

**TRENDS IN M.Ed. STUDIES ABOUT EDUCATIONAL
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CONDUCTED AT ONE
SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION
DURING 1995-2004**

BY

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Signed:

DEDICATION

As a First Generation University entrant in my Family, I dedicate this work to the memories of my dearest parents, the late Mr Bobby and Mrs Kistamah Naidoo who valued Education as a “Prize” which sadly had been denied to them as a result of their historical lack of access.

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TRENDS IN M.Ed. STUDIES ABOUT EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT CONDUCTED AT ONE SOUTH AFRICAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION DURING 1995-2004

ABSTRACT

The advent of democracy in South Africa in 1994 led to new areas of research interest, not least in the field of educational leadership and management (ELM). However, besides the Project on Postgraduate Education Research (PPER), not much research has been conducted to investigate the trends in research conducted by postgraduate students in South African universities. This study therefore aimed to contribute by investigating the trends in postgraduate research in ELM at a selected institution in the decade 1995-2004. Working in the interpretivist paradigm, the study employed an institutional case-study approach to conduct a study of 53 M.Ed. dissertations in the PPER database from the selected institution. The dissertations dealt with ELM topics. Statistical analysis on this dataset and content analyses of three selected dissertations were used to identify trends in education research at the selected institution. Robin Usher's four concepts of con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text were employed as a framework within which to interpret the findings. From the analysis it is evident that the first ten years of the democratic era in South Africa witnessed a change in the demographic profile of postgraduate research. The trends are that Black students completed more dissertations followed by Indian, White and Coloured students; there are more dissertations from males than females, although by the end of the decade the number of woman writing dissertations had increased significantly; research of ELM is mostly qualitative in approach and of small-scale studies; dissertation topics cover a range of five ELM areas of interest, with few authors exploring the con-text of ELM within the broader socio-political context of the decade under consideration.

CONTENTS

DECLARATION	iii
DEDICATION	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF APPENDICES	xiv
CHAPTER ONE	15
Introduction and Background to the Study	15
1.0 Introduction	15
1.1 Statement of the problem	17
1.2 Background to the problem	18
1.3 Research question	20
1.4 Significance of the study	21

1.5 The conceptual framework	21
1.5.1 Robin Usher's ideas about educational research	22
1.5.1.1 Con-text.....	23
1.5.1.2 Pre-text.....	23
1.5.1.3 Sub-text.....	24
1.5.1.4 Inter-text.....	25
1.6 Conclusion	26
CHAPTER TWO	28
Literature Review.....	28
2.0 Introduction.....	28
2.1 The importance of postgraduate education research.....	28
2.2 Postgraduate education research in South Africa	31
2.3 Trends in postgraduate education research in South Africa (1995-2004)	34
2.3.1 Number of dissertations and their focus areas	34
2.3.2 Demographic trends	35
2.3.3 Research approaches and designs used.....	37
2.4 Conclusion	39
CHAPTER THREE	40

Research Design and Methodology	40
3.1 Introduction.....	40
3.2 Research paradigm.....	40
3.3 Research design	42
3.4 Research approach	43
3.5 Purposive selection of ELM dissertations.....	44
3.6 Data analysis methods.....	48
3.7 Trustworthiness in the study	48
3.8 Ethical issues.....	49
3.9 Limitations of the study	49
3.10 Conclusion	50
CHAPTER FOUR.....	51
Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion.....	51
4.0 Introduction.....	51
4.1 Statistical analysis.....	51
4.1.1 ELM dissertation productivity at the institution from 1995-2004	51
4.1.2 Some demographic trends about ELM researchers at Masters level at the institution	54

4.1.3 Focus Trends	58
4.1.3.1 Focus on School Management Teams	60
4.1.3.2 Principals.....	62
4.1.3.3 Women in leadership	63
4.1.3.4 The notion of leadership	64
4.1.3.5 Policy implementation	65
4.1.4 Methodological trends	66
4.1.4.1. Research approaches	67
4.1.4.2 Research paradigms	68
4.1.4.3 Research designs	70
4.2. Content analysis	74
4.2.1 Dissertation 1	75
4.2.2 Dissertation 2	80
4.2.2 Dissertation 3	84
4.3 Conclusion	88
CHAPTER FIVE	90
Conclusion	90
5.0 Introduction.....	90

5.1 Summary of findings.....	91
5.1.1 Student demography	91
5.1.2 Research focus	92
5.1.3 Methodological choices	93
5.1.4 Theoretical choices	94
5.4 Conclusion	95
5.3 Recommendations	97
REFERENCES	98

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: C Categories of information on the PPER database with data from one sampled dissertation	45
Table 2: A correlation of research paradigms and research approaches employed	69
Table 3: Number of EML dissertations by research design.....	70
Table 4: Summary of key points for three ELM dissertations.....	74

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Postgraduate education research output from UKZN by year and gender.....	36
Figure 2: ELM research productivity at the institution per year over the decade 1995-2004	52
Figure 3: Gender trends in the 53 ELM dissertations	55
Figure 4: Race trends in the 53 ELM dissertations.....	56
Figure 5: Comparison of the number of dissertations within the five general focus categories	59
Figure 6: A comparison of dissertations by research approach	67

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Dataset used for study.....	109
Appendix B: Letter of consent to access data.....	123
Appendix C: Ethical clearance certificate	124
Appendix D: Letter requesting permission to use the PPER database and archive, with signed consent	125

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Background to the Study

1.0 Introduction

The major aspect of postgraduate studies in any field is research. Therefore when students enrol for postgraduate studies they are faced with the challenge to come up with worthwhile and do-able research in their chosen field. Multiplicities of factors determine what the students will end up researching. When looked at from a broad point of view certain trends of research focuses can be identified. One level at which trends can be seen is at institutional level within a particular time frame. With this in mind, this study explores the trends that are evident within one institution in the first ten post-Apartheid years in South Africa. To report on my research project, I introduce this study in this chapter by stating the purpose of this study, the problem, background to the problem, the rationale, the research questions and significance of the study.

My interest in studying research conducted by Masters Students at the selected institution was prompted initially by my dilemma in identifying a researchable topic. I faced a bewildering array of options and choices available to a budding researcher. I soon realised that many of the topics that I thought warranted enquiry had already been researched. I found myself in a quandary regarding what to research. As a novice researcher I found myself asking questions about past M.Ed. research studies emanating from the institution where I was registered and in the process I came across the Project on Postgraduate Education Research (PPER) database. This database is a comprehensive repository of M.Ed

dissertations and D.Ed theses for the period 1995-2004.¹ Consequently, I began to pose a repertoire of questions:

- Who are the researchers?
- Are there more qualitative than quantitative studies?
- Are the studies descriptive, theoretical or exploratory in nature?
- Are the concepts of equity and diversity that predominated in the educational discourse in the early stages of South Africa's democracy reflected in the topics selected?
- Are there more studies in one topic than others, for example, on the role of school governing bodies?
- Are there ELM related studies and what is the range that they cover?
- Are studies on educational management focused on social justice issues than on implementation and technical issues?
- Are there changes in trends of such studies in the ten years following the demise of apartheid and the adoption of democracy?

These questions led me to embark on a study about trends in research conducted by educational leadership and management (ELM) Masters students at one institution between 1995-2004. I chose this date range because that is the era covered by the PPER database, and I wanted to use the PPER database as the dataset for my study.

For me the construction and dissemination of knowledge through dissertation writing is at the heart of what Masters students research is about. Hence I begin to conjure a picture of the Masters student on an academic journey across a learning environment with supervisors as their mentors. Lave and Wenger (1991) describe this sort of situated learning activity involving students and supervisors as a community of practice and they point to the importance of context for knowledge construction and dissertation writing. Polat (2011) says

¹ The database is described more fully in section 1.2

that the context of human life concerns time and place. This is also true for Masters students writing their dissertations. They write in a particular locale and at a particular period in history. Thus context should be taken seriously when trying to understand trends in a set of dissertations as I do in this study. I aimed in this study to understand the patterns and trends in a sample of supervised research. The sample selected for this purpose is dissertations completed by ELM Masters students at one institution in the period 1995-2004. This ten year period was the first decade of democracy in South Africa. During this period there were great efforts by government to produce social transformation and change in educational policy was seen as a key driver in this process. Thus it is a significant period for understanding trends in local South African academic communities of practice.

1.1 Statement of the problem

In order to understand how postgraduate researchers were responding to their political context in South Africa during the first decade of democracy, it is important to know who the Masters students researching education leadership and management (ELM) in South Africa are, what they have researched, what methodologies and theories they have used and how have they contributed to the broad debates within ELM in South Africa. Broad debates within ELM in South Africa during that period included those related to the equitable access to education, governance (national, provincial, school), school level management, leadership, and curriculum review and revision (Department of Education, 1996b; Sayed, 2002; Chisholm, 2005; Christie, 2010). Hence, a research study (such as mine) that tracks the trends and patterns in dissertations completed by a set of ELM Masters students will be a valuable contribution to understanding knowledge production within this discipline in South Africa. Some dissertations on postgraduate education trends have been completed (for example, see Madiya, 2009). However, I found that no study focuses on trends of postgraduate research in the ELM discipline in particular. I came to this conclusion after searching for books and journals in my local university library and on electronic databases (e.g. SABINET, JSTOR and EBSCO Host) and via search engines such as Google and

Google Scholar. The lack of knowledge about ELM dissertations from South Africa is a problem which I address in this study.

For the purpose of my research study about ELM dissertations I employ the PPER database which is a national survey of postgraduate research from South African higher education institutions during 1995-2004 (Balfour, Moletsane & Karlsson, 2011). The database is education specific and comprehensive, therefore suitable as a reliable data source for this study. I accessed the PPER database via researchers who had worked in the survey and extracted the M.Ed. items that were ELM specific, from one institution (see Appendix A for the dataset). Using the database, I sought to identify the trends in dissertations completed by the ELM Masters students at one institution over the period 1995-2004.

1.2 Background to the problem

The state of postgraduate studies at South African tertiary institutions has come under scrutiny since South Africa adopted democracy in 1994 (Mouton, 2007). To provide an overview of the current state of postgraduate education in South Africa in the first decade of democracy, the Project on Postgraduate Education Research (PPER) commenced in February 2007 (Molefe et al., 2011). It sought to survey postgraduate education studies completed in South Africa in the first democratic decade that spans 1995-2004. Balfour et al. (2011) explain that the PPER aimed to contribute to the broader sphere of knowledge production in relation to South Africa. This stemmed from their recognition that there was an absence of information about postgraduate educational research undertaken in South Africa, both in terms of subject-content knowledge and methodological approaches. Reports by the PPER researchers (Madiya, 2009; Bengesai, 2010; Balfour & Moletsane, 2011; Balfour et al., 2011; Goba, Balfour & Nkambule, 2011; Karlsson & Pillay, 2011; Madiya, Bengesai & Karlsson, 2011; Molefe, et al., 2011; Moletsane & Madiya, 2011; Nkambule, Balfour, Pillay & Moletsane, 2011; Pillay & Balfour, 2011; Rule, Davey & Balfour, 2011; Rule, 2011) provide trends of postgraduate education dissertations and theses completed in the decade between

1995-2004 in all South African universities, and how these trends relate to contextual factors such as changes in the higher education landscape and policy terrain.

Balfour et al. (2011) aver that significant shifts occurred in education policy during the period under review. For example there was the transformation of the curriculum and adoption of Outcomes-Based Education in 1997. These shifts should be reflected in a concomitant shift of research focuses in postgraduate dissertations and theses. At a simplistic level such new policies might render a shift in research focuses in the country.

The annual output of postgraduate education research publication in South Africa fluctuated over the 10 year period 1995-2004. Already a correspondence has been identified in the annual output of postgraduate education research publication in South Africa. For example, Deacon, Osman and Buchler (2012, p. 100) surveyed journal publications by postgraduate researchers and state that “the total quantity of research production increased annually from 1995 to 1998, briefly declined in 1999, increased again up to a peak in 2001, and thereafter levelled off, with a brief dip in 2004.” They go on to say that the fluctuations in the numbers of dissertations and theses produced can perhaps be explained as being a result of interest generated by the educational reforms of the late 1990s. Mouton (2007) explains the slow growth in Masters dissertations as being a result of the uneven quality of postgraduate supervision available.

Deacon et al. (2012) find that education research concentrates in four disciplinary or thematic areas: educational theory, education management, education policy and higher education studies. Madiya et al. (2011) add that there is also a focus on curriculum. However, other topics such as rural education and gender have not received much attention among postgraduate education researchers (Nkambule et al., 2011) and education studies about violence, gender and HIV/AIDS lag behind (Moletsane & Madiya, 2011). Despite the finding by Deacon et al. (2012) that ELM is a major focus among postgraduate education researchers, none of the PPER research reports analyse the ELM studies in the database. The PPER researchers also find that studies conducted between 1995-2004 are mainly using a

qualitative approach and are small in scale. Karlsson, Balfour, Moletsane and Pillay (2009) postulate that 82% of postgraduate research over that period is qualitative and employs case study methodology.

1.3 Research question

Based on my understanding of the problem of inadequate knowledge of trends in postgraduate research in the ELM field in South Africa I pose a critical research question to guide my investigation. The research question provides an intellectual focus, and influences the choice of research methodology.

The research question is as follows:

- What are the trends of M.Ed. dissertations in educational leadership and management produced at one institution from 1995-2004 in terms of:
 - a) Student demography;
 - b) Research focuses;
 - c) Methodological choices; and
 - d) Underlying theory?

In order to answer this question I have selected ELM dissertations from only one higher education institution. The selected institution is geographically located in a large city and it serves the educational needs of one of South Africa's poorest and most heavily populated provinces. At the time when the government rationalised the higher education sector, the selected institution was brought into existence in 2005 as a result of the merger of two universities which existed in close geographical proximity to each other. One of the universities had incorporated a formerly autonomous college of education in 2001. The incorporation and merger led to the formation. The incorporation and merger led to the formation of one large education faculty and within it a group of about 10 academics dedicated to the teaching of educational leadership and management at postgraduate level.

1.4 Significance of the study

Ocholla and Bothma (2007) contend that research and development form the backbone of any profession and any teaching programme. It is therefore vital for those in education and those involved in teacher education to understand trends in education research. My study describes trends in ELM Masters dissertations from one institution in the period 1995-2004. This information is important for the institutional research fraternity because it may help them reflect on the research product and supervision that led to its achievement. My study may be useful to those involved in academic teaching who seek to reflect on their teaching about research and doing supervision. The study may also benefit future ELM Masters students wanting to know about which topics have already been researched, how and when.

My understanding of the trends is framed by four concepts which I explain in the next section.

1.5 The conceptual framework

In this section I discuss the conceptual framework underlying this study. Despite my earlier comment about a 'community of practice', I have not used Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory because it is not directly applicable. The PPER data base does not include the names of supervisors, so a major element of the community of practice is missing. Instead, I have used a conceptual framework about educational research texts put forward by Usher (1996a). Usher (1996a) brings together four concepts about research production that are originated by other scholars and he refers to the concepts as: Con-text, Pre-text, Sub-text and Inter-text. These four concepts are explained in this section and I show how they are going to be applied in my study of ELM Masters dissertations produced from 1995-2004 at the selected institution.

1.5.1 Robin Usher's ideas about educational research

Usher (1996a) argues that writing types are located within particular textual practices each with their own characteristics and therefore their own form and content of writing, making a unique genre. Thus, education research produces knowledge relevant to its community, and its process of writing and dissertation products relate to the field of education knowledge. Usher (1996a) argues that educational research is located in a community thus it is a social practice in the sense that it follows activities and processes supported and endorsed by that community.

Many research texts are presented and read in a way that pay little attention to the production process of text. That subsequently results in the diminution of the author's voice (Usher & Scott, 1996). Sometimes what the author is saying can be better understood if the production process is taken into account. Not having access to information about each author's process of writing his/her dissertation, readers tend to concentrate on the output of a given text without paying particular attention to the writing process itself. Usher demystifies that by developing a conceptual framework that looks not just at the text, but also its production. The framework helps in the interrogation of the text's textuality and thinking about the writing and reading of the research text. Usher (1996a) argues that texts are not simply "an unmediating means for communicating a reality that is 'outside' the text" (1996a, p. 33), but research writing is "a practice which 'constructs' reality" (1996a, p. 33). Usher states that a text's textuality can be understood through analysing certain features underlying the writing of a text, namely, con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text.

Usher's conceptual framework of textuality is suitable for use in my research because my aim is to understand trends in the demographic details of student authors, their topic focuses, the research designs and methodologies that they chose in the production of their dissertations and their theoretical frameworks. Ushers' four concepts were used to structure my data analysis and guide my understanding of the trends. In the next four sub-sections, I explain Usher's (1996a) four concepts.

1.5.1.1 Con-text

Usher states that “text always has a con-text, in the sense of that which is *with* the text” (1996a, p. 45, italics in original). In the first place, this is the author and their biographical details. This includes the researcher’s “gender, ethnicity, sexuality, and class.” (Usher, 1996a, p. 45). In the second place, con-text also refers to the socio-cultural subjectivity of the author, the con-textual self – what Usher describes as “the embodied and embedded self” (Usher, 1996a, p. 45). These con-textual aspects influence form, outcomes and consequences of research. Thus, the reader should not only be looking at outcomes of research, but the biographical and socio-cultural context of the author as well so as to improve critical engagement with the choices made by the author regarding topic, methodology and underlying theory, as well as the outcomes. Usher (1996a) argues that con-textual significations are important to consider for a deep understanding or appreciation of the text. Erben (1996) concurs with Usher. They both argue that biography provides narrative about the life and self of the author and needs to be considered as an element in the interpretation of the author’s text. Usher’s con-text is relevant to this study as a tool for understanding trends in research choices made by students in terms of their race, gender and the social context of the first 10 years of South Africa’s democracy. However, sexuality and class are not categories that appear in the dissertation excerpts in the PPER database, so were not considered as con-text in this study.

