The impact of the National Professional Diploma in Education in educators' lives

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Masters in Education dissertation

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2009

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DECLARATION

I, ZWELABANTU JABULANI ZUMA declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted previously for any degree at any university.

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ABSTRACT

Within the restructuring agenda of post apartheid South Africa was the national educational agenda which included the upgrading and re-skilling of teachers. One of the programmes identified and developed nationally was National professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) to upgrade the teaching qualifications of under- qualified educators and later un-qualified educators. Within this programme, re-skilling of these educators was also targeted to assist the Department of Education to implement its new school curriculum. Many cohorts have graduated from this programme since the inception of the NPDE in 2002. It is now the time to ask the question "Did the NPDE make any impact in the lives of educators?"

The study seeks to offer an understanding of an understanding of the programme within the rural context by asking the following questions:

1. Is the NPDE making any difference in the rural areas- what do graduates and schools in these contexts have to say? In this study, a tracer study of graduates in the Singane area (name created for this study) will be presented to teachers' (NPDE graduates) experiences of the programme and its benefit to their personal and professional development?

2. Is the NPDE meeting the challenges of the systemic intervention- a curriculum analysis? This study also explores how both the curriculum design and context addressed the needs of the teachers in rural context like Singane. Through a curriculum analysis of the NPDE, the design and delivery are put under scrutiny to explore the relationship between the NPDE's intentions and what actually.

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CHAPTER 1

SETTING THE SCENE: BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the study and concludes with an indication of what one would expect in the rest of the report. The chapter presents a background to the study through a snapshot of a situational analysis of education provisions that led to a refocus on teacher development from producing newly qualified teachers to developing teachers that are in the education system. This snapshot attempts to contextualize the introduction of an interim qualification, called the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) to upgrade under-qualified teachers teaching in South African schools. The chapter then argues for this study's focus on NPDE graduates by providing a study purpose, research questions, a rationale for the study and a brief indication of the methodology employed. The purpose, then, of this chapter is to set the parameters for the study through a focused purpose statement and guiding research questions and the underpinning reasons thereof.

1.2 Background to the study

Post 1994 there has been significant changes to the educational provisioning within the country, in line with the values based constitution of the country that privileged, amongst others, democracy, re-dress, social justice and equity as the values that will inform transformational changes in new democratic South Africa. In education, one of the most significant activities that drove educational changes post apartheid was the establishment of the Committee on Teacher Education Policy (COTEP). This committee set itself three aims. First to do a situational analysis of education within South Africa, the second to establish norms and standards for teacher education and their third focused on

governance of teacher education. The first and second aims of COTEP formed the foundations for a refocus of teacher education. The first aim said to be the Situation analysis led to the publication of the first National Teacher Education Audit (Department of Education, 1995). This audit reflected that at least one third of the teachers in the National Department of Education were un- and under-qualified. Further, it was established by this audit that South Africa had an oversupply of teachers in general.

Unqualified teachers (used synonymously with educators in this study) was referred to educators with only Matric (grade 12) as the highest qualification whereas under qualified educators are those with qualifications in teaching that required one or two year study towards a teaching certificates. The identification of teachers who are regarded as under qualified was based on an agreement amongst education stakeholders represented in the Educational Labour Relations Council (ELRC) which pegged qualified teacher status as Relative Education Qualification Value (REQV) 13 (i.e. three years of post matric study towards a teaching qualification). Using this standard it was, therefore, established through the Audit that one third of educators required upgrading of their qualifications to meet with the agreed requirements of qualified teacher status.

The teacher education audit also reflected the oversupply of educators in the education department. Colleges of Education and universities produced more than expected number of educators per year. That led to colleges of education being closed down[1] because of the oversupply of educators. The Department of Education decided to upgrade under and unqualified educators so that the quality of education improves whilst educators meet the set requirements of a three year diploma. That led to the conceptualization and introduction of a two year teaching diploma called the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) as a means of upgrading under-qualified teachers. Later on around 2005, the three year NPDE was implemented to accommodate un-qualified teachers.

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[1] Debate on whether colleges of education should be re-opened again emerged (SABC 1; 22/04/2008, 19h00)

According to the Snap Survey for the year 2000, there were 68 786 teachers in Kwa-Zulu Natal (KZN) of which a total of 16 718 were under qualified teachers in KZN public schools (Ramrathan, 2002).

The second aim of COTEP led to the establishment of a policy on teacher education, called the Norms and Standards for Educators (Department of Education, 2000) that required of teachers a set of competences that were roles related. This policy outlined the roles of educators in the new education system. The Norms and Standards for Educators set the seven roles of an educator (Dept. of Education, 2000b). These are:

✓ Interpreter and designer of learning programme. In this role, an educator must be able to interpret all departmental policies and guidelines correctly. An educator must be able to design the learning programme that suits his/ her environment out of the departmental frameworks/ policies/ guidelines.

✓ Leader, administrator and manager. In this role, an educator must play active leading role in his field of specialization, learning area, and classroom. An educator must administer his learning area, keep proper records and manage his learning area / class room.

✓ Scholar, researcher and life long learner. In this role, an educator must be prepared to learn new things, conduct researcher even if it means self introspection. He/ she must be willing to learn from learners, colleagues, supervisor, workshops and higher institutions of learning.

✓ Community, citizenship and pastoral role. In this role, an educator must know his/ her country, be a loyal citizen, an active member of the community. He/she must develop the community the school serves. He must exercise the pastoral role in the school by being of the community of learners.

✓ Assessor. In this role, an educator must be able to assess learners and himself or herself. As there is continuous assessment, educators need to assess continuously even for progress reasons. He must also record the assessment and keep assessment records properly.

- ✓ Learning area, phase and field specialist. In this role, an educator must always work towards being an expect in his/ her field, phase and learning area. An educator must always seek information to be updated in his/ her field.
- ✓ Learning mediator. In this role, an educator must mediate his/ her learning area with other learning areas to make learning a whole not a fraction. He must relate his/ her area with other areas and with life in general.

That brought another challenge because educators had to be trained to firstly understand their seven roles and secondly be able to perform their roles as educators. The National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) was also set as an answer to these roles of educators.

These roles and responsibilities for teachers meant that all teachers employed in the school system had to be re-trained in order to perform these roles. Recognizing that the teachers have varying qualifications in teaching ranging from no qualifications to doctoral qualifications, different intervention strategies were required. Of significance to this study is the un and under-qualified teachers who now had to, not only upgrade their qualifications, but also needed to learn about the new roles that they had to perform. This was a further challenge to the education system.

With the introduction of a transformed curriculum for the school education, in the form of Outcomes Based Education (OBE), new demands were being placed on teachers to learn and implement this new school curriculum. The new OBE curriculum brought with it a level of competence that is needed of teachers. This meant that teachers had to undergo training in order to implement the new OBE school curriculum. Of significance are the un- and under-qualified teachers who now had to learn, in addition to upgrading their qualifications, a new sophisticated curriculum.

In attempting to upgrade the qualification status of the un- and under-qualified teachers to a qualified teacher status, learn new roles of being a teacher and learn about and implement a new sophisticated curriculum, the Department of Education conceptualized

and introduced the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) as an interim qualification to achieve all three of the above. The NPDE has been on offer since 2002 and there have been a large number of graduates produced through this upgrading initiative. This study, therefore attempts to understand what benefits teachers achieved after having qualified with the NPDE.

1.3 **The purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study is to explore the impact of the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) on the lives of NPDE graduates. The study focused on the professional and personal lives of educators after they completed the NPDE.

1.4 The critical questions

The study is focused two the following critical questions:

How had the NPDE impacted on:
   ❖ . Educators' personal lives?
   ❖ . Educators' professional lives?

1.4 **The Rationale for the study**

Prior to being a principal of a school, I had been an educator for a period of ten years at a school in Singane, a rural area in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal. Being an educator in this rural context, I have been exposed to the harsh realities of teaching and learning, the most striking of which is resources, both human and physical. The challenges of human resources are largely in relation of the lack of appropriately qualified teachers. Added to this is the lack of physical resources to support effective teaching. Hence this rural context is extremely disadvantaged as compared to urban settings. Having appropriate qualified teachers in these kinds of context will greatly enhance the education of the children. The NPDE programme is a welcomed initiative. This study will provide some

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empirical evidence of the success or otherwise of this intervention programme. Further, while I was a student at University of KwaZulu-Natal (PMB campus), I was recruited to be a tutor in the NPDE programme. I have been a tutor in the NPDE programme in the last four years. This study will, therefore, provide some valuable information that will influence my role as a tutor.

The government, through its re-dress policy focus, has invested a lot of money, time and energy in programmes focused on teacher development. The NPDE is one such programme that was targeted for teacher development that could achieve more that one aim (up-grading of qualifications to qualified teacher status, learning new ways of teaching – OBE, and engaging in new content and pedagogical knowledge). Many students have graduated from the NPDE programme. According to University of KwaZulu Natal database, 71 of the 87 students in the 2005 cohort from Msinga graduated with the NPDE (82 % Graduate Rate). It will therefore be useful to conduct this study to explore if NPDE had an impact in the personal and professional lives of NPDE graduates.

Since the NPDE is a new programme and is specific to the South African context, there have been little studies on this programme exploration. Studies that have been done were focused on curriculum and assessment, but none on the outcomes of the programme in terms of teachers' personal and professional gains. These curriculum studies were largely in the form of evaluative studies where questionnaires were given to students while the programme was running. These evaluative studies focused on the mode of delivery, study material, contact time, and mentoring but not on the impact of the NPDE programme on the personal and professional lives of educators. Previous studies that focused on the assessment (e.g. Ngidi, 2005), explored the mode of delivery and exams related to the NPDE programme. This study hopes to contribute to the knowledge domain on teacher upgrading by exploring the impact of upgrading programmes on the personal and professional lives of the graduates of the NPDE programme. The cohort I will be using as my participants is the group of NPDE that graduated in the year 2005.

The findings from this research could be useful to educators who wish to enroll in the NPDE, principals of schools, policy makers, Teacher Development Directorate, Higher Education Institutions and NPDE staff.

1.6. Features of the NPDE

The NPDE started as a two year diploma with 240 credit points on NQF level 5 which is REQV 13. It is an interim qualification specifically developed for up-grading teachers with REQV 12 status teachers. It was discovered that there was still a huge number of teachers who did not have M+ 1 as the entry requirement. Unqualified teachers were left out, not catered for in the two year programme. By unqualified I refer to educators with Matric only (M + 0). Later in 2005 a three year diploma was introduced to accommodate those unqualified teachers who had not received any teacher training, in the form of qualifications, but have been teaching for a period of five years and more. Hence this qualification is now used as a means of up-grading all un- and under-qualified teachers that have been teaching for a period of five years and above. The qualification, therefore, recognizes experiential knowledge and skills through a process of recognition of prior learning. It then builds on the prior learning through taking taught modules.   The NPDE offered by UKZN had choices of foundation, intermediate or senior phase.

Educators attend Saturday contact sessions in different centres across KwaZulu Natal and write exams at the end of each semester (6 months). The modules are offered over a semester which means that the duration of the modules is 6 months. NPDE students write and submit assignments one, two and three on three contact sessions and write mock examinations on the last contact session. They also write and submit school based tasks with assignments. They are given module learning guides and student guides. The learning guide has the content of the module and activities to be done in their workbooks. The student guides have assignments, school based tasks and activities to be completed for contact sessions. Educators in this programme are visited by the University tutors in their schools to observe educators' lessons.

Educators had to meet the minimum requirement of M+3 as set by South African Council of Educators yet the new education system was also a challenge. Therefore NPDE provided opportunities for development on teachers in two important aspects, viz. upgrading of teaching qualification for teachers within the schooling system and re-skilling educators to engage with the new curriculum framework for schooling.

1.7 The methodology used in the study

The methodology used in this study is a tracer study. Tracer studies attempt to establish the success or otherwise of a programme (Ramrathan, 1997). This methodology is most appropriate for this study as it seeks to explore the personal and professional benefits of teachers after having graduated from the NPDE programme. The study traces graduates of the NPDE programme offered in Singane (Name created for this study). Questionnaires and interviews with graduates were conducted to provide the empirical data for this study. A further elaboration of the methodology is presented in chapter three of this dissertation.

1.8 Limitations of my study

The first limitation is that since my study deals with NPDE graduates at Singane, a rural community, generalization and extrapolation to other parts of the country is not possible within this methodological design. My study may not be generalized as it is not representative of the whole NPDE cohort therefore it might be incorrect to generalize the findings from a small sample group. Therefore generalizing is not in the focus of my study but rather through illumination, some issues may be relevant to similar or other contexts.

Secondly, some principals felt uncomfortable in the beginning to be visited by another principal in their schools. I was not seen as the researcher but maybe as a spy sent by the department. That is why I repeatedly explained my purpose to the principals and

participants. Thirdly, I have been a tutor in the programme which then might make my students to see me more as their tutor than a researcher. I believed that I must explain clearly the purpose of my study to the participants and dealt carefully with the issue of power relations in the field.

