time for practical teaching is to help them to

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become quality educators as a result of the experience they gain during the practice sessions in the schools.

As a college lecturer and organiser of student teaching practice in schools in the Eastern Cape, the researcher encountered problems due to the negative attitude of students, lecturers and teachers towards the Teaching Practice Programme (TPP). The lack of motivation and commitment to the programme was confirmed during informal discussions with some students, lecturers and teachers who are involved with the programme. This created the need to establish whether the nature and implementation of the TPP might be factors that contribute to this negative attitude. If this should be the case, it would be necessary to identify those areas of the programme that are causing the problems, so that they can be changed. It might also be useful to establish how some other areas that should remain a part of the programme, might be developed and improved.

The problem to be investigated in this study deals with the question of the nature and perceived overall effectiveness of the existing TPP in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape, in order to identify aspects of the TPP that cause discontent.

1.3   RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

According to the report of the National Teacher Audit carried out in 1995 (Hofmeyer, 1996:3-4), the quality of teacher education is generally poor and the system is inefficient. While this is considered the case, it is mentioned that there are "pockets" of excellence and innovation in the system (Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation, 1996:27). The poor quality of teacher education may be linked to the quality of teacher preparation in terms of theory and practice. The implication here is that there is a very strong need to evaluate the existing TPP so as to establish the areas of need and with the aim of developing and improving those areas.

An evaluation of the TPP should contribute to the development and preparation of quality educators who will be able to provide primary and secondary school pupils with a solid educational foundation that higher education can be built upon. Once the

problems and challenges that face the TPP are identified, all stakeholders should be able to co-operate as partners in bringing about solutions to these problems.

During informal discussions with a number of lecturers at the colleges in the central region of the Eastern Cape it became apparent that there was a lack of motivation and commitment to the TPP on the part of student teachers and lecturers. An investigation into the organisation, implementation and the learning areas of the TPP, might indicate to what extent each of these aspects contribute to this negative attitude of some of the lecturers and students.

1.4   RESEARCH QUESTION

As stated before (see 1.2), the broad question to be answered is: How effective are the existing TPP's in colleges of education to prepare competent and committed teachers? Further questions are:

- What is the nature of the TPP presently?
- What are the perceptions of the parties involved in the TPP regarding the following:

    - the value and relevance of the programme;

    - the organisation, implementation and duration of the programme;

    - various learning areas covered by the TPP?

- Do these aspects of the TPP mentioned in 1.4.2 contribute to the apparant lack of motivation and commitment of lecturers and students regarding the TPP?

1.5   HYPOTHESES

The hypotheses regarding the perceptions of the TPP are:

H_1: Participants have a negative overall perception of the existing TPP.

H_2: The implementation of the programme.is ineffective.

H_3: The TPP is inadequately organised.

H_4 The time given to actual school-based student teaching practice is insufficient.

H_5: The learning areas covered by the programme need to be reviewed.

1.6 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aims and objectives of the study are as follows:

1.6.1 Aim

The aim of the study is to establish the overall efficacy of the TPP as perceived by the various participants in the programme, in order to find out whether it is a factor that contributes to the negative attitude of lecturers and student towards student teaching practice.

1.6.2 Objectives

- To identify problems with the organisation, implementation and duration of the TPP.
- To establish the relevance of the programme in terms of the learning areas covered by the TPP.
- To identify other problem areas of the TPP.
- To make recommendations to the educators and education authorities as to how the programme could be developed and possibly improved.

1.7 THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The aspects of the research process mentioned in this section are the target population, participants, research approach and the measuring instrument.

1.7.1 The target population

The institutions targeted for participation in this study were three colleges of education and three schools. The colleges were Griffiths Mxenge College of Education in Zwelitsha, Dr WB Rubusana College of Education in Mdantsane and Cape College of Eduation in Fort Beaufort. These are the only colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province.

The schools that were included were Nonceba High School in Zwelithsa, Imiqhayi High School in King Williams Town and Mzomhle High School in Mdantsane. These schools were chosen because they are some of the schools that are used by colleges for students' practical teaching sessions.

1.7.2   Participants

Because both colleges and schools are involved in the TPP the following groups of participants from these institutions were selected for the investigation. The college participants are mentioned first, followed by those from the school environment. The reason for the inclusion of each group is stated briefly.

1.7.2.1   Third year students

Since students are exposed to the TPP from their first year, it was assumed that the third year students, at their level of preparation, would probably be able to provide valuable information regarding the programme from a student perspective.

1.7.2.2   Lecturers

Lecturers have practical experience of student teaching since they are the ones involved in student teacher preparation.

1.7.2.3   Teachers

During the school-based student teaching practice, school teachers become involved in the supervision, guidance and assessment of student teachers. Like lecturers school teachers do have practical experience of student teaching.

1.7.2.4   Rectors and Principals

The participation of the rectors and principals of the three colleges and three schools, was considered necessary for this study, as their responses would be the most comprehensive especially regarding the cost-effectiveness of the TPP.

1.7.3   Research approach and measuring instrument

A quantitative research approach will be followed. A survey will be conducted and data will be collected by means of a questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire is included (see Appendix A). Further details of the research methodology are given in chapter three of this study.

1.8   CONCEPTUALISATION

It is necessary to clarify some of the concepts in the context that they are used in this study.

1.8.1   Teaching practice

While teaching practice generally means practising how to teach, in this study it means more than just that. It is important to mention that at the time of this survey the three colleges that participated, were in the process of structuring their own teacher education programmes according to their institutional needs. However they are at present still following the former Department of Education and Training (DET) core programme for teaching practice.

Teaching practice according to the former Department of Education and Training (DET) Teaching Practice Syllabus, (1990) refers to:

(a)   practising and experiencing activities that promote learning in and out of the classroom situation;

(b)   placing student teachers from colleges into schools to complete the practical aspect of their training;

(c)   the learning area in which student teachers are exposed to experiences of being teachers (DET Teaching Practice Syllabus 1990:8) and

(d)   a number of professional experiences during which student teachers apply, test and construct personal teaching theories while they are naturally and gradually developing their competence as teachers (Turney, 1977 in Ngcobo, 1995:251),

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1.8.2   Practicum

According to Van der Linde (1987:6) *practicum* is used as a synonym of teaching practice. The two words are used interchangeably in this study. The word is of Latin origin meaning "performance" as contrasted with theory, in this context it refers to students' practical performance (practice).

1.8.3   Teaching practice programme

In the context of learning areas included in teacher education, the teaching practice programme refers to the major components of teacher preparation for qualification as a teacher. The programme consists of two aspects, namely *institute practicum* and *school practicum.*

1.8.3.1 Institute practicum

This concept refers to experiences and knowledge students receive at the teacher education institution/college, and includes the following:
- the learning area *education,*
- didactics,
- educational media,
- chalkboard work,
- micro teaching,
- demonstration lessons (DET Teaching Practice Syllabus, 1990).

1.8.3.2 School practicum

This refers to the experience a student gains mainly in a real school situation, hence school practicum, and includes :
- classroom observation
- lesson preparation
- lesson presentation
- classroom practice and management
- extra curricular activities (Teaching Practice Syllabus 1990).

1.8.3 Critical evaluation

In the context of this study, critical evaluation refers to :-

- An in-depth examination and reflection on all the aspects of teacher preparation with the purpose of improving and developing the process of teacher preparation. Critical evaluation aims at establishing what is good and what is bad about the programme, the effectiveness of the programme is measured and assessed. Galton and Moon (1994:77–78) define evaluation as a process of designing and implementing approaches for collecting and interpreting evidence of the quality of educational institutions, programmes and mechanisms which sustain them. Galton and Moon's definition is relevant to the context of the evaluation of the TPP.

1.8.4 Central region

For administrative purposes the province of the Eastern Cape is divided into six education regions namely :-

- ❑ Griqualand East region (around Kokstad)
- ❑ Eastern region (around Umtata)
- ❑ Southern region (around Butterworth)
- ❑ Northern region (around Queenstown)
- ❑ Central region (around East London)
- ❑ South Western region (around Port Elizabeth)

The central region was chosen for this study because it is where the researcher has had practical experience of the TPP as a school teacher as well as being a lecturer at one of the colleges.

1.9   FURTHER PROGRESSION OF THE STUDY

In the second chapter of this study, the literature is reviewed to establish what research has been done on various aspects of teacher preparation in other countries as well as in South Africa.

The empirical research is described in the third chapter. The research methods are explained in relation to the research approach followed in this study and the rationale for following this approach is discussed. A description of the target population is given. Methods of data collection and data analysis as well as the entire process of data collection are explained. The problems encountered are also mentioned.

The results of the research and the interpretation of these results are given in the fourth chapter,.

The fifth chapter is a concluding chapter in which a summary of the research findings is given, as well as recommendations and possible implications of the study. Some suggestions for further research on the topic are made. An integration of the results with the results of previous research is done in order to come to acceptable conclusions.

In the following chapter, the focus will be on those areas of teacher preparation that will be considered to have the potential to benefit teacher education in general and particularly student teaching in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province.

CHAPTER TWO

STUDENT TEACHER PREPARATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the literature dealing with initial teacher preparation, particularly student teaching is reviewed. The aim is to develop criteria which will be used to evaluate the existing student teaching programme in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape.

Since teaching and learning to teach are universal activities, educators and learners in one nation, have much to learn from what is discovered in other nations (Gage et al. 1995:3). Before qualifying as fully-fledged teachers, students have to spend some time in the schools where they practice to teach in order to gain confidence, acquire and develop skills in terms of teaching strategies, methods and classroom management. It is through this practice that they develop competence.

Research done in the developed countries, for example in the United Kingdom, (Barnett, 1987; Martin, 1994; Kealy, 1995) in the United States of America (Griffin, 1989; Gage et al., 1995; Altbach, 1995) and in Canada, (Holdaway, Johnson, Ratsoy & Friesen, 1994) indicates that student teaching is the most significant aspect of teacher education. In South Africa too, Botha (1987:16–17) emphasises the importance of student teaching. Botha also mentions that when teachers recall their teacher training programmes, they often acknowledge that student teaching was the most valuable component of their preparation. While much research has been done on teacher training programmes in various countries, there is still a very strong need for further extensive research since developments continue to demand improvements and advancements in every sphere of people's lives. Since teachers must prepare life-long learners and an individual's education at school forms the basis for his/her further development, it is important that teacher education incorporates new developments in for example, technology, politics and economy in the preparation of teachers.

Supporting the notion of continued research in teacher education, Quimby (1985:14) describes teaching as more of a "practical art than theoretical activity". The implication here is that the programmes of initial teacher preparation are to develop creative and critical educators, who will not just be content with what they can do, but educators who will continue to bring about new ideas and new innovations in their careers. New ideas on the ways to cope with the demands that are placed on the teacher have to be continuously developed. As Davies (1995:2) describes it, teaching is an occupation of "built in tension and ambiguities" therefore educators should be empowered to be able to deal with the tensions that are inherent in the profession. Both the causes of the tension and possible solutions to the ambiguities, can be analysed, and through extensive research solutions could be arrived at. It is essential for nations to share ideas and to find solutions to problems that have cross-national significance in teacher preparation.

2.2   INITIAL TEACHER PREPARATION

As reform had been necessary to eliminate inadequacies in teacher education in the developed countries like Australia, the United Kingdom, United States of America and Canada, (Holdaway, et al. 1994:205-208), it is also necessary for South African teacher education to reform in order to redress the possible imbalances and inadequacies that might be involved in teacher education, and also to meet the challenges of a changing society. As Holdaway et al. (1994:206) explains, inadequacies in teacher education around the world had been focussed mainly on school-based preparation of teachers. This is also confirmed by Goodlad (1984:315) who mentions that in the United States of America teacher education programmes were found to be inadequate.

One of the major problems with the teacher education programmes as cited by Goodlad, were related to the curriculum which, according to him, were not challenging enough. When Goodlad (1984:315) describes the curricula as being "disturbingly alike and uniformly inadequate", one would assume that they were alike in most areas with no significant aspects that would allow for differentiation and creativity in terms of satisfying the varied needs of the communities they were serving.

In his discussion Holdaway et al. (1994:206) mentions practising teachers in the United States of America who, when asked about it, referred to their teacher preparation as "intellectual wasteland". The nature of inadequacies that had been described were related to a number of factors some of which were also included in the findings of other researchers. Some of the factors stated by Holdaway et al. (1994:206) were inadequate supervision of students by personnel, irrelevant extensive coursework that has absolutely nothing to do with teaching and learning, but still had to be mastered by student teachers (Stone, 1987:370-372) and lack of time for inspectors to advise.

While inadequate supervision could be the reason for inadequate student performance, Book, Beyers and Freeman, (1993, in Stone, 1987:370) do not seem to agree with Holdaway et al. as they suggest that many candidates come to formal teacher preparation believing that they have little to learn. They maintain that in other professions like medicine, practising students believe in hard work, difficult access and a sense of academic value. In the authors' opinion prospective teachers expect simple access, easy work and minimal academic value, hence their belief that there is little for them to learn. The consequence is that they perform inadequately. The time spent on irrelevant course work (Stone, 1987:370) could presumably be used more profitably to help student teachers in their teaching programme. This idea is confirmed by the results of a survey of practising teachers conducted in America after their pre-service education (Stone, 1987:371). The results indicated that many teachers believe that their training did not provide enough preparation for them to meet their in-service needs, like classroom management and using appropriate instructional strategies.

Continuing the discussion on "learning to teach", Stone (1987:371) mentions a problem that has often caused conflict between school teachers and college educators, namely that many teachers believe that most skills are learned only through classroom experience whereas teacher educators consider theory as being necessary to provide a framework for understanding practice. Apparently the conflict created the need for further investigations into the gap between theory and practice in the United States. Two researchers who carried out such investigations were Cherland (1989) and Griffin (1989). The results of their investigations indicated that there was a very strong need for partnership and collaboration between schools and colleges in order to bridge the

gap between theory and practice (Cherland, 1989:410-411). The concepts *partnership and collaboration* are discussed later in the chapter (see 2.2.5).

Another crucial aspect of teacher education which had also created problems is the quality of student teaching (Holdaway et al. 1994:205-208). This seems to be in agreement with what Cherland refers to as "damage" being done to student teachers by their preparation. If the quality of student teaching is poor as a result of lack of guidance or insufficient supervision, it has a negative effect on students' future as teachers.

From the above it can be concluded that the following are potentially problematic areas regarding student teaching:

- the quality of student teaching,

- the supervision of student teaching,

A third aspect of student preparation that is causing concern is assessment and evaluation. This will be discussed in more detail later (see 2.2.3).

In the following section, the quality of student teaching is discussed in terms of how it impacts on the quality of the profession.

2.2.1 Quality of student teaching

Quality in teaching, as defined by Thatcher (1991:71) refers to the extent to which the set aims and objectives, that are published in the mission statements of institutions, are achieved. What is implied by this definition is that all staff members of an institution should understand their role and responsibilities in achieving the shared institutional goals. Quality in teacher education is tied to accountability. Accountability means acting according to external demands like satisfying the needs of the business sector, politicians, parents and students. Accountability in teacher education is indicated by teaching performance. Student teachers are assessed according to the degree to which they cause their learners to learn. This is critical for teacher education providers to keep in mind when they develop student teaching programmes. Kealy (1995:47) confirms this notion by stating that only when the ability to enable learners to learn is increased in student teachers, then "real quality" is achieved.

The quality of educators had been identified as the key to the quality of the profession by the South Australian College of Advanced Education (Veale, 1989:101). This holds true for student teachers as well. Their quality performance in teaching, renders them the status of quality educators who contribute to the quality of the profession. Reinforcing Kealy's idea of "real quality" (Veale, 1989:101), maintains that if the field of teaching is professionalised and only people with high preparation and competence levels handle it, then the learning of young people will be improved greatly.

In Veale's opinion, teacher educators have not been able to design educational programmes that assist student teachers in achieving personal and professional growth. Veale believes that teacher education programmes, including the programme of student teaching, are failing to achieve the stated aims. The implication here is that student teaching leaves much to be desired. There are three areas that Zeichner (1986:5 in Veale, 1989:101) believes would influence student teaching positively. These areas are, (1) the curriculum of the practicum, (2) the institutional setting in which student teachers are placed, and (3) the disposition of student teachers and those with whom they interact. Each of these will now be discussed.

2.2.1.1 The influence of the curriculum of the practicum

The inadequacy of the curriculum that has already been mentioned by Goodlad and Stone in relation to American teacher education, seems to have been a problem in teacher education in certain parts of Australia as well. This is suggested in the study carried out on one campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education in the third and final year of students doing a diploma in early childhood education (Veale, 1989:102). The purpose of the study was to look closely at the practicum (practical teaching) experiences of student teachers with all its inherent complexities. The aim was to design curricula for the practicum that would promote quality of student teaching experience. The outcome of the study revealed that the number of higher quality teachers could be increased by paying more attention to the practicum aspects of teacher programmes, that is both to the content and to the quality of the experiences that student teachers are exposed to in the schools, inside and outside the classroom. Such experiences depend to a large extent on the school environments where students practise teaching.