1.5.1.2 Pre-text

According to Usher (1996a), pre-text concerns that which existed before the final text was written. This pre-text includes things such as language used in the early drafts, discourses used to organize meaning, known textual strategies used, literary conventions and rhetorical devices. Understanding pre-text in terms of the language and discourses that the researcher draws on enables readers to have insight into the text and all that surrounds its production rather than simply reading the final product as the first and only draft of the dissertation. Scott (1996) agrees with Usher’s view that acknowledging pre-existing language and

discourses provides understandings about how the text was constructed. Readers are usually fascinated by the completed dissertation in which they look at knowledge that has been produced without considering how it came to be produced. Because readers do not have access to early drafts of dissertations, they cannot draw reliable conclusions about the pre-text, except for what remains in the completed research writing. The reader can analyse the choices made regarding wording and methodology which reveal important aspects of the pre-text. Usher (1996a) says the reader focuses too much on the researcher's text without asking how the final text was created.

Paying attention to pre-existing methodologies and theories (pre-text) in my study of ELM dissertations helped to elucidate the trends in those studies.

1.5.1.3 Sub-text

Usher (1996a) argues that research texts have a sub-text in the sense of that which is beneath the text such as research paradigms and their effects. Usher (1996b) views paradigms as frameworks that function as maps or guides for scientific communities; they lead to the questions researchers ask and the theories or explanations they find acceptable. Research as a social practice reflects the way in which researchers view, approach and work in the world and that is what a paradigm entails. For example, a researcher working within a feminist paradigm is concerned with the well-being of women in all aspects of his/her research work. Looking at paradigms as the sub-text enables the reader to interrogate the researcher's practice and position in relation to their chosen topic (Usher, 1996a). What lies beneath the text in the researcher's paradigmatic practice and position can shed light on shifts in research focuses. In my study of ELM dissertations completed at the selected institution from 1995-2004, I sought to uncover researchers' sub-texts in the form of the paradigms that they preferred. For my study, this would help reveal how the postgraduate researchers understand their world.

1.5.1.4 Inter-text

Research texts such as dissertations are a component of the larger body of research literature. They relate to other research texts and over time they form a body of knowledge greater than that in each individual text. This is referred to as intertextuality. It means texts have a referability and that they are productive by way of making possible new knowledge in conjunction with other related texts (Usher, 1996a). Usher argues that intertextuality points to the accumulation of textual production. It looks at the way in which history is inserted into the text for example in the way in which each dissertation may refer to other dissertations and build on and extend the knowledge of earlier dissertations. Inter-text is a useful conceptual element in my study because trends in a set of ELM dissertations from one institution for the period 1995-2004 is a form of intertextuality in that they have been exposed to a common pool of knowledge via the course work programme, and on occasion, sharing the same supervisor. However, the PPER dissertation excerpts do not contain literature review chapters or List of References, so the issue of inter-text as described by Usher (1996a) could not be fully explored.

To sum up, Usher's (1996a) conceptual framework is generally suited for my study of ELM dissertations completed at the selected institution from 1995-2004. This is because the framework advocates for readers to look not just at the research outcome of the final dissertation, but also to consider the production process and how texts relate to one another. Aldridge (1993) agrees and says that there is a need to reveal, understand and analyse not only the product of knowledge, but its production, and therefore its producer. My study is not about production processes of research, but about trends evident in completed Masters ELM dissertations. In using Usher's framework I sought to look at trends in biographical details and paradigmatic positions which Usher called con-text and sub-text respectively. I also sought to look at trends in methodologies, theories and topics chosen by authors, enlightened by Usher's concepts of pre-text and intertextuality.

1.6 Conclusion

The work covered in this study is presented in six chapters that are interrelated. This conclusion presents a brief summary of what each of the six chapters entails.

CHAPTER ONE has presented the introduction and background to the study. The background shows that the dataset for this study is drawn from the Project Postgraduate Education Research (PPER). This chapter also covers the focus of the study and the critical questions underpinning the research. It ends by presenting Usher's conceptual framework which is used to notice and understand the trends in ELM M.Ed research at the selected institution.

CHAPTER TWO presents a literature review that is related to my topic of trends of M.Ed. research in educational leadership and management at the selected institution within a period of 1995-2004. The chapter first reviews international literature to discuss postgraduate education research in general, then focuses particularly on general postgraduate education research in South Africa where trends of dissertations written from 1995-2004 are discussed in greater detail. The trends focused on biographical details of authors (gender and race), focus trends, research designs and methodologies, and underlying theories/paradigms used in the writing. The chapter ends by discussing information about educational leadership and management research in the twenty first century.

CHAPTER THREE presents the research design and methodologies used to carry out this study. It begins by describing the paradigmatic position in the study. It then discusses research design, approaches used and methods of sampling. It covers data analysis, trustworthiness, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR is about data presentation, analysis and discussion of my findings. It presents data analysis in two broad sections. The first section provides a statistical analysis of data about demography, focus and methodology. The second section provides a content analysis of three selected dissertations.

CHAPTER FIVE presents a discussion of my findings as an answer to my research question. Findings that arise from the statistical analysis and content analysis covered in Chapter Four are summarized and discussed. As this is the closing chapter of the dissertation, I briefly explore the implications of the study and offer recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

In this chapter I review literature relevant to postgraduate education research. Since my focus is on trends in ELM postgraduate education research, I had to first look for literature on that issue. However, I have found no single study that looks specifically at trends of postgraduate ELM research in South Africa and abroad. I came to this conclusion after searching for literature in my local university library and other university catalogues, on electronic databases such as SABINET, JSTOR and EBSCO Host and via search engines such as Google and Google Scholar.

Hence, my literature review discusses literature on postgraduate education more generally. The scope then narrows to literature about postgraduate education research in South Africa especially with reference to the PPER project which provides broad insights about postgraduate education research completed from 1995-2004. My review describes trends of postgraduate education research in South Africa completed from 1995-2004. The focus is on the number of dissertations written from 1995-2004, demographic trends, research approaches and designs, and underlying paradigms. The chapter closes with what has been learnt from the review and gaps in knowledge that my study aims to fill.

2.1 The importance of postgraduate education research

This section consists of a review of mainly international literature about postgraduate education research. It discusses literature related to the importance and benefits of postgraduate education research in general in terms of knowledge production. International

literature is my main source about this because in South Africa there has been little written on the issue under focus.

The first benefit evident from the literature is the product of postgraduate research. A distinctive feature of postgraduate research in any discipline is the production of a dissertation or thesis which students must complete as part of their degree programme. Murray and Beglar (2009) argue that writing a dissertation or thesis for postgraduate education is a long process in which writers benefit through the intellectual and emotional challenges at every step. Therefore the end product does not always reflect the nature of the study when it was first conceptualised. Postgraduate education research also plays a fundamental role in the process of knowledge production. Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) assert that postgraduate education research is important because it suggests improvements for practice in the workplace. This can happen for example when action research seeks to improve classroom practice (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Therefore there can be a relationship between the issue that the researcher studies and their practice.

The second feature is that postgraduate education research develops intellectuals who can think critically and make meaningful decisions (Cadman, 2000). It gives students a chance to research and use their minds to come up with new knowledge. Polat (2011) argues that postgraduate education should push students to be open-minded. Being an open-minded researcher therefore entails the production of research that does not necessarily fall under control of certain forces. Therefore the trends in postgraduate should reflect the nature of academic freedom that the students experience.

The third feature is that the research also prepares students to be competent in academia. Sayed, Kruss and Badat (1998) put forward the notion that postgraduate work at the Masters' level is commonly conceived as inducting students into the academic enterprise, or in terms of an apprenticeship. This supports the view above that there is a link between the research process and the researcher's work.

Fourth, postgraduate education researchers enable knowledge about the education discipline to develop and evolve because of new ideas they contribute. The new knowledge in turn contributes, for example, to practical education leadership and management in the schools. Ocholla and Bothma (2007) argue that research forms the backbone of any profession because students develop deep professional understanding of research in general while also contributing new knowledge to their fields.

A fifth importance of postgraduate education research is that it can provide educators and policymakers with the skills to make evidence-based decisions about education, such as school programming and teaching practice (Lauer, 2006). Through research, teaching of leadership and management in learning institutions also can be improved because research usually provides more reliable knowledge compared to other sources such as stories and personal anecdotes. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) concur with Lauer. They argue that empirical research in education has become essential for making decisions and for forming and changing policies.

The sixth feature about the importance and value of postgraduate research concerns the approaches and methodologies that can be employed. Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) contend that the educational researcher needs a large toolbox of approaches to study the complex educational issues in society. Student researchers need comprehensive understanding of different approaches and methodologies of conducting research in education enabling them to have a variety of research approaches to draw from when engaging in research. Having different approaches available will yield variety in postgraduate education research. From the toolbox, ELM postgraduate education researchers can focus their studies in different fields and use different research designs and methodologies. Researchers in the 21st century need to know about quantitative, qualitative and combined approaches to inquiry and to have an in-depth understanding of the multiple research designs and procedures available with which to understand contemporary issues. Such knowledge equips students to choose fresh approaches rather than repeatedly using one design such as small scale studies case studies and qualitative approaches. New approaches provide new

ways of understanding phenomena (Rule et al., 2011). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006) the last few decades have witnessed a diversification of methodologies following quantitative, qualitative and mixed-method approaches. However, despite the value of different approaches, their finding is that most postgraduate education researchers use qualitative approaches. This can be explained by the fact that education research falls within the social sciences which seem to emphasise subjectivity rather than objectivity. This view is supported by Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) who contend that most researchers use qualitative approaches more than quantitative or mixed approaches. This view is shared by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) who assert that the greater part of education research is qualitative in nature because of people's preferences. They contend that some researchers prefer qualitative to quantitative approaches because they wish to interact more with participants during research in order to get depth and not breadth of meanings. Qualitative approaches allow researchers to interact with people of different cultures in their respective societies (Rule & John, 2011). Murtonen (2005) and Vermunt (2005) argue that postgraduate students lack sufficient orientation and training to be motivated to choose quantitative research.

To sum up, the literature that I consulted revealed six features of postgraduate education research discussed above. These features characterise research at the international level and also to some extent noted by African authors. However, there are issues which are specific to South Africa and these are discussed next.

2.2 Postgraduate education research in South Africa

The previous section looked at the important features in postgraduate education research in general. In this section I focus specifically on postgraduate education research in South Africa. I review scholarly literature about postgraduate education research within the first decade of post-apartheid South Africa (1995-2004). There are four findings from literature pertaining to this issue.

First, Ganqa (2012) reports that postgraduate education research in South Africa has received some attention as a result of the social restructuring and political transformation of the country. There is change in South African universities resulting in increased access and educational opportunities for those previously disadvantaged during the apartheid era. In turn, there is an increase in the number of postgraduate students enrolling for Masters' research programmes.

The second finding is from Balfour et al. (2011). They argue that postgraduate education research in South Africa has specific hallmarks. First, their research illuminates the diverse points of view and perceptions among South Africans. They say that bringing that reality to light is core to research because it makes possible the generation of new knowledge as scholars engage on contentious issues. Second, Balfour et al. (2011) assert that postgraduate research provides possibilities of conceptualising a better future in South African education. This is because the research focuses on issues troubling contemporary education in the country.

Third, Balfour et al. (2011) argue that the PPER survey of South African postgraduate education research shows that it takes time for education change and the concomitant redirection of resources to have an effect. Postgraduate education research generates new knowledge in different disciplines such as ELM which could be useful towards changing leadership and management in schools, but Balfour et al. (2011) argue that little is done with knowledge that is generated from postgraduate education students' research. Balfour et al. Moletsane (2011, p. 206) point out that findings from education research are underused:

It is less clear how research impacts on the worlds of practitioners, policy-makers, and government bureaucracy. In particular, the extent to which the findings and conclusions from postgraduate education students impacts on schools and communities, has not been fully understood.

It is vital for policy-makers to consider findings of research from postgraduate students in education because the findings can generate useful information for policy making. Mouton

(2007) argues that the work of researchers ought to be supported in South Africa because new knowledge that is generated by theses and dissertations is vital to policy makers and for development in education. It is through research that problems in education can be identified and possible solutions worked out. Regardless of the importance of postgraduate research in South Africa, many problems hamper students' successful completion of their theses and dissertations. The problem could be the shortage of supervisors with expertise in the field. Ganqa (2012) reports that there is a need to improve the capacity and quality of postgraduate supervision in South African universities. A comparative analysis of postgraduate education research of three universities completed from 1995-2004 by Madiya et al. (2011) reports that availability of supervisory capacity is crucial for increased and successful postgraduate education research. In relation to this, Herman (2011) argues that the shortage of skilled personnel in social sciences and research is likely to be a barrier to the country's aspiration to increase its production of postgraduate students. This shows how much postgraduate research depends on factors such as the quality of supervision.

My fourth finding is in relation to Mouton's (2007) view that in the field of postgraduate studies, the management and supervision of Masters students at South African universities is inefficient. He substantiates this by arguing that students take too long (on average) to complete their studies. This idea is supported by Ganqa (2012) who asserts that many postgraduate education research dissertations are not completed on time because the majority of students are part timers who require extensive supervision, more time to complete and more research methods teaching. One reason for a coursework approach is to teach students more about research so that they are able to produce a dissertation. Rowley and Slack (1998) argue that modules such as research methods in education can be a means of ensuring that all students have a common grounding to support their research, particularly where students enter a Master's programme with a variety of previous experiences, and where the Master's programme is research based. However, Masters students in South Africa may not get enough research knowledge from course work. A study conducted by Sayed et al. (1998, p. 284) about postgraduate students' experiences reveals that:

A single module on research methodology, which tends more towards research methods and techniques, and some additional work around the research proposal, is inadequate in preparing students for the mini-thesis component of the programme and to become independent researchers.

Thus, there is a need for more research-related teaching for South African postgraduate students so that they are competent to complete their dissertations.

2.3 Trends in postgraduate education research in South Africa (1995-2004)

I found a body of literature about the survey of postgraduate education research in South Africa produced in 1995-2004 and I review that in the next section.

2.3.1 Number of dissertations and their focus areas

Research conducted by Karlsson et al. (2009) shows a discernible difference in the volume of knowledge generation (number of dissertations and theses produced) between the first five years (1995-1999) and the second five years (2000-2004) of the first decade of democracy in South Africa. Balfour and Moletsane (2011, p. 206) found there are 3774 postgraduate dissertations and theses written from 1995-2004, with 708 from 1995-1999 and 2066 from 2000-2004. Bengesai (2010) attributes the smaller volume of postgraduate education research in South Africa in the first five years after the onset of democracy compared to the second five years to the upheaval in academic development due to under-funding during the 1990s that negatively impacted supervisory capacity.

Deacon et al. (2012) conducted analysis of the focus areas of postgraduate education research published in journals. They found that:

... much education research has been classroom-based, small in scale, focused on the formal schooling sector, concentrated in the eight disciplinary/thematic areas of educational theory, education management, education policy, higher education studies, teacher education, language studies, educational psychology and academic

development, and with its annual output having increased over time to reach a certain plateau. (2012, p. 109)

Moletsane and Madiya (2011) argue that most postgraduate education research focuses are informed by the education transformation that happened after apartheid. Karlsson et al. (2009) found that most postgraduate studies conducted between 1995-2004 focus on issues such as curriculum and education management at the expense of topics like rurality and rural education, gender, and career planning (Karlsson et al., 2009). In the South African context, A comparative analysis of postgraduate education research topics (1995-2004) found that there is a significant amount of research on education management (Madiya et al., 2011). Nevertheless, an analysis of ELM dissertations specifically did not ensue.

2.3.2 Demographic trends

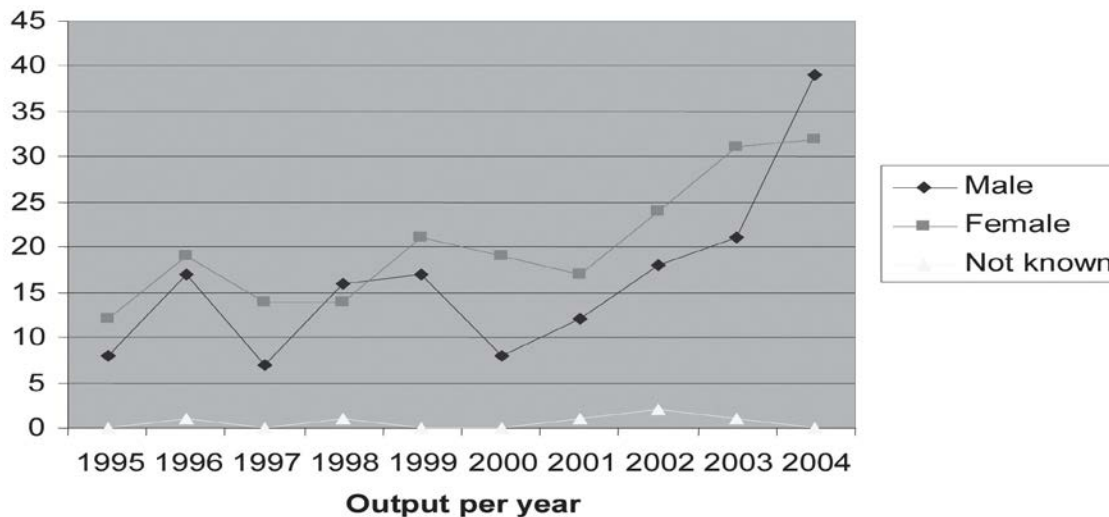
In this section I review literature on demographic trends of postgraduate education research productivity from 1995-2004. Balfour and Lenta (2009) argue that demographic factors are relevant to research productivity at higher education institutions because of how South Africa's past advantaged and disadvantaged certain racial groups. Karlsson and Pillay (2011) argue that an analysis that tracks trends about the race and gender of South African postgraduate researchers is important for understanding the progress made to transform South Africa's higher education and increase access to higher degrees.