Fourthly I also feel that the duration of visiting schools for observation was too short to make substantive conclusions on the findings because I was allowed a mere four days in each school for each of the three participants. Initially, the situation became uneasy and then eased as time went by. I then felt that a short period in schools may compromise the study in terms reliable data. I then had to clearly explain my purpose of visit to the staff and in particular the participants. I had to assure the partcipants and staff about the confidentiality of the data. I had to also assure them that the data collected will be used solely for this study and nothing else.

Lastly another challenge was of analysing the impact of NPDE in the lives of educators. Through observations and interviews, participants mentioned what they learned from NPDE during interviews and questionnaires. Then observation was used to measure what has been said on questionnaires and interviews. That reflected many skills and knowledge educators gained from NPDE.

1.9 The context of Singane

Singane is a rural area between Greytown and Dundee. Tugela ferry is the centre/ heart of Singane that provides important services to the people of Singane e.g. municipality offices, police station, magistrate's court, social welfare, hospital and education circuit office. The rural context also had a negative impact in education because most people did not have time, money, parental support and interest to go to schools.

Most of Singane people work in Johannesburg. They mostly stay in hostels. This migrant worker situation leaves most families with mothers and grandparents to take care of children.

People of Singane sustain themselves through farming of mealies and mabele as their pride. Another pride was on taking care of their cows and goats more than formal education. Girls had a responsibility of the farms while boys had to take care of cows and goats in the open fields.

Singane is far from higher institutions of learning. Being a citizen of Singane, my experience of this community illuminated several issues that would impact on the lifestyle of this region. Singane was plagued by faction fights in the past number of years and this impacted negatively as men died and most families had no one to take care of. People felt that the quicker way to get life at Singane was that once a student passes matric, he must go to Johannesburg to hunt for job. I am intentionally saying he because it was well known that the place of a woman is in the kitchen, not at the workplace. Very few people knew about higher institutions. The economic status also was a factor as the little money they had, was for survival. So any student who obtained better results in matric was recruited by the school to become an unqualified teacher. That is why Singane has many unqualified teachers

Letting alone the distance to higher institutions, the information about higher institutions was too limited. That was a challenge by itself to those few who matriculated with interest to further their studies. The poor economic background also had an impact on those with matric to move to big cities for job opportunities. These are some of the contextual realities that made education a low priority for this community.

Educators from townships and urban areas do not like to work at Singane as the place is too rural. Local matriculants were then employed to be educators. That also had a negative impact on Singane education because those educators were not trained and could not give proper guidance on their students who want to know about higher institutions. I believe it is out of those reasons that Singane has large numbers of under qualified and unqualified educators now.

The study is based on a rural community in the north of KwaZulu-Natal. The place has just started to be largely serviced by the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) for its formal higher education programmes through distance learning. The graduates of the NPDE programme are largely from this university, while some graduates may have graduated from other higher education institutions. The study focused on the graduates from the UKZN, because of the access to information about NPDE graduates which were readily available to me. This is perhaps a limitation of the study as it ignores what personal and professional gains of NPDE graduates that may have been influenced by programmatic differences across the various institutions offering the NPDE programme.

1.10 Conclusion

This study is therefore going to deal with this topic in four key chapters in the following manner. Chapter two will present a review of literature and theoretical frameworks that inform this study. Chapter three will present a detailed account of the methodology employed in this study. Chapter four will present the findings of this study and chapter will five summarize the emerging key findings and concludes the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The study seeks to establish the personal and professional gains by teachers who have graduated with the NPDE at UKZN. In order to contextualise the focus of the study, it is important to understand why the personal and professional gains are important to track, even though these teachers were teaching for lengthy service terms, some in excess of 25 years. A brief historical account of education will assist us in contextualizing this study as the NPDE is an interim qualification that became a necessity for un- and under-qualified teachers to do in order for them to continue as teachers employed by the state. Hence this chapter presents a brief historical account of education across the major eras within South African politics. The chapter will then extend to include a literature review of teacher upgradings with a view to highlighting why and how teacher upgrading progammes are a feature of most education systems worldwide. The chapter concludes with an account of theoretical frameworks that have guided the study process.

2.2. A brief historical account of educational provisioning in South Africa

This section presents a brief synopsis of the transformation agenda within South Africa with specific reference to education and teacher development. This brief synopsis attempts to contextualize the study focus and to provide a rationale for the introduction of an interim qualification in teacher education to upgrade under-qualified teachers as a transformative action. The historical part of the synopsis is presented to highlight the continuing inequalities and regressive educational provisioning and opportunities for the black community of our county. It attempts to explain why this deprived community was disadvantaged in all spheres of life in this country. Black communities were deprived in many ways including education, political rights, human rights, economy and many more.

2.2.1 South African education from 1652 to 1994

Formal education in South Africa arrived under the leadership of Jan van Riebeeck in 1652 (Christie, 2000). Previously blacks had their own informal education which was informally teaching their culture, values and religion to the younger generation (Christie, 2000). The first school for blacks was started for slaves on 17 April 1658 by van Riebeeck who was, at that time, the governor of Cape. The formal education for blacks thus began to shift the focus from teaching culture, values and Black religion to a focus that emphasized subservient attitudes and new religious beliefs. In 1815 Britain took over from European colonies and that led to war between Britain and Europe (Christie, 2000).

In 1836, the Great Trek started because Afrikaners did not want to attend British schools which were in the medium of English. To escape this, Afrikaners introduced schools with Afrikaans as medium of instruction. More mission schools were developed by Afrikaners. The nature of the schools was different in terms of the curriculum. There were schools for Afrikaner children which were different from schools for blacks. This difference in educational focus sowed the seeds for differentiated education systems for the different population groups of the country.

Christian National Education (CNE) was first introduced in 1870 by Afrikaner Nationalists for different purposes. For Afrikaner children it was meant to teach them Afrikaans as a language, maintain Afrikaner culture and religion. For blacks it was meant to teach them to tolerate apartheid, be good slaves and good Christians as these were mission schools. CNE was embedded in apartheid, segregation and inequality (Mathews, 1993). The difference in educational provisioning under the CNE further entrenched the differentiated education system.

In 1948 National Party came into power and that brought further far reaching historical changes in education. The Bantu Education Act was introduced and implemented in 1953

that further entrenched segregated education systems through Acts and resource provisioning. It was under this political administration that the most significant resistance emerged. Most notably was the 16 June 1976 Soweto uprising that was initiated by black scholars to fight apartheid and Bantu education in particular. In 1980, the National Party Government appointed the De Lange commission to investigate South African Education. The commission recommended one system of education but there was no implementation (Christie, 2000).

Nelson Mandela, the African National Congress (ANC) leader was released in 1990 from jail after 27 years of political imprisonment. The unbanning of the ANC, coupled with the release of Nelson Mandela led to a new era of political reforms in South Africa. Thus led to freedom for blacks and the first democratic election in 1994. Post 1994 then saw the emergence of a new way of thinking and living for all South Africans. A major change was the establishment of a single system of education within South Africa that catered for all its citizens.

The history of education before 1994 clearly demonstrates the sub-standard education that Black South Africans were provided. To elevate this sub-standard education to one that is equitable (as required of by the new constitution of South Africa post 1994) to the rest of the population groups within South Africa meant that this population group (Black South Africans) had to develop the most, with peformativity goals that may not be reachable because of the taken-for-granted way of life for this population group.

2.2.2 South African education after 1994

The 1994 democratic elections brought a new democratic South Africa. In the South African Constitution, there are ten constitutional values that are driving transformation. The constitutional values are; democracy, an open society, accountability, the rule of law, social justice or equity, equality, non-racism and non-sexism, respect, ubuntu and reconciliation. These values can only be realized through systems and processes within South Africa. There had to be procedures to legalize the values of the constitution and

education is one system that is crucial to realizing the goals and values of the transformed country. The priority of Education as a system to be reformed suggested that education can address the ills of apartheid. Apartheid as a system had inequalities even in education emphasizing white superiority, for example the symbols found in apartheid textbooks.

South Africa has undergone many changes since the new political dispensation in 1994. Democracy brought the necessity for change in the education system to address among other things, inequalities of the past. That implied change in the curriculum, resources and in the entire schooling system. There was a need to change for the better, meaning that change must be of improving the quality of education. Among many ways of improving the quality of education, developing teachers was considered by the Department of Education as one of the influential areas of development.

Political changes in 1994 in South Africa brought about many changes, in particular in education. The Teacher Audit Report conducted in 1994 reflected an over supply of teachers in South African schools (Department of Education, 1995). There was also a need to review the quality of education and the qualifications of educators. The audit reflected that one third of the teaching stork were un- and under-qualified (Ramrathan, 1998), based on a political agreement between the stakeholders in education (State, Education Labour Relations Council, and teacher unions) that the minimum teacher qualification required for a qualified teacher status would be a matriculation (grade 12) plus a three year study programme in teaching.

The National Education Policy Act (NEPA) of 1996 was introduced as a situation analysis with recommendations for South African education. The policy looked at the input and the output in the education system. If the education system is to produce good citizens, we must have a proper curriculum and well trained educators. So there was the need to review the curriculum and schooling system in general. There was also a need for teacher developmental strategies like the introduction of the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) and other interventions to address the quality of teacher's competence to teach.

The new education curriculum called Outcomes Based Education (OBE) through an implementation project called "Curriculum 2005" (C2005) was introduced in 1997 to be implemented in 1998 in Grade one for all South African learners. C2005 was reviewed in 2000.[2] The curriculum review led to the formulation of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) which was released in 2001. Finally the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) was implemented in 2004. The NCS has three principles, namely: Outcomes based Education (OBE), learner centeredness and integration. In all of these curriculum changes, the question of teacher preparedness to implement these innovations was uppermost in minds of critiques and proponents of the new curriculum.

Transformation in education system brought changes in the structure of schooling system, curriculum and quality provision. In 1995 the South African Qualification Authority (SAQA) was formed and given powers to establish the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). That implied changes in the structure of South African Education. The school structure changed from primary school and high school to phases and bands. Grade R, 1, 2 & 3 are grouped as the Foundation phase, grades 4, 5 & 6 as intermediate phase, grades 7, 8 & 9 as senior phase and grades 10, 11 & 12 as Further Education and Training (South African Qualification Authority, 1995).

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[2] Educators experienced a lot of problems related to new curriculum such as terminology, skills, new methods, new content and many other problems around C2005.

Fig. 2.1 The Old Schooling Structure

OLD STRUCTURE

| Primary education SSA to Std5 | Junior secondary school Std 6 to Std8 | Senior secondary school Std 9 & 10 |
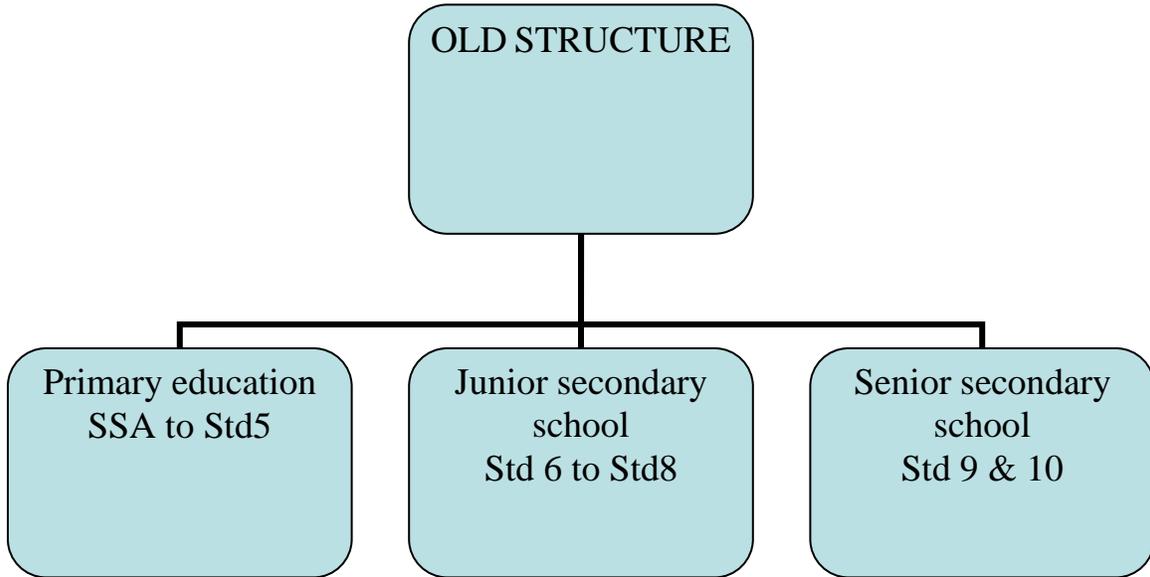
Fig. 2.2 The New Schooling Structure

