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Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project

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Discussion Paper

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Teacher Education for Transformation: the case of the University of the Western Cape, South Africa

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Multi-Site Teacher Education Research Project (MUSTER)

MUSTER is a collaborative research project co-ordinated from the Centre for International Education at the University of Sussex Institute of Education. It has been developed in partnership with:

- The Institute of Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana.
- The Institute of Education, The National University of Lesotho.
- The Centre for Educational Research and Training, University of Malawi.
- The Faculty of Education, University of Durban-Westville, South Africa.
- The School of Education, The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine's Campus, Trinidad.

MUSTER is focused on generating new understandings of teacher education before, during and after the point of initial qualification as a teacher. Its concerns include exploring how new teachers are identified and selected for training programmes, how they acquire the skills they need to teach effectively, and how they experience training and induction into the teaching profession. The research includes analytical concerns with the structure and organisation of teacher education, the form and substance of teacher education curriculum, the identity, roles and cultural experience of trainee teachers, and the costs and probable benefits of different types of initial teacher training.

MUSTER is designed to provide opportunities to build research and evaluation capacity in teacher education in developing countries through active engagement with the research process from design, through data collection, to analysis and joint publication. Principal researchers lead teams in each country and are supported by three Sussex faculty and three graduate researchers.

This series of discussion papers has been created to provide an early opportunity to share output from sub-studies generated within MUSTER for comment and constructive criticism. Each paper takes a theme within or across countries and offers a view of work in progress.

MUSTER South Africa

Revised versions of the South African papers in this series can be found in the book **Changing Patterns of Teacher Education in South Africa – Policy Practice and Prospects, edited by K.M.Lewin, M.Samuel and Y. Sayed, (Heinemann Press 2003).** The book explores policy and practice in Teacher Education in South Africa and their implications for the future, representing one of few empirically grounded, policy orientated studies of teacher education in South Africa. The research presented covers critical topics of interest to those who prepare teachers and study teaching: the evolving histories of teacher education policy, shifting teacher identities, teacher supply and demand, contrasting models of teacher education delivery, college mergers and rationalisation, and the impact of HIV/AIDS on teachers and on teacher provisioning.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CACE	Centre for Adult and Continuing Education
COTEP	Committee on Teacher Education Policy
EPU	Education Policy Unit
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
NSE	Norms and Standards for Educators
OBE	Outcomes-based Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
TEFSA	Tertiary Education Fund for South Africa
TIP	Teacher Inservice Project
UWC	University of the Western Cape

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Rationale

The post-apartheid period of South African history has been marked by hopes for a better future for all, together with apprehension for what the future holds. Education has played a key role in bringing about a change from an apartheid way of life to a way of life based on a democratic society.   In the new social dispensation, teachers carry the heavy responsibility of leading and guiding young people in the country towards the norms and practices of a democratic way of life. The present and future teachers of South Africa face numerous challenges in bringing about this transformation in society.

The question is - how are teachers prepared to face up to these challenges, and how do teacher education programmes meet the demands and needs of a changing society?   One such programme facing these questions is the Higher Diploma in Education (HDE), a one year pre-service teacher education programme offered by the University of the Western Cape, South Africa.   The following extract from a course outline in this diploma explains the challenge as follows:

> ... as we enter the new millennium, teachers in South Africa face very specific, perhaps unique challenges. They have the task of undoing the effects of years of apartheid education and at the same time contributing to new educational values, skills and practices (Course Outline - Preparing to Teach in South Africa 2000, Faculty of Education, UWC, p. 2).

This paper attempts to analyse the extent to which this programme meets its objectives of producing future teachers who will be able to face up to the demands of a rapidly changing South African

The need to develop teachers for a changing society is particularly acute in present-day South Africa.   At the same time, however, an array of new demands face all teacher education programmes across the globe.   Dalin (1998) locates these challenges within three areas, namely, societal paradigm shifts, changing local contexts, and the expansion of children's learning needs. He develops the societal paradigm shifts into ten global revolutions that are currently affecting the lives of children entering the twenty-first century. These include the knowledge and information revolution, the technological revolution, the ecological revolution, the political revolution and the values revolution.

These global paradigm shifts are compounded by local forces which too are having a major impact on the daily lives of teacher educators in South Africa.   Such forces include a new national school curriculum, workplace realities which have fundamentally shifted over the last

ten years and a new set of policy guidelines for teacher education programmes themselves.

Dalin (1998) identifies the learning needs of children and youth as another important challenge facing teachers and teacher educators. The examples which Dalin gives in this category are very pertinent to the South African situation and include the ability to cope in more than one language, the ability to play an active consumer and producer role, and the importance of developing as an independent learner. To this one would need to add the importance of learning to live within the all-encompassing threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and of learning and practising the values associated with the vision of a democratic South Africa.

The emotional space of teacher educators to cope with these responsibilities has, however, been eroded by the shifting occupational realities in this sector. The higher education system in South Africa, where teacher education is located, is in the midst of a process of restructuring. This restructuring is both internally-driven, as university faculties of education become absorbed into larger faculties, and externally-driven as colleges of education amalgamate with one another and become attached to universities. Furthermore, the higher education sector as a whole is grappling with proposals for imminent restructuring around the size and shape of institutions. The shifting ground of teacher education is compounded by a further set of stresses as teacher education is beset by dropping enrolments and a poor public image of teaching.