Postgraduate education researchers in 1995-2004 comprised a racially heterogeneous group. For example, Masters dissertations from the University of KwaZulu-Natal written during the first decade of democracy in South Africa were by African (37%) and Indian (37%), White (26%) authors with none written by Coloured (0%) (Karlsson & Pillay, 2011, p. 242). During the apartheid era higher education institutions were established for particular racial group use but after democratic elections in 1994 access was opened to all (Jansen, 2002). Increased access to higher education resulted in more postgraduate education research by Black, Coloured and Indian students across South Africa. Although previously privileged White people constitute a minority in the South African population, they continue to feature

significantly in certain areas in postgraduate education research. For example, a 2002 survey in education showed that most White students were engaged in studying natural sciences and commercial subjects at university, while most Black students were registered to study education, social sciences and humanities (Van der Berg & Siebrits, 2010). Such a trend was not uniform across disciplines (Bengesai, 2010). This raises questions about ELM Masters students. I sought to look for such racial trends in dissertations produced at the selected institution for my study.

Tracking the gender of postgraduate education researchers is important because it provides insight into how male and female students took up opportunities in changing the higher education landscape. Karlsson and Pillay (2011) report that more postgraduate education (Masters and Ph.D.s) research from the University of KwaZulu-Natal in 1995-2004 was completed by females than males. Figure 1 presents statistics about postgraduate education research output from the University of KwaZulu-Natal by gender and year.

Figure 1: Postgraduate education research output from UKZN by year and gender



(Source: Karlsson & Pillay, 2011, p. 241)

Figure 1 shows that in all years except 1998 and 2004 there are more female than male student authors. Balfour et al. (2011) concur that over the decade 1995-2004, most research was produced by female researchers. It is significant that despite being disadvantaged under apartheid (Wing and de Carvalho, 1995), black women were able to be the majority postgraduate education researchers in the decade immediately after apartheid. Nevertheless, the statistics do not yield reasons for this phenomenon. Despite this I sought to explore if a similar gender trend was present among the ELM student authors from the selected institution over the same ten year period.

2.3.3 Research approaches and designs used

In this section I review literature about research approaches and research designs that postgraduate researchers use. I discuss trends from international research and then I narrow the scope to South Africa.

South African scholars have similar findings to international researchers in regard to the use of research approaches in dissertations (see Chapter 2.1). Karlsson et al. (2009) reveal that most postgraduate education research conducted between a period of 1995-2004 is small scale and qualitative in nature. They found that 82% of postgraduate research is qualitative. Madiya (2009) and Bengesai (2010) also confirm that from 1995-2004 most postgraduate education research was qualitative. They agree with Deacon et al. (2012) who point out that the most important gap in postgraduate education research in South Africa from 1995 to 2006 is the lack of large scale and quantitative research. This suggests that postgraduate researchers are not sufficiently skilled in quantitative approaches.

Rule et al. (2011) are of the view that the reason the qualitative approach is preferred in postgraduate research in education is that there is a shortage of supervisors with science and statistical expertise to help postgraduate students with quantitative approaches. De Beer and Mason (2009) and Monk, Foote and Solem (2012) have similar views to Rule et al. (2011), concluding from their studies that while South Africa is experiencing a growth in postgraduate research programmes, there is an insufficient number of suitably trained

supervisors. Mouton (2007) takes this point one step further by contending that one of the main reasons South African universities are not producing enough postgraduates is because of inefficient supervision and not merely insufficient supervision. The proportion of academics that hold a Ph.D. declined steadily in South African universities over the period from 2004-2008 (North, Zewotir & Murray, 2011). This decline affects the production of postgraduate education research because a Masters student must be supervised by someone with a doctoral degree. Rule et al. (2011) report that the small-scale qualitative case study is a common choice because of the limited capacity among postgraduate education supervisors in quantitative methods.

Another perspective on the lack of quantitative research is provided by Madiya (2009), who argues that there are less quantitative research because of students' resource constraints. Barnett (2006) supports this argument, stating most research employs qualitative approaches because the constraints placed on student research budgets do not encourage large projects.

The most commonly used design in postgraduate education research in South Africa is the case study. The PPER researchers found that case study is the most popular methodology among South African Masters dissertations completed from 1995-2004 (Rule et al., 2011). According to Punch (2009, p. 119) "the case study aims to understand the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context. It also has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case." Rule et al. (2011) give three reasons why South African students prefer a case study methodology: accessibility to the site and participants; the manageability of a small scale study; and, its direct relevance to the student's practice. The topics and focuses of most postgraduate education research from 1995-2004 were compatible with the strengths of case studies, as noted by Punch (2009), which enable researchers to have an understanding of the case through in-depth analysis. On the basis of this information, I sought to find out if a similar trend is evident in the designs employed in the ELM dissertations from the selected institution for this study.

2.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed literature related to postgraduate research starting with international literature and then narrowing down to the trends of postgraduate education research from 1995-2004. I learnt that the education transformation that happened in post-apartheid South Africa led to researchers taking up new topics that corresponded with the transformation that the country was experiencing. More dissertations were written from 2000-2004 than from 1995-1999. Most postgraduate education research from that decade used a qualitative approach and case study design. This tallies with international literature which also finds evidence of more qualitative education research than quantitative (Lauer, 2006). I found that the reasons for these trends were multiple and included the influence of the context, inefficient and insufficient supervision, resource-constraints and students interests.

However, none of the reports on postgraduate education research in South Africa from 1995-2004 looked at the trends in ELM dissertations. The lack of confirmation of knowledge about this research area gave me the incentive to pursue my study. In the next chapter I explain my research design and methodology for this study.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I reviewed literature that relates to my study. In this chapter I move on to explain my paradigmatic position, my research design and the methodology that I used to carry out this study. I describe my case study of Masters dissertations in the field of ELM from the selected institution during 1995-2004. I give an account of my analysis strategies, which were both qualitative and quantitative in nature, my ethical stance and how I addressed the issue of the trustworthiness of my findings.

3.2 Research paradigm

Every research project is guided by the researcher's paradigmatic position, identified by Usher (1996a) as pre-text. Different scholars define paradigm in different ways. Mertens (2012) avers that a paradigm is the framework of philosophical assumptions that guide the researcher. Neuman (2007, p. 81) defines paradigm as a "general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, key issues, models of quality research, and methods for seeking answers." Thus, based on these definitions, I understand that paradigms shape the way we see and understand the world. My research paradigm is interpretivist. According to Neuman (2011, p. 107), "The interpretivist paradigm is the foundation of social research techniques that are sensitive to context, that are more concerned with achieving an emphatic understanding of the phenomenon". The interpretivist paradigm was suitable for this study because I want in-depth description of the dissertations I have in my dataset. The interpretive paradigm allows me to describe and interpret the trends in postgraduate ELM research while being sensitive to the context of the particular institution

which I selected. Two other paradigms I considered as frameworks for this study were the positivist and critical theory paradigms. The positivist paradigm assumes that there is an objective reality separate from the observer, which can be accurately measured and described, the methodology is primarily experimental (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This paradigm is not suitable for this project because there is no experiment involved, and Usher's content analysis is based on not taking text literally at face value as if it is an objective reality. Usher writes: "... research is not simply a matter of representing, reflecting or reporting the world but of 'creating' it through a representation" (1996a, p. 35). The critical theory paradigm is similar to the interpretivist paradigm in that it does not hold with the subjective-objective divide, but it is based on dialogue between the researcher and individuals or groups out of which emerges new information and theories. In addition, critical theory based research is usually orientated toward a particular outcome which involves social or political change (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). However, this study does not involve communication with any individuals or groups, only the written text, and is not aimed at social or political change.

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that interpretivism allows researchers to use their professional judgements and perspectives to interpret data. Schultz and Hatch (1996) argue that interpretivists seek to understand and describe meaningful social actions and to understand meanings of the subject under study. This is achieved in my study by engaging in analysis and discussion of trends of 53 ELM M.Ed. dissertations from one institution over the period 1995-2004 with a close reading of three dissertations in order to understand their meaning in terms of my research question. Interpretive researchers use systematic procedures but maintain that there are multiple socially constructed realities, unlike post-positivism, which postulates a single reality (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The acknowledgement of multiple realities tallies with my employment of the case study design as it assumes that research findings are contextual. In addition, Usher's approach to textual analysis acknowledges and seeks to reveal the multiple realities of the authors themselves, based on textual analysis according to con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text (1996a, p. 45-48).

3.3 Research design

Research designs are procedures for generating, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2012). They explicitly describe the procedures that will be followed to gain answers to the research questions. According to Yin (2003b, p. 19), “every empirical study has a research design and a research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study”. For this study I used a case study design as it was suitable to answer my research question about ELM Masters research at one higher education institution. My choice of methodology informed the data collection methods I used and the conclusions I drew at the end. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) define case study as qualitative research method that examines a bounded system, or a case, over time in depth, employing multiple sources of data found in the setting. For my study the bounded case was ELM Masters research from one selected institution from 1995-2004. Case study research is useful for understanding topics, processes or situations in their context and they are ideal for a small scale project. In the case of my study the context is higher education in South Africa during the 1995-2004 period.

Other qualitative research designs such as phenomenology and ethnography were considered but were rejected for this study because they focus on lived experiences and study of culture respectively (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Case study was the most appropriate because I defined the ELM Masters dissertations as the case and the selected institution and period from 1995-2004 as its boundaries.

Yin (2003a) states that case studies can either be explanatory or exploratory. For this study I employed the explanatory case study because it allows me to develop descriptions and explanations of trends about the dissertations from the selected institution. Rule and John (2011) assert that an explanatory case study has the advantage of explaining what happens in a particular case or why it happens. A single and explanatory case study was ideal for this study mainly because it allowed me to develop an in-depth analysis of the trends of dissertations from one institution. Punch (2009) argues that the case study aims to understand

the case in depth, and in its natural setting, recognizing its complexity and its context. I conducted an in-depth study by focusing on only a few dissertations from one institution. A case study has a holistic focus, aiming to preserve and understand the wholeness and unity of the case. I kept the holistic focus by not analysing dissertations from other institutions or about other education specialisations. Thus, through the use of a case study design, I focused on ELM dissertations from one institution in order to have a clear understanding of the trends in matters such as topic focus and methodological trends as the product of ELM community at that institution in the selected historical period. Creswell, Hanson, Plano Clark and Morales (2007) postulate that many case studies focus on one issue within the selected case to provide insight into the case. My issue was the trends in postgraduate ELM Masters research and my case was the ELM research from the selected institution.

3.4 Research approach

All data required for research falls into two types namely, primary and secondary data (Kothari, 2004). Primary data is generated specifically for a particular research project by the researcher of that project. On the other hand, secondary data comprises data generated for an earlier purpose by another author. The data that I used in this study is secondary data because it was first generated by the PPER team and stored in a database.

For this study I used a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) argue that a mixed approach is characterised by knowledgeable data collection and analysis underpinned by an understanding of one's supporting philosophical assumptions. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are employed in this study because of the need to describe a few ELM dissertations qualitatively and analyse a larger set statistically i.e. quantitatively. Martella, Nelson and Martella (1999) argue that qualitative and quantitative research approaches are not opposed to one another. The different research approaches can complement each other or each can be used to answer separate aspects of the research question that can only be answered by the appropriate approach. Using only one research approach was not going to make this study successful because there was a need to

describe a few ELM dissertations in-depth as well as analyse trends in several dissertations. A qualitative approach enables extensive descriptions and explanations about data. Mack, Woodsong, Macqueen, Guest and Namey (2005) opine that the qualitative approach is able to provide complex textual descriptions of that data. Cohen et al. (2007) argue that content analysis of documents is mainly a qualitative method. This made the qualitative aspect of my approach suitable for one aspect of my analysis. I used the quantitative approach to determine the frequencies of themes from the data. This helped to extrapolate trends in the set of ELM dissertations regarding focus, authors' biographical details and the methodologies used by the researchers. The mixed approach had an effect on the way I selected the dissertations for analysis.

3.5 Purposive selection of ELM dissertations

The dissertations that I analysed were the units of analysis in my study. According to Kothari (2004), there are many procedures through which units can be selected for study but the units' applicability depends on the type and demands of the research and availability of resources. The selection technique for the qualitative component was purposive. In almost all qualitative research, selection is purposive. This means that researchers use their judgment to select a set of units that they believe, based on prior information, will provide the data they need (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007). I first conducted a search of the PPER database for all Masters dissertations from the selected institution for the period 1995-2004, 343 in total. I then used a purposive process to identify ELM Masters dissertations amongst this dataset. For this process, I searched the title category of each of the 343 entries on the database. On the basis of my knowledge of the ELM field, I determined there were 53 dissertations in the ELM field. The 53 dissertations became my selected dataset for statistical analysis of trends, and are listed in Appendix A. Table 1 shows all the categories in the PPER database that were utilised in this study.

Table 1: Categories of information on the PPER database with data from one sampled dissertation

PPER database category	Example from one dissertation
Author	[Name withheld]
Year	2004
Title	An investigation into the management of induction and mentoring at a private college in North Durban, KwaZulu-Natal
University	[Name withheld]
Degree	M.Ed.
Sector	Tertiary
Sector specification	Level 7-10
Approach	Mixed
Paradigm	Interpretive
Methodology	Case study
Data generation methods	Interview – Semi-structured Observation – non-participant Questionnaire – Administered
Data analysis methods	Coding – Thematic Statistical analysis
Population 1	Teachers
Sampling strategy 1	Convenience
Population 2	Managers
Sampling strategy 2	Convenience
Population 3	Support staff
Sampling strategy 3	Convenience
Author's gender	Male
Author's race	Indian
Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Human resources • Induction • Mentoring

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators • Institutions – Independent • Institutions – Higher education institutions
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It must be noted that the the PPER researchers devised the database categories and some of the data in some of the categories may not be entirely reliable. For instance, Balfour et al. Moletsane (2011, p. 206) note that the name of the postgraduate researcher was used as a proxy to determine race and gender but “their interpretation is susceptible to the researcher’s and data capturer’s limited association of names.” For example, Table 1 shows the author to be Indian and Male, but his or her official racial classification or gender may have been different. Another limitation in working with the PPER database was that some data was missing from the hard copy dissertation records. Balfour and Moletsane (2011) explain that the hard copy records were created through photocopying sections of the completed dissertations and theses collected from libraries around South Africa. Only sections were copied due to copyright restrictions. As a consequence, some of the photocopies did not contain all the information for the database categories. For example Karlsson and Pillay (2011, p. 233) found that for their analysis of a sample, “there were 28 theses and dissertations for which no indication of institutional affiliation was available on the title pages.” In spite of such limitations, the database provided sufficient data for my statistical analysis of the 53 ELM dissertations selected.

The 53 dissertations were selected by reading through all the entries in the PPER database and applying the following criteria:

- Masters dissertations;
- The selected institution;
- Words and concepts appearing in the Title and Keywords entries that are commonly associated with management and leadership, such as: management; leadership; principal; leadership; human resources; recruitment, selection and appointment; induction and mentoring; school governance; school governing bodies; policy implementation (Bush, 2011). (See Appendix A for a list of the 53 dissertations.)

However, the 53 dissertations were too many for content analysis. Thus, I purposively selected three dissertations from the 53, this being a small-scale study. The three dissertations were selected on the basis of:

- Dissertations drawn from the most common focus area for research i.e. School Management Teams (SMTs), specifically the management of induction and mentoring;
- The most productive period of the 10 years under review i.e. 2000-2004;
- From both the previously separate institutions and the merged institution;
- From both the pre- and post-amalgamation era at the selected institution;
- Similarity of topic to enhance comparison;
- All in eThekweni region of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education, so there is a broad commonality;
- Varied type of schools – private college, public secondary school, public primary school;
- Schools in areas which in the apartheid era would have been racially designated as Black, Indian, White therefore would have previously been under different education departments;
- Gender – male authors were in the majority in this study (55%), and are the majority in school management in South Africa (65% of principals South Africa in 2005 were male according to Arends, 2007), therefore two of the authors are male.

The three dissertations selected were:

- Inquiry into the management of induction and mentoring in an urban secondary school in Phoenix, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education – 2002, Indian, Male.
- A study of the role of induction and mentoring programmes in achieving school effectiveness – 2004, African, Female.
- An investigation into the management of induction and mentoring at a private college in North Durban, KwaZulu-Natal – 2004, Indian, Male.

3.6 Data analysis methods

The quantitative data analysis method that I used to analyse the trends in postgraduate research from the selected institution was simple statistical frequencies and correlations.

I conducted the statistical analysis by way of frequency count reports of categories relevant to my research question. I summarised the data in a frequency table of the different research focus and methodology plotted over a ten year period. I then made comparisons by checking the methodologies and keywords. Data is presented in the form of figures and tables. I used Usher's (1996a) four elements of textual analysis as outlined in Chapter 1.5.1 – 1.5.4 to help me explain the trends I noticed in the frequency reports.

I also used content analysis methods for a qualitative discussion of my three ELM Masters dissertations selected from the PPER archive. Content analysis enables subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic process of coding and identifying themes or patterns in the text (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). I also employed techniques of close reading, which enabled me to look for patterns and then ask questions about the patterns, especially “why?” and “how?” (Kain, 1998). I used Usher's methods of textual analysis to understand how the authors have “‘construct[ed]’ reality” (Usher, 1996a, p. 33). By analysing patterns that emerged in each dissertation concerning the demographic details of authors, topics of their studies and methodologies that they used and so on.