NEW STRUCTURE

| Foundation phase Grade R to 3 | Intermediate phase Grade 4 to 6 | Senior phase Grade 7 to 9 | Further education and training Grade 10 to 12 |
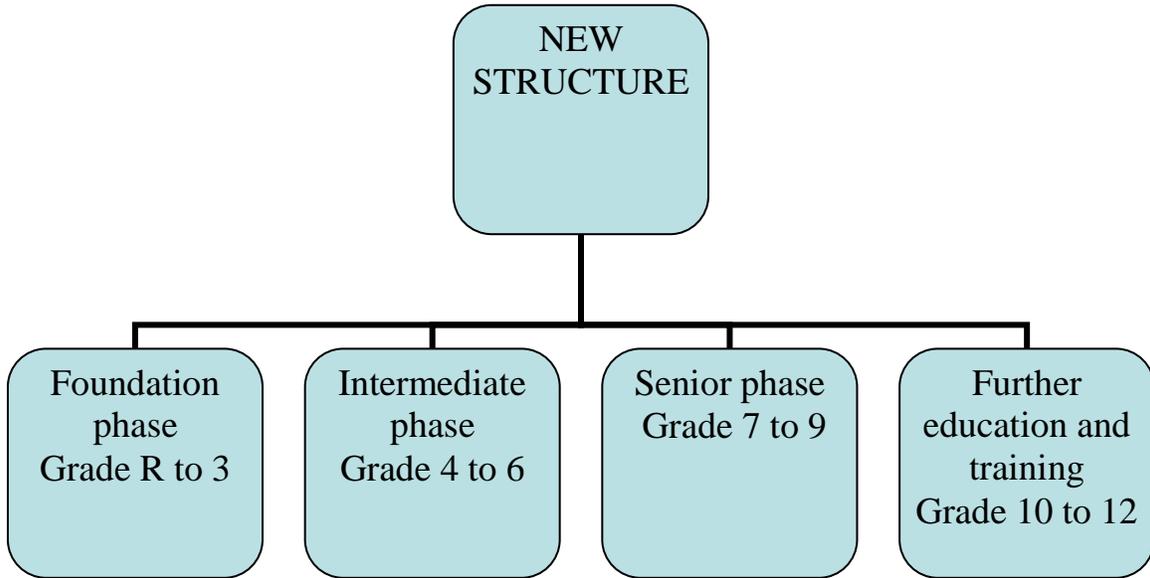
This new structure of schooling, together with a reconceptualised curriculum meant that teachers had to learn and adapt to new situations. Further policy changes related to teacher professionalism and this was regulated by a body called The South African Council for Teachers (SACE) which demanded a different set of performativity goals.

2.2.3 South African Council of Educators (SACE)

The South African Council of Educators (SACE) was established in 1994, recognized by the Minister of Education in 1997 and the SACE ACT was published in 2000 (Government Gazette Act 31 of 2000). SACE was tasked to perform 3 major tasks, namely to register educators, to set professional standards and to develop educators professionally (SACE, 2002: 09). One of the requirements of being an educator in the newly reconceptualised education system was that each educator had to have a SACE registration number before being employed as a teacher. Further, educators had to conform to ethics and code set by the Council. Educators are to abide with all the rules of the Council as a registered member of the Council. The Council is concerned about educators as members of the Council and must not forget learners as their primary clients (SACE, 2002). The Council also emphasizes the role of other stakeholders like parents, community and union obligations. The Council also acknowledges other bodies and policies like Employment Equity Act (EEA), Educational Labour Relations Council (ELRC), School Governing Bodies (SGB) and others.

Among other standards set, one of them was a minimum qualification to register educators which is matric plus three years of teacher qualification. This meant that teachers who were identified as un- and under-qualified teachers could not register with the Council and subsequently were not eligible to teach in schools. However, in order to address the one-third teacher force that was un- and under-qualified, the stakeholders had to introduce a process that allowed for all currently employed teachers to obtain a minimum teacher qualification. This contributed to the decision to introduce the NPDE as an interim qualification for teacher un-grading.

From the above review of educational changes post 1994, it becomes obvious that teachers of the black population group were more disadvantaged than other race groups. In addition to their sub-standard education, these teachers, many of whom were now classified as un- and under-qualified, had a further burden of learning and teaching in a context that was highly complex. Therefore, exploring their gains through the set intervention of the NPDE would provide a glimpse of their resilience to the symbolic violence levelled against them.

2.2.4 Concluding comments of the historical account of education within South Africa

South Africa is at a point in its education history where quality provisioning is taking centrefold attention. The various policies, Acts and structures introduced into the education sector are testimony to the attention that quality is taking in the provisioning of education in South Africa. This study reports on one of those quality issues – that of the provisioning of qualified teachers to provide quality education.

2.3 Literature review

Education exists in the society. The society has its expectations from education. Education must produce according to the expectations of the society. According to Dale (1985), every society expects that education should develop in people the knowledge and attitude which will enable them to contribute to the economy of the country. The more people get skilled, the more they earn better salaries and that will make them to improve their lifestyle. Therefore they will make more contribution towards the economy of the country. Once people are educated, they acquire skills which will enable them to fit in the job markets. Then they will be employed and that will contribute to the economy of the country. They might also render services that will be contributing to the development of the country.

We live in the   century which is characterized by changes globally. There are technological, social and political changes all over the world. Sullivan (2000) indicates

that this century is a turning point globally whereby there is a demand for transformative learning. Learning should be designed to respond to the transformation. If the society transforms, the members of the society need to learn new ways of living in order to cope. He (Sullivan) further points out that in the period of transformation people cannot be moved out from their workstations, instead in-service training becomes a solution for transformative learning.

According to Dadds (2001: 50), "multiple complex social changes place multiple demands on teachers." Changes in the society demand that teachers must change and understand the change occurring in the society. Teachers are expected to be the agents of change so they must understand change as it comes in the society. Political change in 1994 brought many changes in the society, new education system, eligibility to vote, democracy, equity and many more. All these multiple complex social changes put a high demand on teachers to change. Introduction of the new system of education was a very pressing factor for teachers to change. They had to be re-skilled, be transformed, and be developed so as to be able to implement new policies in their line of duty. That was one of the intentions of the Government introducing NPDE. NPDE was brought among other reasons to re-skill educators to adapt with the multiple complex social changes.

According to Becher (1994), since professions are the pillars of the modern society, it is responsibility of every government to transform people in their professions in the times of changes. The government should design intervention strategies to reskill, transform human resource so as to adapt with changes in the country. The introduction of NPDE was embedded on that principle.   To provide opportunities for teachers to learn new teaching strategies and content that will allow them to be functional in a changed school situation.

The report released by UNESCO in 1978 revealed that most unqualified educators are in rural schools. This is a worldwide phenomenon largely because of life style issues. Most countries found it difficult to attract qualified teachers to areas that were not conducive to

good living conditions (Ramrathan, 1997). South Africa is not any different from other developing countries. A rural context has its particular contextual realities that include poor access to infrastructure and amenities, far distances to major town and cities, poverty, unemployment and faction fighting. Hence, these rural communities find it difficult to attract qualified teachers and has to, therefore, continually rely on un- and under-qualified teachers to meet its needs. Hence, a large proportion of un- and under-qualified teachers are from these rural contexts. The NPDE programme, through its programme design of mixed mode delivery with sites of delivery close to these communities, are one way of addressing the need to produce appropriately qualified teachers to these communities.

In South Africa conditions are still difficult in some rural areas. Some schools still do not have proper water facilities, electricity, computers, proper classroom structures, accommodation for educators, no roads to some of them and teaching aids. Therefore teachers prefer urban schools than rural schools. Therefore rural schools remain with no choice but employing unqualified educators who will bear with the condition either because they were born on the same rural setting or they have no choice because they are unqualified.

2.3.1 Learning through distance education

In distance learning students register at a particular institution and are given materials to study outside the institution. They are given tasks to do like assignments and exams to write at a certain period depending on the program of the module. Other institutions offer contact sessions to support students though tutorials.

Perraton (1993) believes that distance education is good because among other reasons, teachers are not taken away from their workplaces and it caters for students who can not go to colleges. Distance education should cater for the needs of the teachers in schools. Differences in the context or environment should be taken into consideration. Distance educators need support from the staff and management within their workplace.

NPDE runs on Saturday contact sessions and at Msinga there are no universities or colleges to train teachers, therefore they enroll through distance education so to upgrade themselves.

The KwaZulu Natal Department of Education and Culture developed a policy framework in 2003 which had guidelines and intervention strategies on professional development and support. The framework had to regulate the professional development of educators in Kwa-Zulu Natal. This framework contextualises the Norms and Standards for educators in the province.

According to the policy framework for continuous professional development and support "Education professionals need to be nurtured, developed and supported, as individuals and as institutions and professional groups, through strategically structured and planned programmes that are appropriately resourced (2003;07). There have been a number of programmes from the department of education to address challenges by developing educators. New policies like developmental appraisal system (DAS), more workshops and in service training (INSET) for teachers conducted by Ikhwezi College and other providers were some of the interventions. NPDE is one of the strategically structured and planned intervention the Department of Education introduced to develop, support institutions and educators. It is also well resourced as educators are provided with recourses to persue their studies.

Among 13 quality standards for distance educators set by SAIDE for supporting distance learning, one of them emphasizes that "distance education should design programmes which are flexible to accommodate the needs of prospective learners, encouraging and responsive to the changing environment" (1998; 12). That challenges the module designers and overall programme designers to design programme for teacher development which will cater educators' needs? Tutors also need to understand the context from which those educators they teach come from.

Higher institution tutors, and curriculum designers of higher institutions must understand the needs and dynamics of their learners. Research is one, among other means, to find out, explore, understand or investigate those issues. Through research, tutors and designers will better understand the needs of the clients they serve who are NPDE students. That is one of the intentions of this study.

Distance education has a variety of modes of delivery. The institution might send study materials in the form of study guides and cassettes and expect students to write assignments and exams. Other institutions, like UKZN in the NPDE programme, offer contact sessions and tutors to support students above the provision of study materials in learning centers. In most cases these learning centers are chosen by institutions where the institutions think they can have an access to. In these centers, tutors are expected to cover a large portion of study guides and help students with assignments so that their students can pass the exams and get certificates of qualification accomplishment. This study tries to explore if NPDE is making any difference in teachers' lives.

According to Harvey and Campbell, in their video, learning centers comprise of many modes like interaction, individualization, independence, practicality, motivating, skills focus and satisfaction (1989). The video also emphasizes the importance of the process taking place in learning centers more than the product. In Singane there is a Learning Centre for the University of KwaZulu-Natal which offers the NPDE. In the centre there is almost all what Harvey and Campbell identified in good learning centres. There is interaction among tutors, students and their material. Tutors do give individual attention to those students who require that. There is a lot of independence, practicality and skills acquisition in Singane centre. Students are offered opportunities for individual presentation, practising some teaching methods and share many skills as educators like assessment skills. Therefore this centre is very useful to educators.

2.3.2 Process of teacher learning

Engaging teachers in learning is a process. As adults, they need practical and hands on solutions to face challenges they left at their schools. Teachers need to be given enough chance to implement what they learnt. That is one advantage of distance learning. Teachers learn new things in the contact sessions and practice those new ideas in their workplaces during weekdays. Even if they attend contact sessions on Saturdays, the next Monday they are in the classroom implementing what they have learned over the contact session. Teachers in NPDE programme also have school based tasks which enhances them to practice in their schools what they have learnt.

Scrivener (1998) emphasized that new learning is constructed over the foundation of our own learning. Knowledge and experiences of the educators should be used as the base of learning new things. When teaching educators, we need to consider moving from what they know to what they do not know. Educators in the NPDE programme are mostly experienced educators who have a number of years serving as educators. They have a lot of knowledge base and experiences that will make them learn new things easy if they are related to those experience.

Teacher development calls upon support from one another. In the case of the NPDE, tutors support students through contact sessions, give them school based tasks and university officials visit students in their schools for support and observation. Students are also encouraged to formulate study groups around their workplaces for more support and sharing of ideas.

NPDE students engage in the practice of teaching as they are full time teachers in their classes. They implement what they learn from their study materials and from their tutors in their classrooms. "The tutoring model comes from England where adult students helped younger students not only to read and reproduce ideas and concepts but also to apply them" (Jarvis, 2001b:25). That is the model adopted by UKZN, the tutoring model

whereby tutors are trained and meet students on Saturdays on contact sessions on discussion and application of ideas and concepts.

When change comes in any instance, learning should follow. In any changing organization, learning becomes the priority to all members of the organization. They might even change their socializing patterns in an organization. If educators learn while they are in the workplace, there is a lot of practicality and involvement in what they learn. They learn about things they do, see, and use in their every working day.

There will be experimenting what they learn, adapting it to suit their unique scenarios, innovating and reflecting about their own classroom practices. Therefore Smlyie (1995) suggests that schools should be redesigned to be conducive and allow teachers to learn in their workplace. He suggests that there should be teacher collaboration, sharing of power, autonomy, accessibility of external sources of learning, integration of work and learning, organizational goals and feedback mechanism.

2.3.3 Teaching adult learners – teachers as learners

Jarvis (2001a) in his book tilted "Learning later in life" explains that in Western Europe people learn later in life for different reasons. It might be because the change came late in their life, or they learn to change the careers or they learn to enhance themselves in the same fields. In the South African Education, there have been a lot of changes after 1994. New system of education challenged educators to learn later in life. Educators had to enhance themselves to cope with new system of education. Learning later in life was then a solution to enhance in educators. Teachers had to be become learners in programmes like NPDE and others.