As these new scenarios emerge, so the problems of the apartheid era have not disappeared. Teacher educators continue to face the challenge of teaching student teachers who struggle with academic reading and writing, who often lack confidence, who in many instances have only been exposed to chalk-and-talk teaching methods, and whose own disciplinary and general knowledge may be limited.

1.2   The aim of the study

Against this background, the aim of this study is to examine the curriculum of the HDE programme including the attitudes of the lecturers, student experiences, resources, the nature of teaching practice in the programme and to consider the cost of the programme.

1.3   Sources of data

The study was conducted during the academic year of 2000, between March and October. A number of different sources of data were drawn on for this study. These include:

- ❖ an entry questionnaire which was completed by 178 student teachers at the beginning of their HDE year
- ❖ an exit questionnaire with a sample of 48 student teachers
- ❖ interviews with 5 lecturers teaching on the programme as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Education
- ❖ a questionnaire completed by eight lecturers teaching on the programme

❖ interviews with a random sample of eighteen student teachers
❖ analysis of curriculum materials and other Faculty of Education documents.

The findings of the different sources of data are summarised in the paper and key themes are extracted for discussion. The findings have been complemented by the personal observations and experiences of the authors who have and are working on the programme

CHAPTER 2

THE INSTITUTIONAL LOCATION OF THE HDE PROGRAMME

Section Two locates the HDE programme within the history of the University of the Western Cape and specifically within the history of the Faculty of Education. The section provides background information which can be used to discuss ways in which the HDE programme relates to its social context.

2.1 The University of the Western Cape

The University of the Western Cape was established in 1960 by the previous South African government as a university college for those classified at that time as Coloured. It was staffed in its early days mainly by those classified White, and identifying with the government policy of apartheid. By the 1980s, however, UWC as an institution had become actively involved in national struggles for democracy and had moved to become a centre recognised internationally for its intellectual and political resistance to apartheid. The Mission Statement of 1982 committed the university to privileging research and teaching to serve the development of Third World communities in South Africa, and in 1987 the then Rector of the university, Professor Jakes Gerwel, wrote:

> The institution has developed to a point in its history where it is without doubt the university in this country that has the most unequivocally committed its teaching, research and service activities to an anti-apartheid and to the post-apartheid ideal. Such a position for a University is not an uncomplicated one; it is fraught with tensions and contradictions (quoted in Van den Berg, 1994: 115).

The university has seven faculties, namely, Arts, Dentistry, Community and Health Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, Law, Science and Education. There are also numerous innovative programmes in the university. A few of these are named here as examples of the social orientation of the university: the Public Health Programme which looks specifically at primary health needs of the country, the School of Government which trains personnel for a new democratic public service and the Mayibuye Centre which houses vast collections on the history of apartheid.

In the Faculty of Education there are three units which reflect the social orientation of the university. The Teacher Inservice Project (TIP) is an 'organisation development' organisation, which works with educational institutions to enhance their capacity for managing change. The Education Policy Unit (EPU) is a leader in the country in research and development for higher education, while the Centre for Adult and Continuing Education (CACE) has a long history of involvement with adult education, particularly programmes to do with combating gender and

racial oppression.

The size and composition of the university has changed substantially over time. From about 2 000 students in 1975, there was an increase to about 4 000 in 1980 and 9 000 in 1987 (Van den Berg, 1994). By 1993 the enrolment was 12 554. Significantly, 49 percent of these were women. Approximately 40 percent of students were classified African (Black), as opposed to 1,5 percent ten years earlier (UWC Office for Development and Public Affairs, no date). By the year 2000, however, registration had dropped to 9 686 students. The reasons for this include the fact that, with the demise of apartheid, many students who might have previously attended UWC now moved to previously White universities, while financial restraints continued to dog the families of students traditionally attracted to UWC.

Although the origins of UWC were as a university specifically established for those classified by the apartheid state as Coloured, it is significant to note that the number of Black students now surpasses the number of Coloured students. While figures for the HDE class itself were not available, figures for the whole university indicate that in 2000, there were nearly 5 000 Black students registered and nearly 4 000 Coloured students.

Whereas initially students had been mainly drawn from the communities of the Western Cape, students now come from all over the country. By the early 1990s the medium of instruction and communication had changed from mainly Afrikaans to mainly English. Although English is not the mother tongue of most of the students, it is a common language of the majority of students. This shift in language use has not been an easy transition, giving rise to heated debates about language policies, medium of instruction, the relationship between language and learning, and about the identity of the university. It has also, ironically, contributed to the drop in enrolment as many Afrikaans-speaking Coloured students moved away from UWC as English became more dominant.

2.2   The Faculty of Education

The recent history of the Faculty of Education is intimately tied up with the anti-apartheid and social reconstructionist history of UWC. In the 1970s the dominant orientation in the Faculty was that of Fundamental Pedagogics, while in the 1980s the Faculty began increasingly to identify with the People's Education for People's Power movement, a national resistance movement seeking to establish a non-racial, non-sexist and democratic political and educational system in the country.

The dominant approach to teacher education in some universities and in the majority of colleges, even in the early 1990s, was Fundamental Pedagogics (Sieborger and Kenyon, 1992; Hofmeyr and Hall, 1995), described as follows:

> Fundamental Pedagogics is the dominant theoretical discourse in South African teacher education. It provides little illumination of the present social and educational order, of possible alternatives to that order or how teachers might

contribute to transformation. By excluding the political as a legitimate dimension of theoretical discourse, Fundamental Pedagogics offers neither a language of critique nor a language of possibility (Enslin, 1990: 78).