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2.2.1.2 The institutional settings in which student teachers are placed

According to Veale (1989:101) institutional settings influence student learning as well. It is only in an atmosphere conducive to learning that quality learning can take place. this is so particularly because student teachers do not visit the schools in order to teach only, but to learn as well. An atmosphere conducive to learning is likely to prevail where there is comfort in terms of peace, facilities, a good relationship and purpose of duty.

Writing about institutional settings, Lang, McBeath and Hebert (1994:81) maintain that environments where the focus is on meeting the personal needs of students by providing a healthy classroom climate and positive learning culture, remarkable results can be achieved. In such settings teachers, lecturers and students treat one another with respect and consequently happiness, confidence, productivity and pride develop. Institutions in which this kind of climate prevails, become learning communities where attendance improves, students' morale improves, discipline problems lessen, drop-out rates are minimised; in fact all sources of possible "psychological discomfort" are minimised. In summarising this discussion Lang et al. (1994:83) give characteristics of a positive institutional and classroom climate as follows:

In a positive institutional (classroom setting) there are:
- Positive expectations - students expect to succeed, therefore the nature and pacing of the instruction is matched to the learner needs and interests.
- Positive teacher behaviours - stable teachers who are focussed, businesslike and caring often inspire and stimulate students.
- Positive classroom management - reasonable rules, regulations, procedures and positive accountability.
- High levels of success.

When student teachers are generally exposed to this kind of learning environments, they are likely to be influenced in a way that helps them to become models of positive and constructive attitudes and behaviours to their colleagues and students. A further discussion of the disposition of students and those who interact with them follows.

2.2.1.3 The disposition of students and those who interact with them

The role of college lecturers, school teachers and education officials regarding student teachers is very significant. As teachers in the making, students are not yet teachers and should be treated accordingly. They should benefit from the interaction with experienced college lecturers as well as with experienced school teachers. Students depend on the kind of experience they have for guidance, support and supervision. How effective the role of lecturers is in providing these experiences, is influenced by the student teachers' disposition (Veale, 1989:102). From what Veale says, it can be concluded that if student teachers have a negative attitude towards the practice which is designed to assist them, then there is very little that college lecturers and school teachers can achieve in helping them. The primary purpose of giving student teachers time for practical teaching is to help them gain field experience with the hope of building their confidence and to improve their motivation.

Student teachers therefore, should take the responsibility of being prepared to work co-operatively with experienced staff. For students' maximum benefit, the co-operation should be reciprocal. What students give to lecturers should come back to them in terms of respect, understanding and consideration. Since both lecturers and teachers have a role to play regarding student teaching supervision, they need to engage in collaborative discussions and the sharing of ideas.

2.2.2   Supervision of student teaching

The role of supervising educators is to give guidance and responsibilities to student teachers at different levels of their preparation. The first responsibility of students is that of observing what goes on in and around the school, as well as to observe experienced educators (both college and school educators) presenting lessons.

The students are also given the responsibility of mastering the theory of subject content, skills, methods and of presenting lessons. At the second level, student teachers take the responsibility of practising what they have learnt and observed, in order to develop their own teaching abilities. The fact that a course to prepare teachers extends over a number of years, suggests that the responsibilities given to students should be increased gradually over that period of time (DET Teaching Syllabus, 1990).

A question asked by Campbell and Wheatly (1983:60) deals with the sequence of these responsibilities and what reasonable level of performance could be expected from student teachers as their teaching progresses. Explaining how student teachers develop, Campbell and Wheatly mention three important stages that students pass through as they become more responsible beginning teachers. The three stages are firstly, concern with self, secondly, concern with teaching actions and learners' behaviour and thirdly, concern with learning.

2.2.2.1 Concern with self

During this stage, student teachers are concerned about themselves, whether it would be possible for them to handle a class of unfamiliar pupils. The prospective teachers are also concerned with their appearance and how pupils and the supervising educator see them. They wonder how they are going to manage the subject and class. At this stage student teachers usually appear to be nervous and they try hard to cope with the overwhelming situation they find themselves in. They often do not respond naturally to the pupils' questions and classroom events. In Campbell and Wheatly's opinion (1983:60), it is very important for supervising educators to have sympathy with student teachers' insecurities at this level.

2.2.2.2 Concern with teaching actions and learners' behaviour

At this stage student teachers seem to recognise and deal with classroom challenges. They seem to have gained some confidence although they still focus on their own actions rather than on pupils' learning. They often become anxious to do things right, which manifests in the excessive way they prepare and plan their lessons. Because they want to be accurate, they tend to be rigid with no sense of timing, very little enthusiasm and almost no class interaction. They often try as much as they can to imitate what they have observed while experienced educators were teaching, without much concern as to whether it is appropriate for them or for their pupils. They often seem disheartened by their inability to manage the pupils' behaviour and their concern shifts to the issue of discipline. Supervising educators have the responsibility to guide and help student teachers by suggesting techniques for maintaining discipline, without judging the student teachers. In this way student teachers are assisted to gain more confidence (Campbell and Wheatly, 1983:60-61).

2.2.2.3 Concern with learning

During the third stage, student teachers move away from the question, "What will I do?" or "What will I say?" to the question, "What have they learned?" Their concern now becomes whether individual pupils have learnt or not, rather than whether the class has learnt. This is the stage at which student teachers are able to develop their own teaching styles and acquire the self-confidence to believe in themselves as teachers. During this stage, student teachers view their field experience as both the time to practise as well as the time to study teaching (Campbell & Wheatly, 1983:61).

According to these authors the various stages have serious implications for supervising teachers. They have to be taken into consideration, as well as the fact that student teachers progress through these stages at different rates. Teacher educators are to have realistic expectations concerning the performance of student teachers. They can help student teachers to develop their full potential only if they do not expect too much too soon and also by not restricting student teachers' responsibilities, so that creativity can be encouraged and developed.

In their discussion of teacher development, Hargreaves and Fullan (1991:64-65) mention three important factors which they believe are essential for the development of student teachers. According to them development is possible when working conditions are improved, when principles that might guide educators in their work are identified, and when teachers, including student teachers, are relieved from any form of psychological discomfort.

Psychological discomfort refers to any action or event that may have a negative impact on the teacher's feeling and emotions. Such discomfort may result from a lack of support from education officials, parents, students themselves or from colleagues (Hargreaves & Fullan 1991:65). It can also result from a lack of sympathy and understanding of the demanding and trying conditions that teachers may experience in their work situation, and lack of respect on the part of education officials. Communities are also likely to bring about psychological discomfort to teachers if they are over-concerned about teachers' private lives, rather than about their services (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1991:65). Such interference can put serious pressure on the teacher. In the same

way as experienced educators need psychological comfort from officials, student teachers need comfort from supervising personnel. There is a connection between what Campbell says about student teachers' insecurities and what Hargreaves says is possible when teachers (including student teachers) are relieved from any form of psychological discomfort. Discomfort may result from lack of understanding and support from supervising staff. When students experience such insecurities from supervising staff their progression through the three stages mentioned above by Campbell and Wheatly will probably be affected.

A further benefit of teaching practice for students is mentioned by Cherland (1989:411) who maintains that if the experience of student teaching is not helping students to learn by the imitation of teaching techniques, strategies and methods implemented by experienced teachers and lecturers, it should at least be helping them to grow as teachers through practice and through reflection upon that experience. Cherland refers to a teacher as a "practising professional, rather than a trained technician". The implication of this comparison is that teachers who are reflective, do not act automatically, but often reflect on what they had been doing, how they did it and how they could have done it better. As practising professionals, both the supervisors and those who are being supervised, need to be continuously reflective.

Reflective practice is the kind of practice in which people recapture their experience, think about it, ponder over it and evaluate it (Schulze, 1994:33). Reflective practice is the key to competence and effective learning. Student teachers who take a surface approach to learning, (meaning those who are learning without being cognitively involved, not thinking about what they are learning and how they are learning it) cannot be aware of their own teaching and learning (Gibbs, 1988:14). Furthermore, they cannot be aware of the real demands of their profession. Whenever student teachers think about what they have taught and how they have taught it, they are likely to develop an awareness of their own behaviour which will enable them to take charge of their teaching even in highly constraining circumstances (Gibbs, 1988:14). Gibbs states that reflection can be particularly critical in the context of professional courses that involve work placement. This means that since students practise teaching in a real school environment, they are able to reflect on their actual experiences in relation to

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what they have learned at college. In this way reflection can help students to bridge the gap between theory and practice and thus turn experience into learning.

In student teaching, field experiences can help student teachers to learn what teaching is all about and how they can best help learners to learn. Through reflection student teachers are able to be actively involved in processing their own learning about teaching and are also able to see their shortcomings. Although teacher education programmes often articulate the purpose of reflective practice, it is not sure whether students always grasp the true meaning of reflection, and in view of Cherland's study (1989:412), programmes have failed to communicate the purpose of reflective practice to the school teachers who are also involved in supervising student teachers.

While explaining the important role that reflection plays in teaching, Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1995:126) regard reflection as an exploratory process that refines and develops intellectual and emotional activities. This definition suggests that when reflecting, one either feels good or bad about what one has experienced. It is this kind of feeling that stimulates thought and determines how one handles such an experience during a future performance. Ashcroft and Foreman-Peck (1995:126) further maintain that there are three stages of reflection on teaching. The first stage being the experience of presenting a lesson, secondly attending to the feelings connected with that experience, and thirdly re–evaluating the experience through recognising implications and outcomes. It can be concluded that reflective practice helps to promote self-assessment which is crucial when one desires to improve one's teaching. It thus becomes important to think carefully about such questions as "What did I teach? How did I teach it? Did the learners learn? How best could I have taught the lesson?" If the ultimate gain in reflection is improvement, then reflection does not merely involve thinking about issues, but it requires the collection of evidence that is analysed in order to establish appropriate and principled actions (Ashcroft & Foreman-Peck, 1995:129).

There are various ways in which this evidence can be obtained. Evidence about a student teacher's practice may be given by the student him-/herself through reflection, the lecturer or school teacher or by peers during feedback sessions. This again emphasises the notion that the quality of student teaching is linked to the quality of supervision and guidance, that is given by supervising staff to student teachers. This

idea is confirmed by Turney (1987, in Veale 1989:102) who explains that "effective" supervision is vital to the quality of the practicum. Student teaching aims at developing students to a level of competence, that will enable them to handle a class with confidence and probably help them to respond to the demands of teaching and learning situations.

From what has been discussed above, it appears that supervising personnel in colleges of education as well as supervising teachers of student teaching in the schools, need to recall their own experiences as student teachers. They need to be sympathetic with student teachers' insecurities. They have to assist student teachers by suggesting more appropriate and relevant teaching strategies that promote confidence building and understand that some student teachers may need more encouragement so that they can reach the required level of competence. This means that the comments supervisors give to student teachers, as well as the guidance and assistance they provide should be constructive rather than destructive. The crucial role of reflection in the learning process also becomes apparent. Such reflective practice can be encouraged through continuous communication with supervisors about their assessment of students' competence, and through self-assessment by student teachers.

Calderhead and Gates (1993:9) maintain that the process of becoming reflective is developmental. Student teachers need to be assisted to develop the skill of reflection. This also is crucial when student teaching is evaluated. Supervisors should initially not have overly high expectations when student teachers conduct evaluation of their own lessons (self-evaluation). This is a skill that should be developed gradually. Supervisors often expect students to conduct insightful and analytical evaluations. This may be a very high-level demand to which only a few student teachers might respond.

As much as reflection is recommended for effective and quality teaching by many researchers, Calderhead and Gates (1993:9) mention also that reflection can be deconstructive depending on the context of reflection. What these researchers are suggesting is that reflection relates to values, attitudes, beliefs, as well as to cognitive skills. Therefore both the contents on which students are expected to reflect, together with the context in which reflection takes place should be considered equally important (Calderhead & Gates, 1993:9).

In his discussion of reflective teacher education programmes, Valli (1993 in Calderhead & Gates, 1993:12) says that inquiry-oriented (reflective) educators are able to prepare more reflective teachers by altering specific programme components within an overall programme context which remains unchanged. This idea could work well in situations where new developments call for the restructuring and development of teacher education.

Since reflection develops over a period of time (Calderhead & Gates, 1993:9), it is a skill in which competence also develops. Lang, Mcbeath and Hebert (1994:12-13) give ways in which one can become competent at reflection. Some of these are when one acquires a broad working material world (diverse experiences), uses teaching skills that provide meaningful learning experiences for students and learns how to promote positive learning environments. This means a classroom atmosphere where learners are able to communicate their views and express their opinions freely and confidently without the fear of being ridiculed by either the teacher or by peers.

Throughout the teaching practice, the supervising staff should assess the progress of student teachers and at certain levels of the course, student teachers have to be evaluated in order to determine whether they have reached that level of competence which will either promote them to the next level of their course or qualify them to become fully-fledged educators. For this reason, evaluation is an important component of student teaching that needs to be discussed.

2.2.3   Assessment and evaluation of student teaching

Although "evaluation and assessment" are often used interchangeably, a distinction can be made between the two concepts in teaching, depending on the purpose served. For example, assessment looks at the quality of teaching in terms of the competence the student teacher demonstrates during lesson presentation, that is explanation of subject content, the teacher's questions and how the teacher deals with and handles learners' questions, as well as which strategies the teacher employs in guiding and facilitating learning. Evaluation is a more encompassing term which includes assessing and measuring the extent of the competence. It also involves passing value judgement in

terms of the effectiveness of the teaching activity (Newble & Cannon, 1995:94). This explains why during their first year of preparation student teachers are not evaluated since they are only observing what goes on in the school (DET Teaching Syllabus, 1990). Although in some cases they do present lessons in order to gain experience and confidence, it would not be fair to evaluate their teaching while they are still so inexperienced. Evaluation of student teaching is perhaps the most critical task facing lecturers, therefore the purpose as well as the criteria for evaluation need to be well defined. The distinction between assessment and evaluation implies that in a teaching situation assessment will focus on the actual teaching while evaluation will also consider the affective learning outcomes, thus taking the whole learning situation into consideration. In student teaching, assessment and evaluation should aim at the following (Newble & Cannon, 1995:94):

- judging the mastery of essential teaching skills and knowledge of subject content;

- diagnosing student difficulties in teaching and commending good points, that is detecting strengths and weaknesses;

- measuring improvement over a period of time and giving feedback on performance, and

- evaluating the teaching methods employed by student teachers in terms of effectiveness of the methods.

Assessment can affect students negatively, particularly because it might determine their perception of their own ability and progress. It is vital for supervising personnel to keep this in mind when they are involved in the continuous assessment of student teachers (Newble & Cannon, 1995:94). The assessment of student teachers should consist of two forms of assessment, namely formative and summative assessment.

2.2.3.1 Formative or continuous assessment

Formative assessment is continuous assessment of the student teacher's performance. Stones and Webster (1984:175) refer to it as "diagnostic" evaluation because the evaluation is able to detect areas of strength and weakness respectively. The student should benefit from this continued evaluation in terms of guiding future practice. Formative assessment should be free of threat and should provide the student teacher

with immediate feedback regarding performance. This kind of assessment is important in the whole process of student teaching development as it continues to inform the student about his/her progress and whether he/she is improving or not. When there is improvement, the student's confidence continues to build up, thus the possibility of positive reflection which could lead to even greater improvement is enhanced. Formative assessment can also contribute to the quality of reflection, because it assists the students in developing a sense of standard (Gibbs, 1988:37).

Two other forms of formative assessment, self- and peer-assessment, are important for student-teacher development. Both self- and peer-assessment can provide the student teacher with knowledge about his/her progress and teaching ability. Self-assessment also implies that the student teachers think about (and evaluate) their own teaching and thus can be considered a part of reflection. Peer-assessment creates the opportunity to assess the performance of others against specific criteria and enables students to compare their own performance, often on the same or a similar task, with that of others in their peer group (Edwards & Knight, 1995:149).

2.2.3.2 Summative assessment

Summative assessment serves a different purpose. Summative assessment determines the level of the student teacher in terms of competence and effectiveness of teaching and normally occurs towards the end of a process. Like all other forms of assessment, this kind of assessment should also be based on appropriate criteria. Student teachers have to be informed about these criteria from the beginning of the course, in the form of a written guide to teaching practice. Summative assessment measures the outcome for example at the end of a teaching/learning situation and at the end of a programme or course. Summative_assessment is crucial in teacher preparation, because it determines whether the student is competent enough to be promoted to the next level of achievement (Newble & Canon, 1995:95).

Investigating the assessment approaches used to assess student teaching in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, Stones and Webster (1984:172) found that there was generally a lack of "rater agreement" among different people who assessed student teaching independently. The information obtained led to two important conclusions:

Firstly, the indication was that training institutions were rewarding different aspects of teaching when assessing student teachers. Secondly, there was no real identifiable consensus about criteria of teaching competence. The implication of the findings was that the evaluation results might not give a true reflection of a student teacher's performance. A further implication for evaluators was that their value judgement was likely to be erroneous if there were no pre-determined criteria. Appropriate evaluation should be ensured and an opportunity should be given for self-assessment and peer-assessment to enhance the development of diagnostic skills, thus encouraging the continued development of student teachers' competence (Stones & Webster, 1984:172).