Teachers are human beings with their own knowledge, beliefs and assumptions, therefore in any learning context that should be taken as the starting point (Smylie, 1995). As an adult there is much that teachers know which make up their experiences of life. Those

experiences provide opportunities of learning. Teachers sharing those experiences and supporting one another within their context constitute a lot of learning in their workplace. Being in the same environment will make them supportive of each other as they have a better understanding of the environment. In the NPDE programme, educators come in contact sessions with daily challenges they face in schools for possible solutions through discussions. Those are the experiences they have where new ideas should be laid on. That implies that schools as organizations should be made conducive for teachers to learn, share, support, contribute and teach others.

2.3.4 Learning as a continuing practice

Senge (1990) wrote on organizations as learning institutions. He emphasized that in every organization each individual must be prepared to learn. He pointed out that school as organizations should function like other organizations. It could be a teacher, principal or a learner- everyone must be prepared to learn from one another, listen to one another, and share creative views and experiences for the growth of the organization. Further, Smylie (1995) says that schools should be redesigned in a way that they allow educators within to empower themselves. The article also points to the training of the school governing bodies to support the school and teachers in teacher development. That brings the idea of professional development as something that should happen everyday in a productive organization.

According to Loucks-Horsely (2003), all professional development programmes need to consider the knowledge base on learners and learning as a major input to their designs. That is why the NPDE programme required some years of teaching experience as one of the requirement in the programme. There is also a component of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL). Kydd (2003) in agreement with that, emphasizes that there should a high involvement of educators in teacher development. Teachers are professionals and managers in their classes, and therefore they should be involved in all decision making even in discussions of the way they are going to be developed. Teacher unions were highly involved in policy making regarding the introduction of the NPDE.

According to Day and Sachs (2004), In-service training of educators (INSET) has been the most widely used form of development intended to provide learning over a limited period. Therefore there are numerous teacher development programmes which are conducted to train teachers while they are in the teaching system. That helps because teachers get a fair chance to implement what they learnt. That also keeps teachers in the system rather that stoping education system for a number of years training teachers. There are lot of workshops and short courses the Department of Education organises as in service training for teachers. NPDE might be the classified as one of the in service training because teachers are trained while they are in service.

According to Kunje and Chimombo (as cited by Ramrathan, 2002), even in Malawi through its Malawi Integrated In-service Teacher Education Project (MIITEP), unqualified teachers were supported in their schools through in-service programmes. In South Africa in-service training has been used as one among many intervention strategies, to support teachers whilst in their workplaces. There are policies in place like Integrated Quality Management Systems (IQMS), the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) and same day workshops to support teachers in their workplaces so to cope with new system of education. The NPDE is also based on the same policies of supporting / developing educators in their workplaces.

2.4 Theoretical framework

The literature on teacher development suggests that teacher development of practicing teachers is informed by a range of theoretical perspectives. These include transformational and reform changes cast within a reform agenda, professional changes in response to the professional growth as an act of teaching relating to the scholarship of teaching and to performativity changes in response to teacher employers expectations and demands. As this study is exploring the impact of the National Professional Diploma in Education, an in-service upgrading programme, for un- and under-qualified teachers,

the theoretical framework therefore assumes a multimodal theoretical approach. This multimodal theoretical approach is informed by the transformational agenda of the state to upgrade under-qualified teachers and this is explored through a transformation change theory, while the professional growth of teachers are explored through theories informing teacher professional development and teacher work within particular contextual drivers. Hence this section of the report attempts to present appropriate theoretical constructs/frameworks that informed this study.

2.4.1 Transformational model of change

South Africa has undergone substantial transformation changes since democracy. More specifically, the introduction of a new curriculum in schools suggests a reconceptualisation of the process of teaching within schools. This is a tall order for South African teachers, especially viewed against its unjust and segregated past, where, for example, teacher qualifications were vastly different across the race groups and communities. Teachers would now require a transformational change to the process of their teaching. Hence, Lewin's (1947) change theory seemed the most appropriate theoretical framework to understand how teachers struggled with deep conceptual change. The change required of the new curriculum was not cosmetic, but rather in-depth reconceptualisation of the fundamentals of teaching. Lewin's change theory allows one to understand the complexities of fundamental changes and the processes through which one needs to go through.

Simply put, Kurt Lewin (1947) identified three stages in the change process i.e. unfreezing, movement and refreezing. These change processes show how one initiates the change process, re-configures and then reforms into a new configuration. He identifies unfreezing as the stage where there are external forces that force the school to change. In the case of the South African context, the external forces that forces school to change would be the introduction of a new national curriculum. Another example would be the introduction of benchmarks for qualified status, wherein, through a negotiated settlement with teacher unions and other stakeholders in Education, the qualified teacher status was

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pegged at Relative Education Qualification Value (REQV) of 13. This means that teachers would only be considers as qualified personnel if they possess a three year post secondary school qualification in teaching. The external forces initiate the unfreezing process of the previously frozen conceptual practice. An analogy would be that if the ice is taken out of the fridge, it unfreezes because of the environment which forces it to change. The ice changes to be a liquid form from a solid form.

In the case of the South African context, two drivers initiated the unfreezing process. These are, firstly, the introduction of a new national curriculum for schooling that requires appropriately qualified teachers to manage the changes, and secondly the benchmarking process that led to the pegging of teacher qualified status at REQV level 13. Teachers in REQV 10 were classified as unqualified teachers. Teachers in REQV 11 and 12 found themselves in a situation where they were regarded as being under-qualified as well as not being able to cope with the new curriculum changes expected of them. These drivers led teachers to the unfreezing process by firstly recognizing that they were suddenly being regarded as un- and under-qualified while they had to cope with a new curriculum that they could not implement. Hence they had to engage in professional development that would bring them to a qualified teacher status, and at the same time develop their professional competence to teach within a new paradigm of teaching. The NPDE provided for these two kinds of development.

Still in the analogy of the ice, the liquid, unlike the solid, shapes according to the container which symbolizes flexibility and willingness to adapt to whatever new environment given. I then relate this stage to the introduction of the new curriculum in our education system. Educators did not know the new curriculum and had to change and adapt to it. Educators had to move from their comfort zones, things they are used to and start new things. They had to unfreeze by moving from their comfort zones to the other new zones. They need to unfreeze so that they liquidate to the new situation and adapt to the new environment. This stage has a lot to do with the attitude of educators towards the new challenges in the new education fraternity. Educators should understand the need to

change and the need to engage themselves with new issues. Educators must also be willing to learn new things, new terminology, new ways of teaching, new standards and many more. When they liquidate then they can move in whatever direction but within the parameters of the new curriculum, which is why the next step is movement.

Movement stage is when there is a shift from point A to B. The literal movement in this case is when educators move to training sites for orientation workshops on the new curriculum. In the inception of the new curriculum, the Department of Education had to intervene since educators did not understand the new curriculum. There were also new learning areas which were introduced like Arts and culture, Technology and others. Those were some of the external forces which demanded educators to be re-skilled to handle the new curriculum. There were many workshops organized for educators in the name of the new curriculum. Then educators had to move to clusters, districts, regions and even provincial workshops.

Another type of movement in the South African context is when educators had to move to higher institutions of learning for both knowledge and qualifications. Workshops attended were not enough in terms of the knowledge base of the new curriculum. Educators had to learn a lot from new teaching strategies, assessment, to the content of the learning areas. So there was a lot of knowledge accompanied with skills and attitudes educators had to develop to implement new curriculum. These new forms of knowledge required a sustained attempt at learning and this was made possible by engaging in higher education studies offered by higher education institutions. Since the minimum requirement for educators was stipulated as M+3 (REQV 13), educators also were forced to go to higher education institutions, as the sole source of teacher education qualification study programme within South Africa, to upgrade their qualifications. Hence under-qualified and un-qualified educators were forced to take courses at higher institutions to be qualified as educators. The introduction of the NPDE to upgrade unqualified and under qualified educators was one of the interventions to help these educators upgrade to a REQV 13 status. That was also going to imply the movement of their salaries to better salary levels. The gain of knowledge and qualification might be deemed as the figurative

movement whereas the movement of educators to workshops and higher institutions may be considered as literal movement. Literally, educators can be observed moving from their working stations to other places but knowledge movement can not be observed literally.

The last stage is refreezing. According to Lewin (1947), this is the final stage in the change process. It is when all that was learnt in the movement stage results in a newly reconceptualised state of existence. This is when everything that was newly acquired translates in a new way of being, that which is considered to be more permanent and difference from the original state of existence. Teachers that have undergone change as conceptualized within Lewin's change theory would be regarded as qualified teachers who are able to implement a new complex curriculum that requires great levels of expertise, knowledge and insights. This transformed state signals a new vision of teachers that would be responsive to the needs of a transforming context, and not one that was resistant to any forms of change.

According to Huberman (as cited by Ramtharan, 2002), teachers' lives are characterized by series of sequences and cycles that teachers undergo although not in the same time and same order. Huberman identifies five phases. The first one is *exploration* whereby the teacher is new in the field and exploring this new world in front of him. The second one is *stabilizing phase* whereby the teacher begins to settle down to the profession. The third one is *diversification* whereby the teacher experiments other possible alternatives or professions .The fourth on is *reassessment* whereby one assesses all possible professions in terms of salaries, conditions of employment, risks and so no. The last one is *disengagement* whereby the teacher decides to continue in the same profession or follow another profession.

I am going to use the Huberman' s theory as a way of understanding and explaining changes in teachers lives after completion of the NPDE. Maybe some of them wish to leave the teaching profession or they wish to continue as teachers or they wish to apply

for senior posts within teaching fraternity. I will be observing changes NPDE brought in the personal and professional aspects.

My sampling will also take teachers from different years of experience so that I look at them as they undergo different stages of development ranging from those who are young in the field, *exploration phase*, to those whore are very old in the field, *disengagement phase*.

Since NPDE is a new diploma, there have been no studies of the exploration of the lives of NPDE graduates. The cohort I will be using as my participants is the first group in NPDE that graduated in the year 2004. There have been evaluative studies and questioners given to students while the programme was running. Those evaluative studies focused on the mode of delivery, study material, contact time, and mentoring but not on the impact the NPDE had in the personal and professional lives of educators. There is a study by Dr. Ngidi on NPDE but it is on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the competences of the NPDE programme which was conducted at University of Zululand in 2005. I have identified a literature gap and felt I need to do this study on exploring personal and professional lives NPDE graduates. My study then will focus on the lives of educators after completing the NPDE as a distance learning at Singane, whether NPDE made any impact or not.

2.4.2 Model of teacher development

Days and Sachs (2004) present a landscape of conceptions of teacher professional development especially those aimed at practicing teachers. One can translates these conceptions of teacher professional development that ranges from state driven activities to self-driven activities, and from needs driven by lack of some competence to desires by teachers to uplift themselves. For example, Days and Sachs (2004) present various discourses in teacher professional development that include managerial professionalism,

democratic professionalism, deficit models of teacher professional development and inspirational models of teacher professional development. These ranges capture the essential purposes of professional development. For example, the managerial professionalism suggests a state initiated (usually the employer) professional development activity aimed largely at attempting to get teachers to conform to its (state's) needs, while the democratic professionalism suggests a form of professional development initiated by the professional associations usually to meet some professional association needs. In the deficit conception of teacher professional development, the need for teacher professional development is usually to develop competence is some or other aspects of teaching, while in the aspirational conception, teachers engage in professional development for their own aspirations and future career trajectories (Days and Sachs, 2004).

In this study, the managerial professionalism conception of teacher development is an appropriate theoretical lens to understand the need for introducing the NPDE as a requirement for teacher upgrading to a qualified teacher status. Further, in order to meet the transformational goals of South Africa, through, for example a transformed curriculum in education, would warrant a state intervention. This intervention by the state has been facilitated through the education sector of our country where new qualifications were introduced to re-skill teachers to implement the transformed school curriculum. The NPDE and Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) were the new qualifications that were introduced within South Africa to re-skill teachers. The NPDE then was a vehicle to achieve two of South Africa's transformative agenda, viz. firstly, to upgrade under-qualified teachers' qualification to a qualified teacher status in order to improve the quality of teachers and secondly, to re-skill teachers to teach within a new transformed curriculum for schooling. Hence, these state initiated professional development activities fit squarely within the managerial professionalism discourse in teacher professional development.

Through this managerial professionalism lens, one would be able to explore the teachers concerns, challenges, resistances, learning experiences and achievements as they graduate

with a qualified teacher status qualification, having been teaching for a considerable number of years prior to enrolling for this programme (NPDE). The managerial professionalism discourse provides the conceptual and theoretical tools for understanding what NPDE graduates have learnt and achieved through the NPDE, both personally and professionally.