Enslin explains how, through an elaborate logic, Fundamental Pedagogics identified itself as a neutral science, cordoned off from questions around ideology or politics. By separating pedagogy from any discussion of power and privilege, Fundamental Pedagogics managed to create a discourse of silence and acceptance about the role of education in society. An astounding picture presents itself, of generations of young people who were living under a system of racism and domination, learning not to ask questions about the link between educational policies and practices and the oppressive policies ruling their lives. (That this was not entirely successful is, of course, illustrated by the crucial role played by educational institutions in the history of resistance in the country).

Enslin herself notes the different discourse at UWC:

> There the theoretical discourse could be described as eclectic, offering critical perspectives on education through liberal and Marxist perspectives. It is significant that both these perspectives treat the political as central to a critical understanding of schooling in South Africa and to future possibilities for South African education (1990: 88).

An extract from the Faculty mission statement of 1992 gives some illustration of the spirit of the Faculty at the time:

> As the Faculty of Education at UWC we aim:
> -to contribute to the development of educational theory and practice in a rigorous academic and professional way
> -to participate, in a spirit of challenge, in the reconstruction and development of education in South Africa to redress historical inequities ...
>
> We locate our work in the social, cultural, political, economic and ecological development of the region, the country and the continent (Mission statement, 1992).

Expanding student numbers in the Faculty in the late 1980s meant that many new staff were appointed in the early 1990s, so that by the mid-1990s there were forty members on the academic staff. Many of these people had been involved in the People's Education movement, and they provided the catalyst for much of the new thinking in the Faculty.

At the time of writing (2000), the Faculty of Education was facing a new set of historical circumstances. Many staff had moved into other institutions or into government or parastatal structures and, due to fiscal restraints and dropping enrolments at the university, these staff were not always replaced. Increased competitiveness for a dwindling market of Education students placed UWC at a disadvantage to its neighbouring universities, where better facilities attracted

the more academically-able students. The student body increasingly was drawn from the poorer sections of society, in particular from rural African backgrounds, where inadequate schooling meant that students were often academically weak. Nevertheless, the spirit of UWC was still very much alive, as was evidenced by the comment at a Faculty review of the HDE programme, where lecturers remarked that one of the strengths of the Faculty was: "*Our strength lies mainly in our commitment and in our critical edge, and the fact that we have our heads in the clouds but our feet on the ground*!" (Final Year Teacher Education programme review, 2000, p.3).

CHAPTER 3

THE CURRICULUM OF THE HDE PROGRAMME

The history of UWC has impacted significantly on the conceptualisation and design of the teacher education programme. This section describes and discusses the key features of the curriculum of the HDE programme.

3.1   Conceptualisation and organisation

The pre-service teacher education diploma runs over one academic year and is geared towards training student teachers to teach in secondary schools (Grades 8 to 12). At the time of writing, new nomenclature for programmes was being instituted by the South African Qualifications Authority, and the Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) would soon change to be called the Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The term HDE is, however, still used in this paper.

Students enter the pre-service teacher education diploma in two ways. The majority first do a three year Bachelors degree and then follow this with a year-long teaching diploma. Many, however, make use of the so-called 'non-degree' route, where students without a matric exemption are allowed to enter a four-year teaching qualification. In the non-graduate qualification, some Education courses are followed prior to the teaching diploma itself. In 2000, 170 students came in through the post-graduate route, and 95 through the non-graduate route.

The programme is structured in the following way for all students, regardless of their entry route. Students do two subject methods, these being the secondary school subjects which they are then qualified to teach. All students also complete a generic Education Theory course, which provides a backdrop to thinking about a range of topics in education. In addition, all students spend ten weeks doing Teaching Practice. The format and timing of the Teaching Practice has changed over the years, but since 1995 has taken the form of students spending an entire term as one blocked period in a school.

The so-called 'theory-practice debate' has influenced the format and timing of teaching practice in the Faculty of Education over the last ten years:

> Over the past ten years or so the faculty has shifted from those approaches to teacher education that emphasise (largely decontextualized) subject content and teaching strategies and techniques. It has moved away from the view that theory must first be learnt and then applied to practice, that good teaching comes about mainly by learning a body of content and an appropriate set of skills and strategies for applying these. It has inclined towards the view that good teaching develops through the practice of practising teaching and within the context of a clarification

of the concept of professional competence ... [with more attention to] a reflective stance in respect of one's teaching and learning ... and an appreciation for those contextual matters that impact on teaching, learning and education (Jantjes, Small and Smith, 1995: 151).

The teacher education curriculum at UWC has many roots in the resistance to apartheid education of the 1980s and the politics of reconstruction and development of the 1990s. But how does the curriculum compare with other conceptions of teacher education more broadly?

Gore (1995) argues that pre-service teacher education can be located within two broad perspectives, one emphasising technical rationality and the other emphasising reflectivity. She equates the first perspective with teacher education which trains teachers in a set of narrowly defined competencies. The second perspective introduces more deliberately the notions of morals, values, purposes and social goals into teacher education.

