

**THE SUPERVISION AND ASSESSMENT
EXPERIENCES OF THE NATIONAL
PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION
(NPDE) FIELD WORKERS**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Deshini Pillay, declare that the research reported in this dissertation, except where otherwise indicated, is my original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. This dissertation does not contain other person's data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from another person. This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:

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We declare that this dissertation has / has not been submitted with our approval.

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Date:

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ABSTRACT

Five field workers and their coordinator of the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE), an in-service upgrading course for under-qualified teachers in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, were interviewed to find what meaning and practices informed them in carrying out their work with teachers.

This study was conducted within the interpretive paradigm and was qualitative in nature. Hence, data was collected using semi-structured interviews. No attempt has been undertaken to generalize the findings as the participants were few. This study is warranted and the findings have relevance for future research.

The key findings of the study are as follows.

- a) Guidelines for supervision – NPDE field workers and the NPDE coordinator revealed that the time frame for one day workshops was too short and this did not allow field workers the opportunity to address critical issues pertaining to the supervision process.
- b) Responsibility towards the NPDE students revealed that the NPDE field workers were not directly involved in choosing the number of NPDE students they had to assess and supervise.
- c) Professional development with regard to classroom observation – a lack of professional development revealed that fieldworkers had to rely on their own knowledge and reading to prepare themselves to supervise and assess the NPDE students.
- d) The role of the NPDE field workers in assessing and supervising the NPDE students – the inappropriate title was key element that emerged from the finding.
- e) Supervision out of class – revealed that this was done once the classroom assessment.
- f) Collaborative partnerships between students and field workers – partnerships formed seemed to be the key element that emerged from the finding. The partnerships formed was based on love, trust and understanding.
- g) Experiences of the NPDE field workers – The data revealed that field workers experiences during their supervision and assessment of the NPDE students were very enlightening.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
B.Ed.	Bachelor of Education
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CHE	Council for Higher Education
DOE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
HEQF	Higher Education Qualifications Framework
LTSM	Learning and teaching support materials
MEC	Member of the Executive Council (Provincial government equivalent to a minister)
NCHE	National Commission on Higher Education
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NPDE	National Professional Diploma in Education
NPF	National Policy Framework
NQF	National Qualification Framework
NSE	Norms and Standard for Educators
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
RAU	Rand Afrikaans University (now the University of Johannesburg)
REQV	Required Educational Qualification Value
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SACOL	South African College for Open Learning
SAIDE	South African Institute for Distance Education
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
UKZN	University of KwaZulu–Natal
USDOE	United States Department of Education

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 1994, and the advent of democracy in South Africa, there have been many changes in the educational system in South Africa, especially at the school level. These changes have had major implications for all South African teachers in terms of school curriculum, teacher development, school governance and quality assurance mechanisms. Particular to this study is the focus on teacher development as part of the transformational agenda of the country. Teachers were now expected to implement a new curriculum that they were not trained to implement. In addition, the implementation of this curriculum, in the form of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) required a teaching force that is well qualified, both in subject content and teaching methodologies. This meant that teachers had to be re - trained to implement this new school curriculum. The problem that the system faced was that approximately one third of the teaching force was un- or under-qualified (Ramrathan, 2002). Retraining for the different categories of teachers meant that the teachers had to be upgraded to a qualified teacher status, currently pegged at matriculation plus three (M+ 3) of professional training in teaching.

A further problem in upgrading teachers to M+3 level arose as a result of the transformatory changes to the higher education landscape and the introduction of the Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000). Which located teacher education within the higher education sector and the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) (a four- year professional qualification in teaching post- matriculation) and Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) being the only qualification of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that will qualify a teacher. This meant that teachers that were categorized as un- and under - qualified did not have a qualification path to achieve qualified teacher status. In order to address this major concern of teacher unions, professional bodies and education departments, a new interim qualification was developed to upgrade un and under – qualified teachers. This programme became known as the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE).

The global village in which South Africa positions itself is very competitive. Skills and knowledge have become important if South Africa is to keep up with leading, developing and developed nations. The post-apartheid government is very aware that quality school-based education and quality teacher education are prerequisites for development. To this end, improving the existing standard of teacher education has resulted in, over the past decade, a major focus on the upgrading of un- and under-qualified teachers.

The NPDE was designed specifically for under-qualified teachers to enhance their phase /subject knowledge, teaching and assessment skills. Since the vast majority of these teachers were schooled during the apartheid era.

They had minimal teacher development training under the old system of teacher training and were subjected to Bantu Education practices and ideologies, doing the NPDE program has meant that they have had to face an entirely different pedagogical and ideological dispensation from anything they have experienced before, let alone the personal trauma experienced as a result of now being declared as un- or under -qualified teachers.

Statistics on teachers across the country which emerged from the first National Teachers Audit (Department of Education 1995), provided critical information with regard to the number of teachers that are employed by the Department of Education. Subsequently other audits were commissioned and done. According to the Department of Education (2006, p. 8), “The 2006 audit was commissioned by the Department of Education following the recent studies and reports by the Human Sciences Research Council on behalf of the Education Labour Relations Council, reports of the Ministerial Committees on Rural Education and Teacher Education, and Teacher Education, and the Department of Education’s report (in association with the ETDP SETA and the International Labour Organization) on Teachers for the Future”. The Department of Education (DOE) (2006, p. 8) outlines that in 2006 there were 386 595 teachers employed by the Department of Education, of whom 19 407, (or 5 %) were in independent schools. The public institutions contained 173 850 teachers that were in primary schools and 53 988 that were in combined intermediate or middle schools. There were 15 954 Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) educators, 7 392 teachers working in special schools and 7 363 in Early Childhood Development (ECD), 24 118 (or 7%) teachers in public schools were employed by school governing bodies.

The Department of Education (2006, p. 8) provides “the following qualifications profile of teachers in public schools in 2005. Only teachers with Required Educational Qualification Value (REQV)¹³(meaning matriculation plus three years of post- matriculation professional training to become a teacher) status are regarded as professionally qualified.

REQV – 14 + - 53% - Total - 186 832

REQV - 13 - 38% - Total - 132 873

REQV - 12 - 6 % - Total - 22 621

REQV - 11 - 2 % - Total - 6 090

REQV - 10 - 1 % - Total - 4 929”.

These figures are an indication of the scope and scale if intervention is yet to upgrade teachers to qualified teacher status within the country. The NPDE was on offer since 2002 and by 2006 nearly 10% of teachers in the public schools were still not yet upgraded. One of the key questions that relate to this massive teacher upgrading process is the quality of the upgrading programme in terms of meeting the national agenda of having a well - qualified teaching force. It is within this key question of teacher upgrading that this study is conceptualized. It will focus on one aspect of quality intervention and that assessment and supervision of under-qualified teachers enrolled within the NPDE upgrading programme.

Having presented a background to teacher upgrading within South Africa, the rest of this chapter provides an overview of purpose and rationale for this study, the key research questions and an engagement with the Perspectives on Teacher Qualification Status and the South African Perspective on Teacher Qualification that frames this study.

1.2 THE PURPOSE, OF AND RATIONALE, FOR THIS STUDY

The purpose of this study is to explore the professional and personal experiences of field workers' supervision and assessment in supervising and assessing under-qualified teachers whilst registered for the NPDE teacher upgrading programme. The UKZN NPDE programme was chosen for this study as it is in the university at which I was registered for my Masters degree and the opportunity was offered to me to participate in a wider project researching different aspects of the NPDE programme. As I am very interested in issues of teacher development, I took this opportunity to research the focus area. I am currently a teacher in a school and periodically the school employs teachers that may not have the necessary knowledge and skills to teach. I am sometimes asked to mentor these teachers. This study will provide me with deep insights on supervising, assessing and mentoring teachers whilst in practice.

Although the NPDE programme has been running since 2002 at UKZN, and the use of field workers to assess and supervise students in their schools has been in place over the same period, no research has been done on field workers' lived experiences. Thus, although there is much interest in how effective the programme is to upgrade teachers, the critical role of the field workers is under- researched. My study intends to address this gap in knowledge about the NPDE teacher upgrading programme.

1.3 THE CRITICAL QUESTIONS

Two key research questions drive this study. They are:

What are the supervision roles and responsibilities of the NPDE field workers?

What assessment meaning and practices inform the way in which they (NPDE field workers) carry out these roles and responsibilities?

1.4 PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHER QUALIFICATION STATUS

Systems of contemporary teacher education and professional development have changed around the world. This is largely in response to the ‘technological turn,’ i.e. the explosion of technology and globalization. According to Brown and Lauder (1992, p. 48), “The significance of globalization and a national educational and economic development can be summarized in terms of a change in the rules, eligibility, engagement and wealth creation”. Knowledge is power, which is why increasing resources for, and attention to, education are being demanded by individuals and society.

As a novice researcher, my interest lies with teacher education and professional development, particularly in South Africa. This section of my study is on teacher qualification status, as this impacts on my research. According to Ingersoll (2007, p. 1), “Across the educational system of the world, few issues have received more attention in recent years than the problem of ensuring that elementary and secondary classrooms are all staffed with adequate qualified teachers”. I believe that the quality of teachers and teaching are among the most important ingredient that shape learning and growth of students around the world.

It is indeed the responsibility of both the governments and the education departments around the globe to help facilitate quality teachers in every classroom. One of the key areas that affects many countries is that governments around the globe have set up agencies to recruit qualified teachers. This is due to the fact that there is a growing teacher shortage in developed countries such as the United Kingdom, United States of America, United Arabs Emirates to name a few. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistic (2008, p. 1), “Governments around the world have voiced concern about the loss of well - qualified professionals, which impacts on the functioning of public services, especially in small states, planned recruitment from South to North can be seen to contradict in some ways”. The Mobility of recruiting teachers should not just be between the rich and the poor countries, but across neighbouring countries as well. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistic (2008, p. 3), “Private agencies recruit from Canada for schools in the United States and likewise South Africa recruits from Zimbabwe.” It has to be justified that when private agencies recruit teachers from other countries and neighbouring countries an imbalance within the Department of Education is created.

Ingersoll (2007, p. 8) states that “Some nations suffer from an apparent paradox - that despite an overall over production and over -supply of new teachers, there nevertheless appear to be substantial numbers of students without access to qualified teachers”. There are reasons why students in some nations do not have access to qualified teachers. A lot has to do with the type of qualification that warrants a teacher to be in a class. According to (Henke, Chen and Geis, 2000, p. 2), “In Hong Kong, teachers gain an entry with the equivalent of a two - year sub or associate degree, in China teachers must have a four – year college degree to teach in a secondary school and a high school diploma to teach in an elementary school, in Singapore a teacher is required to complete a five-year program that includes a bachelor’s degree plus a year of further coursework, in Thailand a five year program is the standard requirement for both elementary and secondary teachers, in the United States teachers at both the elementary and secondary level are required to hold a bachelor’s degree”. According to Hammond (2005, p. 231), “In Germany teachers get degrees in two subjects and pass a series of essay and overall examination before they undertake pedagogical training”. Different countries around the world have different teacher requirements in place. South Africa’s perspective on teacher qualification is explained below.

1.5 THE SOUTH AFRICAN TEACHER QUALIFICATION

The minim requirement to be a qualified teacher in South Africa is matric plus three years of training. This section discusses the South African teacher qualification. The apartheid era created an uneven landscape with regard to qualification and black South African teachers, in particular, were marginalized. They were not given the opportunity to quality education. Keevy (2009, p. 2) states that “While most white teachers received pre and in -service training at well resourced urban universities, most black teachers started teaching without even completing their own secondary schooling, much less the tertiary education that they needed”.

Due to the injustice of the past education system, the South African government and the Department of Education had to deal with a large number of teachers being un- or under-qualified. Keevy (2009, p.4) stressed that “These conditions of teachers being un- or under -qualified posed a threat to the quality of teacher development in the country, and the medium term National programs such as the National Professional Diploma In Education (NPDE) was developed to address this problem”. The National Professional Diploma In Education (NPDE) promised to allow teachers with inadequate training accelerated access to further higher education and training. The Higher Education Qualification Framework discusses the relevant qualification necessary to be a qualified teacher. This is further discussed in this chapter. The next section addresses the transformation in South Africa related to Teacher Development.

1.6 TRANSFORMATION IN SOUTH AFRICA RELATED TO TEACHER

DEVELOPMENT

Efforts to transform the apartheid system prior to the first democratic elections in South Africa, began in the early 1990 s. Prior to its transformation in 1994, the higher education system in South Africa was a racially fragmented system. As is observed in ADEA (2001, p.1), “Gross distortions and inequalities existed in the system, as manifested by the inequitable distribution of resources to institutions, that had enormous disparities between historically black and white higher educational institutions”. The post - apartheid government did however face many challenges with regard to Higher Education Institutions. As Stumpf (2001, p. 23) pointed out, “The major challenge for the post- 1994 government in the field of higher education has been to conceptualize, plan, and govern higher education in South Africa as a single coordinated system”.

One of the key elements of change was the merger of various colleges, universities and technikons. The Human Science Research Council (HSRC) (2005, p. 4) records that “With international trends, colleges of education were incorporated into existing universities and technikons, and from 120 colleges, with some 80 000 student teachers in 1994, colleges were first rationalized according to the quality of teacher education”. The next section of the study focuses on curriculum change, with special attention given to the introduction of Curriculum 2005 and outcomes - based education.

1.6.1 CURRICULUM CHANGE

Change to the structural landscape described above brought about a very significant shift with regard to curriculum in teacher education. According to Garfield (2004, p. 2), “Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was viewed as a planned framework of curriculum innovation, underpinned by factors such as redress, access, equity and development, whereas outcomes-based education in turn was the approach focusing on what is learned and how learning takes place”. Curriculum change occurred first in schools and this brought about changes in teacher education. The main aim of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was to introduce OBE in South Africa. Sayed (2003, p.257) highlights the fact that “Curriculum 2005, which produced the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) committed the education system to an outcomes-based education system, with emphasis on learning areas rather than on discrete and separate subjects”.

Harley and Wedekind (2003, p.109), explained that the “aim of the new curriculum was to begin to integrate education and training incorporating a view of learning which rejects rigid divisions between academic and applied knowledge, theory and practice”. C2005 created much confusion among teachers who had been trained and taught under apartheid rule.

These teachers had very little understanding of C2005, and hence experienced difficulty in it. The reason why these teachers experienced difficulty is that they were not given adequate guidance on how to unpack C2005 correctly. Harley and Wedekind (2003, p.112) reported that “minimal help was reported being received from the National Department of Education”. Lack of understanding by the teachers and insufficient help from the departmental officials were not the only obstacles to understanding C2005. Jansen (1997, 13 September) states that “this abnormality (i.e. the understanding and implementation of C2005) is compounded by the complexity of C2005 terminology”. Harley and Wedekind (2003, p.114) support this statement, saying “evidence in early research through the review committee of 2000 identifies complex and turgid terminology as a major obstacle to understanding of C2005”. Given how rapid the implementation of C2005 was, and how radically different this new national curriculum looked from any previous curriculum, it would be fair to say, that C2005 was politically driven.

It seemed clear that the majority of teachers throughout South Africa believed that C2005 would create equity for all. Hindle (2003, p. 232) mentions that “from the outset, teachers expressed hope and vision of C2005, believing it would achieve equity and redress”. Garfield (2004, p. 4) states that “this marked a significant era in South African history in terms of change from the past, as this change meant equality and equity for citizens of South Africa”.

Although C2005 was meant to bring about change in equality and equity, it brought about more than just a paradigm shift, it brought about factors of stress, resistance and demotivation to teachers, which has proved to be detrimental to the success of the ‘new’ curriculum (even in its revised form discussed below) and OBE. Arde and Bowman (2010, 11 July) note that luminaries like Mamphela Ramphele, for example, have said that “the Bantu Education system served children better than post-apartheid education”. It has to be emphasized that the Bantu Education system was one that catered for only black learners. The post - apartheid education system introduced C2005 and OBE so as to address the inequality of the past. Arde and Bowman (2010, 11 July), in considering the range of responses to C2005 and the introduction of OBE, nevertheless make a significant point when they note that, while “Experts in the education field are undivided in thrashing OBE [but] alas, they’re not as unified about what should replace it”.

The KZN MEC (equivalent to a provincial minister) for Education,, Senzo Mchunu believes that it would take approximately fifteen years to turn the education system in South Africa around. Although educationists around the different provinces, especially KwaZulu-Natal, have expressed their views and opinions on OBE and its failure, the Minister (Angie Motshekga) of Education’s new curriculum is, in the view of the media, likely to be welcomed by all. This new curriculum is one that focuses on the basics that are discussed in the report below.