3.7 Trustworthiness in the study

Trustworthiness is the extent to which research has credibility and the findings are dependable (Schulze, 2003). McMillan and Schumacher (2010) argue that credibility is related to the extent to which the results concur with reality and can be seen to be accurate, and reasonable. I ensured credibility in this study by carefully designing the study (explaining all major components such as paradigmatic position, research approaches and processes of selection and data analysis) and applying the appropriate statistical and analytical tools so that the output would be an accurate and a reasonable answer to the

research question. I ensured dependability by employing similar methods to other researchers using the PPER as their research dataset i.e. frequencies, content analysis and close reading (e.g. Madiya, 2009; Balfour et al 2011, Bengesai et al., 2011; Karlsson & Pillay, 2011;). Schulze (2003) argues that transferability occurs when findings of a study are reproducible and can be applied in another context. I ensured transferability and reproducibility by being clear about my paradigm and the methodology I used, although my findings are context-specific due to the nature of a case study.

3.8 Ethical issues

Cohen et al. (2007) argue that there are three main ethical issues, namely: informed consent, confidentiality and consequences of the research. In relation to this study, I obtained informed consent from the Head, School of Education of the selected institution (see Appendix A), the manager of the PPER project (see Appendix B), and I obtained ethical clearance from the university ethics committee (see Appendix C). I maintained confidentiality throughout the study by way of anonymity of names of students and their supervisors for the dissertations discussed in this study. I only disclosed the titles of the dissertations (see Appendix A). The consequences of the study will be of no harm to any individual or group, and will enhance understanding of the trends in ELM M.Ed research and so contribute to the research production enterprise.

3.9 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to one selected institution and it focused only on ELM M.Ed. dissertations. My findings are only firm in relation to the selected institution but in similar institutions the findings may pertain and be relevant. Including Masters level research only is a limitation because it is not representative of the whole field of postgraduate research which includes doctoral theses and post-doctoral research outputs. The time period of ten years is a limitation because this covers a maximum of five cohorts of students, which is not a large number and so their dissertations may not be representative of Masters students in general.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter provided details of my paradigmatic position, choice of research design and the methodologies I used to carry out this study. An interpretivist case study and mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches were used. Purposive selection was used and data was analysed using statistical and content analysis methods. I outlined how I dealt with trustworthiness in the study. In the next chapter I present the data that I analysed.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter I present the findings from the data that I analysed. My analysis of ELM Masters dissertations completed at the selected institution from 1995-2004 was conducted by way of statistical analysis and content analysis. First I analysed the information that I obtained from the 53 ELM dissertations for frequency trends. I then selected three dissertations on the same topic for content analysis. Content analysis was conducted on frequency trends of the 53 dissertations and the text of the three particular dissertations, utilising the conceptual framework of Usher (1996a) in order to explore the con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text of the material.

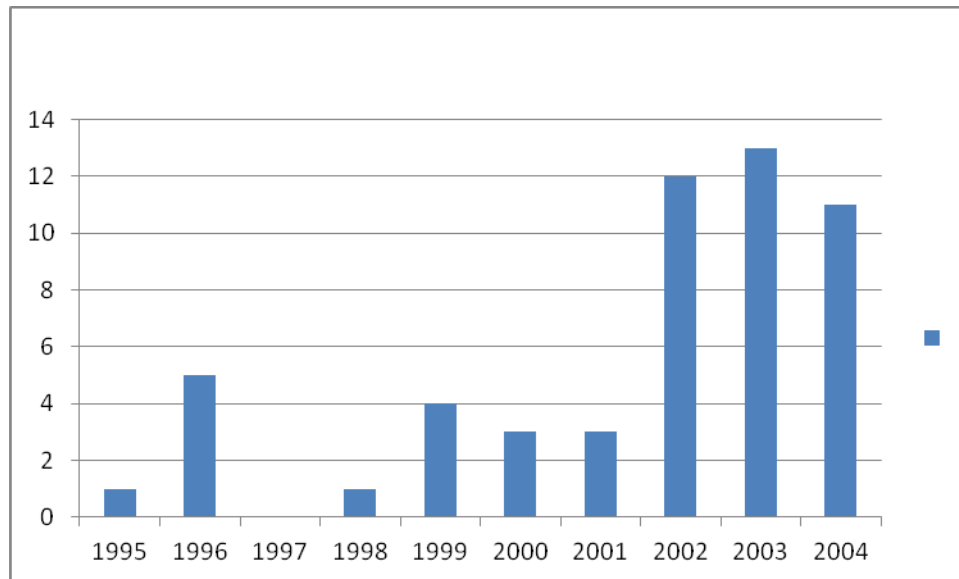
4.1 Statistical analysis

In this section I present my findings and analyse them utilising quantitative techniques. I begin by discussing the volume of ELM Masters dissertations completed at the selected institution from 1995-2004. I then discuss the demographic trends about authors in terms of their race and gender. Finally, I discuss the findings in terms of the trends regarding focuses, designs and methodologies in the 53 dissertations.

4.1.1 ELM dissertation productivity at the institution from 1995-2004

I find that most dissertations were written in the second half of the decade. Twelve (23% of 53) were written in the first half from 1995-1999. Forty one (77% of 53) were written from 2000-2004. Productivity is summarised in Figure 2.

Figure 2: ELM research productivity at the institution per year over the decade 1995-2004



Output was low in 1995, the first year after South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. Only 1 (2% of 53) dissertation was written in that year. The number increased significantly to 6 (11% of 53) in 1996, the year that the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa was implemented (Republic of South Africa, 1996), as well as the Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (Department of Education, 1996a). During the apartheid era there were four different departments of education under central government and many more under "homeland" governments, so the purpose of the act, as stated in the first paragraph, was "To provide for a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools; to amend and repeal certain laws relating to schools; and to provide for matters connected therewith." The changes in education occurring during this period stimulated considerable debate (de Clercq, 1997). The increase at this institution tallies with national trends reported by the Council of Higher Education (CHE) (2010, p. 18) whereby there was an increase in ELM students just after 1994 as there was "demand for high-level research capacity in education and particularly so in policy development." Surprisingly, though, numbers of dissertations fell the next two years so that there were no ELM dissertation written in 1997 and only 1 (2% of 53) written in 1998. Four (8%) dissertations were written in 1999 which makes a total of 12

(23% of 53) written on the first half of the 1995-2004 decade. Thus, the trend over these five years was uneven. One of the reasons for this unevenness may be due to change in the education system as government introduced its national alternative to apartheid education, particularly the Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 (Department of Education, 1996a). However, there is not concrete information available to confirm the effect of that change on ELM research output at the selected institution. Another factor may have been that the ELM Masters degree was only taking shape in the mid to late 1990s in many universities nationally (CHE, 2010). The low numbers during this period may have been a function of a the lack of a formal ELM programme at the institution during those years and so less emphasis on ELM related dissertation topics, or fewer staff being prepared to supervise such topics. The low numbers could also indicate a higher than usual dropout/non-completion rate, although I was not able to confirm this.

There is an increase of postgraduate ELM dissertation completion from 2000-2004 in the institution. While the years 2000 and 2001 record a low 3 (6% of 53) dissertations each, the numbers escalate to 11 (21% of 53) in 2002 and continue to rise in 2003. The greatest number of dissertations, which is 13 (25% of 53), was recorded in 2003. This increase mirrors the trend in the PPER database a whole, in which it is evident that there is a marked increase in education postgraduate output from 2000-2004 (Balfour & Moletsane, 2011). This was the era of debate around Outcomes-Based Education and the introduction of Curriculum 2005 (Botha, 2002; Chisholm, 2005). This increase may be an indication of the firm establishment and growth of the ELM programmes at universities by then resulting in increased enrolment and throughput. Indeed, this trend coincides with the establishment of a separate ELM programme at the institution selected for this study. In addition, this trend could reflect a realisation among education managers that they need higher education degrees as part of their professional development.

4.1.2 Some demographic trends about ELM researchers at Masters level at the institution

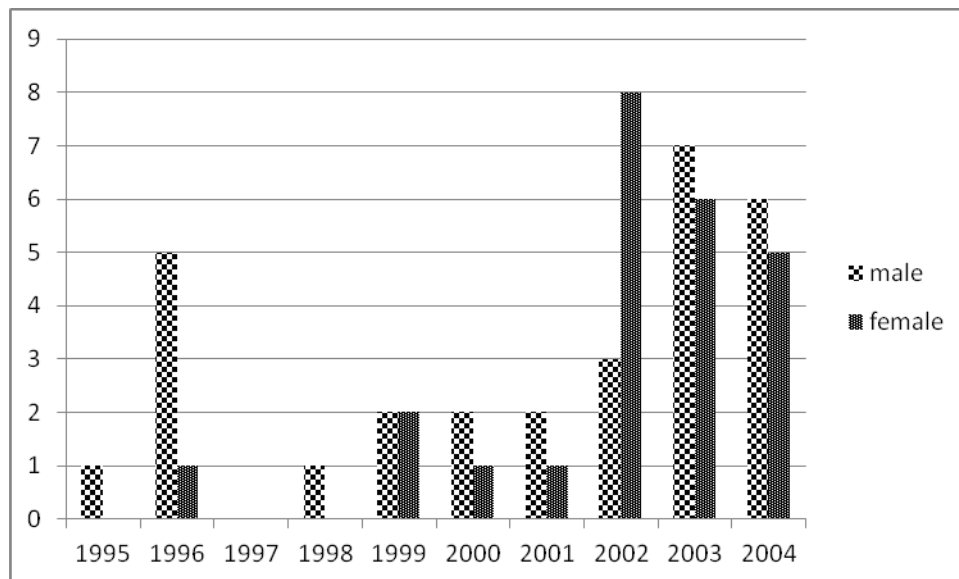
In this section I present the findings from the analysis of two demographical characteristics among ELM researchers i.e. their gender and race. This section about demographic trends is important to note because South Africa is a multiracial and multicultural country that emerged in 1994 from several decades of systematic gender and race prejudice and discrimination. My dataset from the PPER database provided some demographic information about researchers, although, as mentioned in Chapter 3.5, this information is based on an interpretation of names as a proxy for race and gender. Gender and race were each cross tabulated over years.

My finding about gender is that there are more male students writing Masters dissertations than female students over the decade 1994-2004 (see Figure 3). Amongst the 53 ELM dissertations under study, 29 (55% of 53) were produced by males and 24 (45% 53) by females. This is different to the trend observed in the PPER database as a whole, where the majority of researchers are female – 2076 females compared to 1646 males (Balfour et al., 2011). However, this is a similar trend to the gender balance nationally regarding school management. As Arends (2007), in reference to 2005 statistics, points out,

Gender representivity in the management level/ranks is skewed. School management is predominantly male, who constituting 62 per cent of principals and 58 per cent of deputy principals. This is not a representative picture of the education profession in terms of gender, taking into account that female educators outnumber male educators 2 to 1.

At least one male wrote a dissertation in each of the ten years except for in 1997 when there was no dissertation written at all. This is unlike for females who did not produce a dissertation in three of the years, namely, 1995, 1997 and 1998. As I mentioned earlier, the low numbers generally during this period may be an indication that ELM had a low profile in the M.Ed. programme at that stage so not many students chose ELM related topics.

Figure 3: Gender trends in the 53 ELM dissertations

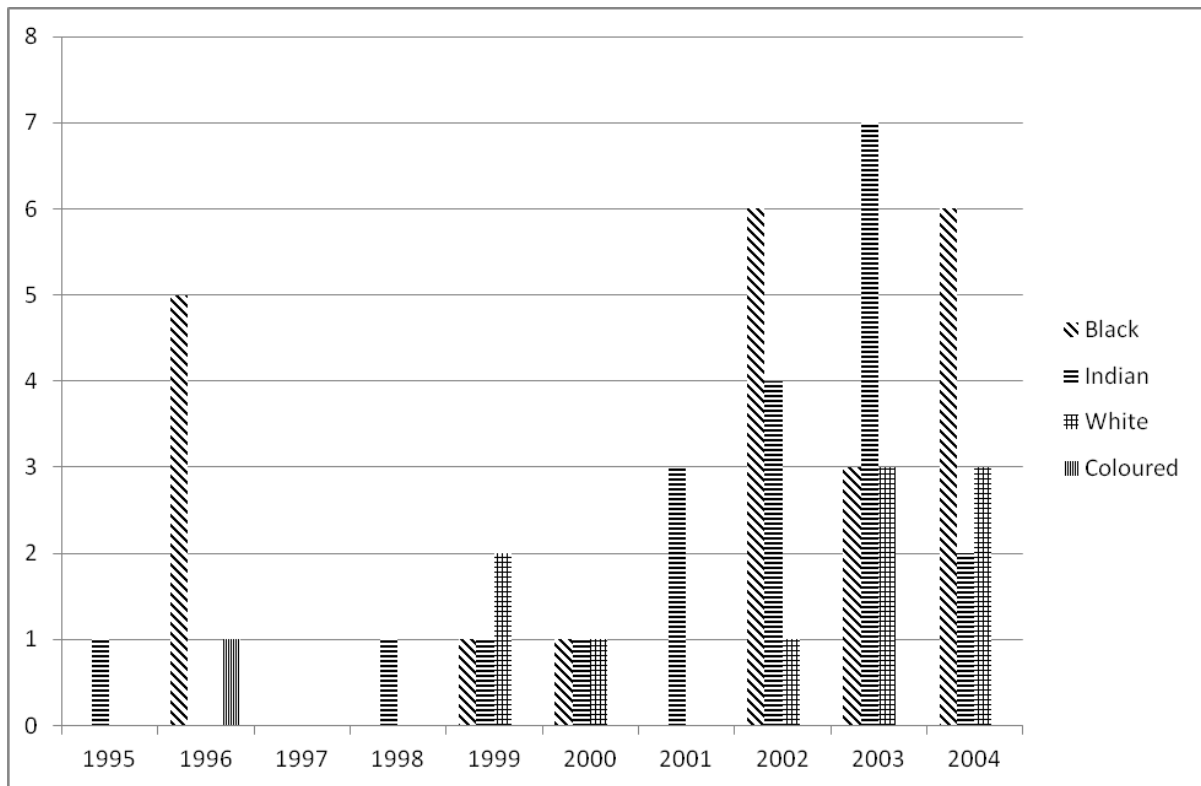


Usher's (1996a) concept of con-text explains how biographical information about authors can help researchers go behind research output and notice trends in any group of research outputs. More women than men wrote ELM dissertations in the second half of the decade. Twenty one females wrote from 2000-2004 compared to 20 males who wrote in the same five-year period (2000-2004). The numbers of dissertations were highest for females (8) and males (7) in 2001 and 2003 respectively. This could have been due to increased enrolment by females in the ELM programme, although I could not confirm this. I speculate that this trend could also indicate a recognition by females embarking on postgraduate education studies that females need to be more actively involved in management and leadership level at schools and for this they need to be qualified in that particular area.

The authorship of dissertations on the general topic of principals reveals a gender con-text (Usher, 1996a) where more males write about this than females. This could be because more male ELM authors were interested in this topic, which could be a reflection that the fact that there are more males who are principals than females in South African schools (Arends, 2007).

In terms of race, over the 10 year period, the highest number of dissertations were completed by Black (22), followed by Indian (19), White (11) and Coloured (1) students which respectively represent 42%, 36%, 21% and 1% of 53 (see Figure 4). Although these figures reflect the racial categories of the province in which the institution is located, they do not mirror the demographic proportions of the residents in the province which are Black 88%, Indian 7%, White 4% and Coloured 1% (Statistics South Africa, 2011).

Figure 4: Race trends in the 53 ELM dissertations



I notice that the race trends for this group of ELM dissertations is quite different to the race trends in the PPER database as a whole, where the majority of dissertation and thesis authors are White 47% followed by Black 39%, Indian 10% and Coloured 3% (Balfour et al., 2011). The trend of Black authors being in the majority in the ELM component of the PPER database although they are not the majority in the database as a whole, may illustrate the post-apartheid transformation agenda which sought to increase the proportion of Black

leadership in the educational as well as health and business settings, as set out initially in the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development (Republic of South Africa, 1994). Another variable here to consider may be the fact that the bulk of ELM dissertations occur in the second half of the period under review, which is the period in which ELM became firmly established. In addition, higher education policy in post-apartheid South Africa enabled many black people to enrol at universities (Gultig, 2000).

The racial analysis in Figure 4 does not show consistency across all the years, with an increasing number of Black and Indian students completing dissertations in the period from 2001-2004. Only one Coloured student completed a dissertation during the period under study. This tallies with the low number of Coloured people resident in the province where the selected institution is located. It was important for me to identify the gender and race profile of the postgraduate authors in order to understand the race and gender trends in the ELM dissertation group over the 10 year period. These trends point to social changes in South Africa during that decade. Usher (1996a) emphasises the importance of identifying the writer of any text before trying to analyse the text. The assumption about context is that the biographic details of the author contribute to what is being researched, their view of the world and also how the research is conducted. Although such correlations are not explored in my statistical analysis, I consider them later in my content analysis of three dissertations.

The following gender and race trends were also noted: authors on principals were mainly African males; authors on policy implementation were mainly Indian males; authors on transformation and the context of educational change in South Africa were White females.