2.4.3 Concluding comments of the theoretical framework

Teacher development does not occur in a vacuum. There is always a context wherein it happens. Educators have their working stations which are different from each other in many ways. Those working stations are schools. Some schools are in urban areas, others in rural areas, some schools are better resourced and others are not. The kind of learners, discipline, infrastructure, learner support material, community and other things are some of the things that make one context of the school to be different from another. Schools vary in many ways. Each school has its own ethos, culture, habit, norms and jargon etc. that impact on the way in which teacher development programmes are implemented. These variances impacts on the way in which teacher development is designed, promoted and implemented. A "one size fits all" approach to teacher professional development is clearly an inappropriate approach within vastly diverse context settings.   Taking cognizance that context does shape conceptions of teacher professional development, theoretical models that inform teacher professional development are compromised by contextual consideration. In this study, the focus and target has been limited to a rural context. Hence, whilst the models may present the theoretical constructs to understand the experiences of the NPDE graduates, the contextual realities of an urban setting may compromise the value and outcomes of the new learning acquired through this programme.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the literature relevant to the study. The chapter outlined different kinds of intervention strategies in teacher development within South Africa and outside. This chapter focuses on the methodology used in the study. The chapter begins with the purpose of the study, followed by the location of the study, critical questions and instruments. The instruments included the university documents, questionnaires, interviews and observations. The chapter concludes with a discussion of sampling, access and limitations of the study.

The methodology used in this study is a tracer study. Tracer studies attempt to establish the success or other wise of a programme (Ramrathan, 1997). In this study, this methodology is most appropriate as it seeks to explore the personal and professional benefits of teachers after having graduated from the NPDE programme. The study traces graduates of the NPDE programme offered in Singane. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted with graduates to provide the empirical data for this study.

3.2 The purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to explore the impact of the National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) on the lives of NPDE graduates. The study focused on the professional and personal lives of educators after they completed the NPDE programme.

3.3 The critical questions

The study has two critical questions:

- How has the NPDE impacted on:
    - ❖ . Educators' personal lives?
    - ❖ . Educators' professional lives?

3.4 Tracer study

Tracer studies are increasingly becoming a means of establishing the success or quality of a programme intervention. Tracer study is simply about locating the where about, functionality of a particular aspect. In a study attempting to establish the success of an access to higher education programme on school learners, Ramrathan (1997) used a tracer study design to ascertain whether, as a result of the porgramme intervention at school level, more students from disadvantaged school backgrounds accessed higher education. These kinds of processes indicate the increasing importance of tracer study designs to inform us on the success or otherwise of a programme, the impact of a programme on systems and processes and impact of programme offerings on individuals. In this study, the tracer study is used to explore the impact of the NPDE programme on the personal and professional lives of teachers who had completed this up-grading programme intervention.

Tracer studies, by design allow one to obtain information about, for example, the success of a programme intervention, or to establish where completers of a programme end up (in the job market) (Ramrathan, 1997). In this study, the tracer study was meant to get an understanding, broadly, of the personal and professional benefits gained by graduates of the NPDE programme, i.e. to establish the success or otherwise of the NPDE intervention on under-qualified teachers. Perhaps a different methodology and research focus would be more appropriate for a study that attempts to gain further knowledge on teacher professionalisation and teacher learning. Further, the rural context within which this study unfolded influenced the focus of this study. Being a member of this rural context

provided me with the conceptual lens to understand the needs of under-qualified teachers in these contextual types.

The study is located at Singane, the deep rural area in KZN. The closest higher institution is University of KwaZulu Natal (UKZN) which is about 150km away. Unqualified educators enrolled in the NPDE programme through UKZN. They attend Saturday contact sessions at Singane High, somehow in the centre of Singane area. They submit assignments, do school based tasks and write exams at the end of the semester.

With the assistance of the Singane Circuit Management Centre (CMC), I was able to get the graduates' school addresses, contact numbers and physical location. I managed to trace 40 graduates and issued them questionnaires. Tracer study, by design, acknowledges that targeted participants may not be traceable because of a range of reasons, which include relocation (migration), death, and loss or change of contact details (Ramrathan, 1997). In this case, 40 of the 87 registered students of the 2005 registration cohort were traceable. This figure of traceable graduates may have also been influenced by the students that may not have graduated for various reasons, including non-completion of study programme.

Tracer studies attempt to trace completers of a programme or event to establish where they are, what they are engaged in, whether the programme intervention or event had any impact of their lives and work (Ramrathan, 1997). In this study, the graduates of the NPDE programme offered by the University of KwaZulu-Natal were traced to establish the impact that this programme had on their personal and professional lives. In order to delimit the scope of this tracer study, a cohort of graduates from the Singane area was chosen as participants for the study. The delimitation also provided an opportunity to explore how this programme intervention impacted on these teachers who are in a rural context, hence a purposeful selection of participants for this study. The choice of Singane as a geographic region was motivated by the fact that I am a resident and a school manager in one of the schools in Singane. The details of my motivation for this choice has been elaborated in the rationale section of Chapter one of this dissertation.

In order to locate the participants for this study, the university records were used to establish the graduate list. Further, an information survey was conducted in the Msinga area to locate the whereabouts of the NPDE graduates. Out of the survey, a list was made with names of schools where the graduates worked. This list made it easy to issue and collect questionnaires because I visited schools on the list to meet the graduates.

3.5 Approaches to the study

The study draws on both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. In terms of the quantitative approach, the study used the university data base in the form of a document to trace the number of students enrolled and graduated in NPDE in 2005. The quantitative data was used mainly for the identification of participants for the study. The university data was quantitatively analysed for frequencies in a particular geographic area. The data collected was captured and a purposive sample of graduates based on distance, e.g. schools in radius of 20 km from my workstation was selected. The analysis of data leans more towards the qualitative approach because the focus of the study is about the impact on the NPDE programme in the personal and professional experiences of 2005 NPDE graduates.

According to Ezzy (2002), qualitative research is done through establishing relationships with people, places and performances. The best qualitative researchers do not separate their lives from their research, as if people could be understood through distancing ourselves from them. In generating data for the study, I used questionnaires and interviews to obtain information from the participants sampled which were then analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative analysis provided some frequencies and descriptive information on the extent to which the NPDE programme impacted on their personal and professional lives. The qualitative analysis provided a deeper insight on the how the NPDE impacted on the lives as teachers and as citizens of the Singane community.

This study is located within an interpretive paradigm as it seeks to explore the impact of the NPDE programme on the personal and professional lives of the graduates. Through this exploration, it hopes to understand how the NPDE programme impacted on their lives and what meaning it brought to them (participants). The interpretative paradigm, according to allows the researcher to understand and interpret the data in a way that provides meaning to the participants.

3.6 Access to research sites and permission to conduct the research

Mitchell and Jolley (2007) emphasized the importance of obtaining permission to conduct research and I consulted my ward manager for permission to conduct the research. I consulted him for two reasons:

Firstly to approve some few days leave to be away from my working station.
As I am the principal, he is my supervisor so I had to negotiate leave with my supervisor. Secondly, for convenience reasons, I chose schools in my ward when I was sampling participants so I had to ask for permission to visit the schools in that ward. I was given 12 working days of my leave. I designed a plan to visit three schools in 12 days, I spent four days in each school for undertaking observation and interviews.

I went to the schools to ask access and permission from the principals and the school governing bodies (Annexure B and C) of the three schools. I requested permission to interview participants, their principals and their peers. I requested permission to record data using pen and paper, tape recorder and my digital camera. I was granted the permission and I promised to abide by school rules and avoid disturbing teaching and learning.

In one case my participant was a principal so I interviewed her deputy instead of the senior because I wanted to focus more on daily activities occurring at the school. It was assumed that the ward manager might have little to say about the daily personal and

professional development of the principal because the ward manager is mostly in the ward office than being in the school.

I chose three participants for the in-depth interviews and observations on the basis of distance, availability, willingness to participate, gender and rank variables. I consulted my three sampled graduates requesting them to be participants in my study. According to Sikes (2000), ethical issues are very important when conducting a research and it is the duty of the researcher to discuss ethical issues with the participants. I organized a meeting with all of them to explain the aim of the study, the ethical issues like their role, rights and the need for confidentiality in the study. I received positive response.

3.7   The instruments

(a)   University document.

The university data base is the form of a document was used to provide information of the number of students enrolled and graduated in the year 2005. This document was analysed along the following lines;

      ◊   Years in teaching profession.
      ◊   Gender.
      ◊   School types.
      ◊   Ages
      ◊   Ranks.
      ◊   Location of the school.

(b)   Questionnaires

McMillan (2001) identified questionnaires as one of the best ways of collecting data in a quantitative approach. Questionnaires were issued to 40 graduates of the NPDE from the class of 2005. These graduates were identified according to the criteria that I had set out

and indicated above. Out of the 40, only 33 questionnaires were returned. (Seven students did not submit the questionnaires back.) The two page questionnaire consisted of both close and open long questions. The SPSS programme was used to capture the data obtained through questionnaires. Out of the 33 questionnaires, I then sampled three participants based on distance, availability and willingness to participate. Some schools at Singane are not accessible by roads. So I chose schools that I can access also in terms of the availability of roads.

(c) Observation

According to Ezzy (2002) the qualitative observation is best done when the observer becomes a part of the dance. My observation encompassed experiences, personal and professional growth / development of educators. I then went to schools to observe the chosen participants for four days in each school. I would like to start with observation before the interview because observation starts as soon as one enters the research site. In all schools I arrived 30 minutes before the school day starts and left 30 minutes after. I observed the time management of my participants.

I observed the way participants handled professional and personal matters inside the class and outside. Documents like the leave register and meeting minutes helped to reflect the personal and professional lives of educators. Two of my participants who were educators, and I observed two lessons in each educator, filing and assessment record. One of the participants was the principal. I was lucky to attend one staff meeting where I also observed the way he handled issues with the staff. I designed an observation schedule (Annexure H) which guided my observation.

(d)   <u>In- depth interview</u>

According to Marshall and Rossman (1989), an in-depth interview is one of the best data collection techniques in the qualitative study. Therefore, I decided to formulate questions for my interview. Interviews were used as a follow up on the questionnaires and observations to give participants a chance to elaborate on some views which were claimed but not supported by the evidence. Again, like in observation I had to interview participants about their experiences, personal and professional growth.

I used lunch times, free periods and out of school time to conduct the interviews. My arrival of 30 minutes early and departure of 30 minutes after school time provided me the scope to do my interviews without impacting on teachers teaching time. I audio taped my interviews. As the interview was semi-structured, I asked some pre-pared questions (see Annexure G) but I also allowed myself to ask some probing questions.

3.8 Sampling technique

Truman et al (2000) discusses the issue of sampling, one of them being purposeful sampling. Truman et al (2000) define purposeful sampling as when the researcher sets the scope of the sample with purpose. Sampling tends to reduce the number of participants by selecting from a large number of possible participants. In purposeful sampling, the researcher will specify the criteria to select the participants to suit the study.

My participants were of the same race, ethnicity, language group and location so I did not use those as my variables instead I chose gender, rank, and school type. I grouped schools in wards so to sample in one ward. I chose the ward where I work so that consulting one ward manager for the permission was convenient I also considered schools that I could access because at Singane some of the schools do not have roads so it becomes difficult to access them.

Out of 33 respondents that completed the questionnaires, I chose one male principal from the primary school; one female HOD from the primary and one male post level one educator in the combined school. There were no participants from secondary school that responded to questionnaires.

3.9 Data collection

The data was collected in various ways namely; University data base/ documents, questionnaires, interviews and observation. Frequency, scores and correlations were used to analyse demographic and professional data on the documents. The SPSS programme was used to analyse questionnaires along the lines of correlation and frequencies. Responses were analysed in to themes, sub themes that were derived from the transcripts of the interviews.

3.10 Methodological limitations

Tracer studies, by design, have several limitations. In my study therefore, there are graduates I failed to locate. It might because of the reasons mentioned early on which might hinder the researcher to trace all the intended participants. Sampling then becomes a major issue in attempting to address this limitation. In my case out of 40 questionnaires I issued, I managed the get 33 back. Although it was a high response rate, I missed seven questionnaires which affect the study in terms of the response rate.

With respect to this particular study, a noted limitation ignores what personal and professional gains of NPDE graduates that may have been influenced by programmatic differences across the various institutions offering the NPDE programme. This is because of the purposive sampling strategy that included only graduates from UKZN.

3.11 Conclusion to the methodology chapter

This chapter makes an argument for why the tracer study design was the most appropriate methodology for the study. It presented the process through which decisions about the methodology, participants and data collection process were made and the limitations that these decisions had on the study. The next chapter presents the analysis of the data produced through this methodological design.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data and the analysis of the data that was produced through the survey of the NPDE graduates from the Singane area. A tracer study design was used to produce the data. The study attempted to establish the personal and professional gains of graduates as a result of obtaining the NPDE qualification which now qualifies them to be regarded as qualified teachers within the policy framework of qualified teacher status in South Africa. The chapter will briefly reiterate the research questions that it attempted to answer, followed by a presentation of the data and the analysis that was produced through the survey questionnaire, semi-structured interviews and observations. Finally the chapter will conclude with a summary of the key findings of the study. An analysis of the limitations of the study that may have influenced the findings will be presented throughout this chapter.

4.2 Research questions guiding the study

The study was located within an interpretivist paradigm of attempting to understand the personal and professional gains of the teacher after graduating with the NPDE qualification. Hence the research question that informed this study design was:

Critical question. How has the NPDE impacted on personal and professional lives?