According to the Report for the Review of the Implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (2009, p.12), “In July 2009, the new Education Minister, Angie Motshekga, appointed a panel of experts to investigate the nature of the challenges and problems experienced in the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and to develop a set of recommendations designed to improve the implementation of the NCS”. The reason for this is that the team could respond to comments from a variety of stakeholders on how the NCS has been implemented.

According to the Report (2009, p. 12), “The team set out to identify the challenges and pressure points”. One of the key elements was that for the last 10 years, OBE has been under persistent attack in South Africa and to deliberate on how things could be improved and to develop a set of practical interventions. The reason why OBE has been under attack is that it does not provide learning that is specified and essential. The Report (2009, p.16) draws on the fact that “The NCS is still characterized as being based on OBE, this is evident in both official and public discourse that to different people OBE means different things”. Since the review in 2009 the Department of Education (DOE) has moved away in the thinking and understanding of it within the current curriculum.

According to the Report (*ibid*, p.16) “The current process of review supports this move away from OBE, as it is suggested by the team that outcomes be replaced with clear content, concept and skill standards and clear and concise assessment requirements”. A strong recommendation that is made by the current review committee is that clarity should be communicated to the DOE so that the understanding from the past that is associated with OBE is not regarded as a privilege.

The Report (*ibid*, p. 44) recommends the following:

- “The new Curriculum and Assessment Policy documents must consist of curriculum and assessment statements which are clear, succinct, unambiguous, measurable and based on essential learning as represented by subject disciplines. Design features of OBE, especially learning outcomes and assessment standards, should not be featured in the curriculum documents.
- The current curriculum has severe knowledge gaps. These gaps must be addressed.
- Learning Programmes, Learning Areas and Subjects must all be called “Subjects” to ensure clarity, simplicity and consistency.
- The number of Learning Areas must be reduced officially to six subjects.”

The Report (*ibid*, p. 16) offers a five- year plan with three phases for improving curriculum implementation and the enhancement of teaching and learning in South African schools:

- “The first phase (18 months) should focus on streamlining the policy available to teachers, clarifying and specifying what they should teach. Limitations should be placed on who has the authority to give directives regarding what is supposed to be taught and how teaching and learning takes place.
- The second period (18 months to three years) should focus on creating tighter links between the curriculum and training. There must be clarity around the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the production and implementation of curriculum that is required. The two final years of the plan should focus on strengthening implementation and allowing the effects of the streamlining and strengthening initiatives to take hold in schools. This will culminate in wide -scale testing in 2014, which will offer some evidence of the progress made by the current administration to building a stable and streamlined curriculum process that addressed the current inequities”.

The goal of the Report (2009) is to improve the quality of education in South African Schools. Bowman (2010, 10 October) states that “ Professor Hugo mentions that Minister Angie Motshekga’s reforms are all about establishing a simple, clear and explicit system”. The present study moves on to the regulation and control in teacher education where the norms and standards for educators are discussed.

1.6.2. REGULATION AND CONTROL IN TEACHER EDUCATION

1.6.2.1 NORMS AND STANDARDS FOR EDUCATORS

The curriculum changes documented above are clearly underpinned by what it means to be an educator in the post - apartheid era. According to Wyk and Alexander (2010, p. 160), “The eight roles that an educator must be able to perform and describe in detail are:

- Learning mediator
- Interpreter and designer of learning programmes
- Leader
- Administrator and Manager/Scholar
- Researcher and lifelong learner
- Assessor
- Citizenship and Pastoral role
- Learning Area/Subject/Discipline/Phase Specialist Role”.

The range of demands placed on teachers is evident in the seven roles set out for them in the Norms and Standards for Educators, is impressive and is expected to have a significant impact on teacher training and curriculum schools initiatives in all school curricular.

According to Parker (2001, p. 29), “The Norms and Standards for Educators (NSE) used an outcomes-based approach to teacher education and provided a detailed account of what a competent educator can demonstrate. This new policy was to be feasible to the needs of learning and the country”. Parker (2001, p. 29) adds that it is clear that “The new policy is intended to contribute significantly by training educators who have knowledge, skills and values to make learning in schools more relevant to the economic and social needs of South Africa”.

The DOE has used the Norms and Standards for Educators as a basis for qualification and learning programmes since their inception. By this I mean that teacher education programs had to shift from a content to a competence approach, where teachers demonstrate practical teaching competence and not only foundational competence. According to Hindle (2003, p.327), “the task that teacher education faced was to develop or re-design programs which were consistent with the norms and standards”. For Jansen (2001, p. 242), the norms and standards for educators as a policy represents “policy images of teachers that conflict with their personal identities, by teachers identities it means a sense of self, as well as their knowledge and beliefs, dispositions, interest and orientation towards work and change”. Carrim (2003, p. 319) made a similar point, when he said “South African teachers do not see themselves as ‘owning’ the transformation of education in South Africa but as subjects of it. They do not see themselves as formulators of policies but implementers of it”. The next section discusses the types of qualifications.

1.6.2.2. TYPES OF QUALIFICATION

The types of qualifications which formed part of the National Policy Framework (NPF) are outlined. Of necessity, this involves reference to the National Qualification Framework (NPF) and the more recent development of the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF). The previous Minister of Education, Grace Naledi Mandisa Pandor, published the Higher Education Qualification Framework which, according to the Government Notice (2007, p. 3), states the “Act No 101 of 2007 has separate and parallel qualifications structures of universities and technikons which have hindered the articulation of programs and transfer of students between programs and higher education institutions”. The new qualification framework has been designed so as to meet the challenges that were facing the higher education institutions.

According to the Government Notice (2007, p.3), “The higher education institutions’ development programs and qualification will provide graduates with the intellectual capabilities and skills that will in turn enrich society and also empower themselves, thus the higher education qualification framework integrates all higher education qualifications into the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and its structures for standards generation and quality assurance.

The Higher Education Qualification Framework is an integral part of the NQF. The term used in this policy is consistent with the types of qualification discussed below.

As indicated, teacher education is now the responsibility of Higher Education and teacher education qualifications form part of the Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF). According to Keevey (2009, p. 1), “The South African National Qualification Framework (NQF) is part of an integrated framework, all levels from (basic to higher education) sectors (such as schooling, both public and private) and types of qualification (such as academic, vocational and professional) are integrated into a single National system”.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) was proposed to replace the fragmented system with a structure that would form a bridge between divided sectors of learning, namely between general education and vocational education and training but it faced problems with regard to the classification of qualifications.

According to Keevey (2009, p. 2), “The NQF in 2006, faced increasing pressure from professional bodies, namely the South African Council for Educators (SACE), to review the status of these professional qualifications”. According to SAQA (2000, p. 4) “With regard to the classification of qualifications the learning outcomes of certain qualifications and standards can easily be described on the Higher Education Qualification Framework”. According to the HEQF (2009, p.2) “In June 2009, the Minister of Education signed into effect the new Higher Education Qualification Framework (HEQF), this new framework is a more differentiated framework and consists of 10 HE levels (level 5 – 10) on the new level 10, the lowest higher education qualification available is the Higher Certificate (at level 5) and the highest is the Doctorate or PhD (at level 10)”. The HEQF is outlined in Table 1:

1.6.2.3 TABLE 1. THE HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

QUALIFICATION NAME	EXIT LEVEL	TOTAL CREDITS
Higher Certificate	5	120
Advanced Certificate	5	120
The National Professional Diploma in Education	6	360
Advanced Diploma	7	120
Bachelor Degree	7	120
Bachelors Honours Degree	8	120
Postgraduate Degree	8	120
Master's Degree	9	180
PhD, Doctorate	10	360

According to the HEQF (2009, p.3), “The HEQF is different from the previous NQF, in a sense that the HEQF specifies all aspects of a qualification, including:

- “The name of the qualification
- The type of qualification
- The HEQF level
- The number of credits at each level
- The entry requirements
- Possible progression to higher levels”.

The HEQF (2009, p3) states that “Until all current qualifications have been evaluated for their compliance with the HEQF, it will effectively have both the HEQF and the NQF in operation. The need for ongoing teacher development is compounded by the existence of un- and under-qualified teachers which requires further efforts in meeting the development needs of teachers. The next section discusses the stakeholders’ influence in teacher development within South Africa.

1.7 STAKEHOLDERS’ INFLUENCE ON TEACHER DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA

Teacher unions for example the South African Democratic Union (SADTU) and the National Professional Teachers’ Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA), have been calling for a strategic national plan for teacher development across the provinces and nationally. SADTU is an affiliate of the Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), which played a significant role in helping the African National Congress (ANC) to win the 1994 -,elections. SADTU as the largest teacher union body has, clearly outlined reasons why they feel that teacher development is important in South Africa. According to SADTU (2009, p.4), the main reasons for teacher development are:

- “The fact that a substantial minority of teachers were unqualified or under -qualified.
- Even amongst qualified teachers there were questions marks about the quality of pre – service training, often delivered by poorly resourced Bantu style education are embodied in a very conservative pedagogy.
- Research findings that many educators lacked essential knowledge”.

Massive curriculum and policy change post -1994, much of it necessary to dislodge apartheid education, nonetheless resulted in so – called policy overload for teachers. New curricula, new methodologies and assessment systems all required, new skills and re - training for the educators. There is a large measure of consensus that training and support to implement the new curriculum was inadequate. A commitment to the notion of lifelong learning needed to address the continually shifting education terrain, but also to underpin the quest to deepen professionalism.

Teacher development in South Africa was always sidelined. SADTU together with the relevant stakeholders in education, agreed some ten years ago on the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS). The purpose of DAS was to develop educators to their full potential. This is highlighted by SADTU (2009, p. 8): “Educators must be accountable for the quality of their work and should present themselves for regular appraisal. This was conceived as a developmental process: educators weaknesses would be identified and addressed through mentoring and training”. The present author agrees with given the unequal and often inadequate nature of teacher training in the previous era.

Due to budget cuts, the Department of Education also looked at other incentives that brought unions back to the table for further discussions aimed at improving teacher and professional development for all teachers across the country.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed teacher qualification status, The South African perspective on teacher qualification, the transformation of the South African education system, focusing particularly on the field of teacher education in terms of the incorporation of colleges, universities and technikons into a unified higher education system, curriculum change, types of qualification, new norms and standards for teachers and stakeholders influences on teacher development within South Africa.

The remainder of this dissertation is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 2: provides the literature review and the theoretical framework that informs this study. It includes a discussion on literature primarily around the concepts of supervision, assessment, mentoring and evaluation.

Chapter 3: focuses on the specific methodology adopted in this study, research methods used, the type of sampling adopted and the approach undertaken in relation to the analysis of data collected in this study.

Chapter 4: focuses on the presentation of data and the experiences of the NPDE field workers and the NPDE programme co-ordinator.

Chapter 5: concludes the study with key findings and a discussion of these findings, particularly in relation to relevant literature, and by making recommendations for further research into the role of field workers / supervisors in teacher professional development generally and, more specifically, their role in the National Professional Diploma in Education at UKZN and other upgrading teacher programmes at this institution.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Having articulated the focus of the study and the rationale for doing the study within the identified context in the previous chapter, chapter 2 attempts to locate the study focus within a literature base that supports its need. This chapter focuses primarily on literature that explores the concepts of teacher upgrading, supervision, mentoring and assessment of adult teachers in South Africa, as they relate to teacher education and professional development for teachers that are in service. The NPDE programme, which is the focus of this study, is a teacher upgrading programme to bring un- and under-qualified teachers to qualified teacher status whilst they are still in practice as teachers. A review of literature related to teacher upgrading is necessary to identify the issues associated with teacher upgrading. It is usually supported by supervision and mentoring at the school site to support teacher learning. A review of literature on mentoring is also necessary, to understand the complexities and issues associated with teacher mentoring. In similar vein, it is crucial to understand aspects of assessment, as teacher upgrading programmes do need forms of assessment that will provide evidence that the teacher has achieved the intended competences developed through the upgrading programme.

A further rationale for this emphasis, rather than any other, is that the school visit component of the UKZN NPDE programme can be understood as contributing to the NPDE students' professional development. Fieldworkers play a critical role in this aspect of the programme. Thus teacher upgrading, mentoring and assessment of these students by field workers is integral to their professional development trajectory and their success in the programme and can be construed as an aspect of the formal assessment of students in the program. The literature review is presented in three sections. The first focuses on the need for teacher upgrading within the school education system, the second focuses on the South African process of teacher upgrading and the third focuses on what is needed to support school-based teacher development processes. The chapter concludes with an account of the theoretical framework that has guided this study process.

2.2 TEACHER UPGRADING IN RELATION TO TEACHER SUPPLY AND DEMAND

Teacher upgrading is a common phenomenon in developing and in the developed world. In the developing world context, teacher upgrading is largely a result of trying to meet national demands for qualified teachers in response to providing access to quality primary universal education for all (Lewin, 2006). For example, in Trinidad and Tobago, the need for universal primary education for its citizens to meet the Education for all (EFA) agendas set by the Jomtien and Dhaka World Conferences on Education and National Development, meant that different forms of teacher development had to be conceptualized.

In this example, prospective teachers were selected from matriculants and were given a seven - week induction course in teaching. Upon completion of the teacher induction programme, these teachers were employed in the primary phase of schooling for up to three years. Following these three year service, the teachers were enrolled in teacher up - grading programmes offered by colleges of education to obtain qualified teacher status. (Lewin and Stuart, 2006). In this case, the need for teacher upgrading was related to the expansion of primary schooling, with a concomitant need for qualified teachers to provide quality education provided by the EFA agenda.

Similar trends are noted in other parts of the world. Another example is the Malawi Integrated Initial Teacher Education Project (MIITEP), in which due to the expansion of the primary education system in Malawi, under- qualified teachers were recruited to meet the expanded demand for primary school education. In order to bring these teachers to a qualified teacher status, the Malawi Education Ministry introduced the MIITEP project to upgrade un – qualified teachers. In this programme the un – qualified teachers were recruited into all of the teacher education colleges in Malawi for a three - month block session, followed by distance education until qualified teacher status was achieved.

This meant that the colleges of education were closed to new teacher recruits over the project period. Teacher development took the form of block sessions and school- based development (Lewin and Stuart, 2006). In this instance, teacher upgrading was also related to issues of teacher demand in response to the expansion of access to primary education. Children and adults of all ages and backgrounds were thus provided with an education.

Laming (2008, 1) notes that “*UNESCO estimates that as many as an additional 30 million teachers will be needed to be employed to achieve this goal, but as UNESCO’s own report monitoring global supply and demand of teachers towards 2015 admits, this, figure alone does not explain the complexity of regional and local differences*”. The global population of primary school children is expected to remain stable, but the teacher population can either remain stable or decline. Laming (2008, p.2) adds that “the Arab states need to increase the number of teachers by 26%, South and West Asia need an increase of 7% and Sub -Saharan Africa requires an increase of 68%”.

In the developed world context, where access to education had already been established, teacher upgrading was in terms of additional qualifications beyond initial qualifications in teaching. For example, in the United States of America, teacher upgrading was largely related to tenure as a teacher. The United States appears to be one of many countries that institutes higher standards and certification for teachers. According to Akiba, Letrende and Scibner (2008, p. 7), “In the United States, the focus on certification has been informed by research on field of teaching and by comparative and international studies that identified the weaknesses in instructional practices and environments surrounding U.S. teachers in comparison with those teachers in high - achieving countries”.

Hence, policy makers around the world have paid special attention to teacher quality as a vehicle to improve student learning. According to UNESCO Institute for Statistics; (2008, p. 4) “Attracting competent candidates for the teaching profession, retaining highly qualified teachers by providing support and incentives and ensuring students’ access to high quality teaching have been major focuses of educational reforms in countries like Australia and the United Kingdom”. The United Kingdom (UK) only accepts graduates to enter the professional gate. Robson (1998, p.5) explains that “This ‘gate’ exists effectively for protecting the interests of members and enhancing the profession’s status”.

Education in the UK is relatively different compared to other developed countries. Saeed (2000) notes that each country in the UK has a separate institution which deals with all the affairs of education. Apart from the traditional one - year Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) at primary and secondary levels, there are the four - year B. Ed and BA degrees. As Matheson (2000) adds, “Until recently, it was a common practice in many Scotland universities for students to take an ordinary degree before proceeding to an Honor’s degree; in the UK the master’s degree is usually one year, whereas the PhD. is at least three years”.