Stones and Webster (1984:10) suggest that evaluation should be done at all levels, meaning at institutional level, programme (TPP) level and at individual student teacher levels. This would probably be necessary in view of what Hargreaves and Fullan (1991:64-65) suggested earlier on that development is possible when teachers are relieved from all forms of psychological discomfort. Any source of psychological discomfort that could be present at any of these levels, can affect individual student teachers' performance and development. Through continuous evaluation at all the levels, quality teacher preparation which is crucial in teacher education could probably be achieved.

Since the ultimate aim of assessment and evaluation is to help student teachers to acquire and to improve their competence, the focus of teacher education should be on competence-based-teacher-education (CBTE). Discussing CBTE, Edwards and Knight (1995:98) mention a number of benefits from CBTE. Those benefits are:

- students' reflection on their own practice becomes focused;
- relationships between subject, application, education studies and school experience are clarified;
- elements of training that are best delivered are clarified and
- the transition between initial teacher education and the first year of teaching is improved.

In an attempt to ensure that student teachers receive quality preparation, the value of mentoring was also realised and became a topic of educational investigation (Martin, 1994:270). In the discussion that follows, the concept of mentoring is explained.

2.2.4   The role of mentoring in teacher education

According to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1992) meaning, a mentor is an "experienced person, a wise and trusted adviser and helper". In the teaching context, the role of a mentor goes beyond just being an adviser but he/she becomes a guide who sets a good example for student teachers. A mentor is described by Martin (1994:270) as being principally valuable in supporting and acting as a critical friend of a mentee (student teacher).

The mentoring role is significant in that a mentor usually has extensive knowledge of the subject matter and the curriculum which he/she shares with the student teacher. The mentors' knowledge of the pupils, the knowledge of the entire school programme and his/her ways of working are valuable to the student teachers (Stephenson, 1995:326). In an environment dominated by such expertise, student teachers feel that a "realistic" situation is created (Stephenson, 1995:329) and therefore learning and development of student teachers is enhanced. From the given description of the role of a mentor, it is true that a mentor has to possess certain qualities and characteristics in order to be able to guide and support the students. Presumably such qualities would include a sense of duty and commitment, a high level of developmental skills, visionary and transformational qualities. It is believed that mentors can make a difference in the creative and educational attainments of mentees (Torrence 1984 in Dreyer, 1994:72).

While mentoring aims at providing a good example for good practice, Martin (1994:274) warns strongly against replication. This means that the mentees should be encouraged to develop skills according to their own abilities and avoid trying to imitate their mentors exactly. What should be developed in mentees is the ability to reflect on the mentor's good practice. A mentor should avoid trying to transform a mentee to be his/her replica. A person of the caliber of a mentor needs also to have the ability to recognise potential in the student teacher and be able to motivate the student teacher (Dreyer, 1994:74). In Dreyer's opinion, there are very few teachers who are blessed

with a natural ability of mentoring, therefore in order to increase the number of mentors who would be able to inspire mentees in this way, training should be given to people who show the potential and willingness to become mentors.

In a mentoring situation, the mentor is supposed to be a critical friend of a mentee, but Stephenson (1995:329) raises the point that a mentor who is also an evaluator of students, creates problems for the students in that they do not know how open they could be, particularly in cases where a good relationship had not been achieved. Research findings in the United Kingdom indicated that student teachers preferred a tutor as mentor to a class teacher as mentor (Stephenson, 1995:329). In spite of the problems associated with mentoring, the majority of students in the United Kingdom recommended the mentor system. They believed that the mentor role is more than just an extention of the supervisory function, but involvement in all aspects of the course (Martin, 1994:276).

To make it easier for mentors to carry out their mentoring functions, there has to be a sharing of ideas in terms of college curricula, instructional methods and strategies, supervision activities and assessment procedures between school teachers and college lectures. This is necessary in order to promote good working relations between institutions (schools and colleges). With this kind of co-operation and relationship, student teachers' learning could also be enhanced and any possible gaps between the theoretical knowledge students receive at college and actual practice that takes place in the schools could be reduced. A distinction is made by two advocates of this kind of relationship between schools where students practise teaching and teacher education institutions. Stephenson (1995) in the United Kingdom and Griffin (1989) in the United States of America referred to the college-school relationship as a "partnership" (when between a college and a school) and as "collaboration" (between more schools and more colleges) that have the same mission. These two concepts have had much impact on teacher education as one can see in the following discussion.

2.2.5   Partnership and collaboration in teacher education

Student teaching forms a link between public schools and colleges of education. This "institutional linkage" as Griffin (1989:344) refers to it, is crucial for understanding the

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roles of participants in teacher education. It is essential that institutions with similar missions and similar perspectives should be in some "mutually beneficial" relation with one another (Griffin, 1989:344). In support of the need for collaboration between institutions, Peckover and Towers (1955:87) say, collaboration in teacher education circles are "front–and–centre". By this they are suggesting that teacher education institutions need to come together with schools and establish relationships that look into the needs of student teachers as being central to their development and that they also need to look into future developments regarding teacher education. The kind of partnership Peckover and Towers (1995:187) are referring to is vested in responsibility for content, structure and delivery of pre-and in-service education. Concurring with Peckover and Towers, Bines and Watson (1995:16) say that partnership has been seen as a means of developing students' professional competences through extended practical teaching experiences in schools, thereby ensuring the integration of different elements of courses as provided by schools and higher education institutions.

According to Peckover and Towers (1995:189), developmental ideals should be extended from two-partner institutions that is college trainers and school teachers to other trainers in a collaborative effort to develop professional practice. Bines and Watson (1992:126-127), suggest that collaboration should be extended further to become "inter-professionalism". That is across professions. They also believe that inter-professionalism can do much to ensure the quality and effectiveness of professional service. The authors also suggest that partnerships should be managed well (Bines & Watson, 1995:22). Another important idea raised by Peckover and Towers (1995:187) is that collaboration should include parents and students. Presumably parents can come up with innovative ideas that could be beneficial to teacher education since they are important stakeholders in education. With the inclusion of students in collaborative practices, the principles of consultation and accountability would be practised. This is important particularly because as future educators student teachers will be expected to work in consultation with other stakeholders in education, and will also be accountable to those stakeholders with regard to their competence and the quality of their teaching. They are also citizens who will be expected to play an important role in society.

Collaboration as proposed by Peckover and Towers (1995:187) has the following advantage: All parties involved would see it as a "collective enterprise". Domination by any one of the parties should be avoided at all costs because it could lead to conflict and possibly strained relations among the institutions. Such a situation would undoubtedly affect teacher development. Collaboration as observed by Ellis (1992, in Peckover & Towers, 1995:188) has certain pitfalls. According to him, certain university lecturers believe that their level of knowledge and skills are higher than that of school teachers and therefore they can dominate discussions with "laymen". This often leads to conflict between lecturers and teachers and results in destructive relationships instead of constructive collaboration. Peckover and Towers (1995:188) also mention that higher education institutions tend to "downgrade" the school-based participants, in so far as knowledge, skills and insights are concerned. According to these researchers, control and responsibility should be shared equally among those involved and those who are affected by it.

In these partnerships and collaborative activities, programmes that could probably lead to the socialisation of student teachers during their first year of employment could be included. These preparatory programmes could serve to get students familiar with the new situation which Holly and McLoughlin (1989:99) refer to as a period of "frantic activity" as student teachers assume a new role of becoming qualified teachers. Partnership as such would play the role of fulfilling the important need to ensure continuity between training and employment, thereby enabling students to make an effective transition. A profile of competence for each student teacher could be handed over from the college to the environment of the first teaching post. The suggested programmes that could be relevant in promoting this are referred to as *internship* and *induction.*

2.2.6   Internship

Internship as it is practised in other professions, refers to the period (usually a period of one year) that interns work before they are fully qualified practitioners (Holdaway et al. 1994:206). According to Holdaway et al. (1994:207) there has been criticism regarding the duration of the school-based student teaching practice in Canada and in the United States of America. The situation as presented by Holdaway et al. (1994:205-211) also

included criticisms of inadequate initial teacher preparation and resultant weakening of standards in Australia and the United Kingdom and inadequate student experiences in the commonwealth countries. The criticisms centered around the following factors as being responsible for the circumstances :

- lack of experienced supervisors;

- lack of time for inspectors to advise;

- lack of liaison between the training institution and the inspecting bodies;

- lack of time for experienced tutors to visit schools in which their ex-students are located, and

- lack of suitable refresher courses.

If an attempt would be made to correct the situation as presented above, all those involved in teacher education would probably encourage the extension of the student teaching practice period and presumably all would favour the idea of an internship programme or an induction programme which refers to the process of socialising the prospective teacher into the role of being a teacher. Induction is explained in 2.2.7 below.

The main objective of the internship programme is to facilitate the transition from study to professional practice by assisting the interns to adjust to the complexities of the profession and to acquire skills (Holdaway et al. 1994:208). This programme may be conducted with or without pay. Examples of different internship programmes proposed in different countries are presented by Holdaway et al. (1994:207). The proposed programmes could be conducted either in conjunction with university preparation or after graduation. Some of the examples are the following. A one full year of internship after completion of a teacher education programme is proposed in the U.S.A. The interns are given full starting pay. They are appointed on probation and the internship is additional to the teaching practice.

In Canada, according to Holdaway et al. (1994:209) a paid nine months internship in the first year of a master in teaching degree is followed by another nine months "residency" in a school during the second year. In Ontario, the prospective teachers would undergo one year teacher training, two years of internship and two years of residency, meaning that during these 2 years they will have less responsibility as

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teachers and will be supervised by senior colleagues. In 1992 Australia expressed approval of a greatly extended practicum arrangement for graduate student teachers.

The question of insufficient preparation of teachers has always been a matter of general concern in many South African schools (Hartshorne, 1992:84). This had been the experience around East London during the researcher's years as a high school teacher and a teacher training educator. Internship, as explained above and proposed in the United States of America would probably alleviate some of the problems regarding the insufficient preparation of some teachers, also in the South African context.

2.2.7   Induction

The two concepts internship and induction are often used interchangeably in the literature, but Holdaway et al. (1994:207) makes the following distinction:
Induction refers to the process of socialising (helping to adapt) the recently graduated educators into the full time teacher role whereas *internship* refers to a type of employment in which a recent graduate has limited work and responsibilities while concurrently is undergoing additional training.

The aim of an induction programme is to improve the quality of students' overall learning experience (Bourner & Barlow, 1991:11). Although induction relates more to recently graduated student teachers, it is worthwhile to mention that it is an extension of work done at the college, university or technikon.

As Davies (1995:2) stated, the built-in tensions of the teaching profession do not go by without presenting problems to the beginner teacher, (the one already in service). Beginner teachers are often known to experience the following problems :
-   overloading in terms of teaching responsibilities;
-   lack of assistance in collecting instructional materials;
-   unavailability of advice from experienced teachers who are often overloaded with teaching responsibilities themselves and
-   lack of specialised instruction about characteristics of the school's community, neighbourhood and students.

If student teachers have experiences of supportive relationships in teacher education institutions, the possibility of experiencing excessive pressure and anxiety during their first year of teaching would be reduced. Appreciation of the benefits of co-operation and collaboration would be promoted. The foregoing discussion has indicated that, mentoring, partnership, collaboration, internship and induction programmes have the potential to promote the quality of the practicum.

2.2.8   Phases of the practicum

According to Van der Linde (1987:7), the improvement of student teaching quality depends on a high quality of craftsmanship and competence. This means that all possible teacher development programmes strategies and expertise that can be put in place to promote the competence of student teachers should be encouraged. When student teachers are prepared for teaching practice sessions, their preparation should consider the three practicum phases namely, pre-practicum, practicum and post-practicum phases.

2.2.8.1 Pre–practicum phase

This is an important stage of student teaching practice, because it re-directs the student teachers' mind-set. While still a student, he/she assumes a role of authority. Discussing the significance of field experiences, Slick (1995:21) explains the purpose of this phase.

During the pre-practicum phase, the college lecturers, students and school teachers are briefed as to when the practice will take place, for how long the practice will continue, what the objectives of the practice are, what each group is expected to do (that is lecturers, students and school teachers) and where students will be placed. The responsibilities of each group have to be clearly stated so that confusion is avoided. This is a crucial phase for confidence build-up in student teachers. Knowing what is expected of them and knowing their responsibilities, reduces the anxiety they are likely to have and which might affect their performance when they do the actual teaching.

Slick (1995:21) maintains that meetings prior to the teaching practice sessions are necessary between student teachers and school teachers (either class or subject

teachers). Such meetings could help to check compatibility between student and school teacher. Slick commends the idea of advisory committees that serve to establish guidelines. To be included in these committees are teachers and administrators (education officials). This kind of collaborative consultation leads to a feeling of ownership that is critical to a successful student teaching programme. School teachers need to set a good example for student teachers even before they come for short visits in the schools. This is one of the reasons why it is important for supervising personnel to be qualified for the work they do.

This phase can be seen in the light of an induction programme during which student teachers are familiarised with what they can expect and what is expected of them. As part of their preparation students should be advised on the following (Slick, 1995:88-95):

-         finance - for travelling and communication expenses if necessary;

-         student teaching handbooks for recording important experiences;

-         relevant forms.

This leads to the practicum phase.

2.2.8.2 Practicum phase

This phase is as important as the pre-practicum phase. Student teachers get an opportunity to experience what is actually involved in teaching, for example lesson planning, lesson presentation and evaluation of pupils' learning. If reflective practice is encouraged, student teachers reflect on their performance and then learn from their own mistakes and they build on their strong points. The student teachers are left under the supervision of either the class teacher or the subject teacher. College lecturers do come to the schools mainly to evaluate student teachers (Van der Linde, 1987:12). Van der Linde believes that this is the phase during which a student teacher's confidence is either enhanced or is destroyed, depending on the kind of guidance and criticism he or she receives. This is also suggested by Calderhead and Gates (1993:9) when they say that reflection on ones' performance (reflection) can be "debilitating". Destructive criticism often has a negative impact on the student teacher's confidence likewise constructive feedback has a positive impact on the student's teaching. The supervising

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and evaluating personnel (the lecturers who evaluate students' teaching) should take cognisance of this when they write comments about student performance.

2.2.8.3 Post–practicum phase

The post-practicum phase refers to the time when student teachers return to the college at the end of the practicum phase. Both students and lecturers presumably discuss their experiences, look at the aspects of the programme that need to be improved for example, organisation, implementation, transportation of students and pupils to and from the schools an so on. Areas of improvement are discussed and strategies for improving them are set up during this phase. The use of schools as teacher preparation setting has been questioned in the U.S.A. and in Australia (Little, 1974:11 and Griffiths & Moore, 1967 in Van der Linde, 1987:12-13). The basis of their opposition to the use of schools is that they believe if schools are entrusted with the responsibility of college staff, both student teachers and college lecturers will regard student teaching as a low-value activity. This is another reason why partnerships between colleges and schools are so important. The partnership between schools and higher education institutions can also be enhanced by communicating and expressing mutually agreed upon key professional values, knowledge, skills and processes for teacher education. This can provide a framework for the professional development of teachers (see 2.2.5)

Table 2.1   Suggested schedule for student teaching

Student	Teacher	College Lecturer
Observe in classroom Orientation After 3 - 5 days present at least 1 or 2 lessons Daily conferencing with teacher about day's activities Complete assignment (Observation form from college)	Discuss plans Provide diverse opportunities for observation Opportunities for review, feedback Complete college forms as required Conference with college lecturer (supervisor) Familiarised with student teachers' biographical information	Visit - dissemination of information, requirements and expectations

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The activities of the various role players during the three phases might vary. Table 2.1 illustrates an example of a TPP as suggested by Slick (1995:95). Some of the main tasks and responsibilities of the various participants are tabulated for all three phases of the practicum.

While problems and concerns of student teaching appear to be similar internationally, it is important to find out exactly what the position is in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province.

2.3   TEACHER PREPARATION IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN THE EASTERN CAPE PROVINCE

2.3.1   The quality of teacher preparation

The concern about teacher preparation in South Africa is not new (NEPI, 1992:17-23), Problems similar to those experienced in Canada, the United States, United Kingdom and Australia (Holdaway et al. 1994:205–208) indicate that teacher education programmes have been found to be inadequate and ineffective to promote quality learning. Pultorack (1993, in Holdaway et al. 1994:206) states that teacher preparation programmes are effective only when they are able to prepare teachers who can reflect on their behaviour and their surroundings and teachers who are able to take valid decisions. Presently quality regarding teacher preparation is one of the aims of teacher education in South Africa as it is stated in the Committee for Teacher Education Policy (COTEP, 1996:8).

The same concerns that were raised about curricula, duration of preparation and supervision of student teaching in the developed countries, have been raised in South Africa as well. In an article that appeared in the Educamus, Botha (1987:16) highlighted problems that are involved in teaching practice. The major problems presented are related to the school teachers' attitude towards teaching practice. According to Botha, in many cases teachers in the schools are negative towards student teachers because they feel their practice is waste of time. For better understanding of the programme of practice in the colleges of education, specifically colleges in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province, a description of the TPP regarding the two

areas of the programme namely, institute practicum and school practicum is given below.