In addition, using titles as a proxy for geographical origin of the author, I found that a number of authors are from outside the province of the selected institution, ranging from neighbouring provinces (four dissertations) to a neighbouring country, Lesotho (four dissertations). This was evident from the use of geographical terms in the dissertation titles. This could indicate that ELM programmes at South African universities are a valuable

resource for the southern Africa region as a whole. An example of a dissertation with Lesotho as a research location is:

What informs the implementation strategies of the Lesotho free primary education? An analysis of stakeholders perceptions at Pitseng PrimarySchool. 2004

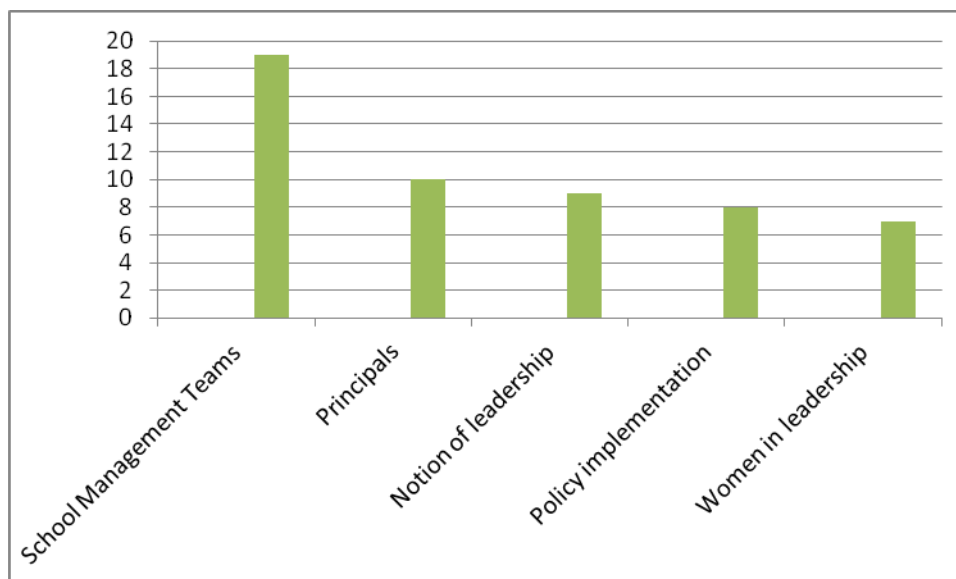
4.1.3 Focus Trends

Every empirical research is about a focus or topic (Franken & Wallen, 2007). At the outset my assumption was that trends in the focus of ELM dissertations would shed light on ELM issues which researchers were puzzled about in the period immediately following the end of apartheid. I analysed the focuses of each of the dissertations under study by drawing from titles. Among the 53 titles which I analysed, I found five general focuses recurring (see Figure 5). These are:

- School management teams (19 dissertations – 36% of 53);
- principals (ten dissertations – 19% of 53);
- the notion of leadership (nine dissertations – 17% of 53);
- policy implementation (eight dissertations – 15% of 53); and
- women in leadership (seven dissertations – 13% of 53).

These focuses are consistent with the core areas of the ELM discipline as conveyed by authors such as Bush and Bell (2008), and with my knowledge of ELM derived from my experience of the coursework component of the ELM M.Ed. programme. From the point of view of Usher's notion of inter-text (1996a), it appears that the textual base for the body of knowledge under investigation (the 53 ELM M.Ed. dissertations from a selected institution for the period 1995-2004) is rather narrow and conventional.

Figure 5: Comparison of the number of dissertations within the five general focus categories



As can be seen from Figure 5, the largest focus category is School Management Teams (SMTs). This is mainly due to the broad nature of the category, as compared to the other categories which are more specific. The category includes issues such as decision making, recruitment, selection, induction and mentoring, and governing bodies.

Analysis of the topics reveal that all focus on schools, with the majority focussing on primary schools. I find that surprising that no author has studied educational leadership and management in higher education institutions such as colleges and universities. Higher education institutions were also affected by the transformation of the education sector to reflect national constitutional priorities, and this period was also characterised by the merger of several of these institutions, including the institution selected for this study.

I find there is a trend in the topics indicating that early studies focussed on principals and school management but in due course changed to a focus on the team approach to school management, which includes SMTs and School Governing Bodies.

I notice some general trends regarding popularity of topics during the course of the decade under review. The first is an interest in principals in the first part of the decade, followed by SMTs, followed by development appraisal policies, and finally, induction and mentoring. These trends could correspond to the emphasis placed by the ELM course work programme and lecturers on particular areas. I notice that the first time School Governing Bodies topic appears as late as 2001. This is surprising, considering that this was a major change in school management philosophy and practice which started as early as 1996 with the Schools Act (Department of Education, 1996).

In general, I find that the research focuses of ELM dissertations in the dataset are consistent with the core areas of the ELM discipline, from the point of view of Usher's notion of context (1996a), I perceive that the degree of engagement by ELM authors with the socio-political context that prevailed in the post-apartheid education arena is minimal, a similar finding to that of Madiya (2009) who investigated a dataset from the PPER database related to environmental studies. The only dissertation title which explicitly links the area of study to the broader context is the following:

How do school management teams function in the context of educational change in South Africa: the case study of sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela circuit, Pietermaritzburg region. 2004

4.1.3.1 Focus on School Management Teams

The principal, the deputy principal and heads of departments (HODs) constitute the SMTs (Department of Education, 2000, p. 2). The 19 (36% of 53) authors who focused on SMTs look mainly at how SMTs function in terms of their fundamental roles in the running of schools. They also raise questions about managing discipline in schools and the management of professional development programmes.

SMTs and School Governing Bodies represent the most significant shift in education management strategy from the pre-apartheid to the post-apartheid era. The pre-apartheid era

was characterised by centralised management (Christie, 2010), with principals as administrators mainly responsible for carrying out the plans of provincial and national education departments with minimal school-based decision making and management responsibility in regard to budgets and recruitment. The Schools Act (Department of Education, 1996a) and the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development entitled *Changing Management to Manage Change* (Department of Education, 1996b) introduced a fundamentally more democratic model with principals being “profiled as ‘management’, signifying their responsibility for running schools and at the same time highlighting their role in transformation to meet new constitutional principles of democracy and equality” (Christie, 2010). Management and decision making now extended beyond the principal to include educators, learners, parents and community representatives via the School Governing Body (Department of Education, 1996a).

Examples of titles in this focus category from the 53 ELM titles are:

“Managing discipline in a school within a context of change: a case study of a Durban school.” 2000

“Managing through teams: an investigation of the effectiveness of formal teams in a secondary school in the Pinetown district of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture.” 2003

The likely reason for SMTs being the largest focus category amongst the 53 dissertations investigated is that some authors may have been members of SMTs themselves and hence had an interest in researching the topic., Another possible reason is that SMTs were a new feature under the post-apartheid education system as a result of promulgation of the South African Schools Act in 1996 (Department of Education, 1996a), so there was an interest amongst authors to explore the implications and application of SMTs in practice. Usher’s tools for textual analysis are helpful in further elucidating possible reasons for this being the largest focus group category.

4.1.3.2 Principals

In South African schools the principal is the senior manager of the school and is the reporting officer on all matters concerning the school. According to the South African Schools Act “the professional management of a public school must be undertaken by the principal under the authority of the Head of Department” (Department of Education, 1996a). Ten (19% of 53) authors focused on principals. This is almost half the number of authors who focused on SMTs. Most of these occurred in the first few years of the post apartheid decade, perhaps stimulated by the publication of the South African Schools Act and the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development entitled *Changing management to manage change* (Department of Education, 1996b) which defined the roles of principals and educators and introduced School Governing Bodies as an element of school management. An example of a title in this focus category is:

“The principals’ self-perceptions and the teachers’ perceptions of the principals’ level of involvement in instructional leadership.” 1996

Authors mainly researched principal’s roles in schools, teachers’ perceptions of principals and principal’s perceptions of teachers. Authors also looked at principal’s views of SMTs and School Governing Bodies in South Africa. When I consider con-text (Usher, 1996a) it is possible that some authors may have been principals and thus interested in this topic. Indeed, the CHE (2010) confirms that most ELM Masters students in South Africa are studying with a focus on their work practice and contexts. This does not mean, though, that all of the authors were principals. Regarding the focus on principals, I find that not all issues pertaining to the work of principals was researched. For example, issues such as principal’s skills and community engagement were not covered in any of the dissertations.

Looking at all the dissertation titles as a whole, I found a trend that in the first five years of the study period (1995-1999), six of the 11 dissertation titles contained the word ‘principal’. In the second five years this word only occurred six times out of 42, which is much less proportionately. The first five years coincided with the democratisation of management in

education (as outlined in Chapter 4.1.3), so it is understandable that most of the ELM research of this period would have been about this topic. However, the sub-text (Usher, 1996a) shows us that the notion of the principal's role in management was still being influenced by the old paradigm of the principal being an administrator/leader rather than being a team member. An example of a dissertation title which represents this is:

“High school principals play a major role in making schools effective at Ndwedwe Circuit.” 1996

My analysis of titles from the second half of the decade under consideration (2000-2004) shows that the sub-text (Usher, 1996a) had shifted, with more emphasis on democratic, collegial and transformational forms of management, as exemplified by the following title:

“Redefined role functions of the secondary school principal in the light of democratic school governance.” 2002

4.1.3.3 Women in leadership

Chisholm (2001) argues that the question of gender and leadership in school administration and policy is one that has long exercised the minds of educational researchers. It is also worth noting that women have dominated the educational profession in the classroom, but not in the leadership and management tier (Chisholm, 2001). the gender balance nationally regarding school management. Arends (2007), in reference to 2005 statistics, points out that school management is “predominantly male, constituting 62 per cent of principals and 58 per cent of deputy principals. This is not a representative picture of the education profession in terms of gender, taking into account that female educators outnumber male educators 2 to 1.”

I found that seven (13% of 53) authors focused on women in leadership, one of which was male. Examples of three titles in this focus category selected from the 53 which address women in leadership are:

“Women in educational management: Why women are underrepresented in the educational management positions in South Africa- a survey study of educational managers in the Kokstad region.” 1999

“Gender imbalance in positions of leadership at schools.” 2003

“Women in management: perceptions of eight women in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.” 2003

The seven dissertations about women in leadership were mainly focusing on the issue that there are fewer women in school leadership than men. I also find that the authors advocating for women to take part in leadership and management of schools are mostly women (six out of seven). This confirms Usher’s (1996a) notion of con-text in which the author is connected to the topic on a personal level. terms of the self having power to determine the text that the individual produces. I find, however, that the studies do not address questions relevant to women already in positions of leadership and management.

4.1.3.4 The notion of leadership

The concept of leadership has been important in post-apartheid South Africa as the country needed new conceptions of leadership that were in line with the democratic transformation that the country was going through, which rippled through educational circles as well (Christie, 2010).

Nine (17% of 53) authors focused on the notion of leadership particularly in the transformation of schools. Authors researched transformational leadership, leadership competences and management and leadership in a transformed society. One example of a title in this focus category selected from the 53 dissertations is:

“Leadership for self management: an investigation into evidence for transformational leadership in a primary school in Durban, South Africa.” 2003

It is not surprising that leadership emerged as a focus in this analysis of 53 ELM dissertations in the period 1995-2004 because it was in this era that the democratisation of school leadership was being implemented. The notion of leadership was changing from one of autocratic leadership to one of team or democratic or shared leadership and practitioners and scholars were grappling with the implications and applications of these changes (Department of Education, 1996b; Christie, 2010). However there was evidence that the sub-text (Usher, 1996a) of autocratic leadership was still influential, because in general the dissertations in this category display characteristics of a direct link between leadership and principals as individuals, rather than leadership in a team context, which would have fitted better into the post-apartheid SMT / School Governing Body focus.

4.1.3.5 Policy implementation

During the era under review, the whole education system had to change from a racially based system to a non-racial system, and from multi-departmental to uni-departmental. Therefore, laws and associated policy played a crucial role in spelling out the parameters of the change required and providing guidance for management of schools on a day-to-day basis (Jansen, 2004). The changing policies stemming from a new constitution and education system in South Africa from 1995-2004 justify the focus on policy implementation.

Eight (15% of 53) authors focused their research on policy implementation. Examples of such policies are the language in education policy, the policy on the administration of corporal punishment, and policy on developmental appraisal for educators. For example, one dissertation on policy is entitled:

“An investigation into the application of quality customer service as a dimension of Total Quality Management.” 2003

Considering the extent to which education policy transformed, my finding is that ELM studies on policies in general and on specific policies were relatively few during the decade among the set of 53 that I was analysing. One of the reasons for this could have been that

there was not enough emphasis on policy in the lecture component of the M.Ed. programme, or that there were insufficient supervisors specialised in this area.

To sum up my findings about all the focus trends, I found that authors researched issues that were relevant to the contemporary topical ELM issues in South Africa of 1995-2004, and issues relevant to their work practice (CHE, 2010). Researching issues relevant to work practice is an example of how the biography of the researcher (con-text) is an important influence on what the researcher researches (Usher, 1996a). The gaps that I noticed were on issues to do with practical aspects of management and leadership and experiences of women in leadership and management.

4.1.4 Methodological trends

Lauer (2006) argues that research methodology is concerned with how a research study is conducted, including the research approaches, design, data collection instruments and the procedure. Such information is useful to build confidence in the study findings and when other researchers want to replicate the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, I looked at the methodological trends in ELM dissertations in terms of the research approaches, paradigms and designs. I analysed methodologies chosen by ELM postgraduate education researchers in order to understand authors' views of the world, their beliefs and applicability of methodologies to address ELM questions. My analysis was guided by Usher's (1996a) aspect of sub-text which explains how the researcher's world view is revealed through methodological choices. In other words, the way a researcher views the world informs his/her choice of research methods to use for a particular inquiry (Cohen et al., 2007). I examined the 53 dissertations in my dataset in order to explore their methodological trends in terms of research approaches, paradigms and designs and my findings are discussed below.

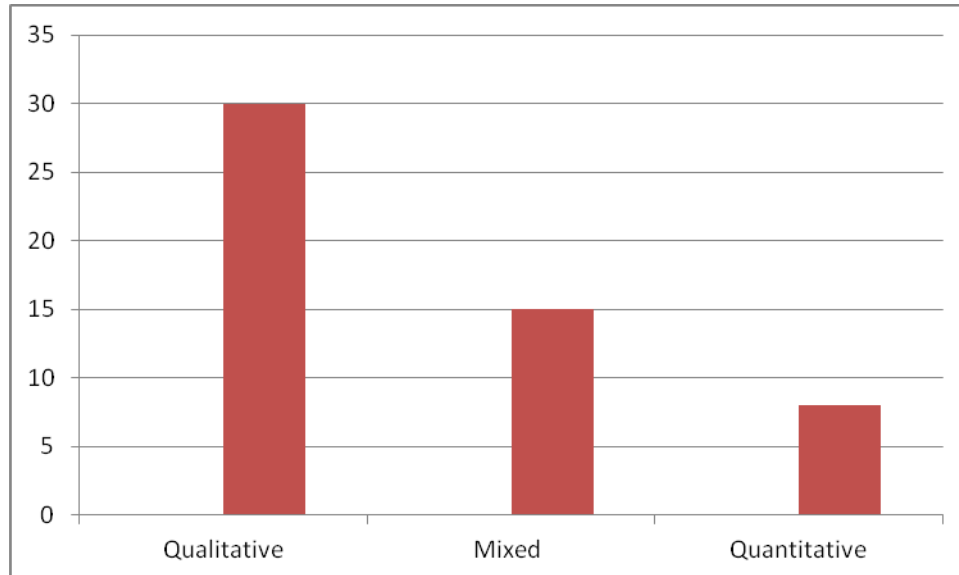
4.1.4.1. Research approaches

Among the ELM dissertations completed from 1995-2004, the following research approach trends are noted:

- 30 (57% of 53) followed a qualitative research approach;
- 15 (28% of 53) preferred a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches; and
- Eight (15% of 53) researchers followed a quantitative approach.

Figure 6 shows the frequency of research approaches.

Figure 6: A comparison of dissertations by research approach



As can be seen from Figure 6, overall the most common research approach was qualitative. However, I found that the research approach trend changed during the course of the decade under study, from quantitative to qualitative. In the first five years the most common research approach was surveys, which is a quantitative approach. This changed from 2000, when case studies became the most popular research approach, which is a qualitative approach. This could reflect a change in emphasis within the ELM programme away from an empirical approach toward a more humanistic, interpretivist, approach, which could have been

influenced by international trends of that time. Heck and Hallinger (2005) analysed research on education and leadership management in the decade 1995-2005 and noted that

scholarly directions seem to be changing, as an increasing number of scholars are approaching educational leadership and management as a humanistic and moral endeavor rather than a scientific one.

Overall, the number of authors using a qualitative approach is double the number of authors who used a mix of approaches. The number of authors who used a mix of approaches is almost double the number of authors who used a quantitative approach only. Thus I find that the qualitative approach is the most used and the quantitative approach is least used among ELM authors in the period under review. This is consistent with international trends in education research (Heck & Hallinger, 2005, as well as with the findings of Karlsson et al. (2009) regarding the PPER national survey of postgraduate education research in South Africa during the period 1995-2004 in which 82% of the studies were qualitative in nature. Mertens (2010) opines that a qualitative approach is used in research that is designed to provide an in-depth description of the topic. Thus, the preference for a qualitative approach enables ELM researchers to have in-depth discussions with participants and to understand their topic through spoken words rather than measurements and statistics. The dominance of qualitative research methods in postgraduate education research in South Africa (Karlsson et al, 2009) has led scholars such as Rule et al. (2011) and Monk et al. (2012) to the view that this trend is due to a lack of supervisory capacity, lack of resources and interest in quantitative research. This could also be a reflection of what Heck and Hallinger (2005) refer to as “a lack of empirical rigour” in the field of educational leadership and management.

4.1.4.2 Research paradigms

Neuman (2007, p. 81) defines paradigm as a “general organizing framework for theory and research that includes basic assumptions, key issues, models of quality research, and methods for seeking answers.”

Of the 53 ELM dissertations under study, the PPER database did not provide information about paradigms for three of the dissertations. My finding about paradigms is therefore based on 50 dissertations. Table 2 shows that forty three authors worked in the interpretive, six in the critical and one in the constructivist paradigm.

The overwhelming preference of the interpretive paradigm is not surprising considering that this paradigm is commonly associated with a qualitative research approach, which is the most common approach utilised by the 53 ELM authors under study. According to Mertens (2010), the framework for most (but not all) qualitative approaches is interpretive. Maree (2007) concurs, stating that the qualitative approach is based on the interpretive paradigm. The subjectivity of the interpretive paradigm enables the researcher to interact with participants at a deeper level and appreciate the divergent opinions of the participants. Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer (2012) hold the view that every qualitative research project has an element of interpretive perspective because of its focus on uncovering views of participants. McEvoy and Richards (2006) opine that qualitative approaches are associated with the interpretivist paradigm because they are largely based on non-numerical narratives.