According to Saeed (2000), this teacher programme exists particularly in England and Wales, along with the most popular streams of teacher education. Some universities introduce flexible teacher training programmes, like PGCE. This programme was introduced to provide an opportunity to those serving persons who due to some family commitment or job commitment could not join regular PGCE programme. Saeed (2000, p.5) notes that this was also to attract the employee’s towards the teaching profession so as to meet the shortage of professionally qualified teacher status (QTS). QTS is a must for all such flexible routes to teacher training and the duration of these flexible routes is more or less than one and a half years. Countries around the world share the same concern with the US and UK policy - makers and educators about teacher quality studies around the world such as the Millenium Project, which has identified variations in student access to qualified teachers in other countries. All other developed countries for example, England, Korea, Japan, The Netherlands and Singapore, except the United States and Australia, have centralized systems of teacher education and certification with tighter regulatory control by the central government.

The United States is the only developed nation that has licensure testing that determines who becomes a teacher, whereas countries like England, Singapore, Japan and Australia have an induction programme. Measuring teacher quality across various national borders does pose a challenge. Every country defines a qualified teacher differently.

2.3 TEACHER UPGRADING AS IT RELATES TO QUALITY OF TEACHING

In focusing on the quality of the teacher education programme, especially within the developed world contexts, Wang et al. (2003, p. 7) found that “although the required number of teachers varied across the countries they examined, Australia, Hong Kong, Korea, the Netherlands, Singapore and the United States, the structure and content of undergraduate teacher education programmes were similar across these countries, including courses in subject content and pedagogy and field experience observing and teaching students. Similarly, Osborn et al. (2003, p.74) found that “The training of teachers in France, England and Denmark was similar in length, structure and context and level of training”. Although the criteria in each of these countries tend to be similar in format, the quality, certification and qualification of educators differ. Every countries criteria with regard to qualification of educators are governed by the education system in their country.

There are challenges that many education systems in developing countries have, compared to developed countries around the world. Kruijer (2010, p.5) notes that “In many developing countries, the increased enrolment of pupils in recent years has not been met by an increase in qualified teachers, rather large numbers of un- and under - qualified teachers have been recruited in recent years by governments”.

Teachers in developing countries are often faced with challenges such as over - crowded classrooms, poor pay and poor working conditions. Laming (2008, p. 4) believes that “the delivery of quality education requires qualified teachers”. Some of the problems that developing countries face is the fact that in the early 1980s and 1990s developing countries were faced with the neo - liberal policies set by the World Bank that placed pressure on the worldwide financial crises. Kruijer (2010, p. 8) “This internationally imposed cap on public sector wage bill induced national government to employ un - qualified volunteer or contract teachers, freezing the salaries of qualified teachers and the employment of un - qualified teachers damaged the quality of education. Primary school education, being the foundation of education has increasing learner enrolments and governments around the globe will need to recruit more teachers.

According to Laming (2008, p.5), “Southern African countries will need 1,6 million teachers by 2015”. If 1,6 million teachers are needed by 2015, how will these teachers be trained when resources in these countries are so limited. Kruijer (2010, p. 9) adds that “West African governments have decided to recruit contract teachers”. West African governments hire these teachers as the cost is far lower and they can hire and fire them. At the same time, the less developed nations need to make education a priority in their budgets. However, African countries have made use of distance education to improve and help un- and under- qualified teachers so as to improve their qualification and provide quality education for all.

Laming (2008, p. 13) states that “Like their counterparts in other regions, many Asian institutions have increasingly made use of distance learning as a supplement to, or a replacement for, face - to - face teaching. Distance education has expanded rapidly in Bangladesh, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Pakistan, Phillipines, Shri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam”. However, Dhand (2006, p.48) has highlighted “Serious deficiencies in the effectiveness of the Bachelor of Education Degree offered by distance education in India”. Dhands’ (2006) remarks will find resonance in other contexts. However, it seems certain that distance education will become an increasing feature in higher education in Asia, much as in other parts of the world.

Upgrading programmes can improve the professional standard of un- and under - qualified teachers in contributing to the public provision of quality education for all. Kruijer (2010, p.29) notes that “Although many teachers might enter an upgrading programme with a minimum qualification, a blanket designation of them as un - qualified may be misleading”. Some of them will have worked in primary education for years and would have gained a considerable amount of practical teaching experience. Kruijer (2010, p.31) further adds that “An upgrading programme must therefore recognize the trainee’s previous experience, these teaching experience can be drawn on as examples to link theory with practice”.

Un- and under- qualified teachers in developing countries are given the opportunity of entering into upgrading programmes. It has to be noted that un- and under -qualified teachers are not empty vessels, they bring with them a body of knowledge of teaching, together with practical experience. Laming (2008, p. 32) notes “They also bring their specific socio - economic and academic backgrounds, their study skills, and their abilities for reflection”.

Teacher education, traditionally provides pre - service or in - service models or a combination of the two. Kruijer (2010, p. 31) writes that “When un- or under- qualified teachers are upgraded through in – service education models, the following four findings can be stated:

- “Firstly, effective in - service upgrading will depend on the availability of support at school level. On a regular basis, tutors should visit the school for classroom observations, education and joint reflection with student - teachers. In reality constraints caused by poor infrastructure , a weak organisational capacity of education institutes, and a lack of tutors make the regular supervision of students impossible. Anticipating these impediments, in - service upgrading models expect the involvement of colleagues on the school team to provide professional support. However, where the proportion of un - qualified teachers is high, as well as the pupil teacher ratio, colleagues are usually not able to deliver sufficient support. In rural areas, where the pupil - to -teacher ratio is low, effective in - service education will be especially difficult to organize.

- Secondly, the average academic level of un- or under- qualified teachers is low. Because of the urgent need for teachers, recruitment based on rigorous criteria of subject knowledge has been impossible. Therefore the improvement of subject knowledge, as well as the mastering of the language of instruction, has to be an essential element to the teacher education upgrading programmes. Under adverse conditions, in -service educators alone will fail to provide these elements of teacher education.

- Thirdly, teachers working under difficult conditions, and with little or no pre -service education, are likely to build solely on their remembered observations of teachers during their own primary and secondary education and will copy this behaviour in their own practice. In most cases this will lead to the application of traditional pedagogical modes like lecturing, rote learning and simple forms of ‘question and answer’, only when supported from the outside by tutors or mentors can in - service education under adverse conditions counter these pedagogical practice and introduce more child - centred or adaptive teaching techniques.

- Finally, when novice teachers bring to a school a desirable new way of thinking about teaching and introduce new methods from their pre - service education, they contribute to the innovation and improvement of education. However, with only in – service upgrading under difficult conditions, external stimuli for innovation in the long term predictably fade away and the school starts to feed on itself”.

The pre- and in -service component of teacher upgrading resonates well with the focus of the study. Just like the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE), that was introduced to upgrade un- or under - qualified teachers in South Africa, developing countries introduce similar programmes for un- or under- qualified teachers. The next aspect of this study focuses on South Africa's teaching upgrading system.

2.4 TEACHER UPGRADING WITHIN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

In South Africa, teacher upgrading was related to a transformational agenda, focusing on redressing issues in response to the apartheid forms of educational inequalities across its race -based population groups. Keevy (2009) pointed out that while most white teachers received pre- and in -service training at well - resourced urban universities, most black teachers started teaching without even completing their own secondary schooling, much less the tertiary education they needed. This caused an imbalance in the education sector with regard the supply and demand of teachers. The majority of skilled and qualified teachers left the country for various reasons and, as a result , the supply and demand of teachers influenced how many teachers would be needed in the education system in the immediate years to come.

“Specific studies predicting the transfer of these projections into the sector of teachers and school education have also attempted to map the terrain dealing with among other issues, the supply and demand for teachers and the impact on the education system” (Badcock-Walters, 2001, p.145). On the demand side, the number of educators that left the profession needs to be replaced. There are a number of reasons why South African educators have exited the system. As Ramrathan (2003, p.79) explains “the main reasons why South African teachers exit the system are due to psychological stress, change, disillusionment with policy changes, curricula, governance, rationalization and redeployment of teachers”. Park (2006, p.144) adds that ‘A number of key variables should also be taken into account such as the birth rate, mortality data, annual attrition rate, retention of learners in the system, distribution of teachers by phase, the demands of the new curricula and the number of learners taking different subjects in the secondary phase”. The morale of teachers is also a cause for concern.

A report issued by the National Professional Teachers' Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) (2002, p.3) highlighted the following aspects regarding teacher morale:

- “ One in every four educators has a sense of low morale towards the profession.
- There was a perception that a further 33.7% of colleagues had an indifferent level of morale towards the profession.
- As many as 38.2% had a negative morale towards job satisfaction”.

This report stressed factors which had a negative effect on teacher morale, included the following: poor leadership style of the provincial departments (65.5%); lack of quality of support received from Departmental officers (63.2%); continuous change in educational methodology and policy (60.0%); poor salary packaged (58.1%); poor quality of communication by the Department with its schools (53.4%); lack of promotion prospects (50.8%). All of the above factors have resulted in teachers leaving the system.

Another key factor that is a cause for concern with regard to the demand for teachers is the migration factor. According to Jansen (1997), “there has been intensive recruitment of South African teachers by the recruitment agencies in the United Kingdom”, a move that angered one of the former Ministers of Education, Kader Asmal, in 2001, who regarded this as a ‘poaching of teachers’.

With so many reasons for teachers leaving the profession, it is not surprising that teacher shortages are looming. The Department of Education (2006, p.11) states that “the educator supply and demand report projected a shortfall of around 15 000 teachers by 2008”. Statistics have proved that there is a decline in teacher supply. According to Park (2006, p. 144), “In 2003, the number of teachers employed by public and independent schools in South Africa totaled approximately 362 600.”

Park (2006, p.144) states, that “The National attrition rate in 1997/98 was 9.3% (accelerated by rationalization) declining to 5.5% in 2000/01, before beginning to rise again to 5.9% in 2002/03. The direct implication is that 21 300 teachers left the system in 2003”. Welch (2008, p.32) concurs with this statement “The system is now producing about 7 000 new entrants to the teaching profession each year, whilst approximately 15 000 are needed”. This is creating a shortfall within the teaching profession.

According to Mbuyazi (2010, 9 September) “The Minister of Education, Senzo Mchunu, stated that there are presently 84 362 teachers in KZN, 11 000 of which are categorized as being un-qualified or under-qualified. He further stated that, while KZN lost nearly 4000 teachers every year, the Department was only able to recruit and attract about 700 teachers”. Bowman (2010, 10 October) adds that “South Africa each year loses 16 000 teachers, of which 4000 are based in KwaZulu-Natal. The reasons range from resignation to retirement, death or termination. Last year (2009) there were 368 587 public school teachers and 24 577 private school teachers”.

Teacher supply and demand is a complex issue, impacted by a variety of factors. Bowman (2010, p.5) warns “Currently we are not producing enough new teachers to meet the system’s needs. About 16 446 teachers would need to be replaced annually to maintain the status quo, however just over 7 500 teachers are expected to graduate this year despite efforts by the provincial department to boost enrolment in teaching courses. In 2008, 5 939 new teachers graduated across KwaZulu-Natal and twelve thousand qualified graduates in 2014 has been set as a target”.

A paradox can be said to prevail, as “although there are projections of teacher shortages in South Africa, these are not currently translating into easily accessible vacant posts for newly qualified teachers. This may be because of the Rationalization and Redeployment Process. Demands of posts being advertised are only filled by teachers currently in the system as opposed to the newly qualified educators that are entering the teaching fraternity” (Bertram, Appleton, Muthukrishna & Wedekind, 2006).

According to Park (2006, p.145) “Although a head count analysis of teachers entering and leaving the profession may help to identify some of the prominent tendencies in teacher supply and demand, it may not be accurate enough to form a sound basis for the educational planning of human resources”. The responsibility lies with the Department of Education, in partnership with the providers of teacher education programmes, who will have to generate sufficiently accurate statistics to create precise models of teacher supply and demand for the country.

In addition to the mainstream issue of supply and demand of fully qualified teachers, the Department of Education has also, since 1994, had to confront the reality of the very large cohort of un- and under-qualified teachers currently in the system.

In 2003, “one third of the teachers in South Africa have less than the M +3 qualification and these teachers were categorized as unqualified teachers and were required to gain the qualification up to the compulsory M + 3”. Mbuyazi (2010) states that “*The Department of Education (DOE) current statistics state that 40% of male teachers and 60% female teachers currently struggle to meet the basic requirements of Category C (M+3) or a three year training, although this may appear unacceptable on a superficial level the fact that these teachers struggle to perform competencies they are not adequately trained for is in fact a testament to their commitment and to their profession. The Department of Education has realized the necessity of upgrading teachers’ qualifications without removing them from an already overburdened educational system*”.

Prior to 1994, the institutions that offered certificates and diplomas to teachers who were unqualified ranged between private institutions, contact universities and dedicated distance institutions. Sayed (2003, p. 247) reminds us that “Teachers were trained in racially and ethnically separate colleges and universities, which was coupled with a system of posting which allocated trained teachers to different and ethnically-segregated schools’. Reddy (2003, p.103) points out that “Springfield College of Education shared a close association with the University of Durban – Westville, who was responsible for training Indian teachers, Edgewood College of Education shared a close relationship with the University of Natal and was responsible for training White teachers. Bechet College of Education trained Coloured Educators”.

The black population had very limited access to higher education. Sayed reinforces this (2003, p. 248) by saying that, “The black population’s higher educational options were effectively limited to ‘teaching and preaching’, teacher education was thus a strategic response to the lack of higher educational opportunities for the black population”. As a result many black teachers entered the profession having not completed a formal teaching training programme, but took the initiative to complete their studies through distance colleges e.g. Success College accredited by the University of Pretoria, University of Port Elizabeth and Azalea College, Rand Afrikaans University, Lyceum College and the University of South Africa (UNISA).

Through programmes offered at these institutions, teachers were given opportunities to study through distance education and gain either a diploma or certificate. Reddy (2003, p.101) reveals that “In 1994, there were 150 public institutions providing teacher education to 200 000 students. At the beginning of 2000, there were 82 public institutions providing education to 100 000 students, of these 50 were colleges of education with 15 000 students.

These institutions were rationalized into 25 contact colleges and two distance education colleges: the South African College for Teacher Education and the South African College for Open Learning (SACOL). By 2000, declining enrolment in university faculties of education and rapid decline in college enrolment were due to stringent quotas imposed by provinces and the rapid growth of the private sector had changed the teacher education profile significantly. According to Bowman (2010, p. 5), “There are 23 universities in South Africa, 21 offer initial teacher education programs including the University of KwaZulu-Natal”. The South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) and the Council for Higher Education (CHE) reported that in 2000 and 2004 reference was made for the need to be concerned about the quality of programme offered by face - to - face institutions.

According to Welch and Gultig (2002, p. 5) “The 1995 teacher audit revealed that in the nineties a rapid growth in the provision of teacher education at a distance through public private partnership (for example, RAU in collaboration with Lyceum College, Pretoria University with Success College), it was estimated that by 2000 up to 40 000 teachers were involved in distance education programs delivered through these partnerships. The 1995 teacher audit also revealed that the quality of education offered was extremely poor, with poorly written guides, outdated content and little or no support and assessment.” The 1995 teacher audit warned that a quality assurance mechanism needed to be in place to address the poor quality of teacher education at a distance .

The different diplomas and certificates that were offered by different institutions were debated and the ministerial committee of education decided to phase out many diplomas and certificates and introduce teaching qualifications such as the Bachelor of education (B.Ed), the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE), National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) and the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE). The next section discusses the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE).

2.5 THE NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION (NPDE)

As the qualification context of this study is the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE), the discussion now moves explicitly to how the NPDE programme evolved and the design of the programme delivered by the University of KwaZulu–Natal (UKZN). During the 1994 political transformation the government introduced a new education system that inevitably put pressure on teachers across the country to change. Teachers had to be re-skilled and developed to implement new policies that were implemented by the Department of Education. One of the intentions of the Department of Education and the Government was the introduction of the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE).

The NPDE was introduced to re-skill un- or under-qualified educators. Becher (1994) stresses that “Since professions are the pillars of the modern society, it is the responsibility of every government to transform people in their professions in the times of change”. The Government together with the Department of Education used an intervention programme (NPDE) as a strategy to re-skill and transform un- or under-qualified teachers in South Africa. This opened a new door for many un- or under-qualified teachers who were given the opportunity to be re-skilled and developed. UNESCO in 1978 revealed that the bulk of un- or under-qualified teachers are in the rural areas. This a global phenomenon.