Liston and Zeichner (1991) have tracked reforms in teacher education in the United States in recent years and have placed these within four distinct traditions. The first, the academic tradition, emphasizes the teacher's role as a scholar and subject matter specialist. The second, the social-efficiency tradition, emphasizes the acquisition of specific and observable skills of teaching that are assumed to be related to pupil learning. Performance is here assumed to be the most valid measure of teaching competence. The developmentalist tradition has its roots in the child study movement and is based on the assumption that the natural order of the development of the learner provides the basis for determining what should be taught, both to pupils and to their teachers.

The fourth tradition, the social-reconstructionist tradition, defines schooling and teacher education as crucial elements in a movement towards a more just society. Programmes here are linked by:

the common desire to prepare teachers who have critical perspectives on the relationship between schooling and societal inequities and a moral commitment to correcting those inequities through their daily classroom and school activities (Liston and Zeichner, 1991: 33).

A slightly different conceptualisation of teacher education is presented by Diamond (1991) who also distinguishes between four approaches to teacher education: competency-based, personalistic, language and learning, and perspective transformation.

A competency-based approach centres on the prior specification of competencies that teachers should acquire in order to perform certain tasks. Personalistic teacher education tries to facilitate personal growth and insight in the prospective teacher. A language and learning approach encourages teachers to talk and write about their experiences, and so to generate knowledge, understanding and meaning. This is in some contrast to the fourth approach, perspective transformation, which seeks to go beyond teachers' existing experience to enlarge awareness of personal and social constructs and, in so doing, to develop the capacity for self-direction.

To a large extent lecturers at UWC have the autonomy to design their own courses, and it is likely that different components of the pre-service programme contain elements from all the above traditions. However, perhaps because of the history of UWC itself, or the mission of the Faculty of Education, many courses within the Faculty would probably identify with the ethos of Liston and Zeichner's social-reconstructionist tradition or Diamond's perspective transformation approach.

The objectives of the programme (Student Guide 2000) shows that three out of the four aims are skill-based. That is to say that the student teachers are expected to develop skills in managing classroom environment, designing teaching and learning resources and teaching specific subject area. The fourth aim is the only one that is knowledge-based. Therefore it is pertinent that the whole programme should be orientated towards practice rather theory. One way this can be achieved is to give more emphasis to subject method courses. However as it was rightly pointed by one of the lecturers interviewed, subject method courses are more expensive to run than Education Theory courses. The Education Theory courses have been described as very 'cost effective'. In order to produce future teachers of high calibre it would be necessary to consider the pedagogical (the teaching and learning) effectiveness of the programme alongside its cost effectiveness. Another way a skill-based objective can be achieved is to give greater field experience to the trainees. In other words the teaching practice period should be of a reasonable length to allow for experiential learning to take place.

3.2   Education Theory

The shift in the Faculty thinking to issues of professional competence, reflection and contextual education have impacted heavily on the conceptualisation and design of the Education Theory component of the programme. During 1995 extensive curriculum renewal took place and by 1996 there were no courses under the rubric of traditional theoretical or foundation disciplines. Six cross-curricular modules are offered, under the heading 'Preparing to teach in the South today'. The themes of the six modules are congruent with the aim of the HDE programme, to train teachers to be transformative agents of society. They are: Conceptions of Teaching and Learning (Module 1), Organising Learning (Module 2), Managing Classrooms (Module 3), Teaching a Diversity of Learners (Module 4), Orderliness and Chaos (Module 5) and Education and Development (Module 6). Within these modules lectures are presented on themes such as the new national curriculum, teaching in large classes, critical thinking skills, teaching for diversity, environmental contexts and the policy process.

In 2000 a new component was introduced, called Contemporary Challenges in Education. This course was another attempt to bring a greater awareness among student teachers of their future roles and responsibilities as teachers. The course includes topics such as language and learning, HIV/AIDS education and inclusive education.

In addition, in order to expand the skills of the student teachers a number of optional extra courses are offered in the faculty. These include a sexuality education course which is run by a

local non-governmental organisation (the Planned Parenthood Association), a first aid course and a course to help develop teaching and learning materials. In addition, students are encouraged to enrol for a computer literacy course. The level of computer literacy of students is generally very poor and a large number of students enrol for this course. All of these course, however, have to be paid for in addition to the normal fees, and given the poverty of most of the students, many of them cannot afford to do these courses.

3.3   Teaching styles and methods

Reorganising the course materials into new themes and titles does not in itself ensure the realisation of the set targets for the course. An important issue is the delivery of the course content. This includes the teaching styles and methods employed by the individual lecturers. Interviews with some of the lecturers regarding this issue show that a variety of teaching styles and methods are employed. It is evident from the interviews that the styles and methods employed by the lecturers are largely determined by the class size. For the Education Theory courses there is a tendency towards using less interactive, one-way lecture methods. The reason given was because of the large number of student teachers attending these courses. One lecturer indicated that there could be as many as two hundred student teachers in one lecture session and poor facilities in the lecture hall has inhibited this lecturer from using more interactive and participatory approach.

Subject method course lecturers have smaller classes and are able to employ a variety of teaching methods to deliver the course content. The smaller number of student teachers attending these courses enables greater contact with the student teachers. However the limiting factor is time. With one practical and one theory lesson per week (a total of about three hours contact time), subject method lecturers find it difficult to deliver the contents of respective courses effectively. They feel that there is insufficient time for effective collaboration and interaction to take place between student teachers and lecturers. Effective collaboration and interaction are important ingredients for the internalisation of the stated aims and objectives of the whole programme.