This research question influenced the design of the questionnaire and the interview schedule. The items of the questionnaire were developed to obtain information that would give me an understanding of how the NPDE programme influenced the personal

and professional lives of these previously under-qualified teachers. Hence, apriori categories that the items of the questionnaire alluded to were used as a basis for the analysis of the data. The appropriateness of these apriori categories were also guided by the conceptual framework of the study relating to the policy framework that guided the introduction of the NPDE programme within South Africa. Further, Lewin's transformation change theory (as presented in chapter two of this dissertation) allowed for the sense making in the analysis of the findings as the graduates account for their personal and professional development through the NPDE programme.

4.3 Presentation of the findings of this study

According to University database 87 students registered for NPDE at Singane in 2005. As this was a two year part-time programme, the majority of those registered in 2005 would have graduated in 2007. There were 55 females and 32 males registered students.

The sample size for the tracer study was, therefore, limited to 40 participants. Questionnaires were then sent to theses 40 participants. Out of the 40 questionnaires sent, only 33 participants returned the completed questionnaires, translating into an 82.5% response rate. In this study, the response rate is relatively high and this could be attributed to the delimits of the study, where the participants were drawn from a small rural community and that the tracing of the graduates were supported by the involvement of the Singane Circuit Management Centre. The questionnaire had 3 sections, Section A as Biographical details, section B was about the NPDE programme and section C was information about the period after completing the NPDE programme.

The gender breakdown of the respondents indicates that of the 33 respondents, 12 were males and 21 were females. This gender breakdown is expected as it is characteristic of the national demographic profile of teacher in South Africa. Our teaching fraternity is characterised by its dominance of female teachers.

Number of years in the teaching profession; respondents were ranging from two to 29 years. Only two had nine years, four were above twenty and the majority was around 15 years. This is telling us that most of the participants have been in the profession for quite some time.

School type; 12 of the schools from which the participants emerged were from combined schools, five in secondary and 16 in primary schools. This makes the majority of the respondents to be in primary schools followed by the combined schools. Combined schools are the schools combining the primary and secondary level. Even those in the combined, most of the respondents are teachers in the foundation and intermediate phases. Schools deemed that under-qualified teachers would be able to best manage teaching learners in lower grades rather than in higher grades of schooling. Primary school also did not have specialisation compared to high schools. I believe that might be the reason that we have many unqualified educators in primaries more than secondary schools.

Finding 1: A significant number of schools are managed by persons that are under-qualified
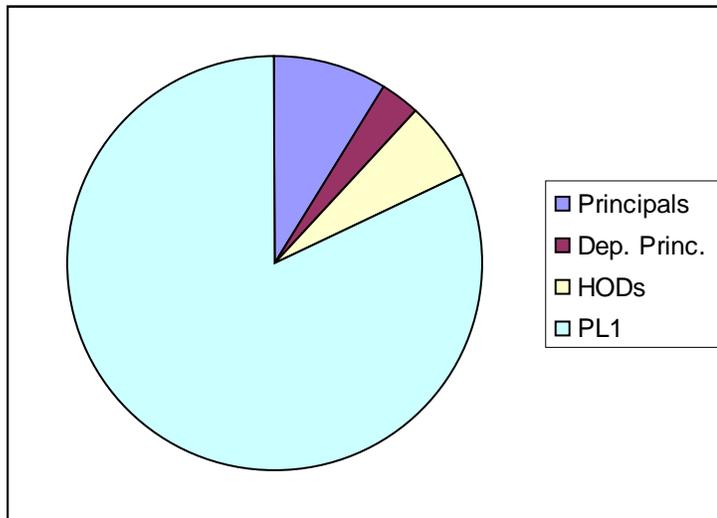
Principals 9%, Deputy Principals 3%, HODs 6%, PL1 82%

Fig. 4.1 Pie chart indicating the employment ranks of the participants within the teaching sector

While the majority of graduates were level one teachers, amongst them there were a significant number of school managers (See Fig 4.1). In this study almost a fifth (18%) of the graduates was in the school management positions (HOD, Deputy and Principal) of which nine% were school principals. This finding implies that a significant number of our schools are being managed by under-qualified professional staff. This finding has serious consequences for our schooling system. The major focus of schooling in our new democracy was and continues to be that of transforming our school system to provide appropriate quality education. This finding suggests that some schools are expected to engage in transformation being led by individuals that are under-qualified professionally and this is further compromised by the lack of further formal training in being school managers.   Hence, questions like, "what kinds of obstacles would these under-qualified managers experience in

transforming their schools?" And "would their newly qualified teacher status make any difference to their roles as managers in a transforming school context?"

Finding 2:   Students had high and wide ranging expectations from the NPDE programme

Table 4.1 presents a summary of the expectations of students from the NPDE programme. The range of expectations includes personal achievements (in the form of improved qualifications and higher salaries) to professional achievements of, for example, teaching their subjects better.

Table 4.1: Expectations of students from the NPDE programme

Improvement of their qualifications	28
To gain knowledge about changes in education	30
Improve teaching skills	25
More knowledge about teaching and learning	30
Obtaining higher salaries	17

Graduates were asked about their expectation in doing the NPDE programme. The programme was meant for and marketed as an upgrading qualification for under-qualified teachers to meet the needs of the new school education system. Hence it is not unexpected that their expectations would resonate with the programmme's objectives/intentions (see Table 4.1). In addition the graduates had largely positive feelings about the doing the NPDE programme. Principals of the schools within which the graduates taught also had similar expectations – being competent and professional in their teaching so that the quality of teaching would be enhanced. In the interviews, one participant mentioned that he expected to be developed as an educator in terms of knowledge, methodology of teaching and obtaining more teaching strategies. Another

participant mentioned increase in the salary as his high expectation. When asked to elaborate on that, he alluded to opportunities from changing the salary levels, to promotions to higher ranking and more senior educator. These opportunities also imply more salary and more status for these NPDE graduates. Many participants mentioned that they also expected to be developed personally as they wanted to gain respect and recognition from colleagues and community around him. The issue of salary as the expectation can also be put on personal expectation or benefit because more salary means better life in that person.

The other intention was also to upgrade educators to the minimum M+3 qualification. This study then explored the intentions of educators in enrolling in this programme. In table 4.1, ninety percent of the participants expected to improve their qualification. They wanted to move from being under-qualified to being professionally qualified educators. 84% expected to gain knowledge about the changes in the education system. There was an introduction of new subjects / learning areas like technology, life orientation and others. That was a challenge educators wanted to meet.

There was 75% of the participants who wanted to improve teaching skills. There are many skills an educator should have but all under the name of teaching skills. Educators in the new education system were challenged to be assessors, designers, facilitators and many other skills that educators needed to have including skills on handling big classes when teaching, grouping learners, engaging them in activities and others. 51% of educators expected more on knowledge on teaching and learning. NPDE was introduced at a time when all educators were required to teach within a new system of school education as an educational transformational agenda. Educators were hungry for new skills and knowledge of the new education system. Even the terminology of learning areas, outcomes, continuous assessment and others was new to educators.

About 90% expected that after obtaining the qualification, they will obtain higher salaries that imply personal growth and development. Obtaining a qualification implies better living. It was a very big concern for unqualified educators to obtain this NPDE

qualification. One of them even mentioned *"the salary I earned as an unqualified educator did not allow me to think of registration and travelling to higher institutions."* At Singane, Universities are far away and it becomes difficult to register and travel to institutions like UKZN for contact sessions. The NPDE programme at Singane was accompanied with a bursary to help unqualified educators financially. Singane learning centre was also opened at one of the schools in Tugela Ferry district to afford educators a nearer centre for them to attend contact sessions on Saturdays. That is why they were expecting to obtain qualification and earn better salaries. "Qualification also opens chances for promotions" one participant said during the interview as one of his expectation.

Finding 3: NPDE had an impact in the personal lives of educators.

By personal in this case I refer to issues like confidence, as a human being outside classroom, status outside the classroom, better life style, engagement in the community, family life and other interests. Earning better salaries might imply buying a house in town, buying a car and changing lifestyle altogether. It would generally relate to the person rather than the profession. For example, a gain in confidence would imply that the person is able to converse with other with a sense of ease and authority in the field of conversation, and not feel intimidated and withdraw from participation.

When we look at our table 4.2 below, 57% of the participants pointed out that they have gained a better lifestyle because of the NPDE. After submitting their NPDE certificates, their annual salary changed to higher amount. They now earn better salaries than before they had obtained the NPDE. Salary has a lot of implication because the lifestyle of a person is influenced highly by the income that person earns. If they are promoted to higher positions, again the salary increases. That is another big answer on the study "Yes the NPDE had a lot of impact in educators' personal lives".

There were also personal gains outside the school. On personal gains, some participants pointed out their engagement in community development. Among other roles emphasized in the NPDE programme, one role emphasizes the active role to be played by an educator in the community. The interviews with educators indicated that *when they apply for promotions there is always a question on community development*. So it is vital for educators to develop the community outside the school. It might be conducting campaigns on drugs, violence, HIV/AIDS, gardens, ABET, computer literacy, youth organizations, ECT. Therefore is quite interesting to hear that graduates engage themselves in the community after undergoing such a programme.

Table 4.2: Personal gains by the NPDE graduates

Gains	No. responded
Nothing	0
Promotion	13
Confidence in teaching	30
More status as a teacher	26
Recognition by peers (other teachers)	28
Recognition by your school managers	29
More knowledge about teaching and learning	31
More knowledge about the new education system	31
Better life style	18

Fig. 4.2: Bar graph of the NPDE graduates personal gains

Of significance here is that the gains by the graduates were largely in the professional domain of their lives (confidence in teaching, more subject knowledge, recognition by peers and managers) rather that on the personal lives (see Table 4.2 and Fig. 4.2). One teacher remarked during the interview, that she has now *moved from the margins to the centre within her school* – a feeling also described by other graduates but expressed differently. This graduate (interviewee) indicated that while she was an under-qualified teacher, she did not participate in discussions and decision making due to fear of the kinds of contributions that she would be making and what her peers might think of her. But now, after completing the NPDE, she is confident and fully engaged in school matters, often taking leadership responsibilities.

Teacher confidence is another attribute graduates claim to have achieved through the NPDE programme. Several of the teachers interviewed indicated their feelings of doubt about their teaching as well as their fear of being appraised by their senior teachers in their schools prior to doing the NPDE. They are now more confident and able to engage with fellow teachers and learners at different levels, including being more confident of their teaching. Increase in teacher confidence has also been noticed by principals of graduate in schools. Graduates indicated that they became members

of the school's staff development teams, took leadership roles in the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) process at their schools and some note increased participation at staff meetings, suggesting that the graduates were taken more seriously by the school management and their peers. This is further supported by the graduates' claims on activities engaged in after completing the NPDE programme (see Table 4.3).

In reviewing the data generated through the questionnaires and the interviews, I found that the graduates could not distil clearly their personal gains from their professional gains. It seems that the two are interrelated. Gaining confidence is both a professional gain as well as a personal gain. For example, from the interviews, one respondent indicated that "personally *I can interact with some people with vigour and confidence because I know now what I am talking about, I can back it with some arguments.*" Having a qualified teacher status certificate means that one would enjoy a higher income and this invariably leads to a better lifestyle. For example, one respondent indicated that, "*my status had increased ... again my salary has been adjusted ... I am owning things like the car. I am driving the car. I have extended my house.*" It would seem that for this rural community, professional growth and personal growth are seen as dependent upon each other and they co-exist.

Finding 4; NPDE graduates became actively involved in their school after completing NPDE

Table 4.3 Activities engaged in after completing the NPDE programme:

Activity engage in:	No.
Enrolled for other programmes	17
Became active in teacher development in your school	21
Took leadership roles in your school	11
Taken on additional responsibilities at school	12
Nothing	0

Fig. 4.3 Graduates' present engagement
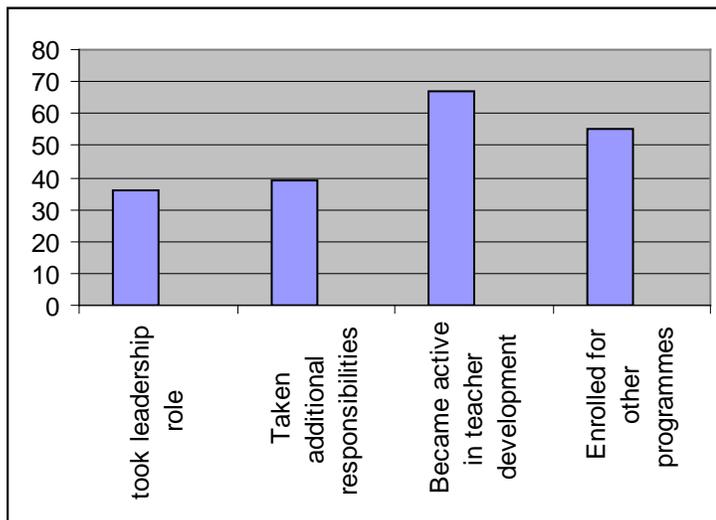
A large number of graduates (17 out of the 33 graduates) enrolled in other programme, indicating a growing interest in their professional careers (see Table 4.3 and Fig. 4.3). One of the intentions of the NPDE upgrading programme was to afford under-qualified teachers access to higher studies. By enrolling in other programmes, like the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), student would be able to access mainstream academic studies in education (i.e. honours, masters and doctoral programmes in education) – an alternate access route to the higher level of study on the National Qualification Framework. Two of the three participants I interviewed indicated that they are registered with UKZN for an ACE programme.