As discussed earlier, developing countries across the globe find it difficult to attract qualified teachers. Ramrathan (2002) endorses this: “Most countries find it difficult to attract qualified teachers to areas that are not conducive to good living conditions”. South Africa is no different than any other country. Many South African teachers who are qualified find the rural context to have poor infrastructure and access to amenities, a high crime rate and poverty. As a result, the Department of Education has to rely on un- or under-qualified teachers from the rural area to teach. Zuma (2009, p.21) feels that “The NPDE programme, through its programme design or mixed mode delivery with sites of delivery close to these communities, are one way of addressing the need to produce appropriately qualified teachers to these communities”. The rural schools have no other choice but to employ un- or under-qualified teachers who either live in the rural area or are conditioned to the setting of a rural school. The next section discusses the NPDE programme delivered at UKZN Edgewood for un- or under-qualified teachers.

The NPDE is a qualification driven by the National Department of Education, and designed to upgrade un- and under-qualified educators from Relative Equivalent Qualification Value (REQV) 10, 11 & 12 to REQV 13. In order to enrol as an NPDE student at UKZN, a teacher with only REQV 10 status is required to have five years teaching experience. However, in 2010, only REQV 11 and 12 status teachers were admitted to the programme, to ensure that the NPDE is not used as a initial teacher qualification, the purpose for which many students have recently being using it. In other words, it should not be used to access qualifications beyond that of NQF Level 6, since that is not its purpose. The length of time required to complete the Diploma is dependent on the entry level. According to Papier (2008, p.7), "Provision is made for the recognition of prior learning (RPL) through submission of a portfolio of evidence". The programme in KwaZulu-Natal is delivered flexibly using self - study materials and extensive support from tutors at various learning centres in KwaZulu-Natal.

The NPDE, as a national programme, has been in place since 2002. Originally the National Department envisaged the programme only needing to last five years i.e. by the end of 2006 they predicted that all teachers in schools in South Africa would be at REQV Level 13. However, many HEIs are still offering the programme because the demand continues. At UKZN, for example, there were 1500 applications in 2009, for 500 places. UKZN's own NPDE operation has been in existence since 2002 and continues to be offered in 17 Regional Learning Centres throughout KZN.

As indicated above, the NPDE programme was designed as a qualification that would be accessible to all teachers who were either un- and under-qualified teachers. Moll and Welch (2004, p. 160) state that "the NPDE was envisaged as an interim qualification designed to provide access to teachers who are school-based, and possess knowledge and skills gained during their teaching experiences".

At the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), the Edgewood Campus NPDE office appoints and manages field workers to supervise and guide NPDE students in their schools. Although there has been one extensive evaluation for the NPDE programme at UKZN (during the period 2002 and 2003), at a programmatic level, and all *modules* are evaluated through a questionnaire with a Likert scale response design by the University's Qualifications Promotion Unit, there has been little in -depth and or focused research into this programme since its inception here. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to contribute to further research into the efficacy of the NPDE programme at UKZN, most particularly the experiences of the field workers employed to mentor and supervise NPDE students in their classrooms.

As the costs attached to this supervision of students on-site is extremely high, it is critical that UKZN is able to justify the continued use of field workers. This study aims to provide empirical evidence to assist with institutional decisions that must be made in this regard. Having presented the teacher upgrading programme within the South African context, the next section of the literature reviews focuses on the aspect crucial for teacher upgrading. It contextualizes teacher upgrading within an adult learning environment that promotes and supports teacher upgrading programmes. It expands to include the support structures and process to promote school-based teacher development. The section concludes with literature on assessment, as it relates to school-based teacher development as assessment forms and integral components to establishing whether teacher upgrading programmes are a paper-chase exercise or a focus on deep teacher learning that leads to quality school provisioning. The next section focuses on adult learners.

2.6 ADULT LEARNERS

The ongoing professionalization of adult education draws on adult educators as learners. Teachers who joined the National Professional Diploma In Education programme had to become learners late in life. Jarvis (2001a) endorses this “People learn later in life for different reasons”. In the case of teachers who joined the NPDE, it was a matter of acquiring a qualification that would enhance them professionally as teachers. Just like the NPDE, every programme is important. Rogers (2007, p. 3) notes that “Developing countries, program planners and many evaluators acknowledge the importance of training for the success of their program”. For any programme to be successful, much depends on the facilitators and how they actually construct knowledge and skills. Knowledge and skills should be shared among facilitators and teachers and should be a two-way process.

2.7 SITE-BASED LEARNING

Site-based learning is learning that takes place in a school, resource centre or colleges of education. According to Hooker (2008, p.5, “Teachers work with local ‘in house’ facilities or master teachers to engage in a more gradual process of learning, master of pedagogy, content and technology skills”. Site-based learning focuses on specific problems that teachers encounter as they try to implement new techniques in their classroom practices.

Gaible and Burns (2006, p. 14) explains that “Site base learning brings people together to address local issues and needs over a period of time, encourage individual initiative and collaborative approaches to problems and provide ongoing opportunities for professional learning among a single set of teachers”.

This is argued by Hooker (2008, p. 6) elaborates: “Site learning approaches are time and labor intensive requiring locally- based providers skilled in facilitation, instruction, content, curriculum, assessment and technology - as well as mentoring teachers to find solutions in low - resource environments appropriate to their needs and contexts”.

These programmes establish and maintain a network of facilitators to meet the need of large - scale site base programmes. They are a professional development for educators that are on - site which enhances their skills and knowledge in the classroom. The next section focuses on the supervision, mentoring and assessment of teachers.

2.8 SUPERVISION, MENTORING AND ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS

2.8.1 SUPERVISION

It is important to define the term ‘supervision’ but as the following series of definitions show, there is no one single description of what constitutes supervision, although many definitions are very similar. Glickman, Gordon and Ross-Gordon (1998, p.8), for example, define ‘supervision’ as “assistance for the improvement of instruction”.

These authors see supervisors as merely performing a function rather than a role, a role whereby the supervisor assists students so that he/she can improve his/her teaching. Van Ooijen (2000, p.5) believes that “Supervision means overseeing”. Fowler (1999, p. 154) describes “supervision as an interpersonal process in which the skilled practitioner or supervisor helps the less skilled practitioners in relation to their professional growth”. Fowler’s definition of supervision is applicable to this study, as all field workers are experienced practitioners i.e. qualified former teachers selected by the NPDE co - ordinators to guide and develop students in relation to their teaching. The next section engages in greater depth with the concept of, and literature on, ‘supervision’.

Teacher Professional Development initiatives in the United States use the collaborative partnership model for supervision of pre-service and in-service teachers. According to Wilson and Rozelle (2005, p. 223), “Collaboration and Supervision together was explored as a model of collaborative supervision in the context of professional development in schools and teacher education in the United States”.

Korthagen (2001, p. 432) records that teacher professional development and teacher education are considered as a collaborative supervision model that attempts to deepen constructivist approaches to teachers’ professional learning”. Integration and practice for pre-service teachers are issues that surround teacher professional development. The next section focuses on the roles and responsibilities of mentors and teachers tasked with mentoring.

2.8.2 THE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISOR AND TEACHERS

TASKED WITH SUPERVISION

The concept of the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and teachers tasked with supervision has been taken to be synonymous with mentors tasked with mentoring in a school context, as the literature in both ‘fields’ share so many commonalities. Both these aspects will be discussed separately, later in the chapter. Fieldworkers in the present study mentored /supervised the NPDE students and assessed them. This section focuses on literature that engages with the terms ‘supervisor / supervision’, while the next highlights literature that makes use of the terms ‘mentor / mentoring’. As the reader will see, both terms can be used interchangeably.

For the experiences of the field workers in my study to be rewarding and effective, the literature suggests that much depends on the disposition and prior supervision experiences of the mentor or field worker and the teacher who is being supervised. According to Zepeda and Mayers (2004, p.11), “quality teaching emerges in an atmosphere of collegiality and the professional support of instructional supervision, regardless of its form”. Supervision, in their view, will make a difference if it occurs in a conducive environment in which collaboration is embraced. Field workers in the NPDE, therefore, who take on the role of mentors, should create opportunities for interaction between supervisors and the teachers they supervise, even in situations where the teachers themselves might not welcome close collaboration. Dorsch (1998, 213) states that if supervision is to be responsive to the needs of teachers then the very structures that promote collaboration and collegiality must be in place and nurtured as teachers learn the skills inherent in these new structures.

As well as the encouragement and reassurance that the work accomplished is worth the effort, for the supervision to be effective, supervisors must understand how teachers learn. As Benson and Hunter (1992, p. 92) point out “humans do not passively encounter knowledge in the world, rather they actively generate meaning in accordance with what they choose to pay attention to”. Thus supervision can only be effective if supervisors look for shifts in teachers’ understanding and provide experiences for teachers to learn.

Lyons and Pinell (2001, p. 243) “offer eight generalized principles to organize and implement constructivist-based learning for teachers. These eight are: encourage active participation, organize small group discussions around common concerns, introduce new concepts in context, create a safe environment, develop participants’ conceptual knowledge, allow participants to construct knowledge, look for shifts in teachers’ understanding, provide additional experiences for participants who have yet to develop conceptual knowledge”.

Johnston and Usher (1997, p.341) report that “teachers want authentic learning experiences that have immediate application in their “real worlds of teaching”. Mentors can create a variety of ways to promote learning that will enhance the relationship that is formed between supervisor and teacher”.

Having knowledge of ‘learning’, and a collegial disposition are not the only characteristics of ‘good’ supervisors, however, and, once again, much like the term ‘supervision’, itself, there are different ‘takes’ on the key roles and responsibilities of supervisors (in the teaching context). Nolan and Hoover (2004) define the role of the supervisor in different ways, ranging from inspector to helper to evaluator to counsellor. Glanz (1998, p. 63) argues that supervision is a function performed by specifically trained professionals. In general, however, it can be said that the role of a supervisor is to form a strong and supportive structure with the teachers they are allocated to (Nolan and Hoover, 2004).

By forming a strong relationship, the supervisor can work on the teachers’ existing strengths and unique teaching skills or contexts, rather than focusing on their weaknesses.

In essence, therefore, a supervisor’s role is to share in the process through commitment and acknowledge the teacher’s work. As Clark (2001, p.172) stipulates, “the supervisor must openly demonstrate shared ownership, the supervisor needs to have a positive communication mechanism in place so that an understanding of the supervision process is clearly understood”.

Nolan and Hoover (2004) endorse Clark’s view that positive communication is essential. Once trust and positive communication mechanisms are in place, the supervisor and teacher can focus on skills of inquiry and reflection that form a critical background for the observation cycle. Furlong (1992, p. 31) states that “the rapid rise in popularity of reflection was due to its apparent political value in opposing the ‘technicist’ approach of government reforms with the underlying theoretical principles of reflection”. To be an effective mentor, it is important to understand that a mentor helps, nurtures and guides student teachers to progress and develop. As Stephens (1996, p. 2) feels that the following guidelines should be followed to be an effective mentor:

- “Acquiring and developing beginning competence in and the commitment to attaining appropriate and secure subject knowledge, making that knowledge accessible and interesting to school students, accurately, compassionately and diagnostically assessing their learning, good-naturedly managing their behaviour and learning, caring for and promoting their psychological, social and material welfare, being able to handle basic computer applications, and dealing with routine administration.

- Possessing and applying a critical understanding of differing learning, teaching, class management, pastoral theories and practices.

- Finding ways to practice and promote social justice in their professional work, and thereby acknowledging that being a teacher requires ethical and ‘political’ commitment”.

This type of mentorship programme should be beneficial to both the mentor and the mentee. Wang, Odell and Schwille (2008) claim that many mentoring programmes help student teachers to adjust and fit into their schools’ existing context, which does not allow for them to be effective teachers automatically. Therefore it is important to note that there is much more expected of a mentee than the mentor, who fills the gap by assisting the mentee in getting the job done. Mentoring has become an increasingly important aspect with regard to development, both professionally and personally.

The conversations that take place between mentor and mentee are very important to the mentoring relationship. From Timperley’s (2001) study on mentoring conversations within school-based supervision and assessment is clear that collaboration is the key to improving the quality of the conversation between mentor and mentee, which allows for professional development between mentor and mentee. The mentor and mentee should not feel intimidated by each other. The next section discusses school - based supervision.

2.8.3 SCHOOL-BASED SUPERVISION

School-based supervision in this study focuses particularly on students who have a wealth of teaching experience and are training to become qualified teachers. As indicated in Chapter 1, the University appoints supervisors or mentors to these teachers. Teachers who are part of the NPDE programme at the University of Kwazulu-Natal also share a close relationship with their field workers or supervisors, where a one to one supervision is carried out.

The responsibility of the supervisor is to follow the criteria set by the University to supervise students who are school-based. Hustler and McIntyre (1996, p.7) stresses that supervision criteria should be consistent with school and university based work. Bleach (1999) concurs that the criteria for supervision should be shared and agreed between supervisor and student. This can be resolved between student and supervisor, where a meeting can be held to discuss strategies that can be used that will be suitable for both the student and supervisor.

As explained earlier, the NPDE programme that is run by UKZN employs field workers or supervisors that are retired or who have resigned from the teaching profession. Their responsibility is to supervise students and give a summative report to the co-ordinator of the NPDE programme. Field workers' responsibility and commitment thus lies with both the students and the University and it requires the assistance of the school where students are based. The NPDE field workers also have a commitment to UKZN. They have to make sure that all supervision is done according to the requirements of supervision criteria provided by UKZN.

The next aspect that is discussed is the assessment responsibilities of school-based supervisors.

2.8.4 ASSESSMENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL - BASED SUPERVISORS

Brookes and Sikes (1987, p. 124) identify “two basic components to the assessment process: formative and summative. Formative assessment is undertaken during the school attachment and places the accent on students' professional development”. Its functions are two-fold, as it provides feed-back on past performance and helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses.

The evidence gathered from the formative assessment contributes to the summative assessment of students, which is a more formal summing up of students' progress. Assessing student teachers' competences does not have to be a very isolating task for supervisors. Peers and students need to be involved so that they can improve the assessment practice.

Brookes and Sikes (1987, p. 124) state that “sharing responsibility for assessment also helps to depersonalize the process, those who play a part in student's professional development and their inclusion in the assessment process provides a comprehensive picture of the student in different situation”. They suggest that “the reliability of the assessment can be improved by increasing the number of independent assessors who contribute to the assessment and the number and the length of the occasions on which assessment is carried out”.

Nyaumwe and Mavhunga (2005, p. 2) feel that “reliance on a supervisor as the only assessor of student teachers’ practice was not fair or valid because several assessors produce more objective assessment of student teachers professional competencies than a single source”. The supervisor should not be the only person to assess student teachers but the school at which the student teachers are based should guide and develop the student teachers. The student teachers are, in this way, developed holistically.

According to Brookes and Sikes (1987, p. 128), “the criteria upon which the assessment will be based and the processes by which the assessment will be conducted should be fully documented and disseminated to all those involved”. Supervisors and students need to work on a partnership basis in which the assessment criteria are made clear.

The following are the possible assessment roles discussed by Brookes and Sikes (1987, p.130):

- “Observing students engaged in classroom teaching and other professional activities.
- Providing oral and written feedback on performance.
- Facilitating students’ self-assessment.
- Monitoring the progress of individual students and making special provision for those who are experiencing difficulties.
- Gathering evidence to document the assessment process.
- Compiling interim and final reports of individual students”.

Clearly, observation forms the centre of classroom and teaching practice and supervision. Observing a student can take place either formally or informally. According to Brookes and Sikes (1987, p. 130) “ formal observations should be spaced to allow students to demonstrate progress, ideally several observations should lead up to the first formal observation, which should not take place too early in the practice”. The present author agrees that formal observation should allow students the opportunity of first engaging meaningfully before the first observation takes place.

2.9 **CONCLUSION**

Chapter 2 focused primarily on literature that explored the concepts of teacher upgrading, mentoring and assessment of adult teachers in South Africa, as this is related to teacher education and professional development for teachers that are in service. The literature discussed teacher upgrading which was supported by literature on mentoring at the school site which supports teacher learning. Mentoring was discussed in detail as it was necessary to understand the complexities and issues associated with teacher mentoring. The issue surrounding assessment of teachers was also explored and discussed in detail. The next section of this dissertation focuses on the theoretical framework.