Table 2: A correlation of research paradigms and research approaches employed

Research Paradigm	Research Approach			Total
	Qualitative	Quantitative	Mix of Qualitative and Quantitative	
Interpretive	25	6	12	43
Constructivism			1	1
Critical	4		2	6
Total	29	6	15	50

Among 43 authors who engaged in interpretive studies, I find that 25 chose a qualitative approach, six a quantitative and 12 a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) argue that the interpretive paradigm is compatible with mixed methods and I find 12 authors who used mix approaches in the interpretive paradigm.

4.1.4.3 Research designs

Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) assert that research designs are procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data in research studies. Yin (2003b, p. 19) states that “every empirical study has a research design and a research design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study.”

Among the 53 dissertations in my dataset, I find that a variety of research designs have been utilised, as can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3: Number of EML dissertations by research design

Research Design	Frequency
Case study	28
Survey	12
Exploratory	4
Ethnography	2
Phenomenology	2
Comparative study	2
Historical research	1
Document analysis	1
Action research	1
Total	53

My finding is that 28 (53% of 53) students chose to employ a case study design. This preference for small scale case study design tallies with the popularity of the qualitative approach as noted by Rule and Balfour (2011) and Karlsson, et al. (2011). Creswell (2008) argues that most qualitative studies use a case study design. He says that this is because a case study allows researchers to have an in-depth study of their topic in order to have a comprehensive understanding of the situation and context. Rule et al. (2011) find that case study is the most popularly used research design by both Masters and Doctorate students

across South Africa in the period 1995-2004. Therefore my findings are consistent with national trends.

The survey is the second most preferred design among the 53 ELM students. Twelve (23% of 53) authors conducted surveys, slightly below half of the number of students who used case study. Cohen et al. (2007) argue that survey design is typically quantitative, possibly to gather large-scale data in order to make generalizations, and to generate statistically manipulable data. By looking at the nature of focuses of topics of the 53 ELM dissertations, I find that most of the authors using a survey design looked at education management and leadership at school level. An example of a survey study title is:

“A survey of school principals in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage Area on the evaluation of their duties.” 1996

Four (8% of 53) students used an exploratory design. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) opine that an exploratory design is a type of mixed method design in which the qualitative data are gathered first and a quantitative phase follows. Creswell and Plano Clark (2012) argue that the primary purpose of the exploratory design is to be able later to generalise qualitative findings based on a few individuals from a first phase to a larger sample gathered during a second later project. An example of such a project title is:

“An investigation into the management of professional development at a secondary school in the City of Durban District.” 2003

The number of students who used exploratory design (4) is a third of those who used survey (12) and a seventh of students who used case study (28). This means that although the exploratory design is on third position in the order of ELM authors preferred designs, there are few (8%) ELM authors who used it although it is primarily a qualitative approach and this is the approach most commonly used by ELM authors.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) ethnography is a study of a culture or social system. Ethnography, phenomenology and comparative study designs were each used by 2 (4% of 53) students. This is despite Watkins' (2012) claim that ethnography and phenomenology are popular qualitative approaches. An explanation for this anomaly can be found in the nature of ethnographic studies and issues relating to ELM student researchers. Ethnographic studies generally require long-term observation of a group or social system in order to assess the rate and direction of change (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). However, many ELM students at the selected institution choose the coursework master's programme so write half-dissertations. This leaves less time for field work.

Two authors who employed ethnography in their ELM dissertations focused on schools as social systems. This is exemplified by the following title:

“An investigation into the role played by primary school principals in enhancing the development of pupils' self-concepts.” 1996

Historical research, document analysis and action research were the least used designs in the set of 53 dissertations. Each of these designs was employed by 1 (2% of 53) student only. The study utilising document analysis was entitled:

“An investigation into the selection and appointment of educators to the position of Head of Department in three primary schools in the Kwandengesi Circuit of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture.” 2003

The comparative study was:

“A comparative study of management strategies in three secondary schools.” 1998

Finally, the study using a historical design was entitled:

“An evaluation of the new Developmental Appraisal System in the Department of Education and Culture.” 2000

The decision by most postgraduate ELM students not to use these three research designs cannot be ascertained from my statistical analysis. What is evident is that most students prefer to conduct case study research designs and this is supported by both the PPER researchers and the CHE.

To sum up my main findings from the statistical analysis are:

- Most dissertations were written in the second half of the decade
- There were more male authors than female authors;
- Authors on principals were mainly African males; authors on policy implementation were mainly Indian males; authors on transformation and the context of educational change in South Africa were White females.
- There were more Black than Indian, White and Coloured authors;
- Race of author may have influenced the selection of research site, with authors selecting a site associated with their race group;
- Focus trends were consistent with the core areas of the ELM discipline. The largest focus category is School Management Teams (SMTs). Early in the decade under consideration SMT related topics focussed on principals, whereas later in the decade they focused on the team approach to school management;
- Early in the decade under study there were more quantitative than qualitative studies, but this changed during the course of the decade with an increase in the employment of case study designs. This reflected a paradigm shift from an empirical approach to a more humanistic, interpretivist approach. Towards the end of the decade under review there is a trend to utilisation of the mixed method approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative elements.
- The number of authors from outside the province of the selected institution increased during the latter half of the period under review;

I now turn to a detailed description and analysis of three dissertations.

4.2. Content analysis

As was explained in the methodology chapter, I used content analysis in addition to statistical analysis to understand trends in ELM dissertations in one institution in South Africa from 1995-2004. My aim was to focus on three selected ELM dissertations and analyse them in more detail. My purpose was to extend and elaborate the findings from the statistical analysis. Conducting a second analysis was a form of triangulation which added to the rigour of my study and trustworthiness of the findings. To analyse three dissertations I used Usher's conceptual framework.

A summary of key elements from the three selected dissertations is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of key points for three ELM dissertations

	Dissertation 1	Dissertation 2	Dissertation 3
Author	X	Y	Z
Race	African	Indian	Indian
Gender	Female	Male	Male
Title	A study of the role of induction and mentoring programmes in achieving school effectiveness.	An enquiry into the management of induction and mentoring in an urban secondary school in Phoenix, north Durban region, KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and Culture.	Investigation into the management of induction and mentoring at a private college in North Durban.
Year	2004	2002	2004
Methodological approach	Qualitative	Mix of qualitative and quantitative	Mix of qualitative and quantitative

Design	Case study	Case study	Case study
Paradigm	Interpretivist	Critical	Interpretivist

Table 4 summarises the key points relevant to the content analysis of the three dissertations. I discuss my findings per dissertation in the next three subsections. As is evident I do not reveal the dissertation authors' names for ethical reasons.

4.2.1 Dissertation 1

Dissertation 1 was written in 2004 and the title is: "A study of the role of Induction and Mentoring programmes in achieving school effectiveness." The title page of the dissertation indicates that it was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the M.Ed. degree, to the Faculty of Education of the selected institution after it had amalgamated. The author gathered data for her topic from two primary schools by means of interviews, attending staff meetings, observing new educators in the classroom, and analysing documents supplied by the Department of Education such as handbooks and guidebooks. She found that one school had no induction and mentoring programme at all and the new educators in that school "felt abandoned". She found that the other school had a programme in place although it was not explicit, and the new educators "felt at home". She states that the findings "suggest that the schools studied did not practice formal induction and mentoring." She recommended that "principals need to be given guidance in the development of programmes of induction and mentoring."

I analysed the biographical details of the author in relation to the demographic profile of students who completed ELM Masters dissertations from 1995 to 2004. Dissertation1 was produced in 2004 by Author X who I assumed to be racially classified as African. I assumed this based on the fact that the student has a name associated with the isiZulu language. This is the same assumption which was made by the PPER researchers. However, this assumption has limitations because there is no proof other than taking the name as a proxy for race (Balfour et. al., 2011). In terms of gender, I applied the same assumption for Student X who I concluded to be female.

Usher (1996a) asserts that biographical details provide a con-text and help explain some of the choices an author may make. In this case, it is evident from the methodology chapter that the author conducted her study at schools in Hammarsdale which is a predominantly Zulu area, and her choice may have been influenced by being Zulu herself.

Her female gender may have influenced her to include a focus on relationships in her study. According to Stedham, Yamamura and Beekun, (2007), Social Role Theory suggests that men and women behave according to the stereotypically expected social roles that they occupy. As a result, “women are more ‘communal’ and men are more ‘agentic’”. Women place greater emphasis on harmonious interpersonal relations, are more caring, and are focused on doing well, whereas men are more concerned with competitive success and extrinsic rewards including financial and status rewards.” Author X states in her Abstract that one of her aims was “also to ascertain if the programmes of induction and mentoring contributed to the sound relationships within the school community”. However, she seems to have lost touch with that aim because during the course of the study because she does not discuss this aim in her conclusion or recommendations.

Other biographical details evident from the Title page and the Acknowledgements page of the dissertation which contribute to my understanding of the con-text of this dissertation are that she graduated from the current institution after it merged and after a fully fledged ELM programme had been established. Further, she was supervised by a lecturer who specialised in ELM.

In her Acknowledgements she acknowledges particular staff in the provincial Department of Education so I infer that she may not have been practising as an educator at the time, but was a staff member of the Department of Education. This is confirmed by a comment she makes in her methodology chapter in which she states that she is a Department of Education official. The biographical information that the author is a Department official is relevant in terms of the con-text (Usher, 1996a) of the dissertation. In Chapter 1 she writes that at the time new graduate teachers finding employment were finding it difficult to find employment, and “The

department has now started employing educators who have been home without jobs for years after training” and do she chose to “investigate the nature of induction and mentoring such educators receive to bridge the gap between training and the beginning of work”. This biographical information is relevant too in terms of how con-text can also influence the “outcomes and consequences of research” (Usher, 1996a, p. 45). In Chapter 3 she writes: “The knowledge by respondents of the fact that I am a Departmental official tended to hinder them from revealing information fully and to express their opinions freely.” The con-text of her location as a Departmental official is also evident in her main recommendation as reflected in her Abstract:

The study recommends that principals, especially the beginning principals, need to be given guidance in the development of programmes of induction and mentoring. Workshops would also help to develop principals in using documents supplied to schools by the Department, to ensure the effective implementation of procedures and processes to be followed in schools.

This is fairly typical of a representative of central authority, where that authority will “give guidance” to the decentralised authority. This is in contrast to the author of Dissertation 2 whose topic was very similar to Dissertation 1, but made recommendations that the principal and educators organise their own training workshops and induction and mentoring programmes. Further, as a Departmental official Author X would have an interest in making sure that the documentation supplied by the Department is used properly. Finally, it is quite appropriate that a Departmental official would be interested in improvement of the “effective implementation of procedures and processes to be followed by schools”, because monitoring and evaluation is a provincial government responsibility (Department of Education, 2001; Department of Basic Education, 2010).

The research focus in Dissertation 1 is induction and mentoring of new educators. The researcher asserts that her aim is to find out about programmes for new educators induction and mentoring, how are they run and to what effect. The researcher spelt out her initial assumptions, particularly that all schools have programmes for induction and mentoring and

that all beginner educators have weaknesses and fears which can be solved by induction and mentoring. As one can see from the wording of her topic, she makes a direct correlation between induction and mentoring and school effectiveness, which is a typical ELM assumption (Creemers, 1997).

Author X made methodological choices in line with the statistical findings about the most preferred methodology amongst the ELM Masters postgraduate students. Her main methodology was a qualitative case study. Author X does not explicitly state the paradigm underlying the study. My analysis is that the sub-text (Usher, 1996a) that she is working from is the interpretivist paradigm. This is revealed by her methodology which was interview-based, allowing her to gain in-depth knowledge of her subjects and the terrain of her research question. She also investigated multiple realities by interviewing school staff from a variety of post levels, as well as observing staff meetings and new educators in the classroom. My analysis was that she did not follow through with multiple interpretations because her recommendations indicate that she filtered the information she gathered through her Department of Education con-text. She also did not follow through with the socio-political contextual reality she raised in Chapter 1 of her dissertation, which was the reality that many of the new educators coming into schools at that time would have been unemployed for a lengthy period of time and so be “rusty”. She did not mention this reality in the discussion of her findings (although it may have been mentioned in her findings, but that chapter was not available in the dissertation excerpt in the PPER archive). The link between the interpretivist paradigm and qualitative case studies is supported by authors such as Mertens (2010), the link with in-depth knowledge gathering by authors such as Punch (2009), and with multiple realities and multiple interpretations by authors such as McMillan and Schumacher (2010). My analysis that Author X’s dissertation is consistent with the interpretivist paradigm concurs with the analysis of the PPER researchers who entered “Interpretivist” when they entered this dissertation into the database.

Finally, I analysed the theoretical choices in Dissertation 1. Theoretical choices are a form of pre-text (Usher, 1996a) because they are used to organise and portray meaning. Author X

states that the theoretical location of her study is Human Resource Management theory, and “that I have chosen to adopt content theories of motivation as the main component of the theoretical framework for this study.” However, the only theorists she mentions in Chapter 1 are Maslow and Gerber. I could not ascertain the extent to which she explains “content theories of motivation” because the dissertation excerpt in the PPER archive does not contain the literature review chapter. The term “Human Resource Management theory” is not mentioned in her methodology chapter, or her discussion, conclusion and recommendations chapter, and neither are Maslow or Gerber. I regard this as an indication that she mentioned her theoretical base as a textual strategy to situate her dissertation within a particular discourse because that was expected of her, but was not able to sustain the application of theory because either she did not understand that it needed to be followed throughout the dissertation, or her supervisor did not point out to her the necessity of doing so.

My analysis of Author X’s title reveals a fundamental pre-text and sub-text underlying this dissertation, as revealed by the wording “achieving school effectiveness”, because this seems to be the intention and meaning that the author is exploring in her study. As stated by Bengesai et al. (2011), “titles are explicitly or implicitly dialogical As the voice of the author, the title carries a point of view which may reveal the epistemological, and perhaps also the discursive stance of that author”.

A full analysis of the pre-text was not possible because I did not have access to previous drafts of the dissertation to see what changed from draft to draft.

I could not conduct an analysis of inter-text in this dissertation as per Usher (1996a) because the PPER archival copy which I had access to does not include the literature review chapter and the List of References, so I could not see what previous texts she included in her study, and how she included them. I could not assess if she utilised research from previous South African post-graduate education students, or articles and books written by her lecturers. Aside from the references to Maslow and Gerber mentioned above, the only other texts the

author mentions are those produced by the Department of Education, which I assume are referenced extensively in the text.

From reading her discussion, conclusion and recommendations, I can see that she has contributed to the field of education research by describing the reality that mentoring and induction programmes do not exist as envisioned by the Department of Education, in the schools that she studied, but I do not see that she has contributed new knowledge to understanding why this is the case, or what can be changed (other than introducing more training).

4.2.2 Dissertation 2

Dissertation 2 was written in 2002 and the title is: “An enquiry into the management of induction and mentoring in an urban secondary school in Phoenix, north Durban region, KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and Culture.” The title page of the dissertation indicates that it was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the M.Ed. degree to the Faculty of Education of one of the universities prior to the amalgamation of universities resulting in the institution which has been selected for this study. The author gathered data from a public secondary school using a survey questionnaire administered to the principal and sample of staff, followed up by semi-structured interviews. He also examined policy documents held by the school relating to induction and mentoring programmes. His findings were that there was no apparent formal system of induction and mentoring for newly qualified educators and new support staff. He recommends that school policy should be in place which clearly outlines the roles of mentor and the school management team. He makes detailed proposals as to how such a programme could be planned, implemented and evaluated at a school level.

The dissertation excerpt contained in the PPER archive did not include Chapter 1, which must have been an error in the photocopying process. However, I consulted the digital online version to gain that information.

I used Author Y's name to build the author's race and gender profile. The name is a common name for a male of Indian racial classification. Other support for the assumption of him being male is that he mentions his wife in the acknowledgements section.. I therefore conclude that Student Y is an Indian male, and tallies with the classification in the PPER database. I then used this con-text to try and make sense of the choices that Author Y made in his dissertation.

Usher (1996a) asserts that biographical details provide a con-text and help explain some of the choices an author may make. In this case, it is evident from the title that the author conducted his study at a school in Phoenix which is a predominantly Indian area, and his choice may have been influenced by being Indian himself.

A further biographical detail obtainable from Chapter 1 is that he is an educator at the school where he conducted his research. This is relevant in terms of con-text, because the author may have had a subjective point of view even before he started the study, based on his own experience. This piece of information is revealed in one sentence under the subheading "Method of study". However, he does not mention this fact again in his methodology chapter, or explore the implication of being an "insider" rather than an "outsider" in terms of his research study. When he presents his summary of findings and recommendations he does not reflect on the relevance of him doing research in his own school setting and how this may impact his findings and recommendations. This is an example of the lack of reflexivity pointed out by Usher (1996a, p. 42) in which the author is writing as if he is not involved in the reality he is writing about. This kind of decontextualisation assumes that it is possible to separate 'subject' and 'object' and that it is possible to make a 'true' representation of the reality that is being studied. Usher developed his form of textual criticism (now being used in this study) in order to expose the fallacy of such decontextualisation. Asselin (2003) has written an article entitled *Insider research: Issues to consider when doing qualitative research in your own setting* in which the author discusses issues unique to insider research that can threaten the trustworthiness or credibility of the study. By the time this dissertation was written in 2004 the issue of the influence of the biography of an author being relevant in

their writing had long been in intellectual discourse due to the work of Foucault (1980), Derrida (1987) and others. It was also a long-standing issue in participatory research, including education research (La Belle, Moll & Weisner, 1979). Rabe (2003) points out that “the insider versus outsider debate is, of course, not new in social research”. My analysis of why Author Y did not take this issue more seriously is that the issues of reflexivity and contextualisation were not sufficiently emphasised in his course-work component and/or that his supervisor did not think they were important issues to pay attention to.