Another important issue with regards to teaching styles and methods is the knowledge, skills and experience of lecturers conducting the various courses on the HDE programme. The lecturers have a major responsibility to initiate awareness and reflection among student teachers on the programme. They would need to have the necessary skills and experience to do this within the short span of the course and the little contact time that has been allotted to them. Interviews with several Education Theory and subject method lecturers shows that all have had at least three years of teaching experience at schools, with most having had much more. Lecturers show an awareness of the realities that exist at schools and the problems and challenges that future teachers in South Africa will face. The lecturers also indicated in the interviews their efforts to keep abreast with recent developments in Education generally and in their respective field of expertise, through conference attendance, collaboration with colleagues from other institutions, use of the Internet, etc.

3.4   Teaching resources and course materials

The following extract from the Course Outline 2000 of the HDE programme clearly spells out the responsibilities of the student teachers on the programme:

> The course is based on a conception of learning which is different from that which you experienced at school or even university in your undergraduate study. It places the responsibility for learning on YOU, the student. You are expected to spend a substantial portion of your study time on independent learning (Course Outline 2000, p.8).

Due to the emphasis on independent learning the course designers of the Education Theory component of the programme have provided student teachers with course materials in the form of compulsory readings and exercises appropriate to the particular module theme. The modules have been put together by the lecturers of the respective courses.

As the student teachers are expected to spend a major portion of their learning time on the modules, the organisation of the modules must be clear and easy to follow. All the six Education Theory modules are organised differently according to the taste of the individual lecturers who have put them together. For an outside reader, there appears to be a lack of uniformity and consistency in the organisation of the modules. For instance, one module may give student teachers a brief summary of the various sections in the module, the questions they need to reflect upon and suggested further reading. This overview at the beginning of the module will help to give student teachers a clear idea of what to expect in the readings and the area they need to focus on. On the other hand, other modules only state the general aims and contents page at the beginning, with no clear indication of what the student teachers need to focus on in each reading and very little guidance in the form of questions for the student teachers to reflect on. This may distract student teachers from the need to read carefully and focus on the vital message in the readings.

One of the criticisms that can perhaps be levelled at the course, and particularly the theory courses, is that students do not have to read outside of the course readers in order to pass the course. This is due to a number of factors which include the fact that the university library has an inadequate collection of books on education, particularly more recent books. In fact, no new books were bought at all in education over the 1998-1999 period due to severe budgetary constraints in the library budget. In addition, due to the large classes, students were not required to write assignments for the theory classes and thus were not forced to read anything other than the course reader. In addition, no prescribed books were used due to the poor financial position of most of the students. It was generally assumed by lecturers that students could not afford to buy books. A number of lecturers have expressed grave concern about the fact that many of the HDE students pass through their university years without ever having had to read a whole book for their coursework and that this practice is continued in the HDE course. This results in a student teachers who are used to having all their notes given to them in the form of handouts and with poor skills to actually search for relevant material and a poor wider general knowledge. This will inevitably lead to difficulties in teaching according to the new curriculum, in which teachers

are permitted and encouraged to use resources that they find for themselves. In addition, they should have a wide general knowledge in order to make the links between their subject method and other subject methods and between what they are teaching and what is happening outside of the school.

3.5 Language of instruction

All readers (except for the subject methods of Afrikaans and Xhosa) are in English, and English constitutes the dominant language of instruction and, most importantly, of assessment in the HDE programme. Student teachers need a fairly good command of the English language to be able to comprehend, appreciate and assimilate the lectures and course materials. However this is not always the case, as indicated by one of the senior subject method lecturers interviewed, who said: *"Increasingly students are not proficient in the English language and lack the knowledge about the language."*

There are now eleven official languages in South Africa and using English as the medium of instruction can be problematic to a large number of students following the HDE programme. While one might argue that the HDE programme favours students with a better command of the English language, lecturers are aware of the problems faced by student teachers. Readings are selected to take students' command of English into account, and examination questions are mostly marked without penalising students for grammatical or stylistic errors. This raises its own pedagogical dilemmas, as lecturers often find it difficult to distil students' conceptual understanding from their poor use of English

3.6 Teaching Practice

Teaching Practice is at the core of any pre-service teacher training programme. It provides the hands-on opportunity for student teachers to experiment and experience real classroom situations. It opens the way for student teachers to put theory into practice, and to reflect on their practice. The Teaching Practice Guide of the HDE programme clearly states these aims in its opening comments:

> Pre-service teacher education aims to ensure that future teachers gain insight into teaching, schools and classrooms before they engage in the serious and professional practice of education. The teaching practice programme has been designed to enable students to observe and make a close study of, school as a formal institution of education and to experience the complexity of classroom behaviour (Teaching Practice Guide: p 1).

For their Teaching Practice, all student teachers spend about ten weeks in a local school. There, under the guidance of the teachers at the school, they are expected to plan and teach at least two lessons a day, to observe the classroom practice of other teachers and their peers, and to participate in the life of the school. They are also required to keep a journal, and to complete a

number of assignments relating their field experience to their studies at the university. During this time, university-appointed supervisors visit the school three or four times, but on the whole the student teachers are under the guidance of the teachers in the school.