2.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the theoretical framework used in this study, it is important to first explain what a theoretical framework is. A researcher in any research study uses a particular lens through which he/she views the world and knowledge. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) claim that ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions which, in turn, lead to methodological decisions and these in turn, give rise to issues of instrumentation and data collection. As a novice researcher, an understanding of the different research methodologies (which includes the three elements ontology, epistemology and methodologies) needs to be embraced and understood.

This research study locates itself in the social science domain. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.19) claim that social science is seen as subjective rather than an objective understanding as a means of dealing with the direct experiences of people in specific contexts and where social scientists understand, explain and demystify social reality through the eyes of different participants. These aspects of social sciences are an important input for supervisory experiences of the NPDE field workers. An interpretation of these experiences will be used. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 21), interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience.

Abbidon (2008) claims that existing supervisory models are based on supervisory approaches commonly adopted towards students in order to help them achieve their objectives such as mentoring, coaching and supervision of students. As a novice researcher I have read various theories on classroom based supervision, mentoring and supervision theories. I found that the best suited theory for this study would be Clinical Supervision. It is firstly important that a clear definition on the term “Clinical Supervision” be given before describing Cogan’s (1973) theory. The word “clinical” comes from psychology. According to Abbidon (2008, p. 2), “Clinical Supervision has been a common development technique in nursing and other professions such as psychologists, psychotherapist and social workers also have a well - established tradition of clinical supervision, in common usage supervision means overseeing, and its fundamental component of counseling”. However, Fowler (1999) suggests that clinical supervision provided on an individual basis aims to enable the supervisee to do the better job, and to provide informed, and enhancing interactions, such as professional support role development”.

In light of this view, the theory of “Clinical Supervision” of Cogan (1973) will be adopted in this study, to understand supervision and also as it is relevant to my study. According to Cogan (1973), his “model of Clinical Supervision is that aspect of instructional supervision which draws from direct first hand observation of actual teaching, or other professional events and involves face- to -face and other associated interactions between the observer(s) and the person(s) observed in the course of analyzing the observed professional behaviors and activities and seeking to define and/or develop next steps towards improved performance”. Cogan’s (1973) model of Clinical Supervision is an ideal model for this study, as it involves interaction between the field worker and the NPDE student during school based assessment during which the students are observed and assessed.

Some of the key elements that will be explored in Cogan's (1973) Clinical Supervision theory are: "rapport between supervisor and supervisee, trust in each participant's direction at mutual rates and intensities, and perhaps most important a primary focus on the teacher's agenda". These elements stress the need to establish the supervisee - supervision relationship and to plan together for classroom observation. The supervisee in these elements discussed is an equal partner with the supervisor in determining the focus and extent of the supervisory process.

Cogan (1973) outlines his five -step plan of supervision in detail. These are a pre - observation, observation, analysis, post- observation conference and post - observation analysis: "The supervisor and teacher meet in a pre - conference and establish a collegial relationship, agree on the purpose of instructional supervision, identify the teacher's main concerns, and decide on steps to take to reach the desired outcome of supervision. This enterprise is reduced to a kind of contract, often in writing. The supervisor and supervisee plan the lesson co - operatively, with plans for teaching strategies to reach desired learning outcomes. Classroom observation occurs, the supervisor records data, the teacher is aware that the supervision is functioning in a collegial, non- evaluative role. The supervisor and supervisee each examine the classroom data based on their prior agreement or contract, they review the data together at the post- conference. The supervisor and supervisee jointly review the completed supervisory process and consider how it might be improved".

Cogan's (1973) theory allows the supervisor to interact with the different experiences when supervising the teacher. During the pre - observation session the main focus will be on the observation process, which will provide critical information for both the supervisor and the supervisee. The pre - observation sets the scene for the classroom observation process. During the observation process the supervisor experiences how it is to enter a world that belongs to the teacher.

2.11 CONCLUSION

To sum up this section on the theoretical framework, Cogan's (1973) "Clinical Supervision" theory used in this study was most appropriate and relevant as it focused on supervision experiences that are required of a supervisor. This chapter also contextualized the need of supervision and assessment of the NPDE fieldworkers. The next chapter discusses the research design and the methodology used.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As established in Chapters 1 and 2, the present research seeks to explore the supervision and assessment experiences of the National Professional Diploma in Education field workers. Chapter 3 presents the methodology used in this study, beginning with making the point that it is important to differentiate between the concepts 'methodology' and 'method'. The latter refers to techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering which is used as a basis for interpretation, inference, prediction and explanation, while the aim of methodology is to describe approaches, paradigms and kinds of research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) add that methodology helps the researcher understand, in the broadest terms, not the products of scientific research or inquiry, but the process itself.

Chapter 3 presents the methodology employed in this study and argues for its relevance to the research focus. It extends to present the process and decisions about the methods employed and the participants recruited to produce the data required for this study. The chapter ends with an exposition of some of the methodological limitations experienced in the production and analysis of the data.

3.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study has been guided by the following research questions:

What are the roles and responsibilities of the NPDE field workers supervising NPDE students?

What meaning and practices inform the way in which they (NPDE field workers) carry out these roles and responsibilities?

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs a qualitative approach. This approach is consistent with the intentions of the study as I present an understanding of the NPDE field workers' roles and responsibilities, as presented by themselves. My study also focuses on what meaning and practices inform the supervision practice of NPDE supervisors and assessors. Garfield (2004, p.324) notes that "Qualitative research can be defined as a process in understanding based on distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem".

Using the idea of process advocated by Garfield, the research establishes, through a process of qualitative inquiry, the experiences of field workers as they relate, through interviews, what they do and what meaning informs their practices as supervisors and assessors. Using the qualitative framework advocated by Garfield, this study is located within an interpretivist paradigm as it seeks to establish through a meaning-making process how NPDE field workers make sense of their roles and responsibilities that deeply located within the context in which they supervise and assess NPDE student teachers.

A paradigm is a view of the world and is a way one makes sense of the world. Radnor (2002, p. 234) states “An interpretive framework requires going into the participants’ natural setting and experiencing the environment in which these participants create reality”. My study resonates well with the views expressed above, as my intention was to find meaning within social interaction and where the context is emphasized as a significant aspect that will influence human behaviour. As a novice researcher, I tried to understand the meaning and the interpretation of the supervision and assessment experiences of the NPDE field workers as they articulate their work.

3.4 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER IN QUALITATIVE STUDIES

Henning (2004, p.421) emphasizes that “In a qualitative study the role of the researcher is the primary instrument of the data collection”. This means that my role in the data collection process is crucial and could significantly influence the data production. I thus needed to take cognizance of my role, my approach and my influence into consideration, as I conducted the interviews with the NDPE field workers. As a researcher central to the research process I had to develop a relationship with the field workers, one that was based on trust and respect. This was not easy, as I was a researcher registered with the faculty that employed the field workers and this raised some skepticism amongst the participants. I had to convince them that my focus was on my Masters study and the reason for the data collection was for research purposes and not as an assessment or evaluation on behalf of the Faculty. In order to accomplish this I spent more time with them during the interview process, the beginning of which was on casual discussions and getting to know each other through conversation.

As a novice researcher I had to have some control of the entire process, where I had to be sensitive to the participants’ needs and the need to produce reliable and valid data for my study. Refining this skill of being sensitive and my ability to produce appropriate data, my interview skills was developed by piloting it amongst some of my relatives and friends, initially not being in the focus on the research agenda but progressively asking questions that were somewhat related to some of their experiences on a range of things.

This process enabled me to settle into an interview process and begin to ask appropriate prompting questions thereby allowing me to develop a flowing process of questioning, listening and probing. As a researcher, the aim of my interviews was to collect relevant data that had quality and depth. All the participants in the study were females and this made it easier to develop a rapport with my participants. This rapport enabled flexibility, reflexivity and allowed participants to review their stance and assumptions as well as their identities or how they see themselves. I had to constantly evaluate the words and meaning that came out of the interview.

3.5 METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED IN THE STUDY

Being guided by a qualitative approach within an interpretivist paradigm, the methodology that was deemed most appropriate for this study was a case study. In order to understand the experience of the NPDE fieldworkers and how they supervise and assess the NPDE student teachers, a case study approach was the most appropriate methodology for this study. Case study methodology allows one to deeply understand a phenomenon within a bounded system with the purpose of illuminating specific issues as they relate to the phenomenon under exploration (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In this study, my intention was to understand the experiences of the NPDE field workers within the context of a particular programmatic design, hence a bounded context. The Faculty of Education designed the NPDE programme with a particular audience in mind and a particular programme emphasis and it would be only appropriate if the experiences of the NPDE field workers were located within this programme design and the institution that designed this programme. As experiences are deeply located within individuals and contexts, the intention is therefore not to generalize any findings, but to illuminate particular aspects that could influence the programme design or the practices of supervision and assessment as conceptualized by the programme design.

3.6. SAMPLING AND PARTICIPANTS

Selecting a sample in any research study is important. In the present research, selecting a sample was important, as it helped to choose a sample from a long list of participants. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) the success and failure of any research is not only determined by the methodology and instrument for data collection, but also suitability of the sample size. This study used a purposeful sampling approach. Walford (2001, p.256) explains that "Purposeful sampling refers to a process where the researcher chooses participants who are likely to be information rich with respect to the critical questions being posed by the research study".

A total of five participants were selected to participate in the study. Although this number is relatively small, it is not uncommon in qualitative studies of this nature. This is because the study is concerned with depth, rather than breadth, and, in this particular case, the scope for interviewing more than five field workers was constrained by the University's schedule and the scope of the research project. Convenience sampling also played a role in this study. As I do not have my own transport and would have to rely on public transport and/or friends (when they were available), I had no choice but to restrict my participants to those within a reasonable distance of my own school and home.

The selection of field workers was a very sensitive task. The list of potential participants which I was given by the NPDE School Placement Co-ordinator, contained 32 field workers. Sixteen of them were based at the Edgewood campus and the other sixteen were based at the Pietermaritzburg campus. The demographics of the NPDE field workers selected for the study comprised four African females and one Coloured. All of the five field workers lived in different areas of Kwa Zulu -Natal. The field workers supervised students that were part of the NPDE programme on both the Edgewood and Pietermaritzburg campuses. Field workers had to visit schools that were within the nine regions in KwaZulu-Natal. The list that I was given by the NPDE co-ordinator was indeed a very comprehensive one containing list of names, places and sites of the different field workers. I had to choose field workers that were closest to my proximity. I initially chose ten field workers but certain circumstances prohibited me from using this number. When I called fieldworkers to seek consent from them to participate in the study, they were very reluctant and refused. I had to eventually settle for five fieldworkers, who were very eager and willing to assist in the research project.

3.7. CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS

Each of the participants was contacted to ask their permission to be interviewed individually. The NPDE programme co-ordinator was asked permission in order to be interviewed. Once an agreement was reached telephonically, a meeting to brief each participant on the purpose and nature of the interview was set up. All the participants and the NPDE programme co - ordinator agreed to sign the consent form. Dates and times for the actual interview were arranged. I successfully interviewed three of the five participants in a face - to - face interview context. A face to face interview was also conducted with the programme co - ordinator. Two of the five participants did not want to be tape recorded. The researcher accepted their decision and carried out the interviews as scheduled.

Notes were taken as the interview progressed. Two of the five participants that initially agreed to meet me to do the interview could not meet me due to work commitments. However, they agreed to do a telephonic interview. Once the raw data had been collected and I had spent some time working with it, I realized there were still gaps that I needed to fill. Thus, I had to go back to the participants to collect more data. An iterative process of data collection was necessary as depth rather than breadth was needed in this qualitative study. Second and subsequent interviews allowed me to obtain more clarity and further information that allowed me to make more sense in the analysis phase of the research.

3.8. SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

To understand why people do what they do, one needs to ask them. Radnor (2002, p. 345) states that “Interviews help us get the meaning that people give to the social situations in which they find themselves”. Walford (2001, p. 421) feels that “Interviews are useful and reliable methods of data collection”, while Garfield (2004, 72) regards semi-structured interviews as the most valuable form of interviewing. It is flexible in a sense that the interviewer may change the mode of the question if the occasion demands”.

Semi-structured interviews, as opposed to structured, closed, questionnaires or interviews, allow for the researcher to repeat questions as well as change the order to suit the situation. The researcher is also able to clarify as well as request information that seems uncertain. For all of the above reasons a common, semi-structured interview schedule was used with the field workers in this study.

Radnor (2002, 346) says the use of semi-structured interviews “creates an atmosphere where the interviewer allows the interviewee to talk freely and is clearly understood, they ask questions that encourage participants to open up about attitudes, thoughts and feelings, they also allow flexibility, where the researcher is free to follow the participants’ interest and concerns”.

A common, semi-structured interview schedule was used with all field workers and the NPDE programme co-ordinator (see Appendix B and Appendix C), covering the following broad areas of inquiry:

What are your roles and responsibilities as a field worker?

What meaning and practices does being a field worker help you in your roles and responsibilities?

Before commencing the actual interview process, a draft interview schedule was piloted with a senior teacher who supervises NPDE students at my school. This allowed me to see whether or not my interview skills and my questions were meaningful. Piloting my interview schedule, allowed me to reflect and realize that interviews require much time and thought and hence my developmental approach using friends and family to develop my skills.

For the actual data production process. I commenced with one interview at a time. The process was completed within two weeks. This allowed me to transcribe each interview record and this enabled me to develop further my interview skills appropriate to the study focus.

3.9 PROCESS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is a crucial aspect in the research process. There are several way to engage in data analysis. Henning (2004) suggests that there are three ways of analyzing data. The first relate to a content analysis that focuses on identifying trends and patterns of actual words used and then to try to bring meaning to these words and phrases. Another way of data analysis is through discourse analysis, which focuses largely on not only what has been said but by understanding what was said and the contexts within which it was said. A third way is a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis. In this study, I adopted a discourse analysis approach to data analysis, as I was interested in meaning- making located within a particular context, influenced by particular drivers (e.g. the curriculum driver).

The data was organized in a particular way, depicting particular experiences as short episodes highlighting particular issues. Short accounts are useful ways of understanding experiences as they attempt to locate the experiences within a story line that has internal logics and flow, making it easier to make sense of experiences of the NPDE field workers. The short accounts are chosen on the basis of fullness of data that would allow for a story line and which illuminates significant issues worthy of elucidation.

3.10. PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES IN THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

The researcher did encounter challenges during the research. The participants that were first selected from the list provided by the NPDE co-ordinator were telephoned on numerous occasions to seek permission to interview them. They always gave excuses that they were constantly busy and would not be able to do the interview.

The researcher also encountered problems when it came to the signing of the consent form. The researcher had to explain to the participants why the signing of the consent form was important and that it is UKZN policy that the researcher has written consent from the participants before embarking on any research projects. Once this was explained, participants signed the consent forms.

3.11. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) explain ethics as a “matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others”. According to Merriam (1998, p. 240), “Ethics is a set of moral principles that are suggested by an individual or group, are subsequently widely accepted and offer rules and behavioral expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects, respondents, other researchers, assistants and students, thus the researcher must evaluate his/her own conduct according to ethical guidelines”.

According to Somo (2007, p.544), “Ethical principles need to be internalized in the personality of the researcher to such an extent that ethically guided decision-making becomes part of his/her total life style. The following ethical guidelines were used:

Participants in this study participated voluntarily and there was no manipulation or pressure.

All participants in the study were briefed on the nature and purpose of the study and thereafter signed the consent forms.

Participants in the study were assured that all information that was given will not be available to anyone who was not part of the study.

3.12. LIMITATIONS

This research did encounter certain limitations. Vithal and Jansen (2006. p. 35) state that “limitations empower the reader to appreciate what constraints were imposed on the study and to understand the context in which the researcher’s claims are set”. The two key limitations of this study are:

Because of the size of the sample group, the findings of this study are not generalized as the entire NPDE group were not represented. The aim of this study was for worthwhile and trustworthy data. The focus of this study is not to generalize but rather to focus on aspects that are relevant to the contexts.

Different forms of interviews were used to elicit the same type of data. Two forms of interviews had to be conducted because of the circumstances indicated above.

3.13. CONCLUSION

Chapter 3 outlined the research design and methodology used. The next chapter presents the data and discusses the findings.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A presentation of the data produced through the data production plan forms the central focus of this chapter. Through the case study methodology, the experiences of the NPDE field workers and the NPDE programme co-ordinator are explored. The data is presented as short accounts of the fieldworker obtained through the interview, followed with a summary that alludes to the key findings of this study.