2.3.2   A description of the teaching practice programme

The colleges discussed here are historical black colleges that offer Secondary Teachers' Diploma (STD) in South Africa. It is necessary to explain the core teaching practice programme followed in the three colleges. At the time of writing this study (1999), these colleges were in principle, still following the Department of Education and Training Teaching Practice Programme (DETTPP) structure. They had not yet completed their own programmes which they started designing after the Government of National Unity came into power. Prior to 1994, all colleges for blacks were administered by the DET in Pretoria (Walters, 1990:8). A core programme of teaching practice was followed. The evaluation criteria was the same. This meant that students at these colleges were to meet the same requirements in order to qualify as teachers. Details of these requirements are as follows:

-        100 lessons presented by each student (uncontrolled)

-        10 evaluated lessons by college lecturers (controlled)

-        20 demonstration lessons presented by lecturers or students

-        micro-sessions given/observed by students (no stipulated number)

-        one case study

-        one observation assignment

-        at least 2 weeks compulsory school-based practice

Of the 110 presented lessons by students, 100 of them were commonly referred to as home teaching (HT) lessons or teaching practice lessons. The other 10 lessons were evaluated by college subject lecturers or by other lecturers who have either majored in the subject concerned, or were teaching it or have a higher qualification in the subject. The common practice was that students were given 2 full weeks (10 days) to remain in the schools to continue teaching during the first semester and another 2 weeks (10 days) during the second semester. As discussed later in this chapter (see 2.3.2.2) there were factors that did not always allow this arrangement to work well therefore adjustment had to be made in order to accommodate such factors. Some of those factors disrupting the teaching practice schedule were stay-aways, class boycotts

(Motala & Tikly, 1993:2) and problems relating to student placements due to subject specialisation. What was important was that all students had to meet the quota of 10 evaluated lessons.

It remained a requirement that students spend some time with pupils in a real classroom situation. In order to meet this requirement and to meet the needs of individual colleges, some colleges had to send student teachers out to the schools for both home teaching lessons and evaluated lessons. Two of the colleges in the central region had to bus pupils from schools to the colleges only for the evaluation sessions (see 2.3.2.2) otherwise they still had to go back to the schools for the home teaching (practising) lessons. The programme of student teaching is explained in the following section. The two areas of the programme are institute practicum and school practicum.

2.3.2.1 Institute practicum

The institute practicum programme refers to the teaching practice programme conducted at college that is designed to prepare student teachers before they go out to the schools to practise teaching. The programme includes the seven learning areas as prescribed by the DET (DET Teaching Practice Syllabus, 1990) and as indicated in table 2. The duration of each of these aspects of teaching at the various year levels is also indicated.

In theory of education, students learn various methods of presenting lessons, principles of education, psychology of education, history of education, education systems, the philosophy of education and current issues in education. Each college decides what and at which level these are done. In subject didactics students learn methods of lesson presentation, specifically the two subjects they are majoring in. They are given an opportunity to construct educational media according to the needs of their major subjects during the educational media periods. Time is also allowed for them to practise how to use the chalkboard. There are periods allocated to teaching skills practice (micro-teaching). Lecturers or students themselves, present demonstration lessons so that students can learn from others' skills and methods of presenting lessons and how to structure a lesson presentation. In educational management, they learn about the administration and management of the school.

Table 2.2   Institute practicum

Professional subjects	Year level and duration		
Education Theory Periods per week	S.T.D.1 5	S.T.D.2 7	S.T.D.3 8
Subject Didactics Periods per week	S.T.D.1 5	S.T.D.2 5	S.T.D.3 5
School Management Periods per week	- -	S.T.D.2 2	S.T.D.3 2
Educational Media Periods per week	S.T.D.1 1	S.T.D.2 1	S.T.D.3 1
Chalkboard Work Periods per week	S.T.D.1 1	- -	- -
Micro-Teaching Periods per week	S.T.D.1 1	S.T.D.2 1	S.T.D.3 1
Demonstration Lessons	S.T.D.1	S.T.D.2	S.T.D.3

First Year Level (S.T.D.1)
Second Year Level (S.T.D.2)
Third Year Level (S.T.D.3)

In both micro-teaching and demonstration lessons, self- and peer-assessment plays an important role. A student is able to reflect on personal skills as well as skills, that can be copied from others (Edwards & Knight, 1995:150). Self-appraisal can be done through the use of video cameras. Video tapes are replayed and students can observe themselves and assess their own performance. This is reinforced by peer-feedback. If given appropriately, feedback strengthens the relationship among peers. This is also of great value to the lecturers, because the sharing of ideas is done without the risk of offending students (Goodlad, 1993:2).

2.3.2.2 School practicum

The other component of the practicum in the three colleges is the school practicum. This is described in table 2.3. In this table the semester in which each school practicum takes place, the duration (number of weeks), place, year levels of students, nature of the lessons and evaluation requirements for each form of school-based student teaching are indicated. The schedule is very similar for Griffiths Mzxenge and Cape College. Dr W. B. Rubusana College is different, because students have one block session of five weeks during their second semester.

Table 2.3   Description of the practical teaching sessions

	Griffiths Mxenge and Cape College				Dr WB Rubusana			
	YL	P	Sem	No wks				
HT	2	School	1	2	Tuition during first semester			
Crit	3	College	1	2				
Tuition	1	College	1	2				
Observation	-	-	-	-				
					YL	P	Sem	No wks
HT	3	School	2	2	2 & 3	School	2	5
Crit	2	College	2	2	2 & 3	School	2	5
Tuition	-		2	2	N	O	N	E
Observation	1	School	2	2	1	School	2	5

YL -   Year-level   HT   -   Home teaching
P   -   Place   Wks -   Weeks
Crit -   Evaluation of lesson   Sem -   Semester

As can be seen in table 2.3, the first year students of Griffiths Mxenge and Cape College receive tuition at the colleges while the second and third year students are engaged in the two weeks programme of teaching practice. All of the Dr W.B. Rubusana students remain at the college and receive tuition. During the second semester all three colleges become engaged in the TPP. The first year students of all three colleges observe experienced teachers during the first two weeks of the TPP. The Dr W.B. Rubusana students stay at the schools for 5 weeks, while the other two colleges continue with the programme that started in the first semester for another two weeks. The Rubusana first year students have an extra three weeks of observation. The other two colleges initially also exposed the first year students to observation lessons during the first semester, but discontinued this practice, because they found that the first year students have too little theoretical knowledge at that stage to really benefit from observation lessons.

During the first year of college, student teachers continue with tuition at the college since they have only been at college for a few months, they have to be oriented with the institute practicum programme. While this is supposed to be a real school situation practice for the second and third year students, in two of the colleges namely Griffiths Mxenge and Cape College, student teachers do not always visit the schools during their evaluation sessions, instead pupils are bussed to the college from the schools. It is important to note that this arrangement only applies to the evaluation session and that it

does not affect the actual teaching practicum in the classroom at a school. It would however affect students' perception of the evaluation aspect of the TPP.

The factors that are said to be responsible for this state of affairs are mainly that it is not always possible to cater for students' needs in terms of subject specialisation. For example few schools offer commercial subjects, therefore colleges have found it easier to bring pupils to college from those schools in order to divide one class into at least more than one group so that more college students can have an opportunity to be evaluated. Another reason stated for this kind of arrangement is the fact that it is time-consuming for evaluating lecturers to move from one school to another to evaluate students. It is also costly in that colleges have to pay for buses to take students and lecturers to and from schools.

Although some lecturers have raised concerns about bringing pupils to college, this arrangement seems to have worked well for the two colleges. Students also benefit from this arrangement. Since they are staying in the residences on campus, they are able to use the college facilities like the library and overhead projectors when they are preparing lessons.

The situation is different at Dr W.B. Rubusana College where students stay off campus. They have the advantage that the college is in a township which has many high schools. The college also has only one class for S.T.D. III students, therefore it is easy for lecturers to remain in one school for at least a whole week and then change schools. Although the various components of the TPP are the same, the duration and semester during which they follow the programme are different. At Dr W.B. Rubusana College the programme is not split into two week sessions, but all students go out to various schools for 5 weeks during the second semester (see table 2.3). During this five week period the students practise to teach under the supervision of the school teachers, but are evaluated by their college lecturers. The evaluation process is the same as that of the other two colleges in that all students have to meet the required quota of ten evaluated lessons in order to qualify as teachers.

During the two weeks of teaching that the Griffiths Mxenge and Cape College third year students practise in the schools close to their homes (home-teaching), college

lecturers do not visit students in the schools. During this time they are left in the care of the school teachers. Usually this is the time when the college staff is busy with the evaluation of the second year students.

2.4   SOME GENERAL PROBLEMS WITH TEACHER PREPARATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

In a report by the Congress of the Education Association of South Africa entitled, "The Transitional Phase in the Republic of South Africa" (1994), emphasis was put on the need for those involved in teacher training to change from the "traditional teacher–instructive–orientated" educative practices of the past and to engage themselves in the more "learner–student and process orientated" methodologies. The implication here is that programmes and courses for teacher education should stimulate and promote reflection and critical thinking. Among the proposed changes in the education system, a new curriculum known as Curriculum 2005 has been designed, along the principles of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) (Olivier, 1997:15). This implies radical changes in the requirements for teacher education. Neither OBE nor Curriculum 2005 is discussed in this paper, because the TPP under investigation still uses the DET curriculum and therefore by definition is not in line with the new developments. However, there might still be positive aspects in the existing TPP that could be used and developed to improve the education of teachers, and therefore it is necessary to identify these aspects.

Some of the present-day issues facing teacher education in South Africa had already been raised in the report of the National Teacher Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) published in 1992. While some of these problems are not directly affecting the TPP, they still have a bearing on the preparation of effective educators. Reported problems were related to access to teacher education, curriculum for teacher education, assessment, organisation, accountability and the professional development of teachers. An explanation of how student teaching could have been possibly affected follows:

-        Access to teacher education was made possible for a number of students without considering the areas of need (NEPI, 1992:18). For example, few students were admitted to colleges with Mathematics, Science, Commerce and English. Most students come to higher education not because they really want

to become teachers, but because the entrance requirement was an 'E' aggregate symbol which was not difficult to obtain in all their subjects apart from those mentioned above. Some came to teacher training institutions because it was the easy way to have access to higher education. Apparently commitment to the cause of training teachers was not considered. This state of affairs is not unique to South Africa, but is also mentioned by Book et al. (1985 in Stone, 1987:370). These authors said that students often come to teacher education believing that they have little to learn. When they come to teacher education for wrong reasons, they are likely to perform inadequately.

- Curriculum problems reported related to the prescriptions that the National Criteria for Qualifications in Education forced upon teacher education courses. All teacher education courses shared some common features. No attempt was made by some departments to match the students' learning needs with the educational needs of the nation. The syllabus stressed content rather than outcomes of learning (NEPI, 1992:17). Although the problem of an inadequate curriculum was also expressed by Goodlad (1984:315) with regard to the teacher education in the United States of American, the problem in South Africa seems to be more complex in nature as a result of the complex historical situation.

- Assessment has been discussed earlier in this chapter (see 2.2.3) and the role it plays in student teaching cannot be overemphasized. A strong need for professionalised and competent supervising and assessing personnel has been discussed (Veal, 1989:101). In the South African context of historical black teacher education, a number of them fall below the M + 3 qualification. This means that they had a matric and no three year college, university or technikon qualification. They could therefore be considered under-qualified to assess appropriately student teachers who are more qualified than they are (NEPI, 1992:23).

- Organisation, accountability and the professional development of teachers is crucial in teacher education in terms of quality, competence and commitment. In the discussion of teacher education problems, the concern was expressed in

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the NEPI that importance of the autonomy of institutions that provide teacher preparation is overlooked. Unlike universities and technikons, who are autonomous, colleges have been accountable to the education departments that employ them. In a way this system constrains the possibility of creative development since colleges would not have the power to act as they deemed fit regarding institutional development. The fact that teacher education has been organised along racial lines, caused many of the colleges to be disadvantaged in terms of facilities and equipment and thus opportunities for professional development were limited (NEPI, 1992:23-25).

Another issue that was already raised during the 1980s and that is related to student teaching, is over-crowded classrooms and a lack of discipline on the part of pupils (Botha, 1987:17). Student teaching is regarded as ineffective by some student teachers because of the duration of the practice. They maintain that the time set for student practice is too short to have meaningful practice experiences. Students also felt that their valuable academic time is wasted due to the lack of guidance on the part of school teachers and lack of commitment by the college lecturers who are assigned with an important responsibility of evaluating student teachers. The problems and concerns raised by Botha are confirmed by Gregory (1988:6) who says that supervision of student teaching is often a problem.

Because the home teaching session is not controlled by college lecturers, problems relating to student teachers' unacceptable behaviour have been reported. According to the report, some student teachers do not honour classes. Teachers were also described as often negligent during the student teaching period (Botha, 1987:17). Cases of student teachers who do not prepare lessons properly to an extent of giving learners incorrect information and student teachers who use inappropriate methods of lesson presentation have also been reported. In such situations lesson objectives and aims are often not achieved and this is probably why some teachers have a negative attitude towards teaching practice.

2.5   SUMMARY

From the issues raised regarding teacher education in the developed countries as well as in South Africa it can be concluded that there are problems that are inherent in teacher education globally. Some of these problems are the quality of students teaching, inadequate supervision, poor collaboration between schools and colleges, problems with certain aspects of the curriculum and inappropriate assessment and evaluation. Apart from these issues the "built in" tensions and ambiguities that are mentioned by Davies (1995:2) need to be considered in a cross-national nature and the way in which problems are resolved elsewhere might be relevant in the South African context.

In view of the problems and challenges that face teacher education internationally, it is necessary to continue examining what the situation is in the areas and communities we are serving. In the following chapter an empirical study conducted on teacher preparation with reference to the TPP, is described.

CHAPTER THREE

THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter two some of the main areas of concern regarding the programme of student teaching were raised. Such areas were:

- the quality of student teaching;
- the quality of supervision that student teachers receive from experienced staff;
- the quality of the assessment and evaluation of student teaching.

Furthermore, examples of programmes that are implemented by some countries to improve and develop teacher preparation were discussed. Since not all institutions or student teachers experience the same problems during the initial teacher preparation, it is necessary to determine the extent to which the problems mentioned are experienced in other areas and circumstances. In this chapter an empirical investigation into teaching practice in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province is described.

The problem stated in the introductory chapter of this study centred around the question of effectiveness regarding the TPP in the target colleges (see 1.2). This is investigated in terms of the organisation and implementation, different areas (aspects) of the TPP, duration and how the TPP is viewed by student teachers, lecturers and schools teachers. This empirical study looks firstly at which problems exist: how these are part of the TPP in relation to supervision, quality, evaluation and also whether the TPP has the potential to develop competent, committed and empowered educators. Secondly this study aims at gaining insight by means of suggestions of participants on how the TPP can be improved (enriched) in a viable manner.

In the following sections 3.2 – 3.5, the research approach, target population, research method and data analysis method will be described.

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3.2   RESEARCH APPROACH

Although two approaches, namely qualitative and quantitative were considered initially for this study, only a quantitative approach was chosen. Both these approaches have the potential to contribute to a better understanding of the student teaching programme would probably indicate patterns and trends. Because of the practical implications of a qualitative investigation in an area where the subjects are living far apart and transport is often a problem, it was decided to follow a quantitative approach. Secondly a quantitative approach would make it possible to draw comparisons between groups about regarding different organisational factors, programme implementation factors and perceptions of student teachers, lecturers and teachers about the TPP.

3.3   THE TARGET POPULATION

The three colleges in the central region namely Cape College, which is situated near Fort Beaufort, Griffiths Mxenge in Zwelitsha near King Williams Town and Dr W.B. Rubusana College in Mdantsane near East London, were identified for the purpose of the study. Three high schools were also identified, because they are relatively close to the colleges. These are also some of the schools that are used by student teachers when they practise teaching. Mzomhle High School is in Mdantsane and is nearest to Dr W.B. Rubusana College. Nonceba High School is in Zwelitsha and Imiqhayi High School is situated in a village. A village school was chosen, firstly because it is nearby to one of the target colleges (Griffith Mxenge College) and secondly in order to determine whether there would be differences between the circumstances in the township and the village school.

The targeted participants for the study were college lecturers who are involved in preparing students for the teaching practice. All the third year students doing the Secondary Teachers' Diploma (S.T.D. 3) in the three colleges were also targeted. Some of the school teachers, namely those who take part in the supervision of student teachers either as subject teachers or as class teachers were included. Rectors of the three colleges together with the three principals of the selected schools were also targeted for participation.

The reasoning behind the selection of the student participants was that, although the entire three year programme of teaching practice is being evaluated, only third year students were included, because of their level of training The course III students are considered to have gained more experience than first and second year students. They are probably more informed about the TPP and therefore they should be able to make more reliable value judgements about the TPP. Student teachers' participation is explained as it was at each individual college when the survey was done.

3.3.1   Griffiths Mxenge College students

This college offers only a Secondary Teachers' Diploma, so it had more S.T.D. students than the other two colleges. There were 130 registered full time students but, only one hundred students participated in the investigation and questionnaires were distributed to them.