Over the years the school-based component of the diploma has undergone many changes towards restructuring and reconceptualisation. Jantjes, Small and Smith (1995) have outlined in some detail the restructuring that has taken place, and have linked this to new conceptions of the role of Teaching Practice. The 1970s, they argue, was a time when teacher training at UWC was dominated by competency-based models and Fundamental Pedagogics, with the emphasis in Teaching Practice being on student teachers' classroom performance rather than on developing the ability to reflect on or discuss school life beyond the classroom. During the late 1970s and 1980s student uprisings all over the country focused attention on the oppressive nature of South African education. Jantjes, Small and Smith (1995) describe the impact of this on the UWC pre-service teacher education programme. A two week period of school observation was instituted early in the year and, instead of being assessed on classroom performance only, student teachers were expected to write an assignment on the social environment at the school.

To enhance the possibilities for student teachers to link the different aspects of their course, a model of continuous teaching practice was implemented in 1992 and 1993. This model expected student teachers to spend one day a week at school, and four days at university, the argument being that this would give them more opportunity to plan their lessons and reflect on their experiences at schools.

The system of continuous teaching practice was short-lived. Part of its demise derived from the unpredictability of the timetable at schools where student teachers were doing their Teaching Practice. Often student teachers could not find out a week ahead of time what they would be expected to teach on their day at school. While this is clearly an untenable situation for school pupils, student teachers and teachers alike, many teachers seemed to accept it as the way schools 'are', and criticism was levelled at UWC for introducing what they saw as an 'impractical' programme.

In 1994 the Faculty changed its model to sending student teachers to a school for the entire second term. The motivation here was that opportunities would still exist for student teachers to reflect on practice and link their school-based experience to their university courses, but that the model would be more practical and manageable than the continuous model. As a bonus, it was argued, student teachers would be able to become part of the staff for a full term and so participate in all aspects of school life, like doing administrative work and assisting with tests and examinations. In 2000, the block period was shifted to the third term. The reason for this was the strong feeling that student teachers needed more than one term at university before being sent out to the schools.

One of the main issues raised during interviews with several lecturers was the block arrangement of Teaching Practice. The one-block ten week period has, according to some lectures, its pitfalls compared to a split Teaching Practice period. Being placed in only one school can limit the student teachers' experience, as school environments and cultures differ greatly. This is

particularly true in the case of South Africa, which is undergoing a transition in every sphere of life. If the student teachers are to be aware of the great diversity in school environments and cultures then, it is argued, they must be given the opportunity to do their Teaching Practice at two or more sites. Robinson (1999) found that student teachers on Teaching Practice report both positive and negative experiences. The placement of student teachers in a second school, it is argued, could open the way for improvements for student teachers who have not done well in the first school for whatever reason.

Over the years the cohort of schools with which the Faculty works has also changed. Whereas in the past students chose to go to the school which was closest to their homes or to the campus, schools close to the campus are barely used any longer, as many of these schools teach through the medium of Afrikaans. Many more schools in the former African (Black) areas are now used as Teaching Practice schools, as these are the schools which offer Xhosa and where many of the students say they feel most comfortable. The large number of students with Xhosa as one of their teaching subjects means that even primary schools have to be drawn on for Teaching Practice sites.

It is important to note, however, that former Black schools tend to be attended for Teaching Practice by Black students only, while the former White and Coloured schools are attended by both Black and Coloured student teachers. Attempts by the Faculty of Education to expose student teachers to different racial experiences are largely constrained by the fact that so many student teachers have Xhosa as their subject method, and that this language is taught in very few schools formerly for Whites and Coloureds. To compound the problem of ongoing racial separation, very few (if any) of the Coloured students in the Faculty even speak, let alone teach, Xhosa. Few of the Coloured and White lecturing staff have sufficient command of Xhosa to do proper supervision of Xhosa lessons, and contract lecturers, teachers and even student teachers themselves are often called on to help university staff with this task.

With regard to assessment, there has been a move from summative assessment of the student teacher's classroom performance during Teaching Practice to continuous and formative assessment of the student teacher's professional competence over time. Professional competence is understood as including good teaching, knowledge of the subject, ability to critically reflect, involvement in extramural activities, enthusiasm and seriousness about the profession of teaching, and a collegial relationship with the staff, peers, pupils and the community.

New kinds of assignments have been introduced into the Teaching Practice programme. These include journal writing, close observation of teachers in subjects other than their own and peer evaluation. All these assignments embody the interest in notions like the teacher as reflective practitioner, inquiry-based learning and action research. The interest in reflective teaching is part of an ongoing interest and commitment in the Faculty of Education to developing the autonomy of learners in an educational system with a history of rote activity. Many members of staff were drawn by the possibilities for professional growth suggested by reflective teaching: analysis of moral and ethical issues in teaching, taking responsibility for action, and examining practice with a view to improvement.

Teaching Practice requires careful planning and implementation and the Teaching Practice Guide shows the meticulous planning that has to take place before Teaching Practice can be successfully implemented. This handbook gives detailed information about the expectations of the Faculty of Education of its trainees while on Teaching Practice.

An issue of significance that emerged from the interviews with lecturers is the system of mentoring of student teachers by teachers at the school. During Teaching Practice the student teachers are under the guidance and supervision of two subject teachers (mentors). The mentors' assessment of student teachers' teaching accounts for 30% of the final mark. It is thus obvious that the mentor plays an important part in the professional development of the student teacher. Some of the lecturers interviewed expressed concern about the ability of some mentors to give the appropriate guidance to student teachers, especially in reflective practice and in employing teaching and learning methods that they are not familiar with. While lecturers are strongly encouraged to liaise with the mentor teachers, and even to conduct workshops on the expectations of Teaching Practice, in reality this usually does not happen.