Author Y had a similar research focus to Author X. However, from the title of his dissertation it is evident that his focus was the management of the induction and mentoring process, not the role of that process in terms of school effectiveness. In particular, his interest was “effective human resource management”, in particular to educators as assets. In his Abstract, Author X writes: “It is therefore important that educators, who are the most expensive asset in the school, are managed effectively” in order to justify expenditure by the Department of Education on their salaries. Perhaps the con-text (Usher, 1996a) of his male gender influenced this materialist utilitarian approach, as compared to the more relationship orientated approach of Author X, who is female. His focus seems to illustrate the observation in Social Role Theory that “men are more concerned with competitive success and extrinsic rewards including financial and status rewards” (Stedham et al., 2007).

I analysed the methodological choices that Author X made for his research. He used a mixed methodology, consisting of a questionnaire survey and semi-structured interviews. He used three questionnaires to investigate responses from the principal, educators and support staff. He used these responses to develop questions for semi-structured interviews for more in-depth investigation.

Author X does not name the paradigm within which he operated. However, the PPER database classified this dissertation as being within the critical paradigm. I agree with this analysis. This paradigm (Usher’s notion of pre-text) is evident from the following sentence which appears as early as the Abstract: “It therefore becomes necessary to ensure that newly

appointed educators and those appointed into promotion posts who are earning these salaries do justice in their jobs and produce the goods”. In addition, the author makes it clear that he hopes for change as a result of his findings and recommendations. In his conclusion, after making detailed recommendations as to what such a programme should include, he states explicitly that he intended to promote change as a result of his study:

This investigation has served to highlight some of the weaknesses as well as the strengths of an induction and mentoring programme at PTS. It is anticipated that the management team at PTS will be alerted to flaws in the management of induction and mentoring and that remedial measures will be adopted soon. By so doing, it is hoped that this investigation will make a small but meaningful contribution to improving the management of induction and mentoring programmes at PTS.

His methodology contains elements of the interpretive paradigm because he prepared questionnaires for teaching staff as well as support staff, thereby recognising the multiple realities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) of the staff compliment of the school. He further recognises multiple realities in his recommendation that “in drawing up a an induction programme should be negotiated and decided upon by all who will participate in it.” However, it is evident that his detailed recommendations for mentoring and induction are written with orientation of educators in mind. There are no specific recommendations for support staff.

The author makes a clear statement of his theoretical orientation, namely, Human Resource Management. The only theorists mentioned in the pages available in the PPER archive are “O’Neil et al. (1994)”. He does not discuss this theory again in his methodology chapter, or relate his theory to his methodology. He comes back to O’Neil et al. in his concluding remarks, relating their theories to his findings, and commenting that “O’Neill et al., (1994) propose a generic ideal; for the South African context it must be acknowledged that this will not work as staff come from a multi-cultural background, with differing personality traits and institutional training. The generic model will therefore not apply to every institution without modification.” This comment reveals, his sensitivity to multiple realities, and, in this

instance, his sensitivity to multiple outcomes. Thus, he has maintained the pre-text (Usher, 1996a) of theory throughout his dissertation, which is quite impressive.

A full analysis of the pre-text was not possible because I did not have access to previous drafts of the dissertation to see what changed from draft to draft.

I could not conduct an analysis of inter-text in this dissertation as per Usher (1996a) because the PPER archive does not include the literature review chapter and the List of References, so I could not see what previous texts Author Y included in his study, and how he included them. Aside from the references to O’Neil et al. mentioned above, there are no other authors mentioned in the pages available in the PPER archive. He makes the observation in Chapter 1 that “there are no 'official' guidelines against which to judge the effectiveness of any school's induction and mentoring practices.” Therefore, considering that such texts are not available for inter-text, he recommends that school management teams should meet and draw up their own induction programme and documentation. This is a different approach to that taken by Author X who recommended that the Department of Education should arrange such programmes and train principals in how to manage them. Considering the lack of existing texts on induction programmes in South African schools, Author Y takes on the challenge of generating new knowledge by producing a detailed proposal for such a programme which takes up seven pages in his final chapter.

4.2.2 Dissertation 3

Dissertation 3 was written in 2004 and the title is: “An investigation into the management of induction and mentoring at a private college in North Durban, KwaZulu-Natal”. The title page of the dissertation indicates that it was submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the M.Ed. degree to the Faculty of Education of the selected institution after it had amalgamated. The college comprises a primary school and a high school. The author gathered data using a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews with principals from both schools and all the academic and support staff, as well as perusal of relevant documentation. He found that no formal programmes of induction and mentoring exist at the school. He

recommended that “management together with, and in consultation with, staff members, draw up and implement policy on induction and mentoring”. The dissertation excerpt contained in the PPER archive does not contain the final chapter with conclusions and recommendations, which is an oversight of the PPER researchers who made the copies in the first case. However, I was able to find the dissertation in the digital archive of the library, so was able to access that chapter.

I conclude that Author Z is male because he mentions his wife in Acknowledgements. The author’s first name is also generally used as a male name. The surname implies that Author Z may be racially classified as Indian because that name appears in the Indian community. However, there are also Coloured people in South Africa who go by that name. Nevertheless, in Acknowledgements he refers to his immediate family including his children and their names are typically Indian. Thus I interpret that he is classified as Indian. This biographical profile constitutes Author Z’s con-text which according to Usher (1996a) should inform some of the choices in the research.

In Chapter 1 the author states that the college where he conducted his research is “a private institution with an Islamic ethos”. In Durban the majority of Muslims are Indian, so it is likely that the majority of students and staff at this school are Indian. It is possible that the con-text of the race of the author may have informed his choice of research site.

Author Z states in Chapter 1 under the subheading “Method of Study” that “the school where writer is an educator provided the basis for the research.” As pointed out above in discussion of Dissertation 2, this author has no reflection on the implications of ‘insider’ versus ‘outsider’ dynamics in relation to his role as a researcher in this study while being an educator on the staff of the institution he was investigating. This research study was conducted two years after Dissertation 2 so the implication is that in the intervening time this issue had not yet gained a higher profile in the teaching programme, or in the mind of the supervisor.

The research focus of this study was induction and mentoring, with a focus on the management thereof. This is similar to the focus of Dissertation 2. Author Z also uses the word “assets” to describe educators, and opines that “School management teams have to ensure that these newcomers settle into their jobs as quickly as possible” in order to justify the high proportion of the college budget which is spent on salaries. This more practical and “asset” oriented approach could be revealing the con-text of his male gender, as per Stedham et al. (2007).

Author Z states that he “employed a case study method to elicit data”. I found that he used a mixed method approach which elicited data by means of questionnaires followed by one semi-structured interview only, with the principal.

The paradigm sub-text of Dissertation 3 is listed in the PPER database as interpretive. However, after analysing this dissertation I would place it in the critical paradigm. I agree that there are interpretivist elements because it is a case study including an interview, but Author Z uses language related to justice and change, in the same way that Author Y does.

I found that Author Y also used human resource management theory, with “O’Neil et al (1994)” as the main theorists. He does refer to these theorists again in his conclusion and recommendations chapter.

Author Z handled his recommendations differently to Author X and Author Y. He lays the responsibility on the SMT for the lack of suitable induction and mentoring programmes. He recommends that they go for training, but also that all the role players should sit round the table and discuss the findings of this research process and formulate a policy and programme from there. He states:

It seems as though the problem lies with the S.M.T with regards to the mentors programme. Their knowledge of mentoring and induction seems to have much to be desired. Many institutions provide these services and the principal and his SMT need to be big enough to acknowledge this, attend the courses and allow the college to grow by their efforts of knowledge seeking. The respondents offered topics to be

included in the induction and mentoring programme. An effective way to bring out the best in all role players, would be to sit around the table and discuss these recommendations. Top down formulation of the policy would deprive the role of other players of ownership, resulting in disinterest. Proper participative formulation will result in constructive implementation.

His recommendations reflect a democratic ethos (Department of Education, 1996b, Christie, 2010) and the existence of multiple realities (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

A full analysis of the pre-text was not possible because I did not have access to previous drafts of the dissertation to see what changed from draft to draft.

Although I could not do a full analysis of the inter-text of this dissertation because the PPER archive excerpt does not contain the literature review and List of References, I did find a particular form of inter-text which is important to note. Usher (1996a) explains that “texts are productive in the sense that they both transform prior texts ... and make possible new texts.” (1996a, p 47). On examining Dissertation 2 and Dissertation 3 it was evident to me that there were many passages of text in Dissertation 3 that were exactly the same as in Dissertation 2 but were not referenced as having been sourced from Dissertation 2. This may be a case of “copying prior texts” rather than “transform[ing] prior texts” (Usher, 1996a, p. 47).

I could see from the Acknowledgements pages of both Author Y and Author Z were supervised by the same supervisor. In the light of the following quotation from Usher (1996a, p. 47) perhaps the inter-text between Dissertation 1 and Dissertation 2 is the supervisor, present in both dissertations as an ‘absence’.

At the conscious level, intertextuality works through citations that are actually ‘present’. Unconsciously, intertextual traces are always present both between the researcher’s own ‘different’ texts and between the researcher’s texts and other texts. As Barthes (1977: 146) puts it: “.... The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture”. These traces, the ‘tissues of culture’, are citations

which, although not physically present, are present as ‘absences’. They speak *through* the text in an endless referability and are potent in their effects though they are not spoken *in* the text. (1996a, p. 47. Original emphasis)

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter I present my findings from the statistical analysis and the content analysis that I conducted in an effort to answer the research question asked in Chapter One. I found the following:

- Demographic trends revealed that more males completed their Masters dissertations in the ELM field between 1995 and 2004. A close reading of the three selected dissertations reveal that con-text (Usher, 1996a) of gender may influence the approach of an author to their research field. The two male authors exhibit a materialist utilitarian approach, compared to the more relationship orientated approach exhibited by the female author, which illustrates the observation in Social Role Theory that “men are more concerned with competitive success and extrinsic rewards including financial and status rewards” (Stedham et al., 2007).
- Race trends revealed that more African students completed dissertations in the same period, ahead of Indian, White and Coloured students. Close reading of the three selected dissertations revealed that race of author may have influenced the selection of research site, with authors selecting a site associated with their race group.
- Focus trends revealed the following five broad ELM themes: SMTs, principals, the notion of leadership, policy implementation, and women in leadership. The most common focus trend was SMTs. The three dissertations selected for close reading all dealt with induction and mentoring, which is within the SMT focus. Close reading revealed that the authors’ approach to and recommendations regarding their topics was influenced by their location within the education sector. The author who was a Departmental official recommended that the central authority of the Department should organise development of induction and mentoring programmes and train

principals as needed, whereas the authors who were practising educators recommended that schools themselves develop such programmes.

- The dominant research design was the case study design, the case being mostly one school. A few used mixed approaches and quantitative research. Of the three selected dissertations fell, one utilised the qualitative approach (case study), and two utilised the mixed methods approach (case studies). This reflects the trend towards the mixed methods approach during the latter half of the decade under review.
- Most authors preferred to work within the interpretivist paradigm following a qualitative approach. The three dissertations selected for close reading reflected this trend. However, the three authors did not state which paradigm they were using – type of paradigm was assigned by the PPER researchers.
- The underlying theory trend was impossible to ascertain without looking at the content of the dissertations. However, the three dissertations subjected to content analysis revealed that human resource management theory was used by all three.

The authors did cover the broad terrain of ELM issues although most of the dissertations appeared to be descriptive of particular conditions and circumstances, with very few looking at the role of schools and education within the broader national agenda of social and political transformation in alignment with the ideals of the Constitution.

The next chapter is the final chapter of this dissertation and in it I conclude this study, by not just summarising the findings, but also explaining the implications of this research.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.0 Introduction

The first ten years of democracy in South Africa are a watershed period in the history of the country as various aspects of society were transformed. Political and social-economic change had a ripple effect in all sectors. Postgraduate education research was not exempted.

Some studies have been conducted to find the trends of postgraduate research, the most outstanding one being the PPER which researched national trends in postgraduate education research in the period 1995-2004. Using the ELM M.Ed. dissertations listed in the PPER database as a dataset, I sought to investigate the trends of ELM M.Ed. research at the selected institution of higher learning in South Africa from 1995-2004.

My research question is as follows:

- What are the trends of M.Ed. dissertations in educational leadership and management produced at one institution from 1995-2004 in terms of:
 - a) Student demography;
 - b) Research focuses;
 - c) Methodological choices; and
 - d) Underlying theory?

5.1 Summary of findings

After a statistical analysis of 53 dissertations and content analysis of three dissertations I was able to identify some trends in the ELM M.Ed. research from the selected institution over one decade which pertained to my research question. My assessment is that my research findings do answer my research question.

5.1.1 Student demography

My research question concerning demography focused on gender and race of dissertation authors. I found that the majority of authors of ELM dissertations at the selected institution were males. This finding differs with findings from examination of the PPER database as a whole, where females are the majority of authors (Bengesai, 2010; Balfour et al., 2011). This could be an example of con-text (Usher, 1996a) in that it reflects the context of proportionately more males choosing the ELM specialisation in the M.Ed. degree course than females, possibly reflecting the reality that the majority in school management and leadership positions are males even though females are the majority of educators (Arends, 2007).

The statistical findings of this study show that more Black than Indian, White and Coloured ELM Masters students completed their dissertations in the period from 1995-2004 at the selected institution. This trend differs from the national PPER trend where the majority of dissertations and theses have been completed by Whites (Balfour et al., 2011). This could reflect the national political imperative of this period which was to redress historical racial imbalances in leadership in all sectors of society, as reflected in the goals of the Reconstruction and Development Programme which promoted affirmative action (Republic of South Africa, 1994). Using the author's surnames as a proxy for race, I noticed a trend where the race of the author often correlated with the location of the research site, based on my knowledge of which areas are associated with predominantly one race group. There are no longer laws governing which race group may live in which area, but there are still areas which are predominantly one race group (Seekings, 2010). This reveals a con-text (Usher, 1996a) whereby the biographic variable of race influences the choice of subject matter.

Demographic variables which were not available from the PPER database, but which would have been very helpful in providing a fuller picture of context (Usher, 1996a), were age and educator level (i.e. position in the work place e.g. Head of Department, Principal, Department of Education official). Age is relevant for this cohort of students, who completed their M.Ed. in the period 1995-2004 because all of them would have had some years at least of their own schooling under the apartheid system, and possibly some experience as educators in the apartheid education system and the post-apartheid education system. This socio-cultural experience context may have influenced their engagement with their topic, although I was not able to ascertain this. Educator level is relevant because it reveals the power position of the author and how this may influence their choice of subject matter as well as their interpretation of data. This was evident from the three dissertations selected for a close reading, where the Department of Education official author recommended that induction and mentoring deficiencies be remedied by workshops conducted by the Department, whereas the other two authors who were educators recommended that such deficiencies be remedied by the SMTs organising their own workshops to plan and manage effective induction and mentoring programmes.

5.1.2 Research focus

In general, I found that the research focuses of ELM dissertations in the dataset were consistent with the core areas of the ELM discipline. I found there were five broad themes that emerged for the decade: SMTs, principals, the notion of leadership, policy implementation, and women. The largest category of research focus is SMT. This is not surprising considering that SMTs and School Governing Bodies represent the most significant shift in education management approach from the pre-apartheid to the post-apartheid era (Department of Education, 1996a; Department of Education, 1996b; Christie, 2010).

I perceive that there are focus gaps in the ELM research field related to gender equality in education management and leadership, the impact of education transformation on higher

education institutions, and reflection on the influence of the socio-political context on the educational management arena.

My observation is that, in general, the topics selected by ELM M.Ed. authors were conventional in that they dealt with core ELM issues, but ignored key areas of the context as pointed out in the paragraph above. This may be a reflection of the inter-text (Usher, 1996a) in relation to the academic community of practice comprising students, lecturers and supervisors, who may have narrowly focussed on theoretical ELM issues rather than the relevance and applicability of these theories in the socio-political reality of that significant historical period.

5.1.3 Methodological choices

I found that the main methodological trend is the move away from quantitative to qualitative approaches. This is reflected in the shift from survey research designs to case study research designs which overall is the most popular approach (53% of dissertations) used by ELM authors from the selected institution during the period 1995-2004. This trend tallies with national trends since, as Karlsson et al. (2009) claim that 82% of postgraduate research is qualitative so it is not limited to ELM only or this particular institution only. The wide use of qualitative approach may be because of limited supervisory capacity with quantitative skills in South Africa (Madiya et.al., 2011).

The three dissertations I conducted a close reading of which were from 2002 and 2004 all used a mixed approach involving a small sample survey followed by small sample of semi-structured interviews. This may indicate that a combination of research methods is emerging as a more fruitful approach from a knowledge point of view than either methodology on its own.

5.1.4 Theoretical choices

According to Usher (1996b) research texts have a sub-text such as a research paradigm which lead to the questions researchers ask and the theories or explanations they find acceptable. I could only analyse the sub-text of the three selected dissertations, which were all case studies. Two followed an interpretivist paradigm and one a critical theory analysis. The interpretivist paradigm is commonly associated with the case study method (Cresswell, 1998). Therefore, I assume that most of the dissertations in the ELM dataset would have been interpretivist as well, considering that case studies was the most common research method employed. The interpretivist paradigm is appropriate for education research because it seeks to develop an deep understanding of its subject matter (Punch, 2009).

I found that the authors of the three selected dissertations all stated that they were using human resource theory as their theoretical framework. However, that theory was not fully explained, and the authors did not link their theory to a paradigm. The paradigm was “assigned” by the PPER researchers, and in my close reading I looked for evidence of that paradigm. Based on my close reading, I agreed with the PPER researchers’ assignment of paradigm for Dissertation 1 (interpretivist) and Dissertation 2 (critical theory), but not for Dissertation 3 (interpretivist). My analysis of Dissertation 3 revealed that the sub-text (Usher, 1996a) was closer to the critical theory paradigm. As pointed out in Chapter 4.2.2, very similar language is used in Dissertation 2 and Dissertation 3, including certain passages being copied verbatim, so I am puzzled as to why the PPER researchers assigned different paradigms to the dissertation entries in the PPER, unless it was different researchers that dealt with the two dissertations. What this reveals is that if the sub-text of paradigm is not articulated by the author, the assignment of a paradigm ‘label’ is subjective.