3.3.2   Dr WB Rubusana College students

The college offers three teachers' diplomas namely S.T.D., Primary Teachers' Diploma (P.T.D.) and Junior Primary Teachers' Diploma (J.P.T.D.) There were only twenty-three registered full time S.T.D. 3 students. All of them were included for participation.

3.3.3   Cape College students

Like Dr WB Rubusana College, the three teachers' diplomas are offered and forty full-time students were registered for S.T.D. 3 at the time of the investigation. All the S.T.D. 3 students were included in the target population for the study. The teaching practice programme for the colleges was explained in the previous chapter (see 2.3).

It was considered important to include third year students since they are the major participants in the TPP. Their responses are crucial to the understanding of the relevance of the programme and their opinions about the programme can probably contribute towards the development and improvement of the TPP.

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3.3.4 The lecturers

The lecturers who are involved in the organisation of the TPP, those who teach subject didactics and those who are in charge of all the professional subjects, were targeted for participation. As people who have practical experience in the preparation of student teachers, their contribution to this study is very important in terms of providing suggestions and recommendations relating to student teaching. They are also in a better position to know the areas of the programme that are likely to present problems and they may have possible solutions to some of those problems.

3.3.5 Rectors and principals

It was assumed that from a management perspective, rectors of colleges and principals of schools would know better whether the implementation of the programme was cost-effective or not. Furthermore, they would be in a position to assess whether the programme of teaching practice interferes with the entire programme of colleges or schools and if it does, to what extent. In this regard, their contribution would help towards the improvement of the programme regarding cost-effectiveness and time scheduling. Unfortunately one of the rectors did not respond and only one principal responded. The category rector/*principal* has been left out but the responses are added to that of the lecuters and teachers respectively and reported as part of those categories.

3.3.6 School teachers

During the organisation stage of the school-based teaching practice session, the school teachers provide student teachers with lesson topics that should be taught. They are expected to welcome students in their classes and to remain with them until the end of each session. During the third year, student teachers often concentrate on the teaching of Grades 10, 11 and 12 (standards 8, 9 and 10). At the third-year level, students teachers are supervised mainly by either subject teachers or class teachers of these classes while they present lessons. The teachers' roles are that of guiding and assessing the student's progress. They have the right to suggest appropriate teaching methods and strategies. Student teachers are supposed to learn from them the reality of the school situation regarding class management, school administration, school

organisation as well as extra-curricular activities. During the practise sessions, teachers spend more time with student teachers, they can therefore provide first-hand information on what goes on during student teaching regarding lesson presentation, class management and extra-murals. If teachers manage to maintain a relationship of trust with student teachers, they are also likely to know how students feel about the practice.

3.4   THE RESEARCH METHOD

The study was conducted during 1997. The survey method was considered an appropriate method for data collection since opinions and attitudes are tested in this study and anonymous respondents would probably be more open to give an honest opinion. Questionnaires were used to conduct the survey.

3.4.1   The measuring instrument

The reasons for using questionnaires for data collection were as follows:

- Questionnaires would be less expensive than other methods and would be a more convenient means of assessing the widely scattered respondents.
- The anonymity of the subjects could most likely be preserved since nobody would be required to give his or her name, and there would be no direct contact between the reseracher and most of the subjects. This would be done in order to encourage honest and frank responses.

Structured self-administered questionnaires were used. The questionnaire was divided into three sections, namely A, B and C. Section A dealt with the respondents' biographical information, Section B with aspects of the TPP and Section C with the impact and evaluation of the program. The tasks to be performed by the participants included responding to questions that required closed and open answers, selection of items on a four or five point Likert scale and follow-up answers to "yes/no" questions. Respondents were also afforded an opportunity to give suggestions and recommendations on whatever they felt could contribute to an improved programme. Valuable information that might have been left out by the researcher could be filled in

through the use of open questions in the questionnaire since the respondents were allowed to complete the questionnaire at their own pace.

One format of the questionnaire was used for all the groups of respondents, that is lecturers, teachers and student teachers. There were, however, questions that were specific for each group. Examples of such questions are question three, four and five (see appendix A). The identification of the institution was necessary in order to validate other questions, for example the response to the number of students enrolled at the institution. The response to this question could possibly indicate how informed the respondents were.

The nature of the questionnaire was as follows:
Firstly the questionnaire was based on relevant issues relating to the value, organisation, relevance of learning areas, guidance, relationships, implementation, duration and perceptions of the overall effect of the TPP.

The first part dealt with respondents' biographical information that is questions 1-8. The experience of lecturers and teachers is believed to be an important factor in their evaluation of the programme. For example, the number of years respondents had been at the school of college, and thus have been involved in the programme of student teaching, would probably influence their experience and therefore their perceptions regarding the TPP. Knowing the number of years experience (question 4) would also give an indication of how well the respondents are informed about the TPP. Student teachers were required to indicate whether they are boarders or day students (question 7). The intention was to establish whether there would be concerns that would be relevant only to either boarders or day students.

The second set of questions (9-19) related to the student teachers' perception of the TPP in relation to its organisation, value and relevance (see Appendix A). Respondents were also required to indicate reasons why student teachers register in colleges of education (question 8). It was important to include this questions since it was stated in the literature review that some of the problems experienced in teacher education related to the reasons why student register at colleges of education (see 2.3.2.2). It is believed that one is likely to be motivated by the goals one has. Those

goals are often related to the reasons behind a student's registration at the college. Students' understanding of the TPP was assessed (questions 15 - 16) in order to be able to interpret identify the reason behind their apparent lack of motivation regarding the TPP. It was reasoned that if students considered teaching practice significant, challenging and agreed that they were satisfied with the TPP (question 9 - 10) and yet were not enthusiastic about it, then that would be an indication that there are probably other problems facing teaching practice. It was necessary to know whether respondents were involved in the organisation of the programme (question 13) and whether they were aware of what their institutions' missions were in relation to the TPP. It was assumed knowing the mission of the institutions would add to the participants' perception of the value of the TPP and would strengthen their commitment to the programme. It was also important to know whether the programme of student teaching presented problems (question 11), as well as to become aware of the nature of the most common problems. This could contribute to the identification of possible reasons for the apparent lack of motivation that was noted with some students and experienced teachers (see 1.3).

The third set of questions (20 - 30) tested the respondents' opinions regarding various aspects of the TPP, namely how they felt about the learning areas included in the programme (question 20 - 21), whether they would like any changes (like additions or omissions) to be made (question 20) or whether they would like the programme to remain as it was at the time of the investigation.

The questionnaire was designed to cover the possible areas of concern as they were found to be in the developed countries and in South Africa in the literature reviewed on teacher education. The intention was to find out to what extent those concerns are part of the Teaching Practice Programme in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape, so that strategies could be designed to address those concerns. The process of gathering information from respondents is explained below.

3.4.2 The process of data collection

Permission to conduct a survey at the colleges and schools was obtained from the Eastern Cape Department of Education. The institutions were requested to co-operate

in this regard after the aims of the study were explained to the participants. Questionnaires were distributed personally in order to explain the rationale and aims of the study. They were handed to the senior members of staff in the colleges and to the principals in the schools. A total of 263 questionnaires were distributed. The table 3.1 indicates the number of questionnaires distributed at each institution. The number of questionnaires distributed to schools are lower than that of colleges, because not all the teachers at the school are involved in the teaching practice programme.

Table 3.1:   Questionnaire distribution

Griffiths Mxenge College	130
Dr WB Rubusana College	43
Cape College	60
Mzomhle High School	10
Imiqhayi High School	10
Nonceba High School	10
TOTAL	**263**

A period of three weeks was allowed for the respondents to complete the questionnaires. In order to expedite the process of data analysis, questionnaires were collected personally. Problems were encountered as all three principals had, for some reason, not given the questionnaires to the teachers and that necessitated an extra two days to be allowed for completion of the questionnaires. The same applied to the college lecturers. Very few of them had attended to the questionnaires immediately, therefore extra time was given to them as well. The extension of time was inevitable as failure to do this would have affected the response rate and it would not have been possible to proceed with the research.

The available data was then analysed as follows.

3.5   DATA ANALYSIS

The statistical functions of the Windows 95 Excel Programme was used to analyse the data. The responses were analysed in terms of all institutions and according to the categories lecturers, teachers and students. As stated before (see 3.3.5) the categories

for principals and rectors were combined with those of the teachers and lecturers. Attention was also given to sub-categories, (NA=Not Applicable and NR=No Response) because these could also indicate certain trends.

The descriptive statistical procedures employed were frequency and contingency tables to indicate patterns and trends according to categories. These patterns and trends would make it possible to draw conclusions about the programme. Cross tabulation of frequencies was done in order to show relationships between the different responses to various questions. Responses to open ended questions were also analysed and categorised. A more detailed description of the results follows in chapter four.

3.6 SUMMARY

In this chapter the target population, research approach, method and process of data collection were described, as well as the method of data analysis. The results of the survey will be reported and interpreted in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPORT AND INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the results of the data analysis are reported and interpreted in terms of the aims of the study and in relation to the problem as outlined in the first chapter (see 1.2). The results are categorised into five broad categories, namely biographical information of the participants, perceived value and relevance of the Teaching Practice Programme (TPP) implementation, organisation and duration of the TPP, importance and duration of the various learning areas of the TPP, and suggestions regarding the TPP offered by the respondents.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

In spite of the problems experienced during the data collection (see 3.4.2) 142 (54%) of the 263 questionnaires that were distributed, were completed and returned. The lowest response rate (11,7%) was experienced at Cape College, where only seven of the original 60 questionnaires were returned. All other institutions had a response rate higher than 63,8%, and which varied between the categories of respondents. The distribution of the respondents across the various institutions and according to their position (ranks) within the institution is presented in table 4.1

As can be seen from Table 4.1, most participants were from the college sector. Of these, 92 (65%) were from the students' category, 26 (18%) from the lecturers', 22 (16%) from the teachers' and 2 (1%) from the principals' categories. The one percent from the rector/principal category could not be considered representative of that category and therefore the category of principal has been excluded from the tables that follow. It was decided that the one principal from the colleges be included in the number of lecturers and the one school principal be included in the category of teachers, hence the number of lecturers will be 27 and teachers will be 23 in number. .

Table 4.1: **Respondents according to ranks and institutions**

Name of Institution	C	S	Total	L	P/R	S	T
Cape College	7		7	26	1	92	
Griffiths Mxenge College	83		83		1		22
Dr WB Rubusana College	27		27				
Imiqhayi High School		7	7				..
Mzomhle High School		7	7				
Nonceba High School		9	9				
Non-response	2		2				
Total	119	23	142	26	2	92	22

C - College; S – School

L – Lecturer, P/R - Principal/Rector; S – Student; T – Teacher

The information in table 4.1 was required in order to compare perceptions and responses of the college population with those of the school population about the teaching practice programme. This information would further help with the understanding of the programme since the responses from different institutions and ranks, would provide different perspectives.

It was also important to know the respondents' experience of the TPP as experience would enable them to make more reliable judgements about the TPP. Students are exposed to the TPP from their first year, although they are only observers during the first year (see 2.3.2.2).

Table 4.2 indicates that no teacher or lecturer had less than three years teaching experience Their teaching experience ranges from three to seven years. This indicates that lecturers and teachers who supervise, assess and evaluate the student teachers are relatively experienced personnel. To know the respondents' experience in relation to the programme was necessary in order to confirm their value judgement of the programme. It is believed that experience is important to be a good teacher. It was assumed that one would know something better when one has been involved with the TPP longer than two years.

Table 4.2:   Respondents' experience of the TPP

Experience: number of years		Lecturers	Students	Teachers
Years as student	3		91	
	4		1	
Years as lecturer	3	1		
	4	1		
	5	24		
	7	1		
Years as teacher	3			4
	5			2
	7			14
Non-response				3
Total		**27**	**92**	**23**

As illustrated in this table 91 (99%) of the 92 students who participated in this study have been at college for three years and only one student has been there a year longer. Since the students are exposed to the programme from their first year (see 2.3.2.2), it can be assumed that their perceptions of the programme could be considered a relatively true reflection of the real situation regarding the TPP. Although it is not indicated in this table, additional information gathered about the students showed that out of the 92 students who responded to the questionnaire, 84% were boarders and 16% were day students. This information was required in order to establish whether there could be concerns and problems that are specific to boarders, or whether those experienced by day students are different from those experienced by boarders.

In the literature review it was stated that some of the problems experienced in teacher-preparation emanate from the reasons behind some students' registration at colleges (see 2.4). It is believed that a programme of teaching practice could be affected and could be seen as not being challenging and effective if the students register for wrong reasons. Their level of motivation and performance could be reduced and this could discredit a programme that could otherwise have been considered to be effective. The apparent lack of motivation and commitment to the programme mentioned in the rationale for the study (see 1.3) could result from students registering at colleges for

the wrong reasons. Therefore it was necessary to find out from the student teachers why they registered at colleges. The results are presented in table 4.3.

As indicated in table 4.3, the highest number of students (36.9%) registered at the college for what seems to be the wrong reason, namely because they could not afford to go to a university or technikon. However, this does not mean that they did not want to teach, because they could have registered for a teaching course at a university or technikon. The second and third highest responses were want to teach (26%) and want to work with learners (16.3%).

Table 4.3: **Various reasons for students registering at colleges**

REASONS	Lecturers		Students		Teachers	
	No	%	No	%	No	%
Not meeting university entrance requirements	4	14.81	2	2.17	1	4.34
Want to teach	3	11.11	15	16.30	1	4.34
Want to work with learners	3	11.11	24	26.08	6	26.08
Having no money for university/technikon fees	3	11.11	34	36.95	3	13.04
Parents wanting their children to be teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0
All of the above reasons	7	25.92	3	3.26	4	17.39
Non-response	7	25.92	14	15.21	8	34.74
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100

Although it was expected that only student teachers would respond to this question, it was interesting to find that there were some responses from all categories of participants. Whether the lecturers' and teachers' perceptions of these reasons differed from the real information given by the students would have given a broader perspective on the results. However, too few of them responded to get a clear indication of their opinions. The low response rate from teachers and lecturers could be an indication that they felt that the question was meant for student teachers only.

The questions in this section investigated the experience and interest of the participants regarding the teaching profession. This would be considered an indication of the quality of their responses regarding the TPP. In the following section the results

of the investigation into participants' impression of the TPP as a method that should contribute to the professional preparation of teachers, are reported.

4.3   PERCEIVED VALUE AND RELEVANCE OF THE TPP

The following tables indicate responses with regard to the participants' perception of the overall value of the TPP. It was necessary to establish the respondents' understanding of the programme as a significant learning experience. Table 4.4 shows the results.

In table 4.4, 41.54% of the respondents agreed that student teaching practice is a significant learning experience and 40.8% strongly agreed.. That means the highest number of respondents perceived student teaching practice as a significant learning experience. With the agreed and strongly agreed categories added together, the responses by the various respondents were lecturers (59.3%), students (89.1%) and teachers (82.6%). The fact that more than 30% of the lecturers reacted negatively should not be ignored.

Table 4.4:   **Respondents' perceptions of the student teaching programme as a significant learning experience**

	Lecturers		Students		Teachers		Total	%
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Strongly agree	7	25.92	40	43.47	11	47.82	58	40.84
Agree	9	33.33	42	45.65	8	34.78	59	41.54
Disagree	8	29.62	5	5.43	2	8.69	15	10.56
Strongly disagree	1	3.70	0	0	0	0	1	0.70
Non-response	2	7.40	5	5.43	2	8.69	9	6.33
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

A question was asked to find out who benefits most from the TPP. The responses would indicate the value of the programme as experienced by the different people involved with it. The results indicated that the majority (68%) of the respondents confirmed that it is the student teachers who benefit most from the programme. The

14% who had a different opinion, believed that they all benefit from the programme meaning lecturers, teachers as well as student teachers.

The value of the TPP would be reflected in the extent to which participants perceived the programme as having an impact on them personally, as well as on various aspects related to their teaching. The five response categories that would indicate the intensity of the programme's impact on each area that might be affected by it, were as follows: very positive impact = 5, positive impact = 4, neither positive nor negative impact = 3, negative impact = 2 and very negative impact = 1. The responses are illustrated in Figure 4.1.
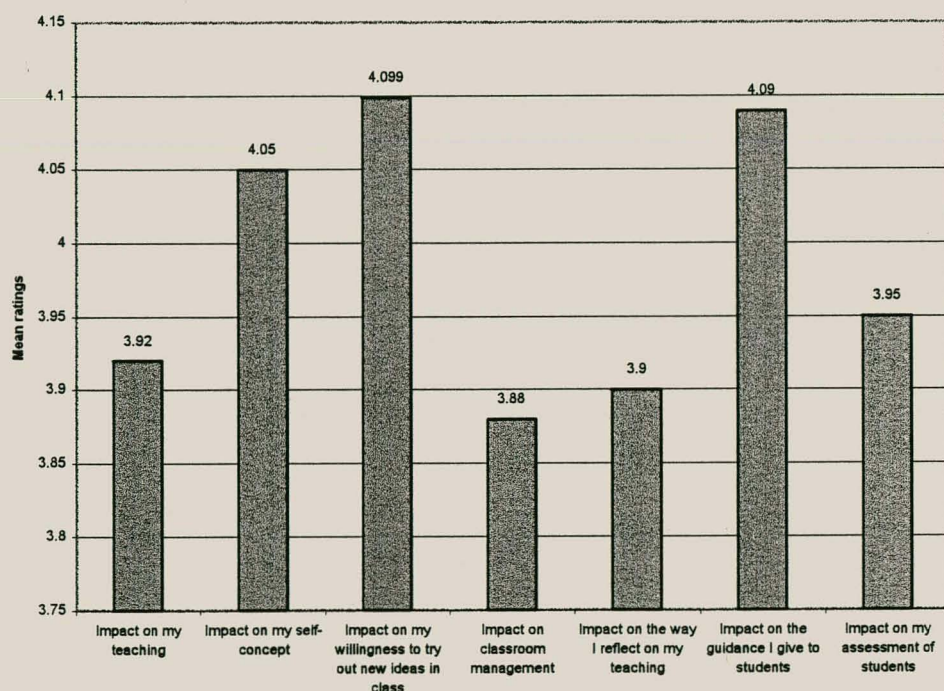
Figure 4.1: Areas and intensity of impact.