The Teaching Practice supervisor is the person responsible for the overall assessment of the student teachers under his/her supervision. Two issues emerged in the interviews concerning the appointment of Teaching Practice supervisors. The first was the training of the lecturers at UWC to be Teaching Practice supervisors. Lecturers felt that supervisors need training in negotiating with schools, especially with the co-ordinating teachers and mentors. Subject method lecturers also raised the concern that frequently supervisors are not subject specialists and therefore are not able to guide or assess student teachers effectively. In fact, supervisors are responsible for all the student teachers at a particular school, no matter what their subject. This is particularly problematic when student teachers are teaching in Xhosa, which most of the supervisors cannot understand.

The second issue raised in the interviews with lecturers was the relationship between the Teaching Practice supervisor and mentors at school. The supervisors only visit the school three or four times during the duration of the Teaching Practice. There is not sufficient time for dialogue between the supervisors and the mentors for effective collaboration to take place. The lack of communication between supervisor and the mentor may affect the professional development and assessment process of the student teachers during Teaching Practice.

A further concern expressed is that, due to staff shortages, the Faculty makes extensive use of contract supervisors from outside the Faculty, particularly for the supervision of the large number of Xhosa method students. While an attempt is made to introduce these external supervisors to the Faculty's approach to teaching and learning, there is little control over how these supervisors are actually working with the student teachers when at the schools.

3.7   Assessment

The assessment method varies greatly between the various components of the PGCE programme. The most common methods of assessing student teachers include examinations, tests, portfolios,

and assignments in the form of essays with exams being the dominant mode for large classes. In fact there is a heavy emphasis on examination as evident from the allocation of 50%-60% of the assessment in most courses to examinations. One weakness of the programme is that given the intake of the students there is limited opportunity for developing academic skills through essay writing. In fact, is some of the theory papers, multiple-choice questions are still the preferred assessment mode.

A closer look at one of the test papers (Module 2 Education Theory 401 march 2000) shows that a great majority of the questions (4 out of 5) requires student teachers to remember and apply knowledge. There is a lack of questions requiring them to use higher thinking skills of analysing, synthesising and evaluating. This is in contrary to the aim of 'producing thinking teachers' as expressed by the Dean of the Education Faculty.

A major problem of assessment is the lack information given to student teachers about the type of assessment they will undergo during their training. There is no Assessment Guide and the Student Guide 2000 only briefly mentions about examinations. There is no mention of assessment in any of the other documents including the Course Outline 2000 and course modules. However the Teaching Practice Guide does spell out clearly the type and criteria for assessment during teaching practice. A similar overall Assessment Guide would be beneficial to the student teachers as it will help them to focus their efforts towards achieving the aims and criteria set out.

With the drop in student numbers on the HDE course, there is a move back toward setting assignments rather than tests for the theory courses. These require students to search for information and also to show that they can apply the theoretical knowledge that they have gained in this course. In addition, exam papers focus on essay type questions which aim at evaluating to what extent the student teachers are able to make sense of and apply the knowledge and concepts that they are taught in the theory classes.

3.8   Quality Assurance

One method of quality assurance employed on the HDE programme is the use of external examiners. The lecturers give mixed opinions about the effectiveness of external examiners' feedback. One of the main concerns is that there is no consistent format of feedback from external examiners. This has resulted in different lecturers having different levels of feedback. Some lecturers indicated that a more uniform system of feedback from external examiners should be developed to optimise the benefits from such quality assurance methods.

A concern raised during the interviews with lecturers was the use of external markers. Due to the large number of students in certain courses it has often been necessary to employ external markers. However some lecturers felt that the markers do not undergo proper training. They expressed doubts whether this system will ensure consistency in the assessment process of student teachers.

Another important form of quality assurance is student evaluations. All lectures are expected to ask students to evaluate their courses but there is not always sufficient control that this is actually done.

A further, and very important, form of quality assurance is that of course reviews. Lecturers meet at intervals of 1 to 2 years to look at their courses and to discuss changes. An extensive review process of the HDE programme was held during 2000 and a number of recommendations for improving the course were given. These included doing more research into students' backgrounds and developing the relationship with schools. At a curricular level, the recommendations included improving communication between subject method and Theory lecturers, enhancing academic skills development amongst students, improving teaching materials and addressing students' fears and anxieties about Teaching Practice. In addition, course committees are in the process of being set up to review all sections of the course on an annual basis. These will comprise the lecturers concerned, student representation, experts from the field and academics from other universities.

3.9   Conclusion

The HDE programme was designed to produce professional teachers who are able to take on the numerous challenges facing teachers in present day South Africa. The programme aims to produce enthusiastic teachers who will strive to become professional teachers through a process of lifelong learning. There are many factors determining the success of the programme and it is hoped that this analysis will help in highlighting some of these factors. Generally the lecturers interviewed were optimistic that the quality of graduates produced through this programme is good. They also felt, however, that there is much room for improvement.

In subsequent sections of this report other perceptions and experiences of the programme will be presented. Data from student teacher and lecturer questionnaires, as well as from student teacher interviews will complement the information presented thus far, and will provide further detail on some of the issues raised in this section.

CHAPTER 4

EXPERIENCES AND VIEWS OF LECTURERS

This section documents the experiences and views of lecturers teaching on the programme. It draws mainly on the data of eight questionnaires and is supplemented by comments from interviews with five lecturers on the programme as well as the Dean of the Faculty of Education.