This finding suggests that the NPDE is not only a means to upgrade teacher qualifications, but also acts as a catalyst or stimulus for further studies. Although beyond

the scope of this study, it would have been interesting to know why these teachers enrolled for further studies. One can only conjecture on the reasons for engaging in further studies. For example, the NPDE programme may have given an insight into what possibilities exists for teachers both personally and professionally, should they continue with further studies. They have seen the impact that it had on their lives, personally through better lifestyle and professionally in the confidence in their teaching abilities. If they engage in further studies, they may expect to get more of what they experienced through the NPDE.

A higher number of graduates (21 out of the 33 graduates) became active in teacher development in their schools (see Fig 4.3), signalling and triangulating their claim of being recognized by peers and managers in their schools for their competence and contribution. Participants also mentioned the issue of positive self esteem and confidence they gained as educators in their schools. Because of the qualification they obtained, they took leadership roles in their schools in different activities. Confidence has boosted their morale and the way they look at themselves. Some teachers were very passive and they also feel inferior because of the lack of knowledge. The NPDE programme provided them with the knowledge and confidence to become active in schooling activities. They gained respect and recognition by their colleagues in their schools. One respondent, through the interviews indicated that "*Qualified educators come to us and ask things about the new system of education that makes us proud and active to help them.*" Being recognised by their colleagues is a big boost in their professional lives and this, according to the respondents was the result of going through the NPDE programme.

In addition to laying claim of their recognition and contribution to teacher development in schools, all respondents agreed that all teachers should do the NPDE programme irrespective of their qualification status – an advocacy stance. Recognising the benefits of doing the NPDE programme, these graduates are now taking on an agency role of influencing other teachers to do the NPDE programme.

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36% of the respondents have taken leadership role in their school. Others have been appointed as sports organizers, HoDs, acting HoDs, and even class teachers. That comes with more responsibilities and more challenges. That is indicative of the fact that the staff and management of their schools have developed trust and confidence on the graduates after completing NPDE. 39% have taken additional responsibilities at school. Others have trained their colleges on assessment issues and other issues related to teaching. No participants indicated that they were not involved in anything after they graduated from the NPDE. That tells that all the participants are engaged in some activities in their schools.

Finding 5: NPDE had an impact in the professional lives of educators

Table 4. 5: Ratings on how the NPDE programme developed the graduates in their professional competence:

(1= unable to tell; 2= no development; 3= some development; 4= noticeable development; 5= substantial development). The figures presented within the rating columns are a count of the number of respondents that rated themselves within each rating scale.

	1	2	3	4	5
Content knowledge of the subject you teach			6	20	6
Teaching skills			3	12	17
Curriculum development /planning skills			9	13	10
Engagement with the new NCS curriculum			4	18	10
Understanding of your teaching context			7	17	8
In designing assessment for your learners			8	11	13
Ability to engage your learners meaningfully in your lessons			5	14	13
Developing learning materials/resources for your lessons			8	10	14

This self reported data suggests that the NPDE programme had made noticeable changes to their professional competence of being a teacher (see Table 4.5). This was further corroborated by the examples of different approaches to teaching and assessment the interviewees had used since commencing the NPDE programme. These include the making of and use of learning resources from their context rather than relying on and

waiting for resources provided by the Department of Education, teaching methods using more exploratory processes rather than telling methods, and assessments that range from research activities to project work and portfolio development. Principals also indicate that the graduates have developed professionally through the incorporation of, amongst others, new dynamic teaching methods in their lessons, better planning of lessons, and improvise resources taken from learners' surroundings.

Professional development also covers wide areas but within the scope of teaching which is our profession in this case. Those are areas like confidence as a teacher, status in teaching, recognition at school, knowledge about teaching, learning and new education system. Those are also areas that develop an educator in the teaching profession as a teacher. One participant mentioned that she did not participate in school discussions and decision making due to fear of the kinds of contributions she would be making and what peers might think of her. But now after completing the NPDE, she is confident and fully engaged in school matters, often taking leadership responsibilities.

The improvement in the teaching was confirmed by my observations. I visited three schools with participants and observed new ways of teaching, grouping learners, providing learners with opportunities to perform activities. In my observation, learners were brainstorming topics, discussing ideas, presenting research findings and presenting their ideas very well. That was showing me the profound impact of NPDE in the professional lives of educators. But above that, that was also showing the impact of NPDE in the lives of learners in the classrooms.

Because of this qualification educators feel like, what other participant in this study termed as, *"obtaining a license to apply for promotional posts."* The minimum qualification on application for management posts was M+3 plus years of teaching depending on the post level applied for. Of the three participants I visited, one of them was a principal even before this programme. One was appointed as an HOD and the last one was appointed at the school to be an acting HOD immediately after obtaining this qualification. That shows the impact of the NPDE in their professional lives. This implies

a different status within the school and outside. This implies more recognition by the staff members, school managers, learners and the community at large.

4.4 Summary of analysis and findings

A summary of the analysis of the data produced by the methodology employed and the finding derived thereof suggests that the NPDE programme was a successful intervention in the lives of the NPDE graduates. The notion of success for these teachers relate to their personal and professional lives. Three important theoretical constructs emerge from these findings (benchmarks, maturity and learning). The first relate to benchmarks and the need to achieve these externally determined benchmarks which impacts of teachers' professional lives. The benchmark for a qualified teacher status was politically determined as a three year post matric (schooling) study towards a teaching qualification.

Once the benchmark was determined, the impact on the teaching fraternity was enormous. A large number of teachers, who were once identified as certified and qualified teachers suddenly became categorised as under-qualified. Many of these teachers were long serving teachers with some having more that forty years of teaching experience. One can imagine the personal impact that this benchmarking process had on them. Hence it is not un-expected that the majority of there participants wanted to re-gain their professional status as a qualified teacher.

Setting new benchmarks can be ascribed as setting new goals. The transformations change theory helps us to understand the how people feel and experience transformational change. By setting new transformational goals – in this case the need to equip schools with qualified teachers to provide quality education resulting in the new pegging of qualified teacher status – created a context for change and initiated what Lewin (1947) called as "unfreezing" component of his change theory. Teachers declared as under-qualified had to unfreeze their notion of being a qualified teacher and to accept that their status had changed from a qualified teacher status to an under-qualified status.

This unfreezing was the most difficult process for these teachers and therefore the initial frustration expressed. However, once the "unfreezing" process initiated, the under-qualified teachers began to see new opportunities. This resulted in the identification of second theoretical construct – that of maturity.

The maturity comes in the recognition that in order to provide good quality education, teachers need to upgrade themselves in terms of the knowledge base, their teaching methodologies and be able to engage with a new curriculum. The landscape of teaching was changing rapidly within the South African context post-apartheid and this meant that if teachers were not going to engage in these changes personally, then they would have great difficulties as teachers. This maturity of thinking emerged when they enrolled for the NPDE programme – an initial step in development. The maturity of the teachers unfolded more profoundly in their responses to the gains that they expected of the NPDE and in their target for their professional growth. They wanted to be better teachers. They wanted to be more knowledgeable in their teaching skills and they wanted to be more involved in their lives as professionals.

NPDE graduates once mentioned that their professional identities were being looked at differently. This, Lewin (1974) suggests in his transformation change theory, is called "movement". Teachers "moved" to different things. Professionally they moved to a qualified teacher status and this brought with it a new sense of maturity for their teaching professional. They were attracted to the centrality of the roles that they can and have played since the NPDE. Some achieved promotions, while other were more centrally involved in decision making in the school's activities, their curriculum planning and teaching, their extended roles as teachers and respect by colleagues and managers. These new statuses, both in qualification and their participation leads to what Lewin calls "re-freezing" – a new teacher identity.

Teacher learning, as a third theoretical construct, emerged as a crucial finding of this study. Teacher leaning is a wide field of study. In this study, teacher learning is directed

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at how the NPDE, a state initiated professional development activity, provided the opportunity for leaning. The study findings revealed that external intervention is a catalyst for teacher learning, especially when monetary gains and professional opportunities are associated with the outcomes of the learning process.

In this case, most of the respondents aspired for higher salaries, promotions and better lifestyles and saw the achievement of these aspirations through the NPDE programme. The professional component of teacher learning then emerged through the learning experience provided by the programmes. This related specifically to the exposure to possibilities for teaching through new teaching methodologies and building of self-confidence and self-trust through the programme. Teachers expressed that the most important learning they achieved through the NPDE programme is learning to be confidence as a teacher. They said that confidence can be achieved through knowing the subject content, detailed planning and with research insights. Further, it was realised that "*it is OK not to know something rather than to teach incorrect content or become defensive*" one participant mentioned. So mastering the content of your learning area helps boosting the self esteem in teachers.

The changes to the confidence levels of the graduates were remarkable and cannot happen without deep introspection, knowledge and practice by the teachers. The NPDE programme interrogated the under-qualified teacher past practice, provided opportunities and exposure to learn new content and pedagogical knowledge, and through integrated assessment strategies were able to put into practice these new learning with the guidance and support of the lecturers, tutors and school based mentors. Through these extensive engagements over a period of two years, the graduates emerged confident in their teaching, their engagement in school, and their positive feelings about themselves – clearly transformational in nature. The changes noted can be summarized as noted in Table 4. 6.

Table 4. 6: Professional changes noted in graduates of the NPDE programme

Change from	Change to
Not being confident	Being confident
Being told	Telling
Externally driven	Self agency
Being on the margins	Becoming part of the central force
Teacher telling	Teacher exploring
Use of limited teaching methods	Exploring new teaching methods
Limited assessment strategies	Exploring different assessment strategies
Using no resources	Making and using resources developed from their context

The NPDE programme, therefore, provided a stimulus for initiating teacher learning and the outcomes of the learning related to teacher confidence and trust, with some learning on teaching methodologies and subject content knowledge.

4.5 Conclusion

The delimitation of this study locates it within a rural context within South Africa. Hence, the findings may not be generalised to all graduates of the NPDE programme. However, these findings may illuminate some important details that may be worthy of further studies in this area of teacher professionalisation and teacher learning. The scale of this study precludes me from engaging in these areas of knowledge production.

This chapter attempted to provide an analysis of the data produced through the survey design, resulting in the establishment of several finding related to the key questions of study. The findings were summarized into key findings that emerged and informed by the theoretical framework employed in the study. In summary the NPDE programme had impacted on the personal and professional lives of teachers and graduates were very positive of their newly acquired professionalism. The next chapter will conclude the dissertation with recommendations on the NPDE programme and teacher learning.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes this study by giving the brief summary of the findings and the implications on the study. The findings on the study have shown that NPDE had a positive impact in the lives of educators in both personal and professional. Educators have been developed/ upgraded in their qualification to REQV 13. This had many implications as their salaries were increased. They obtained status, respect, and recognition in their workplaces. Increments in their salaries imply better lifestyles, buying cars, building new houses and many more financial benefits.

They also developed as educators in their professions. The introduction of the new system was a challenge to all educators, not only unqualified and qualified only. It was even worse to unqualified and under qualified educators as they did not have any tertiary knowledge and methodology of teaching. The new education system came with new methodology of teaching, new ways of assessment, new content in other learning areas, new terminology and even new learning areas like technology and others. Those were all the challenges educators faced in the education system. This study has shown that NPDE has geared up educators with the skills they needed to handle the new system.

5.2 Illuminations through this tracer study

The intentions of the NPDE as a national intervention strategy were to upgrade under qualified and unqualified educators and also to develop educators to meet the challenges of the new system. Despite that unqualified and under qualified educators had to meet the challenges of the new system of education, they also had to meet the standard on M+3 for both SACE and the employer. That was also the intention of the introduction of NPDE. This study again has shown therefore that NPDE has succeeded on achieving those two main goals.

This study has also shown that there are unqualified qualified educators within the education system who really need this NPDE. There are educators who had their diplomas and other qualification long before the introduction of the new system. In terms of their qualifications they are secured as they are qualified but they are unqualified in the new learning areas they find themselves in, like technology, arts and culture, life orientation and others. Those educators need support on both the new content and methodology. The reason why I include methodology is that the old system was teacher centered as opposed to the new system which is learner centered. Learner centeredness includes peer assessment, continuous assessment, group work, individualization, projects by learners and active role played by learners in the learning process. Therefore an educator who belongs to the old school of thought needs some developments to adapt to the new era irrespective of the qualification.

The majority of the participants have shown that after completion of NPDE they enrolled with different institutions to further their studies. Some registered for the Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) programmes and some registered for other courses, like computer courses, as part of their personal and professional development in the field. That shows that NPDE opened eyes for them to see the need to be life long learners, scholars and researchers.