Figure 4.1 shows that the general trend, as represented by the number 4 on the rating scale, is that the TPP's most positive impact was on the respondents' willingness to try out new ideas in class. The second highest rated aspect that showed a positive impact, was on their guidance to students and in the third highest category was the TPP's impact on the participants', self-concept. It is commendable for the programme to have a positive impact on one's desire to try out new ideas. When teachers are able to give quality guidance in terms of the new ideas, their self-concept is likely to be developed further. The positive self-concept further builds self-confidence which has

the potential to lead to creativity and reflective practice. Presently the programme seems to have had neither a positive nor a negative impact on the way respondents reflect on their teaching.

To further test the respondents' perception of the value of the TPP, they were required to indicate whether they were satisfied with the present programme or not. The results are indicated in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Satisfaction with the present TPP

Response Categories	Lecturers		Students		Teachers		Total	
Satisfied	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**	**No**	**%**
Yes	9	33.33	62	67.39	13	56.52	84	59
No	18	66.66	28	30.43	9	39.13	55	39
Non-response	0	0	2	2.17	1	4.34	3	2
Total	**27**	**100**	**92**	**100**	**23**	**100**	**142**	**100**

Table 4.5 indicates that 59% of the respondents are satisfied with the TPP and 39% are not satisfied. Student teachers make up the greater section of the satisfied respondents. This is possibly so because at their level they have little experience of programmes other than the one offered by the colleges. Those who are not satisfied with the programme, are mainly lecturers and teachers. Again possibly experience may have taught them that there are areas that need to be re-organised. Their suggestions later in this chapter (see 4.6) might explain this better.

It would add to the value of the programme if it were considered relevant in terms of the institution's mission statement. Therefore to what extent the TPP fits in with the mission of the institution had to be established. Participants were first asked whether they know the mission statement and then whether they knew what the aims of the TPP were. If they responded positively, they were asked to state whether they considered the aims of the TPP to be in line with the mission statement. The results are reported in tables 4.6 and 4.7

Table 4.6:   Knowledge of mission statements of institutions

	Lecturers		Students		Teachers		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No	5	18.5	54	58.7	14	16.8	73	51.4
Yes	20	74.7	27	29.3	8	34.9	55	38.7
Non-response	2	11.8	11	11.9	1	4.35	14	9.8
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

Table 4.6 indicates that 74,7% of the lecturers knew the mission statements of their institutions, while only 34,9% of the teachers and less than 30% of the students knew the mission statement. This implies that only the lecturers would be in a position to judge whether the TPP is in line with the mission statement. This was not the case. There was a discrepancy in the second part of the answers. Respondents who did not know the mission were not expected to respond to the next part of the question which required that they indicate whether the programme was in line with the mission or not. There seems to have been some confusion, because even those who have answered "No" to the previous question, have responded to say the programme is in line with the mission. As a result of this discrepancy, the responses could not be considered reliable.

As can be seen in table 4.7, the results were different regarding the participants' knowledge of the aims of the TPP. Knowing the aims would possibly also motivate the participants towards achieving them.

Table 4.7:   Knowledge of aims of the TPP

	Lecturers		Students		Teachers		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No	5	18.6	11	12	8	34.8	24	16.9
Yes	21	77.7	74	80.4	14	60.9	109	76.7
Non-response	1	3.7	7	7.6	1	4.3	9	6.4
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

The results presented in Table 4.7 indicate that the largest number of respondents know the aim of TPP. This is important because when the aims are known, one can expect that the participants would be able to direct their efforts towards achieving the aims of the programme. It can also be assumed that the respondents would be able to assess the TPP with the aims as criteria. This implies that the criteria against which they assess various aspects of the programme are known to them.

It was assumed that the importance attached to the TPP by the different people involved in it would be reflected in specific behaviours. To evaluate how the respondents perceived the behaviour of the various role players, they had to indicate to what extent they agree or disagree with the following statements:

- student teachers do not always prepare for class;
- school teachers are not prepared to assist student teachers;
- student teaching disrupts school's programmes;
- principals are not co-operative regarding student teaching;
- college lecturers are not always available for supervising student teachers;
- student teaching causes conflict between school teachers and lecturers;
- department officials show no interest in student teaching practice.

These statements relate to both the effective implementation of the programme as well as to the perceived value of the TPP. The responses are illustrated in figure 4.2.
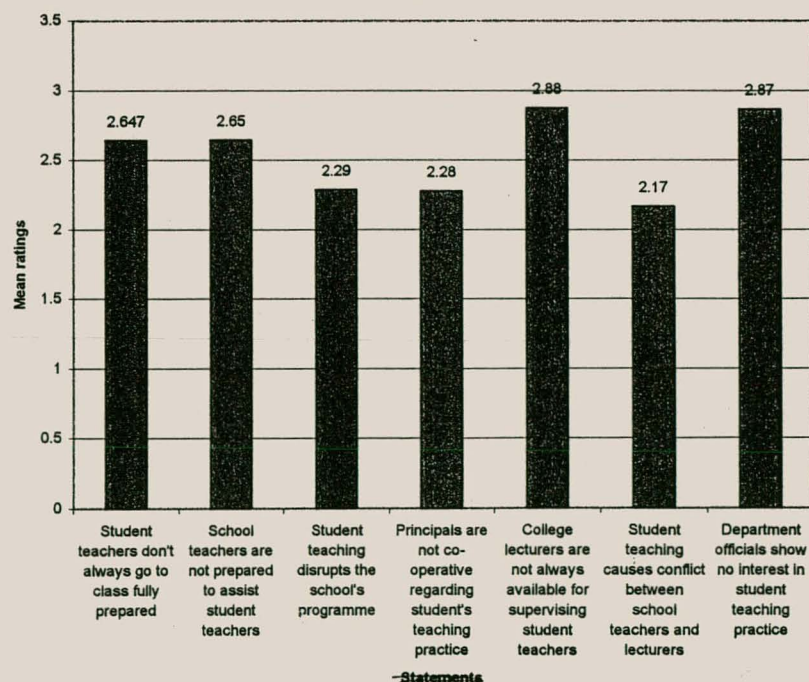

Figure 4.2: Opinions about role players' behaviour

Figure 4.2 illustrates the respondents' opinions about the statements. Numbers 2 and 3 on they Y-axis respectively represent categories disagree and agree. According to the figures, respondents disagree with all the statements. This means that the opposite is said about all the statements. While this is the situation, the means of four of the statements as represented by the figures 2.65, 2.65, 2.88 and 2.87 tend to lean more towards the agree category. Some of the statements, for example, (supervising personnel not being available resulting in inadequate supervision, the conflict between school teachers and lecturers about the gap between theory and practice, lack of co-operation from school teachers) were raised as disturbing concerns in teacher education in the developed countries. Perhaps the possibility of some of the statements being true, will be raised in the suggestions and recommendations by respondents later in this study (see 4.6).

The quality of the TPP was tested in relation to how respondents perceived the organisation and duration of the TPP, as well as the appropriateness of the learning areas covered during the programme. This will be discussed in the following two sections.

4.4   IMPLEMENTATION, ORGANISATION AND DURATION OF TPP

It was necessary to find out whether respondents were practically involved in the organisation of the programme. The indication was that only 22% of the lecturers, 13% of the students, and no teachers were part of the organisation process of the programme of student teaching. In their suggestions a number of student teachers have raised the concern that it would be fruitful if they were included in the organisation of the programme. In their opinion, some of the transport and placement problems could be prevented by their contribution.

According to Table 4.8, 49.29% of the respondents believe that student teachers have not experienced problems with their placement. The 46.47% who agreed that students have experienced problems, have stated the following as major problems with placement. In many instances student teachers seemingly have not received the kind of welcome and guidance they would expect from teachers. As indicated by most student teachers, school pupils disrupt classes continuously by holding meetings during tuition

time, with the result that it becomes impossible to present the required number of lessons expected by college lecturers. A problem raised by day students with their placement was the expense involved as they have to travel by taxi to the various schools. They believe that students' travelling expenses should be reimbursed by the education department. One student teacher stated that university students were favoured by some schools. One principal was quoted as having said it in no uncertain terms, that university students deserved preference. Over-crowding and insufficient facilities were said to be problems experienced in general with placement.

Table 4.8: **Placement problems experienced by student teachers during teaching practice in the schools**

Response Categories	Lecturer		Student		Teacher		Total	%
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No	8	29.62	47	51.08	15	65.21	70	49.29
Yes	19	70.37	40	43.47	7	30.43	66	46.47
Non-response	0	0	5	5.43	1	4.34	6	4.22
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

A different kind of problem mentioned was the lack of co-ordination of the programme between schools and colleges with resultant lack of co-operation on the part of school teachers. This created the need for better communication among all parties concerned. Table 4.9 show to what extent this was perceived to be a need.

Table 4.9: **Respondents' opinions about the need for collaborative discussions between schools and colleges**

Response Category	L		S		T		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Strongly agree	11	40.74	42	45.65	10	43.47	63	44.36
Agree	10	37.03	27	29.34	7	30.43	44	30.98
Disagree	0	-	6	6.52	2	8.69	8	5.63
Strongly Disagree	5	18.51	13	14.13	3	13.04	21	14.78
Non-response	1	3.70	4	4.34	1	4.34	6	4.22
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

As can be seen in Table 4.9, 44.36% of the respondents strongly agreed and 31% agreed to the idea of collaborative discussions between school teachers and college lectures and students, therefore a high 75% of the respondents are in favour of the better communication regarding the TPP. The majority of respondents seem to believe that such collaborative discussions could possibly eliminate some of the organisational and implementation problems that might be experienced in relation to the programme. The 4% non-response could have resulted from the fact that respondents did not understand the meaning of the word "collaborative". As indicated in the literature (see 2.2.5), collaborative discussions are necessary between schools and colleges in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice and secondly to promote commitment and good relationships that lead to development.

According to Botha (1987:16) the results of the study conducted in some of the former Transvaal (now Gauteng) colleges regarding the duration of the entire teaching practice was considered insufficient. The same concern was raised in studies conducted in the United States and United Kingdom (Holdaway et al. 1994:207). It then became necessary to establish how the respondents felt about the time allowed for student teaching practice in the central region of the Eastern Cape.

Table 4.10: Duration of the TPP

Programme duration	Lecturers	Students	Teachers	Total	
				No	**%**
2 - 3 months	3	51	7	61	44
4 - 6 months	14	20	4	38	26.8
6 - 8 months	2	3	4	9	6.3
9 - 12 months	8	16	7	31	21.8
Non-response		2	1	3	2.1
Total	27	92	23	142	100

Table 4.10 indicates that the period that is considered to be sufficient for student teaching practice must be longer than 2 - 3 months. All the respondents felt that the present 10-15 weeks allocated for student teaching in the target colleges is very

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insufficient. However, a larger number of respondents (54%) felt that TPP should be even longer, namely between four and twelve months. This seems to be in line with the suggestions given in Botha's study (see 2.3.1), and agrees with the need expressed in other countries to include an internship as part of the T.P.P. (see 2.2.6).

In an environment where funding is a problem, it is important to establish whether the programme is cost-effective or not. The perception of respondents regarding the situation in the target colleges and schools is illustrated in table 4.11

Table 4.11: Respondents' perception of cost effectiveness of the programme

Response Categories	Lecturers		Students		Teachers		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No	6	22.22	26	28.26	10	43.47	42	29.57
Yes	20	74.07	64	69.56	10	43.47	94	66.19
Non-response	1	3.70	2	2.17	3	13.04	6	4.22
Total	27	100	92	100	23	100	142	100

Table 4.11 indicates that a highest number of respondents believe that the TPP is cost-effective. The positive responses were made mainly by lecturers (74%) and students (69.6%). Although the responses of the rectors and principals are reported with those of the lecturers and teachers respectively, their opinion would probably give a more reliable response to the question. One principal and one rector responded and both of them indicated that the programme is cost-effective.

Since students are included in the governance of colleges and some teachers had been trained in these colleges they were also asked to respond to this question. However, the nature of their comments as well as those made by some lecturers who responded negatively indicated that they misunderstood the question. For example, among the 34% who did not agree (particularly lecturers) some did not seem happy about the fact that they pay for their travelling costs to the various schools. Some student teachers also mentioned that they should be re-imbursed for their travelling expenses.

4.5   DURATION AND IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING AREAS

To test the perceived importance of the different aspects of the TPP, a question was asked whether respondents would like to see more or less time given to specific learning areas of the programme. Response categories were presented as follows:

Much more time = 4,   The same time as now = 2

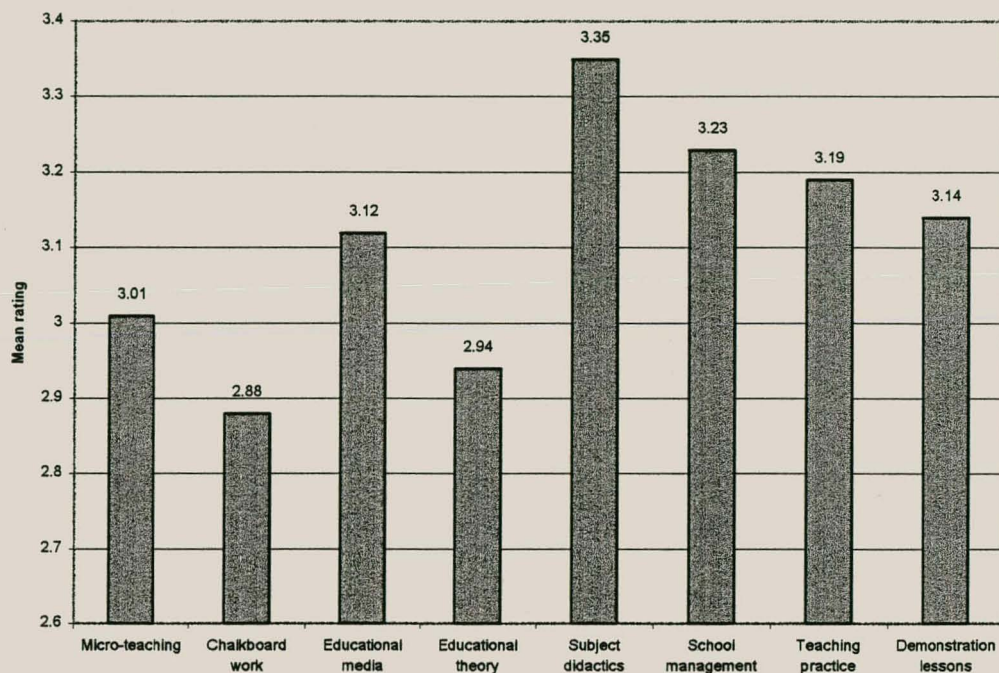A little more time = 3,   Less time = 1.

Figure 4.3: Duration of the various learning areas

As indicated by Figure 4.3 more time should be given to subject didactics, school management, teaching practice, demonstration lessons and educational media. These are key areas of the programme in which competence needs to be demonstrated before any quality learning by students can be expected to take place. Chalkboard work and educational theory time is considered sufficient.