A thematic analysis of the data is presented. The themes have been derived from combination of the expectations of what a fieldworker is expected to do during teaching practice supervision, as well as from the data that was produced through the categorization process of finding similar accounts across the participants. A content analysis framework to data analysis was used in the presentation and categorization process.

4.2. GUIDELINES AND TRAINING FOR FIELDWORKERS

The participants in this study categorically and collectively indicated that the guidelines and training to support the work of the fieldworkers were superficial, inadequate and largely technical in nature. Furthermore, fieldworkers with extensive teaching experience felt that they learnt nothing new from the training session and relied more on their experiences as teachers to manage their responsibilities to supervise and assess the student teachers. While these were the feelings of the participants after attending the training workshop organized by the institution (the university), there were some variations to their accounts of the experiences of these training sessions. Prior to exploring how each participant experienced and learnt from the training sessions, it would be appropriate to establish what the coordinator of the training session had to say in order to put perspective to the experiences as articulated by the fieldworker.

The co-ordinator, through her interviews, indicated that:

In the planning phase of the NPDE fieldwork programme, a training programme is built into the programme design. In reality, this is not a one - day programme, but rather it is a couple of hours, usually held after lunch so as to accommodate for travel and teaching obligations of the fieldworkers. The training sessions are usually held on both the campuses where the Faculty of Education is located. Fieldworkers are required to travel to one of these two campuses for the training session.

A typical training session starts with introductions and proceeds thereafter with requirements for supervision and assessment. Fieldworkers are given their schedule of students that they have been contracted to supervise together with details of the schools where these students are located. The training session then proceeds onto an explanation of the record-keeping and assessment forms that were developed by the institution.

The explanation included how these forms should be filled in. The training session then concludes with an explanation of how the fieldworkers should fill in their claims and the process of making these claims.

Clearly, from this account, the training sessions are largely technical and procedural in nature. It certainly is not a content training session as the focus is on schedules, form completion and travel claims. No engagement occurs on what or how the students are expected to be supervised nor on any training on how to assess the students during their field work. There is no indication of how the NPDE programme was to influence the students and what programme outcomes are to be assessed. Perhaps the lack of this focus of the training session is based on the assumption that the fieldworkers are experienced teachers (practicing or retired) and that they would use their knowledge to assist them in the supervision and assessment of the students in the NPDE programme. But this assumption, or the reality of it, is counterproductive to the intention of the NPDE programme. According to the design of the NPDE programme, under-qualified teachers are expected to re-skill themselves in terms of content and pedagogy that is influenced by the new outcomes based education philosophy. If these fieldworkers are expected to use their experience to support these under-qualified teachers, then there is a clear risk of the NPDE programme intentions being jeopardized.

The description of the training session, as presented by the NPDE co-ordinator, has been picked up by all the fieldworkers, in their account of their experiences and feeling about the training session. The fieldworkers accounts of the training sessions are presented here:

Field worker 1, who had been part of the NPDE programme both as a tutor and a field worker, felt that there were no clear supervision guidelines in place with regard to the one-day workshop. The following extract from her interview shows her feelings:

There was no training offered to me. Attending a one day workshop, is where the co-ordinator of the NPDE program hands out an agenda outlining what was required of us during school-based assessments, there were no proper supervision guidelines in place.

Field worker 2, a retired educator for the past 23 years, who had a wealth of teaching experience and was also a supervisor to her educators during her teaching days, also felt that there were no proper guidelines:

As a field worker there were no training or proper supervision guidelines that were given. We had to rely on our teaching experience as teachers and as supervisors during our teaching days, There was no training given to be a field worker, as mentioned earlier that during the one-day or half-day workshop we were just briefed on aspects that were technical, like transport, accommodation, etc

Field worker 3, an educator who resigned from the teaching fraternity after 18 years, also had knowledge and experience in supervising educators at her school. She felt that there was no proper supervision guidelines for her to follow. Her feelings on this issue are:

There was no formal training, we only had a one- day workshop that was merely a discussion of what we already knew and on how to go about assessing students. The NPDE co-ordinator also showed us different schedules that will be used in assessing the NPDE students.

Field worker 4, a retired educator, taught at a secondary school and also has much teaching experience felt that the programme did not have proper supervision guidelines for the NPDE field workers. She mentioned that there are many new and current trends in education that she has to keep up to and also the NPDE programme should have proper workshops in place. The following extract is from her views on the guidelines for supervision:

Being part of a one- day or should it be said a half- day workshop, we were not part of any planning as such. The job description was to read and acquire new and current knowledge in education;, there was no proper reading material that had anything to do with supervision of the NPDE students. Technical aspects were discussed during the workshop. This was transport, accommodation and meals.

Field worker 5, a retired educator who had 21 years of teaching experience, shared the same sentiments as the first four NPDE field workers. She felt that the guidelines for supervision of the NPDE students should be something that is user friendly and hands on. Her account of the training session:

The NPDE co-ordinator was the only person that was in charge of planning and there were no proper supervision guidelines that were discussed at the one- day or half- day workshop. I had to develop on my own, the training or the half day workshop was held one week prior to the school-based assessments. There were no specific supervision guidelines that were given or discussed at the workshop or training. The NPDE co-ordinator discussed very briefly the use of the observation schedule, which was something everyone was familiar with.

The five accounts of the field workers presented above show that the guidelines (training) for supervision were not in keeping with supervision and assessment requirements that field workers needed to be equipped with. Technical aspects were the key element that was discussed during the half or one- day workshop as revealed in the data. What was evident from the data was that field workers needed proper guidelines for supervision which should have been meaningful and helpful. Timing of the training was a concern, as it took place just one week prior to the fieldworkers going into the field.

Although the timing issue was not interrogated further, it is something that is of concern in that it does not allow for time for further clarification, learning and strategizing needed for effective supervision. Besides timing as an issue that may have compromised the training session, the duration and once-off session were limited for interaction between the co-ordinators and fieldworkers to take place. It was perhaps assumed by the designers of the training session that fieldworkers would be able to read, understand, interpret and be able to support, supervise and assess students based on just being able to read the documents presented to them, a concern raised by one of the fieldworkers.

4.3 THE ROLE OF THE NPDE FIELD WORKERS IN SUPERVISING AND ASSESSING THE NPDE STUDENTS

The participants in this study clearly indicated that their role as fieldworker were to supervise and assess the NPDE students. While the fieldworkers identified with the name “fieldworkers,” and accepted this term, their accounts of what they do seem inconsistent with the term. Most indicate that they largely assess students according to an assessment schedule and provide feedback, but with little or no supervision. This suggest that the name “fieldworker” is an inappropriate name for the kind of work they are involved in. Fieldworkers were more involved in supervision and assessment of the NPDE students, they were not on a field but rather doing a job that suited one of a supervisor.

Field worker 1 briefly explained the term fieldworker and then her role as a field worker (supervisor). She elaborated that her role was appropriate. She also spoke about how she assesses her students. Her feelings demonstrate this:

As a qualified coloured female educator with a Matric plus four years of training, the term fieldworker to me is a person who goes out onto the field and collects information and also assists in getting a job done. Although this term differs to the job I had to do, I found it rewarding and exciting. As a fieldworker within the NPDE programme my role was to go out into the field and visit NPDE students in their respective schools, to assess and supervise the; hence my role was most appropriate as I had to be in the field assessing and supervising students. During my observation of my students I try to assess them to the best of my ability, using the assessment tool that is the observation schedule. Students are assessed according to the schedule and this is handed over to the NPDE co-ordinator at the end of the school-based assessments”.

Field worker 2 explains her understanding of the term “fieldworker”. She thereafter mentioned that she took on the role of a supervisor where she had to go into the field and supervise NPDE students and also felt the term field worker was most appropriate for the job she undertook. The account is:

Firstly I am a qualified black teacher, with a teacher's diploma in education. My understanding of the term "fieldworker" is that I am responsible to go to schools and gather data on NPDE students using different assessment tools. As a fieldworker I also have roles and responsibilities that I adhere to. When I visit my students at their respective schools I am aware of the role that I have to my NPDE students which is to assess them. Before commencing on my observation I check to see that the lessons are planned appropriately and it is specific to the lesson being taught. An observation schedule is used with criteria on how to assess students. My responsibility is to give the observation schedule and a report to the NPDE co-ordinator.

Field worker 3 felt comfortable with the term 'field worker'. She had to go and assess students. She describes her assessment with her students, which was rewarding for her. The following extract from her interview shows her feelings:

As a field worker who is a qualified black teacher I feel like a labourer in the field when I visit my students to assess and supervise them , only this is a different field a field in education. My role as a field worker is to observe NPDE students as a form of assessment. The assessment schedules is thereafter handed in to the NPDE coordinator. I find my job as a field worker very rewarding as students go out of their way in planning their lessons for assessments. I have not experienced any hassles when it comes to assessing my students, many of them have been teaching for years and know exactly how to teach.

Field worker 4 mentioned that being called a field worker was not an issue, as she did the same as any other lecturer who goes out and supervises students at their respective schools. She also felt that her assessments of students were very encouraging and inspiring. Her account on this:

The term field worker for me is someone who goes out collecting relevant information that will help the university understand how the NPDE students engage with learners in the class. As a fieldworker I have to supervise and assess students the same way a supervisor would supervise his/her students. My role is very important to me as I am a qualified teacher with a teacher's degree. Once I completed my observation schedule on each student and cross check a number of aspects against this schedule, the lesson plan, structure etc. My responsibility is also to give them feedback on the lesson, once this is done a summative report is handed, together with the observation schedule, to the NPDE program co-ordinator.

Field worker 5 stated that the term “fieldworker” to her is something that is not suitable for the type of job she has to do, she would prefer to be called a supervisor as her role was to go to schools and supervise and assess NPDE students. She also hinted that the observation schedule did take some considerable time. Her account is:

The term “fieldworker” is a bit odd, cause to me it someone who goes out all the time and collects stats and information on people. I feel that the correct term is to be called a supervisor , this is an appropriate term as my role involves supervising and assessing students. As a fieldworker we take on the role of a supervisor where we are constantly guiding, developing, encouraging and mentoring students. As a qualified black female, I am confident when I assess and supervise my students. During the assessment of students an observation schedule is completed by field workers and then a summative report is completed by both the student and field workers, which is then handed over to the NPDE programme co-ordinator. The observation schedule is time consuming as there is a lot of information that is required.

The five accounts of the fieldworkers presented above show that all the fieldworkers are qualified personnel, with either a teacher’s degree or a teacher’s diploma. Fieldworker clearly defined their understanding on the “fieldworker”.The key element is that all field workers acknowledged their role as that of a supervisor. They also felt that they accomplished this role as a supervisor with regard to school based assessment. However, it was evident from the data that there were inconsistencies with regard to what happens to the assessment tools that are handed over to the NPDE co-ordinator.

The accounts of the five fieldworkers have been picked up by the NPDE coordinator. During the interview process, questions were raised with the NPDE programme co-ordinator on how effective the assessment tools (observation schedules) were and whether or not she felt a need to amend these schedules. These assessment tools have been used ever since the inception of the NPDE programme. Questions raised on what happens to these assessment tool after they have been collected. The NPDE programme co - ordinator explains:

There was no need to amend or change the assessment tools, once a field worker completed his/her observation on each student, a summative report which was a report on (how a student planned and delivered his/her lesson during the school-based assessment). This report was done together with the student and thereafter handed to me the NPDE programme co-ordinator. Once the assessment tools are handed to me, they are stored in boxes. I have discussed this during our meetings on why these marks are not captured and to date I haven’t received any answer to this.

4.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITH REGARD TO CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Through the accounts of the participants in this study, it seems quite clear that fieldworkers rely on their own experience and knowledge for classroom observation, supervision and assessment. No professional development in these key areas of teaching practice was facilitated by the institution and therefore a concern emerges between the programme design, teaching within modules and field supervision and assessment. The fieldworkers rely on their professionalism to update themselves with current developments in education to support their work as fieldworkers.

Thus, when it came to how they should actually impart the knowledge that the NPDE students required, regardless of whether it was to do with pedagogical content/phase/disciplinary knowledge, no workshops directed at these types of specific areas were offered to them by the Faculty of Education. They had to develop on their own by reading up on the latest developments in relevant literature before imparting what they had learnt to their students. The significance of this lack of professional development with regard to class visits (and continued support) cannot be overstated.

An important point to be borne in mind is that all field workers that supervised NPDE students in this study were trained during the apartheid era. There is thus a very strong possibility that they relied significantly on the pedagogies and knowledge derived from the racially diverse teacher training institutions that characterized the apartheid era in which they were trained to supervise and observe students.

The description of professional development with regard to classroom observation has been picked up by all the fieldworkers in their account of their experiences and feelings about classroom observation. The fieldworkers accounts of classroom observations are presented here:

Field worker 1, who was trained during the apartheid years, did not receive training or supervision guidance in visiting her students who are now in the post -apartheid era. She had to rely on her training as an educator to supervise her students. Her account is:

Being a retired educator, I was trained as a teacher during the apartheid era. When I joined the University as a field worker I did not receive training as a supervisor and, yes, I relied on my experiences as an educator to supervise my students during class visits. During my class visits I encouraged NPDE students to acquire new and meaningful knowledge.

Field worker 2 who was also trained during the apartheid era, mentioned that she had to keep abreast with the latest developments in education before she visited her NPDE students and had to be knowledgeable in every learning area. Her feelings on this issue are:

As an educator from the old school, before I went to visit my students I had to know what the new curriculum was all about and, yes, it was my responsibility to read and keep up-to-date on the happenings in education.

Field worker 3 also mentioned that before she visited her students she had to have a good and thorough knowledge of the curriculum, so as to offer the best advice and guidance to her students. Her account is:

As a field worker I spent a lot of my spare time reading on aspects pertaining to curriculum, as well as new developments in education. I had to also impart knowledge that was current and relevant to my students during their class visits. I had to answer questions raised by my students on how they can best deliver and implement the curriculum in their classes. This was challenging for me as I was never trained as a supervisor.

Field worker 4 revealed that she, too, was trained in an era that has now changed and moved towards liberation with regard to new knowledge and how she should construct herself during class visits. She had to rely on her own reading and acquire knowledge that would enhance her students to the best of their abilities. Her feelings on this issue are:

My experience as an educator and my experience as a supervisor was extremely different and poles apart. I had to rely on how I was supervised and how my supervisors developed me during my years as a teacher. I read a lot on current trends in education and impart my new knowledge to my students when I visit them for class-based assessments. I also tried my level best to develop them to the best of their abilities.

Field worker 5 mentioned that during her class visits she always contacted the NPDE programme co-ordinator if she was not certain about anything pertaining to her class visits. Her account is:

The NPDE programme coordinator was very helpful she always assisted me when I needed her assistance or if I was not certain of anything with regard to class visits. She helped me in getting students organized for their lessons and assisted me if I was unsure on how to implement the National Curriculum Statement.

Clearly, from these accounts, fieldworkers had to rely on their own knowledge and skills of supervision to supervise their students. The key element was that fieldworkers took the initiative to become familiar with current developments in education, largely through self-engagement. The description of professional development with regard to classroom observation as presented by the five fieldworkers, has been picked up by the NPDE programme co-ordinator in her account: Interestingly, the NPDE programme co-ordinator mentioned that as a co-ordinator of such an important programme she did not receive any formal training with regard to class visits. Her account is:

There was no formal training from the University with regard to class visit and assessments, I did not receive any formal training from the University. Not all knowledge is learnt through formal learning, some knowledge and skills are acquired through exposure, direct involvement, experience and research. This does create an opportunity to engage with this in terms of experiential learning, learning through practice and situated learning.

As indicated from this account, the Faculty of Education did not provide fieldworkers with proper skills and knowledge on how they should construct themselves as supervisors during their class visits. Perhaps the programme designers assumed that field workers were experienced and that they could supervise the NPDE students based on their own knowledge and skills. The Faculty of Education failed to realize that being a supervisor is a task that requires experience, training and development. Having a qualified and trained supervisor means preparing a student adequately to meet the demands and challenges of the classroom.