It was pleasing to discover that in most of them, NPDE opened doors for promotions/ better packages/ greener pastures. Some of the participants are HOD and Deputy Principals which is an achievement. REQV 13 had been a minimum requirement for promotional posts, so that made NPDE graduates to start qualifying for promotional posts.

5.3 Recommendations arising out of the NPDE tracer study

It is recommended that even senior educators, heads of departments and even principals be developed through such programmes like the NPDE or ACE so that they will have the necessary, most recent background in their workplaces when introducing new strategies. For a conducive learning and teaching atmosphere in the school, the management of the school must set the tone, support with resources and all kind of support. It is better to support something that you know than supporting something you do not know. Therefore the school management teams should be updated somehow on the new ways of teaching, new needs, so that they support and provide if the need arises.

The programme also includes school visits and school based tasks. On my observation when I visited schools I discovered that NPDE educators need more school based tasks and school visits. The university visits students in their school at least twice in three years. For more on-site support which is also individualized, I would recommend more visits so to see where educators lack and are they implementing the different strategies they acquire from the programme.

What cropped out from my interviews and observation was to recommend that there should also be the link between what is tutored by the tutors and the visitors from the university. It is difficult and confusing if university monitors come to schools with different expectations than what is taught by tutors in the contact sessions. Therefore there should be common grounds between the tutors and university monitors so that they

check on what the tutors has taught in the session. Above that university monitors should also reflect what has been written on learning guides and student guides. Students use the learning guides as their bible or source of reference to apply in their circumstances. Again if university monitors negate what is on the guide then students become confused.

School based tasks are designed in such a way that educators do these tasks at their respective schools with learners. It gives educators an opportunity to experiment what has been leant in the contact session. Although these tasks are not marked they are submitted to the following contact session for discussion. I therefore recommend that more emphasis should be made to these tasks so to increase an opportunity for educators to implement and explore what they learn.

Another link I also expect to see is the link between the department of education and the university. I feel the university must produce what the department needs. Educators are trained by higher institutions and the department through workshops. Firstly there should be a link between those two structures. The department of education has few days' workshops and other interventions to develop educators. Those interventions should relate on what higher institution teach to future educators. Secondly, higher institutions produce educators to be employed by the department of educators. Therefore higher institutions should produce what schools in particular need. Higher institutions should be aware on what is happening even on the ground root level of schools so to design the curriculum that serves the needs not only of the department of education in general but also of schools in particular The new system of education should be well explained to the university so that the university designs programmes which fit exactly the challenges the department faces and schools in particular.

Those programmes also should not be "one size fits all" programmes. There are schools in urban areas which have different daily needs when compared with schools in rural areas. Schools in rural areas have more challenges than those in urban or township schools. Some schools in rural areas still face problems like insufficient infrastructure.

Bad roads to schools or no road at all, no classes, no libraries, no electricity at all and other challenges still face rural schools. Shortage of educators in rural areas is also a problem. Qualified educators have wide choices so they end up choosing urban areas for better life and more resourced schools. Schools in rural areas do not have cottages to accommodate educators so they end up staying in rondavels of the families near schools. That brings shortage of teachers in rural areas which also leads to overcrowding in classes and teachers teaching subject/ learning areas they are not trained for. Therefore programmes offered to educators in rural areas should really address daily challenges they face. The introduction of NPDE has then helped mostly the rural unqualified and under qualified educators to be better educators even in rural areas like Singane.

CHAPTER 6

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CHAPTER 7

ANNEXURES

ANNEXURE A LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANT

Dear NPDE graduate

I am Mr. Z.J. Zuma, a part time student at University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood campus). I am doing Masters in Education specializing in teacher development. My study entails doing a research as part of the requirement of my degree.

I would like to request you to be a participant in the research I am conducting. I would like to request a permission to conduct my research in your school. My study is about exploring the difference that has been made by National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) in the lives of teachers at Msinga who have undergone through this programme.

I will visit your school to interview and observe you in your schooling activities. My visit will be only 4 days. As the benefit I promise to make the findings and recommendations available to the school as a way of information dissemination. I also hope my research will be useful to you.

No payments will be made to the school in this research but if there are expenses incurred by the study, I promise to reimburse those expenses. I will use a tape recorder to record interviews and pen and paper to record additional information and observation. I promise the confidentiality on the information gathered and will only use it for my study and nothing else.

Hoping my request will reach your highest consideration.

Yours faithfully

Mr. Zwelabantu Jabulani Zuma Sign ………………………   Date:………………...

P.O. Box 1152

Greytown

3250

Cell 0720387477

My Supervisor: Prof. P. Ramarathan (D. ed)

University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus)

P / Bag X 03

Ashwood

3605

Phone Number: 031 260 8065

Email: @ukzn.ac.

Dear Principal

I am Mr. Z.J. Zuma, a part time student at University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood campus). I am doing Masters in Education specializing in teacher development. My study entails doing a research as part of the requirement of my degree.

I would like to request a permission to conduct my research at your school. My study is about exploring the difference that has been made by National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) in the lives of teachers at Msinga who have undergone through this programme.

I will visit your school to interview teachers and observe them in their schooling activities. My visit will be only 4 days. As the benefit I promise to make the findings and recommendations available to the school as a way of information dissemination. I also hope my research will of the useful in the teachers involved.

No payments will be made to the school in this research but if there are expenses incurred by the study, I promise to reimburse those expenses. I will use a tape recorder to record interviews and pen and paper to record additional information and observation. I promise the confidentiality on the information gathered and will only use it for my study and nothing else.

Hoping my request will reach your highest consideration.

Yours faithfully
Mr. Zwelabantu Jabulani Zuma Sign ……………………   Date:………………...
P.O. Box 1152
Greytown
3250   Cell 0720387477

My Supervisor: Prof. P. Ramarathan

University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus)

P / Bag X 03

Ashwood

3605

Phone Number: 031 260 8065

Email: ramrathan@ukzn.ac.za

Dear Governing Body Chairperson

I am Mr. Z.J. Zuma, a part time student at University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood campus). I am doing Masters in Education specializing in teacher development. My study entails doing a research as part of the requirement of my degree.

I would like to request a permission to conduct my research at your school. My study is about exploring the difference that has been made by National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) in the lives of teachers at Msinga who have undergone through this programme.

I will visit your school to interview teachers and observe them in their schooling activities. My visit will be only 4 days. As the benefit I promise to make the findings and recommendations available to the school as a way of information dissemination. I also hope my research will of the useful in the teachers involved.

No payments will be made to the school in this research but if there are expenses incurred b y the study, I promise to reimburse those expenses. I will use a tape recorder to record interviews and pen and paper to record additional information and observation. I promise the confidentiality on the information gathered and will only use it for my study and nothing else.

Hoping my request will reach your highest consideration.

Yours faithfully

Mr. Zwelabantu Jabulani Zuma Sign ……………………… Date:………………...

P.O. Box 1152

Greytown

3250   Cell 0720387477

My Supervisor: Prof. P. Ramarathan

University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus)

P / Bag X 03

Ashwood

3605

Phone Number: 031 260 8065

Email: ramrathan@ukzn.ac.za

<u>ANNEXURE D LETTER TO THE WARD MANAGER</u>

Dear Ward Manager

I am Mr. Z.J. Zuma, a part time student at University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood campus). I am doing Masters in Education specializing in teacher development. My study entails doing a research as part of the requirement of my degree.

I would like to request a permission to conduct my research in your ward. My study is about exploring the difference that has been made by National Professional Diploma in Education (NPDE) in the lives of teachers at Msinga who have undergone through this programme.

I will visit your 3 schools to interview teachers and observe them in their schooling activities. My visit will be only 4 days per school. As the benefit I promise to make the findings and recommendations available to the school as a way of information dissemination. I also hope my research will of the useful in the teachers involved.

No payments will be made to the school in this research but if there are expenses incurred b y the study, I promise to reimburse those expenses. I will use a tape recorder to record interviews and pen and paper to record additional information and observation. I promise the confidentiality on the information gathered and will only use it for my study and nothing else.

Hoping my request will reach your highest consideration.

Yours faithfully

Mr. Zwelabantu Jabulani Zuma Sign ………………………   Date:………………...

P.O. Box 1152

Greytown

3250

Cell 0720387477

My Supervisor: Prof. P. Ramarathan

University of KwaZulu Natal (Edgewood Campus)

P / Bag X 03

Ashwood

3605

Phone Number: 031 260 8065

Email: ramrathan@ukzn.ac.za

ANNEXURE E AGREEMENT FORM

PLEASE FILL IN THE FOLLOWING:

I …………………………………………… THE ……………………………………..
OF ……………………………………… SCHOOL HEREBY AGREE /
DISAGREE TO GIVE PERMISSION / PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY
CONDUCTED BY MR. Z. J. ZUMA ON HIS MASTERS DEGREE.

I AM FULLY AWARE OF MY RIGHTS AS THE PARTICIPANT IN THE STUDY

SIGN: …………………… DATE: …………………. PLACE: ……………................

SCHOOL STAMP (if available)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR CO OPERATION.

<u>ANNEXURE F QUESTIONNAIRE</u>

Tracer study of NPDE graduates

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information on the impact of the NPDE programme on the graduates' personal and professional lives. Information obtained through this questionnaire will be treated as confidential and will be used for research reporting purposes only.

Section A: Biographical details

1. Name (optional) _____

2. Gender

Male	Female

3. Number of years in the teaching profession: _____

4. Rank employed:

PL1	HOD	Deputy Principal	Principal

5. School type

Primary	Secondary	Combined	Other

Section B: About the NPDE programme

6. How did you get to know about the NPDE programme (tick appropriate response/s:

By departmental circular	
Referred by your school manager/s	
Referred by a colleague	

Incidental (just came across this programme)	
Personal search for an upgrade programme	
Other: please specify:	

7. What are the 3 things you expected from the NPDE programme (or wanted the programme to provide you with):

(a) _____

(b) _____

(c) _____

8. Describe your feelings about doing the NPDE programme and say why you felt this way:

Section C: After completing the NPDE programme

9. As a result of completing the NPDE programme, what do you think you have gained personally (you may tick more than one response):

	✓) Tick
Nothing	
Promotion	
Confidence in teaching	
More status as a teacher	
Recognition by peers (other teachers)	
Recognition by your school managers	
More knowledge about teaching and learning	
More knowledge about the new education system	
Better life style	
Other (please specify)	
Other (please specify)	

Other (please specify)	
Other (please specify)	

10. What have you engaged yourself in after completing the NPDE programme:

Activity engage in:	Tick ✓	Describe activity	Why did you engage in this activity
Enrolled for other programmes			
Became active in teacher development in your school			
Took leadership roles in your school			
Taken on additional responsibilities at school			
Nothing			
Other (please specify)			

11. What are the 2 things you liked about the NPDE programme?

(a) _____

(b) _____

12. What are the two things you would like to change in the NPDE programme?

(a) _____

(b) _____

13. Would you recommend that all teachers (irrespective of their current qualifications) do the NPDE or similar programme? _____

Explain your answer to the above (why do you think so):

_____

_____

_____

_____

14. In terms of your teaching, rate how the NPDE programme developed you in:

(1 = unable to tell; 2 = no development; 3 = some development; 4 = noticeable development; 5 = substantial development)

(tick your rating in the table below)

	1	2	3	4	5
Content knowledge of the subject you teach					
Teaching skills					
Curriculum development / planning skills					
Engagement with the new NCS curriculum					
Understanding of your teaching context					
In designing assessment for your learners					
Ability to engage your learners meaningfully in your lessons					
Developing learning materials / resources for your lessons					
Other (please specify)					

15. Take any one of the your teaching activity where you have rated 3 or above in the question above (14) and describe fully how the NPDE programme helped you to develop yourself professionally (you could describe this by using an example)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

16. Did the NPDE programme make any difference to you in your personal life outside of school?

	Yes	No
Your engagement in the community		
Your family life		
Your interest / hobbies		
Other (please specify)		

17. Is there anything specific about teaching in a rural context that the NPDE programme assisted you in?

_____

_____

_____

_____

18. Do you believe that by doing the NPDE programme you would be able to make a difference in the quality of rural education?

Yes	No

19. Did the NPDE programme meet with your expectations

Yes	No

Please explain your answer:

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire

Mr Zweli Zuma

Tel: 0720387477

Email : @ukzn.ac.

Prof. Labby Ramrathan (Supervisor)

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Faculty of Education

Tel: 031 260 8064

Email: ranrathanp@ukzn.ac.za

ANNEXURE G   INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were your expectations before you registered the NPDE?
2. What personal gains did you benefit from the NPDE?
3. What professional gains did you benefit from the NPDE?
4. In which areas did NPDE boost your confidence?

ANNEXURE H   OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

In the three schools I visited for observation, I observed the ff things

1. The active role of the participant in the school.
2. Influence of the participant in the school..
3. The lessons in the class.

Documents will be observed as supporting evidence of the above observation. Documents like educators file, log book, attendance register and minute books. These documents will reflect the above 3 observations for example if after the completion of the NPDE the educator has been active, tasked to perform duties, is performing those duties, contributions to staff meetings, lesson plan tallies with new methods of teaching and again does it tally with the real lessons.