To double-check the importance of the programme areas, respondents were required to indicate which learning areas should be emphasised. The results are illustrated in figure 4.3. Response categories were presented as follows: Strongly agree = 4, agree = 3, Disagree = 2 and Strongly disagree = 1. Respondents were required give their

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opinions about the importance of each area by stating whether the teaching practice programme should concentrate more or less on each of the areas.
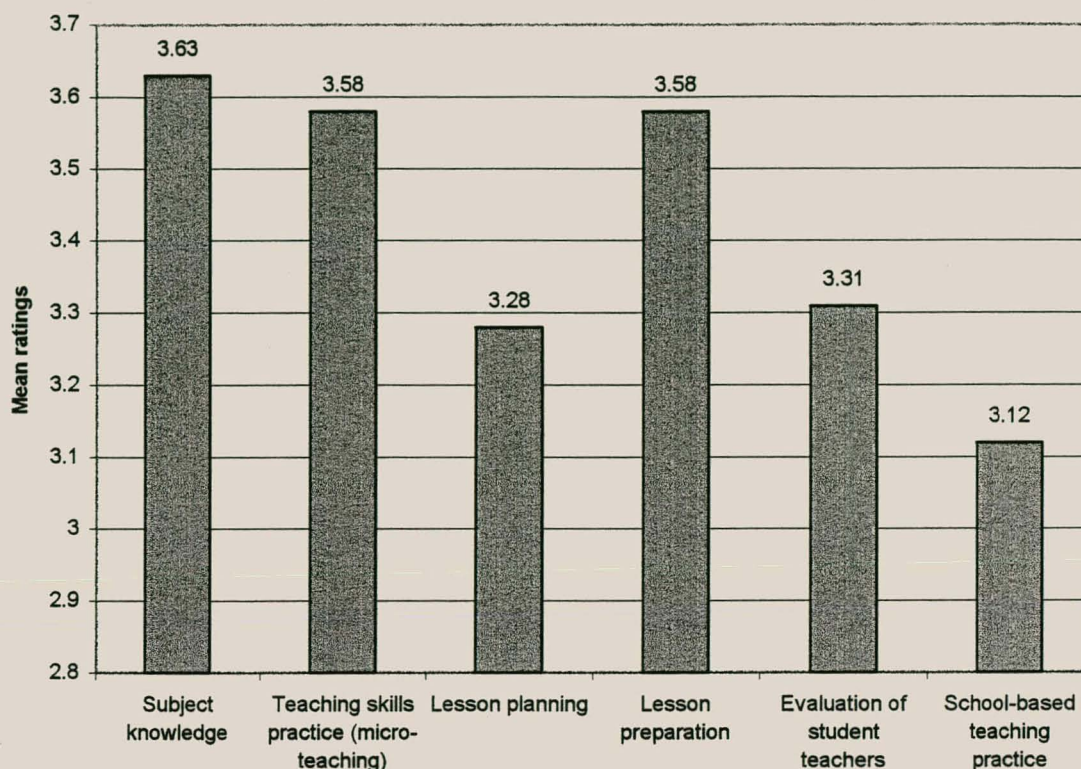

Figure 4.4: Importance of learning areas

As can be seen, subject knowledge, teaching skills and lesson preparation are close to 4, the strongly agree category. This can be explained in terms of what was indicated in figure 4.3, namely that subject knowledge which is related to subject didactics is considered to be very important. Subject content should be mastered by pupils therefore, teachers themselves need to have a thorough knowledge of the subjects they teach. Lesson preparation including appropriate teaching skills promote the chances of the subject content being presented successfully and effectively. The required level of competence can be achieved through the programme of constant teaching practice and demonstration lessons. Student teachers should have the opportunity to learn by observing lessons presented by others. In the literature reviewed on initial teacher preparation (see 2.2) research results according to Stone (1987:371) revealed that many teachers believed that their training did not equip them with sufficient knowledge to meet their in-service needs. Such knowledge is dealt with in school management. Perhaps this holds true in the colleges of education in the Central region of the Eastern Cape, hence respondents feel that the programme needs to concentrate more on school management. School-based teaching practice also provides student

teachers with opportunities to learn more about real classroom management, school organisation, management and administration.

To further establish whether there was a possibility of rearranging the programme, respondents were required to indicate, from given alternatives, whether they were in favour of or against re-organisation of those alternatives. Categories are represented thus: strongly in favour = 5, in favour of = 4, neither in favour nor against = 3, against = 2, strongly against = 1. Figure 4.5 below indicates the responses.
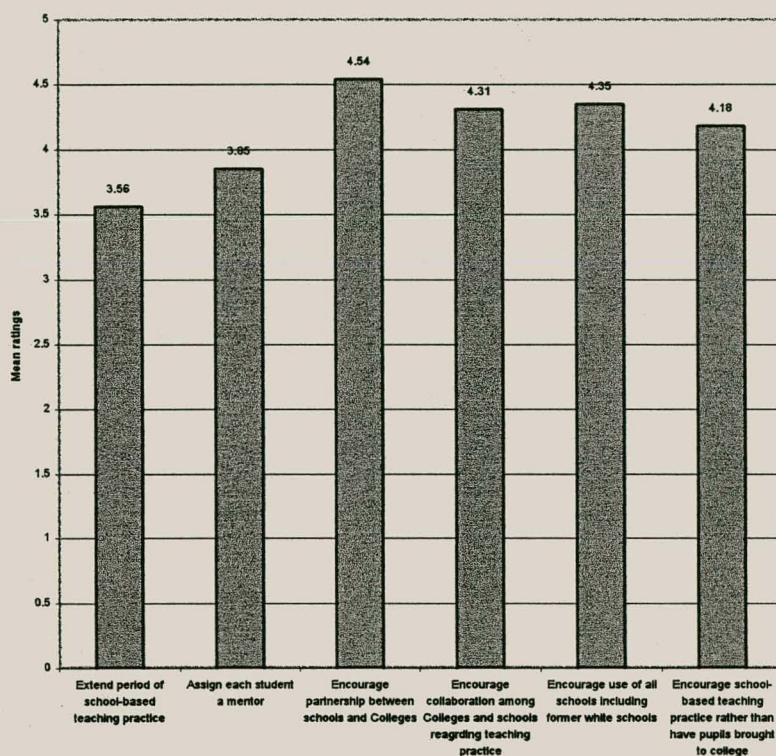

Figure 4.5: Preference areas for programme re-organisation.

As represented in Figure 4.5, the respondents were in favour of the re-organisation of all the alternatives particularly in a way that would encourage partnership between schools and colleges. The second highly rated alternative is that all colleges should be encouraged to use all schools for practice including former white schools. The idea is that student teachers should be exposed to all possible school situations. Those schools are believed to have better facilities and are better equipped with modern technology so student teachers could learn a great deal from the schools. While the reasons behind bringing pupils to college are understood, some respondents believe that real school–based student teaching when practised and encouraged, could hopefully contribute towards improvement of the programme.

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It is believed that the sizes of colleges and schools may affect student teaching in terms of not being able to accommodate all students on the teaching practice time table with the result that students in large colleges may end up not meeting the required number of evaluated lessons. The size of the institution would also throw light on the number of lecturers or teachers who are involved in student supervision. Schools with large classes could create problems for student teachers. The responses to this effect indicated that generally colleges have an enrolment of plus minus five hundred students. Schools in the townships have bigger numbers of up to nine hundred, and more pupils in some cases. The schools in the rural areas have a fewer number of pupils.

Respondents were required to give suggestions on how the programme could be run and improved if there was a need to improve it. The following suggestions were made.

4.6 SUGGESTIONS MADE BY PARTICIPANTS

Several suggestions were offered by student teachers, lecturers and school teachers. Those made by the last two groups are listed as educators suggestions. The suggestions offered by the participants are not prioritised within the categories, however, those listed first were mentioned by most of the respondents in the specific category. Suggestions made by student teachers are presented first, followed by those offered by educators.

4.6.1 Suggestions from student teachers

Student teachers seemed to be very concerned with the number of lessons required in order to be able to qualify as a teacher. In this regard they suggested that the colleges should not prescribe 100 lessons to be presented by students in four weeks for qualification as a teacher. The reason for this suggestion was that, in a real school situation, it is not always possible to meet this requirement for the following reasons: the already mentioned disruptions by pupils, shortened school terms due to extra mural activities like music festivals, athletics held during school hours, regular meetings held by teachers, organisations during school hours, taxi violence that is prevalent and in some cases makes it impossible for student teachers to be in the

schools in good time. This seemed to be a major concern of the Griffiths Mxenge college students in particular.

As day students, the main concern of Dr WB Rubusana college students, was that of transport fares. They also suggested that for the five weeks of practice teaching it would be better if students used more than one school, as it is very boring to remain in one school. Boredom could possibly be experienced when the atmosphere and conditions are not conducive to learning. As much as this could be a genuine concern, it is also important to remember that when one is employed to teach, one will have to remain in that one school for as long as one is employed by it.

Regarding student supervision, it seemed that 50% of the student population were discontent about the kind of supervision they were receiving. Twenty percent (20%) of the student teachers who participated, suggested that teachers needed to be "workshopped" so that they are "equipped" with skills to be able to give student teachers quality guidance and supervision.

A number of students who felt that the actual time for school-based practice be extended, suggested that this should be done with the purpose of giving students some experience in other school areas like management, administration rather than classroom practice only. One student further suggested that the system of block teaching practice be replaced with continuous practice throughout the year. The student believed that this would be a more realistic approach to teaching instead of them having to go back to college after two weeks when they are beginning to enjoy their stay in the schools.

There were also some suggestions regarding the nature of feedback given to students after assessment. More than 70% of the students who participated in this investigation, believed that a percentage rating is more motivating than merely a symbol like an A or a B, in that a student can be more aware of the level of his/her performance when a finer measure is used. The range within the categories represented by symbols are too wide. One of the suggestions referring to marker subjectivity, was that teachers should attempt to give an honest assessment of student teachers performance.

Twenty-two (22%) of the students suggested that more time should be given to practice rather than theory since theory deals mainly with the work that they had done in standard ten. Five percent (5%) of students suggested that only lessons for evaluation should be planned. This suggestion seems not right because every lesson has to be planned for effective presentation. One student raised a valid suggestion that problems experienced during the teaching practice session should be dealt with immediately. According to him this would help to bring about a better understanding between student teachers and supervising personnel rather than having lecturers and teachers blaming student teachers for not caring and students blame lecturers and teachers for not being committed to the programme because they already have certificates.

One student teacher suggested that supervising staff should be selected because some teachers do not set a good example and their kind of behaviour (not stated) is very discouraging to students.

This sounds like a serious appeal to those in charge of the programme of teaching practice. This seems to be related to what Hargreaves and Fullan (199:65) had said about "psychological discomfort" a situation where student teachers are upset about educator's behaviour, can be a damaging situation which doesn't relieve students from psychological discomfort (see 2.2.1).

4.6.2   Educators' suggestions

The following are suggestions made by lecturers and teachers.

A major concern of lecturers regarding the programme was that most student teachers do not take the TPP seriously. One lecturer suggested that the system of grading students' performance should be done away with. In this lecturer's opinion, as long as evaluation is associated with marks or grades, student teachers will always attach more importance to the grades they are given rather than to the level of competence they are expected to reach.

It was suggested that the habit of giving student teachers unannounced visits during their home-teaching practice, could help students to be always prepared rather than to be thoroughly prepared only when they know that they will be evaluated. However, such a practice might undermine the relationship of trust and respect that should be established between students and supervisors.

Approximately 60% of the lecturers seemed to be in support of what the student teachers have said about the need for the department of education to subsidise the expenses involved in the running of the TPP, like transport for students as well as for lecturers.

The fact that so few educators made suggestions could be indicative of their lack of commitment to the TPP. This causes concern, because they are the people who have practical experience of the TPP and whose input would have provided valuable information regarding the improvement and further development of the programme.

4.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter responses were reported and interpreted in the context of the TPP as used by the target colleges. The results were reported in terms of the perceived value and relevance of the TPP regarding the implementation, organisation, duration, as well as the relevance and duration of the learning areas covered by the programme. The suggestions offered by the participants were summarised and reported.

In the fifth and final chapter of this study the conclusions will be discussed and some recommendations regarding the TPP will be made.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

Ideas on initial teacher preparation in particular and on teacher education in general, have been raised and discussed in the foregoing chapters. In this final chapter, the study is put in perspective by giving a summary of the study, in terms of the aims, the stated problem, the hypotheses and the literature reviewed on initial teacher preparation. The results of the analysed data are synthesised and and conslusions are drawn. Some recommendations regarding the improvement of processes regarding the TPP are made, and suggestions for future research are offered.

5.2   SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study was to critically evaluate the overall efficacy of the TPP, to establish its relevance in terms of the learning areas that the TPP offers. The problem stated in the first chapter (see 1.2) questioned the effectiveness of the existing TPP in relation to its potential to produce competent and committed educators who are able to create and facilitate peaceful learning environments. This created the need to evaluate the TPP and to determine to what extent it contributed to the apparent lack of motivation, displayed by lecturers and student teachers in the school-based TPP. It was also necessary to involve prospective and experienced educators in evaluating the TPP so as to determine how it could be improved.

Some general concerns about teacher preparation in the developed countries were identified during the review of the literature. Areas that were considered inadequate in previous research conducted in Canada, United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia and South Africa, included the quality of student teaching. In this study circumstances which would influence the quality of student teaching were tested in relation to the organisation, implementation, various aspects and duration of the TPP. Other areas that caused some concern in the developed countries and which were also

investigated were the evaluation of students, the establishment of mentoring programmes, partnership and collaboration, internship and induction programmes.

In relation to the TPP in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape, it was stated hypothetically that the organisation of the TPP was inadequate and that the time set aside for the actual school-based student practice was considered insufficient. Due to these factors it was not possible to give student teachers reasonable experiences/practice to enable them to become competent and committed educators. It was also stated that the implementation of the TPP seemed to be satisfactory and that the TPP was beneficial to the student teachers, but that a review of the various aspects of the TPP was considered necessary.

These assumptions were tested during the empirical research. From the results of the investigation certain conclusions regarding the TPP were drawn. The findings and conclusions will be discussed in the following sections.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

In order to prioritise the most urgent concerns and proposed development actions, the discussion of the conclusions does not necessarily follow the same pattern as the reporting of the results. In other words, to indicate which aspects of the overall TPP were found to be the most positive and which the most negative, the findings are discussed according to the importance of the various findings, rather than according to their initial classification (see 4.1). This implies that findings regarding aspects of the learning areas for example might be discussed with certain aspects of the broader implementation of the programme in the same section. Since the overall perception of the value of the programme indicates whether the TPP should remain a part of the total teacher training process, the findings regarding participants' global impression are discussed first.

5.3.1 Overall perception of the programme

The respondents' general perception of the present programme of student teaching is that most of them considered it a significant learning experience (see 4.3). This means that the value of the school–based teaching practice programme should not be

underestimated. This positive reaction to the TPP emphasises the potential of the programme to contribute positively to the preparation of competent future educators. It also heightens the concern regarding those aspects of the TPP that might endanger the quality of the overall programme.

The impact of the programme on the participants seems to be mostly on their willingness to try out new ideas in the classroom (see figure 4.1). This is a positive finding, because with all the changes in the education system, it means that the TPP can play a role to prepare the future educators for these changes. Another positive aspect is that the TPP contributes to a positive self-image. As stated earlier (see 2.2.1.2) quality learning is promoted by a teacher who feels secure and competent.

The fact that the TPP is perceived to have the lowest impact on such an important factor in the quality of a school system as school management, is a matter of concern. This will be discussed in more detail in the following section (see 5.3.2.2).

The findings regarding the overall satisfaction with the programme varies among participants. Students and teachers seem to be relatively satisfied. The dissatisfaction with the programme experienced by lecturers can also be seen as a positive sign, if it would imply that they are aware of the need for change. This will make it easier to implement new developments regarding teaching practice.

Although the overall perception of the TPP seems to be positive, not all aspects regarding the programme were considered to be satisfactory. In the following two sections the positive will be discussed first, followed by those areas of the programme that cause concern. Of the various learning areas covered by the TPP the following were found to be relevant and important.

5.3.2   Positive aspects of the TPP

The following aspects of the TPP were rated highly relevant and are listed according to the order of importance indicated by the results. It is stated in each case whether the specific aspect is considered sufficiently well implemented, or whether it should be re-organised and/or developed.

5.3.2.1 Subject didactics and subject knowledge.

This learning area was found to be highly relevant. However, since the basic principles of teaching and learning are included in this aspect it was found that much more time should be given to it. This is the area in which a high level of competence regarding formulation of subject aims and objectives, effective teaching methods and strategies is a pre-requisite before quality learning can be expected to take place. Emphasis is put on thorough lesson planning, varied teaching approaches that promote active and out-comes based learning. If teacher educators could concentrate more on this aspect that includes assessment and evaluation then the programme could continue to develop reflective, creative and critical educators that teacher education is striving to produce.

5.3.2.2 School management.

This was considered a second important learning area that needs to be preserved and developed. Participants also stated that much more time should be given to school management (see 4.5). As was reported in the literature reviewed on teacher preparation, inadequate curricula fell short of preparing educators adequately for their in-service needs (see 2.2.1). One of these needs is the ability to manage the environment in which learning should take place. This refers not only to the classroom environment, but also to the total school environment, where a climate that promotes learning should be created. If more attention is given to this aspect, as suggested by the results of data, the possibility of developing responsible educators who would have the potential to produce future leaders is increased. However it was found that the present TPP has very little impact on the school management abilities of the participants.

5.3.2.3 Teaching practice.

Another learning area that was found to be important was teaching practice. This is also a positive finding, because the more students can practise teaching in a real classroom situation, the more confident they will become (see 2.2.1). The teaching skills practice and design and use of educational media provide prospective teachers

with opportunities to develop confidence and competence required for effective teaching.

There were also aspects of the TPP that were identified as insufficient and thus causing concern. These will be discussed in the following section.

5.3.3   Areas causing concern

The results of the investigation confirm that the duration of the school-based practice teaching is insufficient and that a review of the various aspects of the TPP is necessary. The following were identified as areas of concern of which some are related to the organisation of the programme.