4.5 FIELDWORKERS RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE NPDE STUDENTS

The participants indicated that their responsibility towards the NPDE students was enormous and critical, but felt that their input into the students' development is limited. They further, indicated that they only offered their assistance to the NPDE students during school-based assessments. The participants revealed that they did not have any say on the number of students they had to assess and supervise. These were some of the feelings of the participants. However, there were variations to the accounts of the participants and their responsibility towards the NDPE students. The participants accounts on their responsibility towards the NPDE students are presented here:

Field worker 1, during the interview, displayed a strong sense of responsibility for her students and said that she engaged in meeting with her students before and after her supervision of them. The following extract from the interview shows her feelings towards her responsibility to her students:

As a field worker, the responsibility was to meet our students before and after their supervision. Although having a number of students it seemed impossible to offer valued guidance and support, as time was a very critical factor. It would have been nice to meet my students on a regular basis so as to offer them assistance and guidance all the time. My meetings were generally very short and to the point, as students were very occupied with their preparation for their school-based assessments....

Field worker 2 revealed that she did not have time to meet her students, or even choose the number of students she would like to supervise. She was handed a sheet from the NPDE co-ordinator with the number of students and schools she has to visit. Her feelings about the process are:

Firstly there was no choice in selecting the number of students I would meet during the school-based assessments. I had to accept the number of students that I was allocated to by the NPDE co-ordinator. Due to the number of students I had to assess and supervise I had no time to meet or guide my students properly. I only offered feedback after their supervision, which was not adequate for them.

Field worker 3 mentioned that she did not have a say in the number of students she had to meet, but felt that the NPDE co-ordinator always made sure that students were equally divided among her colleagues. She also felt that the number of students allocated to her for school-based assessments were adequate. Her account is:

All of the field workers have a lot of trust and faith in the NPDE co-ordinator, as she is always helping and assisting us in everything we do. I am happy and do not have any problems with the number of students I have to meet and supervise. The NPDE co-ordinator is always fair in her allocating an equal number of students per field worker. Although time is limited, I try to always meet with every student that I am allocated to.

Field worker 4 stated that the number of students per school-based assessment was too highly as field workers had to assess three learning areas in one day and had to meet two to three students in one day. Meeting with students had to be finished within a limited time. The following extract from her interview shows her feelings:

Although we were not involved in choosing the number of students we have to supervise. We find it taxing and difficult in meeting with students to assess them in three different learning areas all in one day. Time is too limited in meeting all students the same day.

Field worker 5 mentioned that she was happy with the number of students that she was allocated to and that her meeting with her students were completed as per schedule that was handed out to her by the NPDE co-ordinator. Her feeling shows her happiness with regard to her meeting:

There were no problems with meeting students in one day. I had to meet with all the students that I was allocated to and I always had to finish my meeting on time. When I met with them, my meeting were brief and to the point.

The five accounts of the fieldworkers presented above show that their responsibility towards their students was enormous and demanding. Time being the common factor and the number of students allocated to each of the fieldworkers was evident, as discussed in the data. Evidence from the data were that fieldworkers needed more time and fewer students to assess and supervise so as to provide adequate and proper supervision to the NPDE students.

Although fieldworkers had no choice in choosing the number of students to supervise and assess, it was perhaps the decision of the programme designers who felt that fieldworkers would manage with the number of students allocated to them, as agreed by two of the fieldworkers.

The responsibility towards the NPDE students, as presented by the fieldworkers, has been picked up by the NPDE programme co-ordinator in her account of her feelings and view about the responsibility towards the NPDE students. The NPDE programme co-ordinator's account is presented here:

As the programme co-ordinator of the NPDE programme, Edgewood base, I was solely responsible for allocating and choosing the number of students that each field worker had to meet during their school-,based assessments. Field workers have no say in this as I am the only person responsible for the allocation which is fair and even. My responsibility was to ensure that every NPDE student was met by the NPDE field worker. This is indeed, an enormous task for the programme co-ordinator to fill. As the programme co-ordinator I have to make sure that every fieldworker is allocated students and that every student is supervised and assessed.

Clearly, from this account, the responsibility towards the NPDE students is largely that of the NPDE fieldworkers. The NPDE programme co-ordinator is only responsible for the technical aspect, such as sorting the number of students and making sure every student is seen to. There was no engagement on the concept of time, on how long students were to be supervised and assessed. Perhaps the programme designers felt that getting the NDPE fieldworkers involved in choosing the number of students for them to supervise and assess would cause discrepancy. If the programme designers expected the fieldworkers to do justice to the supervision and assessment of the NDPE students, then they probably should have hired more fieldworkers and allocated a minimum number of students per fieldworker.

4.6 SUPERVISION OUT OF CLASS

The participants indicated that supervision out of class was done once classroom assessment was completed. Consistent with the findings in the preceding section, out of the class engagement with students was largely related to feedback from the classroom observations. While the fieldworkers claim that this post – observation meeting is supervision, the accounts from their interviews suggest that their engagement with students is assessment - related rather than development - related.

Field worker 1 explained that she focused on assisting her students after their school-based assessment. Her students always adhered to and listened to her advice. Her account is:

After every assessment with my students I would sit with my students and discuss every aspect of the assessment process. It was a learning process where we learnt from each other. There were many aspects of the curriculum that I had picked up from my students. We filled in the summative report together; this report was done openly and transparency was always maintained...

Field worker 2 mentioned that she offered her students advice and guidance out of class. She had to develop her students who had the potential but needed more help to enhance their teaching. Her feelings on this issue is:

Once the lesson was completed and the observation schedule was completed, a meeting between my students and myself had been set up so that we could sit together and iron out problems and challenges that each student had experienced. During the discussion the students' weak and strong points were discussed. Students were allowed to reflect and openly discuss what they felt they needed help in.

Fieldworker 3 stated that she took on a very important role, when she assisted her students in filling in the summative report and also when she allowed her students to reflect critically on their assessment. Ideas were exchanged between the field worker and the student and a positive engagement between both was always welcomed. Her account is:

Being a field worker, I have to always guide my students in and out of the supervision process. My students are always able to contact me anytime if they needed assistance. After their lessons we would sit in a place that was conducive and I always asked students to critically reflect on their assessment and to be as honest about the process as possible. Once this was done and engagement would take place where support was always given”.

Field worker 4 stated that she always offered her support and assistance to her students at all times. She had to make time out of class to assist her students if they had difficulty in anything. Her account is:

After every class-based assessment, where the students were observed, a meeting had to be held out of class, where the necessary supervisory help was rendered. We were always able to interrogate the class-based assessment. My meeting with my students was always positive and encouraging, I always made time for my students.

Field worker 5 recorded that she, too, supervised her student out of the class, where she offered them assistance and guidance in being effective teachers in the class. During her engagement with them she always felt comfortable. Her account is:

As a field worker who took on a very important role of supervising and assessing the NPDE students, I always offered assistance out of the class. Our meetings would often go on for long hours. I felt that was able to build strong bonds between my student.

It is clear from the accounts presented above that supervision out of class was effective, as fieldworkers provided the NPDE students with proper guidance and assisted them on how they should use their knowledge and skills in the classroom. Although the NPDE programme designers did not provide the fieldworkers with effective tools for supervision, it has to be acknowledged that fieldworkers used their own initiative to guide and develop their students.

Prior to exploring how each of the participants supervised their students out of class, it would be appropriate to establish what the co-ordinator of the NPDE programme had to say. Her account is:

As the programme co-ordinator, I had an obligation to meet with my field workers. I had to assist my fieldworkers with everything. I was always there for them, anytime. My meetings with them was about the supervision of students and also how they should go about assessing and developing them. When field workers could not make it to complete their assessment, which was very rare, I would always step in to assist. If they needed advice on school-based assessment, I offered my advice and guidance.

It is clear from this account that the NPDE programme co-ordinator played a pivotal role in helping and guiding her fieldworkers in supervising their students. She guided them appropriately on how they should guide and develop their students during their supervision out of class. Although both the NPDE programme co-ordinator and the NPDE fieldworkers relied on their own knowledge of supervision, it seems that they were both content and satisfied with their supervision skills.

4.7 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND FIELDWORKERS

The data from the participants relating to the relationship between themselves and the student suggest that it is one of collaboration and mutual benefit, rather than a one-directional relationship. Most described their relationship as that of a mentor, which is quite different from an earlier engagement that suggested that they were comfortable being called fieldworkers.

Field worker 1 stressed that she did form a strong partnership with her NPDE students. It was a partnership that offered her students all the support and assistance during school-based assessment; her account is:

The partnership that was formed between my students was one where both of us learnt new techniques and skills. I also took on a role of a mentor. This partnership was collaborative. There was always respect and encouragement from my side as a mentor and my students as well. When students needed my help and support I always assisted them during class - based assessment and out of the class. I found being a mentor very positive.

Field worker 2 engaged meaningfully with her students. She took on a role that was not authoritative or dominant. She always made her students feel welcome and safe during their class - based assessment. The following extract from her interview shows her feelings:

As a field worker both my students and I collaborated on different methods of teaching in the class. I found this rather encouraging as my students were innovative and creative. During class-based supervision and assessment I mentored my students. Whenever my students did not know anything I always made them feel comfortable and secure offering the best advice and solution to whatever they needed assistance in. We formed a two -way partnership where there was understanding, love and support.

Field worker 3 shared a very positive and collaborative relationship with her students. She came across as being a warm and loving person to her students. She took her role as field worker (mentor) very seriously. Her feelings on this issue are:

As a field worker, my students did not work in isolation we always collaborated on different ideas and had discussions on the best methods of teaching the different learning areas. I also did come across as a very positive person as I was ever willing and happy to answer any questions with regard to my supervision and assessment requirements with my students. My students felt very comfortable during class- based assessments. We would even share our lunch during the breaks. I could talk to my students about anything, from the latest trends to the news around the world. The partnership that we shared was based on respect and trust.

Field worker 4 explained that her relationship was a two way process, in which she and her students learnt from each other. She formed a relationship that was based on trust and respect. She always spoke to them about her days as a teacher and how she had to go through the same channels of being a teacher. Her account is:

As a field worker (mentor), I always formed a collaborative relationship with my students. The relationship that was formed was based on trust. Once my students trusted me, my battle had been won. I made them feel safe and secure where they could talk about whatever was on their mind. We respected each other, irrespective of race, creed, religion and gender. I always encouraged them to speak their minds with regard to anything”.

Field worker 5 created a positive environment, where a collaborative relationship that offered collegial support had been implemented. She demonstrated a loving and caring nature towards her students. Her feelings on this issue:

My role was to form a collaborative partnership with my students, so that they were comfortable and were able to approach me with regard to anything. I had to nurture, guide, supervise, assist and help my students during their class- based assessments. To me this was very rewarding and encouraging.

The five accounts of fieldworkers presented above show that they formed a collaborative partnership with their students. They took on an important role during their supervision and assessment of the NPDE students. They were mentors to their students and offered them care, encouragement, support, guidance and were good role models to them.

The description of the relationship between the NPDE fieldworkers and the NPDE students presented above has been picked up by the NPDE programme co-ordinator.

She mentioned that the duration of school visits by the NPDE field worker will be limited and that students will not be given the opportunity to be mentored on a regular basis. She felt that other stakeholders in education should become involved. Her account is:

Yes, this should be looked into where the mentors from schools and District people should come on board and assist as they are the best people who are part of the school domain. Yes at the moment the University has decided that the field workers will visit students in their first year, the second year students will fill in an assessment schedule and in the third year field workers will go back and supervise students.

This account clearly indicates that in order for the NPDE students to be effective and developed teachers in schools, the schools and the Department of Education should step into assist and mentor these students. Supervision and assessment should be ongoing. It should not be only when fieldworkers come in twice a year. Senior teachers at school level can develop and assist the NPDE students.

4.8 EXPERIENCES OF THE NPDE FIELDWORKERS

The participants in this study gave an account of their experiences during their school- based assessments. These experiences were both enriching and an eye- opener to the Faculty of Education. It was perhaps not discussed as to what fieldworkers endure during their school - based assessment.

Field worker 1, for example, explained her experiences in the classroom and out of the class. These were different in every school she visited. The communities always welcomed her. Her feelings on this issue are:

As a field worker, I had to travel a lot, going to different places and visiting different schools. The most interesting experience for me was the communities that I had visited, the people were very warm and friendly.

Field worker 2 also concurred that visiting different places was very interesting and the people were always warm and inviting. The schools were very far apart, which involved travelling long distances during a single day, simply to meet the students. Her account is:

Visiting different places was very encouraging, as I met a lot of good and loving people who always assisted if we were lost. Sometimes finding a school was so difficult that people from the community would always assist us getting to a school on time.

Field worker 3 added that travelling into the deep rural areas was very tiring and dangerous at times, as safety was of importance. The fieldworker would arrive at school only to realize that the school lacked essential tools for the NPDE students to do their assessments. Her feelings on this issue are;

As a field worker going into the deep rural area it was very dangerous and we had to always put our safety first. When I got to one school after a tiring journey I was amazed by the lack of resources that the school had. Students were very innovative in creating things for their assessments.

Field worker 4 explained that her experiences were different. She had to deal with students who were not prepared for their lessons. She had to guide and help them get ready for their assessments. Her account is:

My experience was different, as I had to travel a long distance only to be greeted by students who did not plan and prepare for their lessons. I had to sit and assist them in the planning so that they could deliver a lesson that would be suitable.

Field worker 5 felt that her experience was rewarding. She had visited schools where her students who had taught the reception grade, made learning fun and exciting for their class. Her account is:

Visiting the grade R class was the most rewarding and exciting experience as the teachers always had vibrant and exciting lessons planned and the teachers used different ideas to teach their learners. Teachers used innovative ideas to teach their learners.

The five fieldworkers were very open and enthusiastic. Their reports reveal that their experiences were very different. Travelling long distances and finding the schools were the key element that were discussed in the data. The programme designers did not take into account the distance that each fieldworker had to travel to get to a school. Fieldworkers had to also complete their school - based assessment on the same day. Proper planning with regard to the distance each fieldworker had to travel should be considered.

The experiences of the five fieldworkers have been noted by the NPDE programme co-ordinator herself. She had to spend much time with the NPDE fieldworkers. Her account is:

As the NPDE co-ordinator I had to travel a lot with my field workers and, yes, I did experience seeing the different schools and the different communities in different regions. I had to visit schools that were far off, if a field worker could not make it to assess their students.

Clearly, from this account, it was not only the NPDE fieldworkers that had to travel and experience different situations, it was also the duty of the programme co-ordinator. The programme co-ordinator did take her role as a coordinator very seriously, always making sure that every fieldworker completed her supervision and school- based assessment.

4.9 CONCLUSION

Chapter 4 presented the data by categorizing them according to themes that are closely related to the functions and responsibilities of the fieldworkers. Within each theme, emergent findings were revealed by the presentation of data to support the findings. Clearly, from the data and analysis, the work of the fieldworker in supervising and assessing student on teaching practice is a misnomer and the training of these fieldworkers is of concern, especially if they are expected to support the students in new learning that is appropriate to the current school education system. The next chapter presents a summary of the findings and recommendation for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the data produced for the study was categorized and presented as emerging findings. In this chapter, sense making of the data is privileged with the purpose of extracting the key findings of this study in terms of the research questions. Some recommendations are made based on the key findings. The chapter concludes with a summary of what has been on the key findings. The chapter concludes with a summary of what has been done across the research process and alludes to some further research that should be pursued in this field of exploration.

5.2 KEY FINDINGS AND THEORETICAL INSIGHT

To reiterate, in literature this research study an attempt was made to explore and understand the field workers' experiences because it is a key element of Teacher Professional Development in the context of this study. The focus of the study was on exploring fieldworkers' experiences of supervision and assessment within the NPDE programme offered at an higher education institution as an intervention strategy to upgrade and re-skill teachers who were deemed under-qualified in terms of the policy context regarding recognition of teacher qualification. It must be emphasized that the students in the NPDE programme are largely experienced teachers, some of whom have more than thirty years of teaching experience and these teachers are being given coursework and site based supervision for teacher development so that they could achieve a qualified teacher status.

This section of the chapter attempts to clearly articulate the emerging findings that will contribute to the main or key finding of the study. Perhaps then, it may be more appropriate to articulate the main finding and then show how this key finding emerged through the data analysis. The key finding of this study is: *Despite the theoretical and programmatic centrality of the role of fieldworkers in supervision and assessment of the students (under-qualified teachers), the person responsible for supervision and assessment by fieldworkers suggests that this central role is procedural in nature and does not add any value, except for accountability to the teacher development process of under-qualified teachers. Having articulated this key finding, the rest of this section shows how this finding emerged.*

5.2.1 GUIDELINES AND TRAINING FOR FIELDWORKERS

The guidelines and training for fieldworkers formed a very critical aspect of the NPDE programme. Fieldworkers were hired on assumption that they were skilled in supervising and assessing the NPDE students. The programme designers failed to realize that the NPDE fieldworkers were trained professionals who only possessed a teachers qualification. They were not trained to be supervisors. Being a supervisor is a job that requires individuals to have certain skills and knowledge on how to go about supervising students . As Glanz (1998, p.6) notes that supervision is a function performed by specifically trained professionals.