The commonality of the human resource theory framework in the three dissertations could be evidence of institutional focus where supervisors direct their students towards particular theories and concepts. This may be an example of inter-text (Usher, 1996a), where the

authors drew from common conventional sources, including prescribed texts, course lecture notes and, in the case of two authors, the same supervisor.

5.4 Conclusion

Usher and Scott (1996) point out that many research texts are presented and read in a way that pay little attention to the production process of text. They go on to say that sometimes what the author is saying can be better understood if the production process is taken into account. Usher (1996a) states that texts are not simply “an unmediating means for communicating a reality that is ‘outside’ the text” (1996a, p. 33), but research writing is “a practice which ‘constructs’ reality” (1996a, p. 33). In order to reveal that ‘construction’ process, Usher (1996a) developed a conceptual framework that looks not just at the text, but also its production, guiding the reader to look for con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text.

In order to answer my research question which was “What are the trends of M.Ed. dissertations in educational leadership and management produced at one institution from 1995-2004?”, I applied Usher’s (1996a) framework to analyse the findings from statistical frequencies of the 53 ELM dissertations from the selected institution for the period 1995-1004, and to content analysis of three selected dissertation extracts from the PPER archive.

Usher states that the “con-textual self” (Usher, 1996, p. 45) influences form, outcomes and consequences of research. In terms of con-text, the only biographical information I could obtain from the PPER dataset was gender and race based on author names as a proxy. I found that gender and race did have some influence in choice of topic and research site. Content analysis of the three selected dissertations revealed the employment status of the authors which is also relevant biographical information. This status did influence outcomes and consequences to the extent that the Department of Education official had different recommendations (consequences) to those of the two educators even though they were all investigating the same phenomena, that of induction and mentoring. The “socio-cultural subjectivity of the author” (Usher, 1996, p. 45) was not obvious from the titles of the 53 ELM dissertations. I could make certain assumptions regarding the socio-cultural subjectivity

of the authors of the three selected dissertations because I had a little more information to go on, including the Acknowledgements pages, but I felt there was not sufficient information for me to ascertain trends. From what I could read in the chapters available in the dissertations from the PPER archive, the authors themselves did not pay much attention to the socio-cultural or socio-political context of their topic or research site. The in-depth interviews conducted by the authors may have revealed more of this, but the chapter on findings is not included in the dissertations in the PPER archive, so I could not assess this. My general assessment of the 53 topics, though, was that very few dealt with analysis of education leadership and management issues within the broader context of the socio-political environment of South Africa in the first decade after the advent of democracy. My findings are that most authors were not reflexive enough i.e. either too descriptive or too theoretical and not responding directly enough to the changes from the external environment impacting on the internal processes of school management. This may reveal that this broader context was not emphasised in the ELM programme at the selected institution during that period.

The concept of pre-text was not largely useful in the analysis of my data. This concept according to Usher (1996a) entails an analysis of the thoughts of the author as these are manifested for example in the written drafts. However, for the database and the dissertations I did not have access to the drafts only the finished product. The finished product sometimes looks perfect, but it does not necessarily follow that the author had exactly those thoughts at the beginning. The closest I got to getting an idea of the thoughts of the authors was the analysis of theories, because they represent some of the conceptualisations the author might have about the study. I therefore only referred to pre-text sparingly.

The third of Usher's (1996a) concepts is the sub-text. This concept was useful in understanding the paradigms influencing the methodological and research approaches of the authors. In the same vein I also understood the analysis of the methodological choices the researchers made as sub-text. The paradigm underlying each topic is listed as a category in the PPER database, but these were assigned by the PPER researchers. The three dissertations selected for a close reading did not state what their paradigms were. The three authors did

state what their theoretical bases were, but did not explain them, or show how they influenced their findings and recommendations. This lack of intellectual clarity may be a reflection of the lack of emphasis on these aspects in the ELM programme of the selected institution during the period 1995-2004.

The fourth and last of Usher's (1996a) concepts is the inter-text. This could not be fully assessed because the dissertations in the PPER archive do not include the literature review chapter and the List of References. However, I could see that many of the dissertations had similar titles, with the only difference being the research site. This could be a version of inter-text, where most of the students were drawing from the conventional base of their lecturers and supervisors, and not exploring a wider base of ideas and texts.

My research study has identified certain trends of M.Ed. dissertations in educational leadership and management produced at one institution from 1995-2004. Usher's (1996a) framework of con-text, pre-text, sub-text and inter-text was helpful in gaining a deeper understanding of trends, but they could not be fully explored because full dissertations were not included in the study.

While some of my findings confirmed the trends from the finding related to the whole PPER database, ELM is a unique field and therefore has unique trends. The CHE (2010) points out that the ELM Masters degree is developing and so the trends will probably keep changing. This leaves the door open for further research on this issue.

5.3 Recommendations

The following recommendation for further research emerges from the findings of my study. I recommend that an individual ELM focus area such as SMTs be researched in depth through analysing whole dissertations including the literature review, findings and List of References, and conducting interviews with selected students and their supervisors. This approach will enable a greater understanding of the con-text, sub-text, pre-text and inter-text of the research studies and the focus area, as espoused by Usher (1996a; 1996b).

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APPENDIX A

ELM related M.Ed dissertations from the selected institution contained in the PPER database, in year order. Authors are not listed for ethical reasons.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Methodology</u>	<u>Keywords</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Race</u>
1995	The potentiality of systematic staff appraisal for the professional development of teachers: a study with particular reference to the KwaZulu-Natal.	Exploratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous professional education • Educators – Performance appraisal • Management – Human resource development 	Male	Indian
1996	A survey of school principals in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage area on the evaluation of their duties.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership • Appraisal system • Institutions - Schools 	Male	Coloured
1996	Gender-related problems that female principals perceive they encounter on the job in schools in Venda.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender studies – Management • Discrimination – Gender • Institutions – Schools • Ethnic communities 	Male	African
1996	An investigation into the role played by primary	Ethnography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners – Self-concept 	Female	African

	school principals in enhancing the development of pupils' self-concepts.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership ethos • Culture of learning & teaching • Institutions – Schools 		
1996	The principals' self perceptions and the teachers' perceptions of the principals' level of involvement in instructional leadership.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership • Educators – Perceptions • Management – Classroom • Management – Training & development 	Male	African
1996	High school principals play a major role in making schools effective at Ndwedwe Circuit.	Comparative studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School effectiveness • Management – Leadership 	Male	African
1998	A comparative study of management strategies in three secondary schools.	Comparative study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Strategic planning • Institutions – Secondary schools • Comparative education 	Male	Indian
1999	Conceptualising Whole School Development: examining the	Phenomenology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school development • Institutional change 	Female	White

	approaches of NGOs to school development in South Africa		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service providers - Consultants 		
1999	How school governing bodies manage new legislation in South Africa?	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Policy – Reforms • Recruitment, selection & appointment • Legislation • Management – Participatory 	Male	Indian
1999	A critical assessment of the current selection procedures for secondary principals in KwaZulu-Natal.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership • Education systems • Recruitment, selection & appointment • Institutions – Schools 	Male	White
1999	Women in educational management: why women are under-represented in the educational management positions in South Africa - a survey study of educational managers in the Kokstad region.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender studies – Management • Management – Leadership 	Female	African
2000	Managing discipline in a school within a context	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discipline • Management 	Female	White

	of change: a case study of a Durban school.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners • Policy – Reforms • Institutions – Schools 		
2000	An investigation into the management of discipline: an exploratory study in a Chatsworth secondary school of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Discipline • Ethos 	Male	Indian
2000	An evaluation of the new Developmental Appraisal System in the Department of Education and Culture.	Historical research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development appraisal system • Evaluation • Institutions – Schools 	Male	African
2001	The novice primary school principal "Are you managing".	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Training & Development • Induction • Mentoring 	Male	Indian
2001	Time analysis of senior managers of schools in respect to teacher professional development.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous professional education • Management • Time use • Management – 	Female	Indian

			Human resource development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators 		
2001	The role of governing bodies in resourcing schools: differential responses to the Schools Act of 1996.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Education law • Management – Financial 	Male	Indian
2002	The impact of an Education in Human Values Programme on primary school learners	Exploratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values in education • Human values in education 	Female	Indian
2002	Redefined role functions of the secondary school principal in the light of democratic school governance.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Management • Policy - Reforms 	Female	Indian
2002	An Inquiry into the management of induction and mentoring in an urban secondary school in Phoenix, north Durban region, KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Human resources • Recruitment, selection & appointment • Mentoring 	Male	Indian
2002	A study of the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System in a former DET primary school in the Pinetown District of the	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development appraisal system • Management – Human resources 	Female	African

	KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture. KwaZulu- Natal.				
2002	An evaluation of the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System at a selected secondary school in the North Durban Region.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development appraisal system • Educators – Performance appraisal • Evaluation • Institutions – Secondary schools 	Male	Indian
2002	Implementation and monitoring of Developmental Appraisal System in a rural high school.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural areas • Development appraisal system • Continuous professional education • Institutional – Schools 	Female	African
2002	Staff development programs associated with good academic performance in the Lesotho primary school leaving examination: a study of four primary schools in the Mafeteng District.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic achievement • Continuous professional education • Examinations • Management – Human resource development • Institutions – 	Female	African

			Schools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries – Lesotho • Education systems – Foreign countries 		
2002	An investigation of the links between principals, advisory committees and management committees in the management of primary school education in Lesotho: a study of three schools in Botha-Bothe district.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Education systems – Foreign countries • Countries – Lesotho • Governance – Cooperative • School management teams 	Male	African
2002	Investigation into the implementation of the Developmental Appraisal System in a primary school in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators – Performance appraisal • Development appraisal system • Management • Education systems • Policy – Principles • Policy & practice 	Female	African
2002	A study of current processes for the selection of school principals in Wentworth, City of Durban, District of KwaZulu-Natal.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment, selection & appointment • Management – Human resources • Institutions – Schools 	Female	White

2002	An investigation into the management of induction of teachers at Zenon High School, in Berea, Lesotho.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries – Lesotho • Management • Induction • Educators 	Male	African
2002	Collegial management in Gcewu Secondary School, KwaZulu-Natal: an investigation with particular reference to staff perceptions.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Collegiality • Management – Participatory • Management – Human resources • Educators 	Female	African
2003	Leadership for self management: an investigation into evidence for transformational leadership in a primary school in Durban, South Africa.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership – Transformational • Institutions – Schools • Policy – Principles 	Female	Indian
2003	An investigation into the selection and appointment of educators to the position of Head of Department in three primary schools in the Kwandengesi Circuit of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education	Documentary analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Human resource development • Recruitment, selection & appointment • Educators 	Female	African

	and Culture.				
2003	An investigation into the management of professional development at a secondary school in the City of Durban District.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management - Human resource development • Continuous professional education • Management – Training & development • Institutions – Public schools 	Female	White
2003	An investigation into leadership in a high school in the Pinetown district of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture with special reference to characteristics of transformational leadership.	Exploratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership – Transformational • Institutions – Schools • Policy – Principles 	Male	African
2003	The impact of leadership and management styles of the principals of Catholic secondary schools on school discipline in Limpopo Province.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership • Discipline • School effectiveness • Institutions – schools • Institutions – Faith- 	African	Male

			based schools		
2003	Women in management: perceptions of eight women in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender studies – Management • Government administration • Policy – Gender 	Female	Indian
2003	Gender imbalance in positions of leadership at schools.	Phenomenology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender studies – Management • Employment equity • Institutions – Schools • Management – Leadership 	Female	Indian
2003	A diagnostic review of aspects of management in an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal, with particular reference to perceptions of quality and criteria for total quality.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Total quality management • Institutions – Schools 	Male	Indian
2003	Exploring leadership competencies amongst senior management personnel in the schools under Phoenix and City of Durban districts.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership • Institutions – Schools • Urban areas 	Male	Indian
2003	Managing through teams: an investigation of the		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Participatory 	Male	Indian

	effectiveness of formal teams in a secondary school in the Pinetown district of the KwaZulu Natal Case study		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School management teams • Institutions – Public schools • Governance 		
2003	An investigation into the application of quality customer service as a dimension of Total Quality Management.	Ethnography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Client services & liaison • Management – Total quality management • Policy – Principles 	Male	White
2003	Exploring teacher perceptions towards the Developmental Appraisal System.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development appraisal system • Educators – Performance appraisal 	Male	Indian
2003	An investigation into the effectiveness of team-building in the Whole School Development Department of a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) in the Valley of a Thousand Hills, KwaZulu-Natal.	Action research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole school development • Teamwork • Management • Organisational development • Service providers – Consultants 	Female	White
2004	How do school management teams function in the context of	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School management teams 	Female	White

	educational change in South Africa: the case study of sixteen primary schools in Vulindlela circuit, Pietermaritzburg region.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy & practice 		
2004	An investigation into leadership for transformation in a secondary school in Durban, South Africa.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership – Transformational • Institutional change • Policy – Principles • Institutions – Schools 	Female	White
2004	An investigation into the management of school-parent relationship at a primary school in the Chatsworth district of KwaZulu - Natal Department of Education and Culture. KwaZulu-Natal.	Exploratory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Parent participation • School governance 	Male	Indian
2004	An investigation into the management of induction and mentoring at a private college in North Durban, KwaZulu-Natal.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Human resources • Induction • Mentoring • Educators • Institutions – Independent • Institutions – Higher education 	Male	Indian

			institutions		
2004	Transformational leadership: an investigation into the existence of transformational leadership at a Durban secondary school.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership – Transformational • Institutions – Schools • School effectiveness 	Male	White
2004	A study of the role of induction and mentoring programmes in achieving school effectiveness.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School effectiveness • Management – Human resources • Induction • Mentoring • Institutions – Schools 	Female	African
2004	An investigation into the role of perceptions school governing body and school management team members: a case study of a rural primary school.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Management • Policy – Principles • School management teams • Rural areas 	Female	African
2004	An investigation into leadership in a junior secondary school in Lusikisiki District, Eastern Cape, with special focus on evidence	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management – Leadership – Transformational • Institutions – Public schools 	Male	African

	for the existence of transformational leadership.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rural areas 		
2004	What informs the implementation strategies of the Lesotho free primary education? An analysis of stakeholders perceptions at Pitseng Primary School.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy – Principles • Free primary education • Education systems – Foreign countries • Countries – Lesotho • Institutions – public schools • Education – finance • School fees 	Male	African
2004	Principals' views and experiences of school governing bodies in the Sweetwaters Circuit, Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal.	Case study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School governance • Management – Leadership • Management – Participatory • Policy & practice 	Male	African
2004	Principals' perceptions of the role of teacher unions in the effective management of schools in the Ndwedwe and Maphumulo circuits KwaZulu-Natal.	Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educators – Unions & organisations • Management • School governance 	Female	African

APPENDIX B



3 December 2010

Ms J Vallen
M Ed Student

Dear Ms Vallen

The Project on Postgraduate Education Research (PPER) database and archive room on the Edgewood campus are available for you to engage in a study of a subset of the M Ed dissertations from one institution. We are delighted that you want to conduct research using the data from PPER.

You will need to download EndNote from the software library that is available to registered students, and bring a flash disk when you come to copy the data from the database. Please contact me about collecting the key to the archive room.

Sincerely

Jenni Karlsson and Daisy Pillay
Project Manager and PPER researchers

School of Education and Development Edgewood Campus

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Founding Campuses:

Edgewood

Howard College

Medical School

Pietermaritzburg

Woolville

APPENDIX C



14 December 2012

Ms Jennifer Vallen, (207524514)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Vallen

Protocol reference number: HSE/0802/10M

New project title: Trends in M Ed studies about educational leadership and management conducted at one South African Higher education Institution during 1995-2004

Approval and change of dissertation title

I wish to confirm that ethical clearance has been granted full approval for the above mentioned project:

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully


Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

cc Supervisor Dr J Karason
cc Academic leader Dr MN Davids
cc School Admin. Mrs S Nalcker

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sci Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
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Funding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS



APPENDIX D

157 Nature View Street

Croftdene

Chatsworth, 4092

24 January 2012

Head, School of Education

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RE : REQUESTING PERMISSION TO USE THE DATABASE AND ARCHIVE

Dear Professor : [REDACTED]

I am a Masters student in the Educational Leadership, Management and Policy (ELMP) discipline of the School of Education at the University of [REDACTED]. My study is about trends in the Educational Leadership, Management and Policy M Ed dissertations completed at the University of [REDACTED] and its ancestor institutions over the period 1995-2004. I am requesting permission to use data related to M Ed dissertations written by [REDACTED] ELMP students, which is captured on the Project for Postgraduate Education Research (PPER) database and held in the library.

I will be using statistical and content analysis methods to identify focus trends, methodological trends and theoretical trends in those dissertations and I anticipate that my study will be a baseline study that the ELMP discipline can use in reviewing its achievements. No interviews will be conducted.

Although information linking dissertation titles to student authors (and in some cases the names of supervisors) is published in the dissertations and available in the library, I will not provide the names of authors and supervisors when individual dissertations are discussed. A full list of the dissertation titles and authors (only) in the data set used for my study will be provided in an appendix to the dissertation.

Dr. Jenni Karlsson

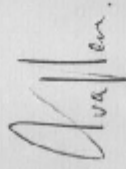
Faculty of Education

Tel: 031 2601398

Cell: 083 7881 433


E-mail: Karlsson@ukzn.ac.za

Yours faithfully



Jennifer Vallen

Student Number – 207524514

Permission granted

04/11/2012