5.3.3.1 Lack of co-ordination between schools and colleges.

The lack of communication and agreed upon codes of conduct between colleges and schools could be noted in various ways. In some cases this is evident in the way college student teachers are not welcome in schools. To some student teachers their stay in the schools is considered time wasted rather than time spent profitable and according to them, this is a source of demotivation. When the programme is well co-ordinated, and all parties concerned are aware of and committed to the aims of the TPP, student teachers would value their stay in the schools and their level of motivation could be increased. Good relationships need to be maintained at all times between schools and colleges. The programme should include regular discussions between and among institutions. This was mentioned in the literature review as a very important aspect in the total effectiveness and quality of teaching practice programmes (see 2.2.5).

5.3.3.2 Lack of necessary facilities and over-crowding

Inadequate facilities and over-crowded classrooms were mentioned by students in the comments made regarding the re-organisation of the TPP as well as in their general suggestions regarding the improvement of the TPP. In some areas in South Africa poor facilities and over-crowding is a serious problem and were also mentioned as hindering factors that affect student teaching performance (see 2.4). Some student

teachers tend to be intimidated by large classes in which a lack of discipline affects their enthusiasm and they tend to welcome the slightest chance available that could keep them away from class. Student teachers also commented on the fact that the general school atmosphere in some schools is not satisfactory and conducive to learning. Apart form this, the curriculum also contributes to the poor quality of learning.

5.3.3.3 Problems related to the curriculum

Comments were made by some student teachers about the curriculum that is "conservative and still teacher centred". Some student teachers who come to train in these colleges received their primary and secondary education in schools where there was a more student centered approach. This is also a factor that affects students' enthusiasm.

5.3.3.4 Insufficient time for practice.

Insufficient time for practice was found to be a matter of concern in teacher preparation in countries like Canada, Australia, United States as was discussed in the literature (see 2.2.6). The time allocated to school-based student practice is too short. According to some student teachers, too much is expected from them within a short space of time. In the literature reviewed, three phases which student teachers pass through were discussed (see 2.2.2). It was stated that the supervising staff should guard against expecting too much within too short a space of time. From previous research done in South Africa as well, this has been raised (Botha 1987:16). Some of the student teachers' comments were that it seems as if nothing will ever be done about this problem. This was stated as a reason why students concentrate more on the value of a pass mark rather than on the value of developing skills and competence.

5.3.3.5 Lack of funds to run adequate student practice.

Both students and experienced lecturers believe that teaching practice is costly particularly for student teachers. Seemingly colleges cannot afford to provide them with educational media for every lesson they have to prepare. It was found that when some student teachers realise that they cannot afford to prepare adequately, they rather

stayed away from class than struggle in class trying to explain the work without the necessary media to do so.

In some cases student teachers who have to travel to school out of their own expense do not go to school when they do not have money, particularly during the home-teaching sessions when they know that college lecturers will not be there to see that they have not attended school. This confirms the notion held by lecturers that student teachers do not take teaching practice seriously.

5.3.3.6 Inadequate supervision.

Although few student teachers suggested training of supervising staff, this suggestion is significant in that such training would equip and develop staff with skills. A number of researchers (see 2.2.2) have emphasised the damage that inadequate supervision could cause to prospective teachers. According to the findings, not all supervising staff members keep in mind that student teachers are not yet teachers and so cannot be expected to always do things as experienced teachers do. The kind of treatment they receive should take into consideration that they need to be relieved from any form of psychological discomfort. A number of student teachers have indicated that some school teachers and lecturers do not always set a good example in the way they conduct themselves. As learners, student teachers can be influenced negatively by supervisors who are considered to be role models. One particular student teacher stated that such behaviour by experienced teachers is discouraging to student teachers. Apart from proper supervision there are also other forms of support that teachers and lecturers can provide to students.

Because the home-teaching session is not controlled by college lecturers, problems relating to student teachers' unacceptable behaviour have been reported. According to the report, some student teachers do not honour classes. This confirms the finding of previous research in South Africa that teachers were often negligent during the student teaching period (Botha, 1987:17). During the present investigation cases of student teachers who do not prepare lessons properly, even to an extent of giving learners incorrect information, and student teachers who use inappropriate methods of lesson presentation have also been reported. In such situations lesson objectives and aims are

not achieved and this is probably why some teachers have a negative attitude towards teaching practice.

5.3.3.7 Insufficient student support

The need for mentoring, internship and induction programmes in the developed countries, was a result of the need to provide prospective teachers with the kind of support mentioned (see 2.2.4). This kind of support is not included in the present TPP.

5.3.3.8 Evaluation of student teaching.

It was found that evaluation does not always benefit student teachers. From the student teachers' comments and suggestions, it appears that the aims and objectives of students' evaluation are not clear to the students. In the literature study (see 2.2.3) two forms of evaluation are discussed. The formative assessment which measures improvement continuously over a period of time is not provided for in the programme of teaching practice. The only form of assessment practised is the summative evaluation. This could probably be an answer to the reason why it was found in this investigation that students attach more importance to a mark (grade) than to competence. This is so, because of the emphasis placed on summative assessment and because the students realise that a good pass can probably determine their future. This was evident in the student teachers' responses when they were required to indicate the most motivating performance rating. Most students indicated that a percentage is the most motivating form of rating. To students, a pass mark is 50%, therefore a percentage tells them where they stand in relation to the 50% which is a pass mark.

It suggests that as long as student evaluation is associated with a mark, it will be difficult to associate it with competence and as a means of measuring improvement, strengths and weaknesses.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings it is evident that the problems experienced by participants in the TPP vary. These problems are related to the organisation of the programme, rather than to the learning areas covered during the TPP. The most urgent problems are a

lack of proper co-ordination and communication between all parties concerned, namely college lecturers, school teachers and student teachers. Other problems relate to insufficient facilities and funds.

In view of these findings, the following recommendations are made:

To improve those areas of the programme that are considered satisfactory, regular workshops or other staff development activities should be conducted to create awareness of new developments and provide training. This will be especially necessary with the change to a new TPP. The best way to do this would be to include, school teachers and when necessary student teachers as well. Concerns and new ideas that relate to teacher education as well as student teaching could be discussed co-operatively and collaboratively for example, ideas about Curriculum 2005 and outcomes-based education.

Consultation between schools used for teaching practice and colleges should be encouraged and formalised. The involvement of all the staff that is preparing prospective teachers should be ensured by the collaborative interpretation of the aims of the TTP. Such discussions should include student teachers. The outcomes of the TPP teacher education should be clearly defined and understood by all participants. Only when the TPP is acknowledged as significant by all concerned, when the vision regarding the programme is shared, will the possibility of ownership and commitment start to exist, and can the TPP be utilised for the development of future educators.

Regarding the duration of the actual classroom teaching practice, it has been a recommendation even in earlier studies that the 10 to 15 weeks of teaching·practice is insufficient. There is a very strong need to extend the time for school-based teaching practice. An internship programme is highly recommended even if it is only for a period of six months. During this period the focus should be on skills development including the use of modern technology in education. This is the time during which prospective teachers should be affronted to mentors. The kind of mentoring proposed here is one that will involve and influence the prospective teachers in a way that will develop in them the ability to apply, direct and utilise the knowledge and skills acquired. This will include employment of outstanding educators who can act as role

models for student teachers. This will hopefully increase the level of motivation of prospective teachers.

An introduction to research methodology and procedures should be included in the curriculum of teacher education. This would develop in prospective teachers an inquiring mind that would possibly lead to creative and reflective thinking.

Provision of sufficient equipment and basic facilities in all the institutions that educate teachers including schools, is recommended. Proper facilities influence the quality of teacher education.

Evaluation of student teaching should be done continuously in order to detect students' strengths and weaknesses with the aim of helping students to improve their performance so that they can be come competent.

In the revised Norms and Standards for Educators (Technical Committee, 1998:127) it is indicated that teaching practice is an essential feature of all educator programmes. This means that it is a means of delivery and assessment, "not a course". Viewed from its present state, the DET syllabus of the TPP used in colleges in the central region of the Eastern Cape needs to be replaced by a programme that meets the requirements of the new system (Technical Committee, 1998).

In relation to the time student teachers spend in the schools for practice teaching presently, they should be provided with an authentic context within which they can experience and demonstrate the integration of the knowledge, skills and values that are developed in the entire curriculum. Professional development of student teachers depends on the educational use of teaching practice and experience. If internship programmes are difficult to monitor then the extension of the school based teaching practice should be considered.

Competence acquisition is a key factor in the preparation of quality teachers. The educators and the learners should aim at the acquisitions of skills, knowledge and acceptable values. Without developing these skills, there is no quality education.

Continuous assessment of these skills would encourage their integration in the learning of life skills.

5.5   RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Much research has been done on various areas of teaching preparation in the developed countries. More research needs to be done in the South African context on initial teacher training particularly as new developments are underway regarding curriculum, community orientated education and information and instructional technology. It is also recommended that future research should include classroom observation and interviews with all parties as further methods of data collection.

Further investigations should be undertaken into the possibility of including more opportunities for exposure aspects of school management and ways in which the TPP could provide these opportunities.

Cost-effective strategies to provide training to supervising staff should be identified and assessed, as well as strategies to improve mentorship. Especially ways in which formative assessment can be implemented should be investigated and be included in the training of supervisors.

Although according to the overall results of the study, a higher percentage of the respondents view the organisation and implementation of the TPP as being satisfactory there is a need for further research to be done on these areas. For example, more reasons for the lack of co-ordination between schools and colleges should be identified and possible solutions to these problems should be genrated, implemented and assessed. The apparent problem of the reluctance of various parties to accept accountability for the effective organisation of the TPP should be investigated.

5.6   CONCLUSION

From the discussions and findings presented in this study, it can be concluded that although there are some positive aspects of the programme, there are problems facing the present TPP in colleges of education in the central region of the Eastern Cape Province. These are problems that can be dealt with particularly if consultation and

co-ordination can be maintained among all institutions involved with initial teacher preparation.

Well-organised, effective and relevant teacher education programmes are a pre-requisite for the education and training of quality educators. A relevant and well organised TPP fulfils a crucial role in the achievement of higher level goals. It is necessary to take into consideration the needs of all parties involved in the TPP.

All teacher educators, prospective educators, in-service educators and communities who are committed to the cause of education, should contribute to the development of competent and quality educators who are not "addicted to grades and certificates, but to self improvement" (Davies, 1995:3) as well as improvement of teacher education programmes.

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QUESTIONAIRE ON THE EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME

I would appreciate it if you would answer the following questions as objectively as possible. Tick the appropriate box and where names are required please use the space provided.

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Is your institution a

School	
College	

2. Name of the Institution

3. Indicate your rank

Student	
Teacher	
Lecturer	
Principle	
Rector	

4. Number of years at College (**if student**) :

3 Years	
4 Years	
5 Years	

5. Number of years teaching experience :
    (if **lecturer** or **teacher**)

1-2 years	
3-4 years	
5-6 years	
7 and more years	

6. Number of years management experience :
    (if **Principal** or **Rector**)

2-3 years	
4-5 years	
6 and more years	

7. If you are a **student,** indicate whether :

Boarder	
Day Student	

8. Here are some reasons why students register at Colleges of Education. Tick (✓) the appropriate boxes to indicate your reasons for registering as a College student.

Not meeting university entrance requirements

Want to teach

Want to work with learners

Not having money for University / Technikon fees

Parents wanting their children to be teachers

All of the above reasons

B. ASPECTS OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMME

9. The teaching practice programme is viewed by students as the most significant learning experience in their professional preparation. What is your opinion about this statement? Tick the appropriate box to indicate your opinion.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

10. Who benefits mostly from the teaching practice programme? Tick the appropriate box. Choose only one.

- the school pupils
- the student teachers
- the school teachers
- the lecturers
- all of the above

11. Have student teachers experienced problems with their placement in the schools where they practise teaching?

Yes

No

12. If you have answered "Yes" to question 12 above, what kind of problems were experienced? Use the space below to explain

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13.   Are you involved in the organisation of the teaching practice programme ?

Yes

No

14.   If you have answered "Yes" to question 13 above, please indicate in what way are you involved ?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

15.   Do you happen to know the mission statement of your institution ?

Yes

No

16.   If you have answered "Yes" to question 15 above, would you say the teaching practice programme at your institution is in line with the mission ?

Yes

No

17.   Do you know what the aims and objectives of the teaching practice programme are ?

Yes

No

18.   If you have answered "No" to question 17 above, do you think knowing the aims and objectives of the teaching practice would help you in any way ?

Yes

No

19.   If you have answered "Yes: to question 18 above, do you think that the goal intended by this programme was worthwhile ?

Yes

No

20.   Listed below are various areas of the teaching practice programme. Indicate whether you would like to see more or less time given to each area. Please circle the number to show your opinion.

4.	much more time
3.	a little more time
2.	the same time as now
1.	less time

a)	Micro – teaching	1	2	3	4
b)	Chalkboard work	1	2	3	4
c)	Educational media	1	2	3	4
d)	Educational theory	1	2	3	4
e)	Subject didactics	1	2	3	4
f)	School management	1	2	3	4
g)	Teaching practice	1	2	3	4
h)	Demonstration lessons	1	2	3	4

21.   A teaching practice for student teachers should concentrate more on the following aspects of the programme. Indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each aspect.

4.	Strongly agree
3.	agree
2.	disagree
1.	strongly disagree

a)	Subject knowledge	1	2	3	4
b)	Teaching skills practice (micro-teaching)	1	2	3	4
c)	Lesson planning	1	2	3	4
d)	Lesson preparation	1	2	3	4

e) Evaluation of student teachers   1   2   3   4

f) School - based teaching practice   1   2   3   4

22. Please indicate your opinion about the following statements by circling a number

┌─────────────────────────────────────┐
│ 4.   Strongly agree   │
│ 3.   agree   │
│ 2.   disagree   │
│ 1.   strongly disagree   │
└─────────────────────────────────────┘

a) Student teachers don't always go to class   1   2   3   4
    fully prepared.

b) School teachers are not prepared to assist student   1   2   3   4
    teachers.

c) Student teaching disrupts the school's programme   1   2   3   4

d) Principals are not co-operative regarding student's   1   2   3   4
    teaching practice.

e) College lecturers are not always available for   1   2   3   4
    supervising student teachers

f) Student teaching causes conflict between school   1   2   3   4
    teachers and lecturers.

g) Department officials show no interest in student   1   2   3   4
    teaching practice.

23. Colleges should organise teaching practice discussions together with students and teachers
    from the schools where students do teaching practice. Please indicate your opinion
    regarding this statement by ticking the appropriate box.

    -   Strongly disagree
    -   Disagree
    -   Agree
    -   Strongly agree

C.   IMPACT AND EVALUATION OF THE TEACHING PRACTICE PROGRAMMING

24.   What would you say about the present teaching practice programme in your institution ?

a)   It is very challenging
b)   It is challenging
c)   It is somewhat challenging
d)   It is not challenging at all

25.   How long do you think student teachers should experience actual teaching practice sessions before they become qualified teachers ?

a)   2 – 3 months
b)   4 – 6 months
c)   6 – 8 months
d)   9 – 12 months

26.   Indicate to what extent has the teaching practice programme had an impact for you personally on each of the following. Please circle a number.

> 5.   very positive impact
> 4.   positive impact
> 3.   neither positive nor negative impact
> 2.   negative impact
> 1.   very negative impact

a)   Impact on my teaching   1   2   3   4   5

b)   Impact on my self – concept   1   2   3   4   5

c)   Impact on my willingness to try   1   2   3   4   5
       out new ideas in class

d)   Impact on my classroom management   1   2   3   4   5

e)   Impact on the way I reflect on my teaching 1   2   3   4   5

f)   Impact on the guidance I give to students   1   2   3   4   5

g)   Impact on my assessment of students   1   2   3   4   5

27. In the evaluation of student teacher's performance, which one of the following ratings is most encouraging to indicate good performance ?

a   a percentage
b)   a symbol
c)   a pass or fail
d)   just feedback only

28. Are you satisfied with the present teaching practice programme ?

Yes

No

29. If you have answered "No" to question 28 above, what recommendations do you have. Please use space to explain.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

30. If the teaching practice programme was to be reorganised, here are the alternatives that could be included in the programme.
What is your opinion regarding these alternatives ?
Circle a number for each alternative

5.	strongly in favour of
4.	in favour of
3.	neither in favour nor against
2.	against
1.	strongly against

a)   Extend period of school-based teaching practice   1   2   3   4   5

b)   Assign each student a mentor   1   2   3   4   5

c)   Encourage *partnership* between schools   1   2   3   4   5
     and Colleges

d)   Encourage *collaboration* among Colleges   1   2   3   4   5
     and schools regarding teaching practice

e)   Encourage use of all schools including   1   2   3   4   5
      former white schools

f)   Encourage school-based teaching   ·   1   2   3   4   5
      practice rather than have pupils brought
      to college

g)   Please give other suggestions

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

31   In terms of cost, what would you say about the teaching practice program in your
      institution ?

(a)   Cost effective
(b)   Not cost effective

32.   What is the total number of students in your institution ?

500+	
600+	
700+	
800+	
900+	