The guidelines and training given to the fieldworkers were superficial as it did not prepare them with adequate supervision and assessment techniques that fieldworkers required. The guidelines and training for fieldworkers only took place after lunch and on one day. The agenda of this so called training for fieldworkers only presented fieldworkers with an agenda that discusses technical aspects.

The technical aspects that were discussed in great detail were travel costs to and from their school visits, accommodation (if the destination was far from home), payment of fieldworkers. The other aspects that were discussed by the programme coordinator was on how to fill in the observation schedule and summative report. The programme designers did not offer fieldworkers with proper guidelines on how to supervise and assess the NPDE students nor where they given any orientation on what the programme intervention intended, what was taught through the programme and what was expected through the programme design. This suggest that the fieldworkers were supervising and assessing students not what the NPDE programme intended but rather on what knowledge and experience the fieldworker brought to bear in their supervision process. It was clear from the accounts from the fieldworkers that their personal experiences and training formed the basis of their engagement with the NPDE students.

The next aspect that was a call for concern was the duration or time of the guidelines and training for fieldworkers. It was rather too short and not sufficient for guiding and training. This can been seen as poor planning by the programme designers. It has to be argued that a half day workshop will never equip fieldworkers with the necessary skills and knowledge that they would have required to be effective supervisors.

5.2.2 THE ROLE OF THE NPDE FIELDWORKERS IN ASSESSING AND SUPERVISING THE NPDE STUDENTS

The inappropriate title was the key element that emerged from the finding. Although fieldworker were comfortable with the title they were given to by the Faculty of Education. This seemed inconsistent with the work they had to do which involved supervision and assessment. The discrepancy lay with the fact that fieldworkers did more assessment rather than supervising students.

The programme designers should have probably used a more suitable term like an assessment officer or supervisor. Fieldworker is indeed an odd title to the kind of job that each of them had to do. Fieldworker is a term used for individuals that are work on a field. For professional people to be regarded as a fieldworker seemed very inappropriate. Fieldworkers accounts in the data analysis clearly shows that they accomplished they role as a supervisor and not that of a fieldworker. Another inconsistency was the fact that the data that was collected during the observation process during the classroom was not captured and reflected in the students portfolio for their assessment mark.

5.2.3. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WITH REGARD TO CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

Lack of professional development seemed to be the key element that emerged from the findings. As discussed earlier in this chapter, fieldworkers were not properly equipped with proper guidelines and training. They had to rely on their own knowledge and reading to prepare themselves to supervise and assess the NPDE students. Korthagen (2000, p. 432) notes that “teacher professional development and teacher education are considered as a collaborative supervision model that attempts to deepen constructivist approaches to teachers’ professional learning”. The NPDE programme lacked integration and practice. Fieldworkers were not trained to supervise NPDE students according to how the theory they gained during their lectures. There was no integration from the lecture to the classroom. Hustler & McIntyre argue that “Supervision criteria should be consistent with school and university based work”.

The programme designers should have trained fieldworkers by developing their knowledge base on what aspects they needed to know before they visited their student’s. Kruijer (2010, p. 13) notes that “The improvement of subject knowledge, as well as the mastering of the language of instruction, has to be an essential element to the teacher education in upgrading programme.

5.2.4 RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS THE NPDE STUDENTS

Limited input and fewer students were the key constructs that emerged from the findings. Fieldworkers were responsible for assessing and supervising the NPDE students. This was an enormous task as they had to assess and supervise three students per school. The assessment and supervision process involved three learning areas per student. Although fieldworkers faced such an enormous task, they took their responsibility of assessing and supervising very seriously as mentioned in the data in chapter four.

The programme designers failed to realize that supervision and assessment is not a clear cut process, it is a process that involves a lot of time and focus. Cogan (1973) mentions very clearly in his detailed five step plan of supervision: which includes a pre – observation, observation, analysis, post – observation conference, post observation analysis. Although fieldworkers met with their students before their actual assessment in the classroom, it was a briefing meeting where students allowed them to view their lesson plans. The observation in the class was based on how they actually delivered their lessons. As mentioned in the data fieldworkers had to actually make time to do a post observation analysis. The analysis was done collaboratively where the summative report was compiled together.

Although fieldworkers tried to implement Cogans (1973) five step plan, it was not done accordingly as time was against them. The next important aspect that encroached on them being effective supervisors was the total number of students allocated to them. Three student’s per school was a bit too much for them. Bearing in mind the three different learning areas they had to assess. The programme designers should have realized that fieldworkers could have not done justice to the supervision process as they had to visit schools in different locations and on the same day.

5.2.5 SUPERVISION OUT OF CLASS

Assessment was the key element that emerged from the finding. Although fieldworkers supervised the NPDE students out of class, this engagement was purely assessment related rather than post – observation which should have involved supervision. During this meeting details of the assessment was discussed with the NPDE students and the fieldworkers. Supervision out of class did not offer any aspect that involved developing the NPDE students. Cogan’s (1973) notes that “During the post- observation conference feedback should be presented to the supervisee regarding the observed lesson which should be objective, understandable and appropriate to the pre – observation conference”. Although the NPDE fieldworkers did meet with their students after their classroom based assessment. The meeting was short and brief. Fieldworkers did discuss their strengths and their weaknesses, but this was fast tracked and it was not developmental in any way. Hence, Nolan & Hoover (2004) argues that “By forming a strong relationship the supervisor can work on the teachers’ strengths and unique teaching skills or contexts rather than focusing on the weakness.

The programme designers should have included a schedule for fieldworkers to follow that included all of Cogans (1973) theory. Another important point that was evident from the data was that both the fieldworker and the NPDE students filled in the summative report that reflected a critical analysis of their assessment. This is in accordance with Brooks and Sikes (1987, p. 124) “There are two basic components to the assessment process: formative and summative”. The summative report was completed between the fieldworker and the NDPE students. Whereas the formative report which included the observation schedule was completed by the NPDE fieldworker only. The summative report is only completed after the classroom based assessment, and having noted earlier that the post conference meeting was fast tracked due to time. Was the summative report a real reflection of the NPDE student, or was it just filled so as to speed up the process.

5.2.6 COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS AND FIELDWORKERS

Partnership formed seemed to be the key element that emerged from the finding. The partnership that was formed was based on love, trust and understanding. Although the discrepancy from the data revealed that fieldworkers regarded themselves as mentor’s, they also took on the title of being a fieldworker. The literature draws on the works of Jones (2008, p. 2) “Collaboration between teachers’ has been a model of professional development in the past but these partnerships tend to be restricted to partners within each sector, example teacher with fellow student”. This formed a very important aspect of the partnership model in the NPDE programme. This partnership model in the NPDE programme leads to mentoring. This resonates well with Jones (2008, p.2) “Partnership between pre – service teachers and in – service teachers traditionally follow a mentor type model”.

Fieldworkers found that being a mentor to their students had a positive effect on the relationship that the fieldworkers and the NPDE students had on each other. Fieldworkers felt that they were always there listening and mentoring their students.

McNally and Martin (1998) adds that collaborative mentors combine support and challenge in ways whereby teachers are empowered. The data revealed a very important point that schools where the NPDE students are based should mentor and guide them. This is important as supervision is ongoing and the students are developed accordingly. Kruijer (2010, p.3) notes that “Effective in – service upgrading will depend on the availability of support at school level. The programme designers only allowed for two visits per year and this will be changed to a first in the first year of study and the third year. There will be no visit in the second year. It has to argued that the NPDE students need mentoring and support all the time.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The University of UKZN needs to address these critical issues surrounding the NPDE program and in order for them to address these issues, the following recommendations in my view are imperative to the NPDE programme.

1. The NPDE programme coordinator, together with relevant staff in the Continuing Education Sector of the Faculty of Education at UKZN, need to sit together and map out guidelines and training for supervision that address the needs and demands of the NDPE field workers.
2. The work load of the NPDE coordinator is something that should also be looked at, as it is clear from this study that she is overloaded to the point of not being able to function to the best of her ability. The university, could for example, employ additional coordinators to assist in the different aspects of the program.
3. Workshops should not be held two or three weeks prior to school visits, but rather two or three months before the actual school visits begin. These workshops should assist and provide the field workers with everything they need to know about what is required of them during school-based assessment. However, a workshop should also be held just prior to the school visits discussing issues that field workers were not clear on. During these workshops, theory followed by practice should form the bases of discussion. Aspects such as curriculum, assessment, supervision and observation of students should be discussed and interrogated at length. The workshop should focus on quality that allows every field worker an opportunity to be developed. This resonates well with Kgope (1999, p. 181) “Workshops must be embedded with quality and not quantity”. The time frame of these workshops should be held for two weeks from 9am to 12h00, so that field workers are properly equipped with knowledge and skills in the supervision and assessment of the NDPE students. Field workers should be given relevant and important literature that pertains to their field of supervision and assessment.
4. The university should play a key and important role in ensuring that the relevant stakeholders, example the department of education, the school where the NPDE students are based and the district officials should be part of this programme assisting and guiding the field workers in making sure that the school-based assessment programme is a success. The observation schedules that the NPDE field workers fill should be analyzed and in should be in line with the NPDE programme.
5. School-based assessment and supervision should be done on an ongoing basis and the relevant stakeholders in education, that is the department officials, the school where the NPDE students are based and the district officials, should be part of this programme. Schools need to identify relevant and adequate teachers that are able to assist, mentor and supervise students on an ongoing bases. It should not only be done in the first and third year, but on a regular basis.

6. The assessment records of the NPDE students should be handed over to the university. The ongoing process allows learners the opportunity of rectifying their errors and implementing the correct methods of instruction. This in turn will make them good and fully fledged educators of the twentieth century.

CONCLUSION

The supervision and assessment experiences of the NPDE field workers in this study illuminates the sole purpose of this study as an attempt to answer the critical questions was made. This study used a qualitative methodology where semi-structured interviews were used to explore the supervision and assessment experiences of the NPDE field workers. The interpretive paradigm was used to understand the field workers in a social context of the NPDE programme. The limitation of this study was that time was of importance and that field workers were so busy that the initial lot of field workers that were chosen refused to participate in this study. The researcher had to also go back into the field to collect more data. The data was presented by short accounts of participants experiences on their supervision experiences. Through these short accounts, emerging findings were identified which lead to a key finding of this study. The study concludes with the findings and future recommendations. In addition, further research leads to be pursued in terms of what exactly happens during supervision at the site of schools by exploring through in depth observation and interviews between supervisor and student. Focusing on what learning takes place during these interactions identify, recruit, and develop fieldworkers so that appropriate fieldworkers are employed and who can enhance the achievement of the programmatic interventions that are privileged in a programme design such as the NPDE programme.

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Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Dear Participant

I would like you to read this 'Informed Consent' document. It explains details about the NPDE Research Project and your rights as a participant in this project. When you have finished reading it, please sign it in the space indicated to show that you have read, understood and agree to the terms of your participation. When you have signed, please return it to me as soon as possible.

PROJECT TITLE: An exploration of the supervision and assessment experiences of NPDE field workers.

PROJECT AIM: The aim of the project is to find out more about the supervision and assessment experiences of NPDE field workers. Your role in this research is critical, as we need to find out how you as field worker are supported and assisted by UKZN in supervising and assessing NPDE students, and the effect your role has on students' classroom practice.

PROJECT LEADER: Deshini Pillay

PARTICIPANT SELECTION: Five participants will be selected from a list from the UKZN, Edgewood Campus.

WHAT IS REQUIRED OF YOU?

I would like to interview you three times for 60 to 90 minutes each time. Each interview will be at a time and place that suits you and will not cost you any money. I would also like to accompany you on one of your visits to a school if this is possible.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS FOR YOU

It is always difficult to say how people will benefit from participating in this kind of research. However, I am hoping that, through our collaborative investigation into NPDE field workers supervision and assessment experiences, and the conversations we have, your understanding of issues related to supervision and assessment experiences will grow, and that you will leave the project empowered through your participation in it. With deeper knowledge of all these kinds of issues, it is possible that you will feel more powerful as an supervisor or field worker and keen to make changes with regard to your supervision.

USE OF A TAPE RECORDER

All interviews will be taped. Each interview will then be transcribed by me and given back to you for checking and comments before we have the next interview. We are doing this because each interview builds on the one that went before.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND ANONYMITY

All interview transcripts will be kept under secure lock and key, and will be protected by a password (known only to me) on my computer. I would, however, like your permission to let me show sections of the transcripts to my supervisor, as I need guidance and support in the process of data collection and analysis.

At no stage will your real name appear in any document that is made public as a result of this research without your permission. This will ensure that no-one recognizes you if they ever get to read my dissertation, or any publication that I write as a result of this work. You may request copies of the transcripts of all your interviews should you wish.

THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Your participation in this project is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw from it at any point. If you decide to withdraw, you will not suffer any kind of punishment/disadvantage. I would like you to notify me as quickly as possible, however, if you suddenly do not want to withdraw so that a replacement can be found.

I, _____ (Full names in block letters),
have read, understood and agree to the terms of my participation in the NPDE Research
Project as set out in this document.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The purpose of this interview schedule is to gather information on the experiences of field workers.

Being a field worker

1. Describe to me what it means to be a field worker on the NPDE programme.
2. Why do you think you are called field workers?
3. Would you rather be called something else? What would this be (if yes).
4. How were you selected as a field worker?
5. What is the highest qualification required to be a field worker?
6. Describe the training you had to become a field worker.
7. Give me an example of the best learning experiences you had during your training. How has this experience helped you in your visits to NPDE students?
8. Give me an example of the worst moments in your training.
9. How many schools are you allocated to during the two semesters?
10. What role do you play in selecting the schools you will visit? If none, why do you think that is the case? What role would you like to play?
11. How many students do you supervise? Would you like to supervise more or less? Why (either way)?
12. What types of supervision methods do you use?
13. What kind of support do you get from UKZN / the NPDE program coordinator? Give some examples of this support. Is this enough for you or would you like more. If so, what would you like?
14. Describe the most interesting experience you have had as a field worker on the NPDE?
15. Would you recommend to your friends to apply to become field workers on the NDPE? Why/ why not?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:

1. When are the one day workshop or training for field workers held? That is, how close to their school visits actually beginning to they get 'trained'?
2. Where are these one day workshops held? Why here? Have field workers indicated any other venues they would prefer? Why? What is the actual venue like - well ventilated/ good lighting/spacious/chalkboard/OHP/tea and food provided/ comfortable chairs etc.?
3. Who bears the cost of these workshop's?
4. Does every field workers attend these workshops? If any are exempted, on what grounds? What do you do if a field worker can't attend?
5. How many field workers are trained? Just enough for your requirements, or do you have a pool of field workers that you can draw from.
6. Describe a typical training day? What are some of the activities that take place? Are there any materials given out?
7. Do field workers sign a contract, if so for how long? What are the terms of this contract/ Is there a job description written into it? What do you do if a field worker breaks the contract, say by not turning up to do supervision when she/he was expected to do? what happens if the students being supervised lodged a complaint against a field worker? Even if this hasn't happened, what disciplinary procedures would have to be followed? If yes, can you have a copy?
8. Who designs the classroom schedules that field workers use? And who signs them off i.e. that what has been decided will be what happens, and then afterwards, that what was agreed on actually did happen?
9. What was the function of the School - based Tasks (SBTs) that have been used in previous years? (They are not being used in 2009.) How did the field workers work with these SBTs i.e. did they help students complete them or not?. Ask, 'what has become of these?' where are they?

10. How are these schedules used to feedback on the NPDE?
11. You know that school visits have been suspended for the moment. Do you agree that this was the right decision to take? What do you see as the value of the school visits in terms of professional development? How many visits should field workers make to each student to really 'mentor' or 'supervise' them properly?
12. Finally, IS it important that NPDE students are visited in their schools? e.g. Who else could assist with school-based supervision in the NPDE? Are there, for example, mentors in schools, or District people, who could be brought into this job? Don't crowd Joy with questions here, but probe and ask for examples.