4.1   Biographical information of lecturers who were interviewed

Of those who completed the questionnaire, one lecturer was between 31 and 35 years old, one was between 36 and 40, two were between 41 and 45, two were between 46 and 50 and two were over 50. Four were males and four were females. Using apartheid terminology, one was formerly classified African, one Coloured and four White. Two did not complete the information on racial categories. While no reasons were given, it is likely that they did not want to associate themselves with a racial classification. Two of the respondents were placed on the rank of lecturer, four were senior lecturers and two were associate professors. The generic term 'lecturers' is used in this report to denote all the respondents. All were permanent members of staff.

The respondents represented a range of specialisations within the HDE programme, including five who taught on the subject methodology courses, five on the Education Theory programme and three who taught on both aspects of the programme. The number of lectures per year ranged between eleven in total for the year, to one per week (about 26 for the year). The different amounts of time spent lecturing is difficult to compare within the sample, as some lecturers share courses (and thus have less lecturing time on that course) and others teach entire courses.

The highest qualification of two of the respondents was a Masters degree, while six had doctorates. Seven of the eight had a teaching diploma. Only two were still studying, most probably the two who did not have a doctorate.

Five staff members had four to six years teaching experience at a high school, while two had sixteen to seventeen years high school teaching experience. None had primary school teaching experience.

At the time of the research (2000) experience lecturing at university ranged from one year (one person) to seven years (one person) to four people who had ten to thirteen years experience. One had twenty years experience teaching in a university, and another thirty years. Only one person had taught at a college, and had eleven years experience of this.

A strong degree of job stability is indicated by the fact that four of the eight lecturers had been at UWC for between one and seven years, three between ten and thirteen years and one for twenty years.

4.2   Perceptions of the job

When asked to indicate which aspects of their job they found most attractive, lecturers listed most aspects of their work as attractive, including supervising students on Teaching Practice, developing student teachers' professional skills, subject teaching, developing curriculum materials and research.   Administration is the one activity which is regarded as less attractive by most of the lecturers.

Given the choice of where they would like to work, six of the seven who responded to this question indicated that they would like to stay in the Faculty of Education at UWC, with only one indicating that he would like to move to another university.   Nobody expressed interest in moving to a technikon, a school or to the provincial or national department of education.

4.3   Teaching

The workload of lecturers is described in the account of all the courses which the eight respondents taught in 2000.   What is most significant to this study is the fact that their involvement in the pre-service teacher education programme constituted only a small part of their overall work load.   While this allows for cross-fertilisation across programmes and levels, it also means that there are no lecturers who are able to put their full energies into the development of the HDE.   The following were the courses in which the respondents to the questionnaire were involved in 2000:

Undergraduate
Sociology of Education
Didactics
Philosophy of Education

Higher Diploma in Education
Method of English
Method of History
Method of Xhosa
Method of Afrikaans
Method of Guidance
Education Theory
Xhosa Communication
Afrikaans Communication

Further Diploma in Education
School management
School administration

Bachelor of Education (Honours)
Research in language education
Education and schooling
Education in South Africa
Orientations in language teaching
Metatheory
Curriculum innovation
Mentoring and teacher education
Current issues in education
Cognitive development
Lifeskills and Aids education

Masters
Discourse analysis
Language teaching and learning
Research approaches in language education
Education policy
Creativity in reading and writing
Proposal development
Leadership in education
Leadership and management theories
Research into curriculum
Theory and practice of educational change
Masters programme in teacher education for Eritrean students

As can be seen from the above list, the lecturers were involved in teaching a large number of diverse courses. Over and above their normal teaching, lecturers were also involved in research supervision. All eight respondents were supervising Masters students, with three having more than six students. Five also had between one and three Doctoral students.

4.4   Experiences of teaching on the HDE course

As a way of gauging the most common teaching methods on the HDE course, lecturers were asked to think about their teaching periods over the last four weeks of teaching they had done on the HDE programme, and to estimate the proportion of the time they spent on lecturing, using small group discussion (less than 20 students), using large group discussions and doing practical work.

For the majority, lecturing had been the most common form of instruction, in particular for those who worked with big groups. Subject methodology lecturers (who have smaller groups of students in their classes) indicated a greater variety of forms of instruction.

Lecturers were also asked to indicate what would help them to teach more effectively. There was a fair level of agreement that an improved pedagogical context would help lecturers to teach more effectively. Improved student motivation was listed most often, with more lectures, smaller lecture groups and stricter selection criteria also being noted often as important or very important. The poor practical facilities were noted by some lecturers as contributing to high levels of stress. They underlined the frustration of having to cope with poor resources (e.g. broken overhead projectors, venues that were often dirty, broken furniture and so on). This was compounded by very old computers, which were unable to cope with newer programmes, lack of printing facilities in the faculty and ongoing difficulties with getting adequate administrative support. In addition poor library facilities meant that they often did not set assignments in which students had to make use of the library.

The issue of lecturers' perceptions of student motivation is a point that will be taken up again in the conclusion, as significant differences emerged on this point in the comments of lecturers and students.

4.5 Assessment

Different forms of assessment were all indicated as happening regularly in the different course components of the HDE, including multiple choice, open response questions, essay questions, assignments, projects and practical work. Of all of these, essay questions were used far more frequently than the other forms of assessment. There was an equal balance of lecturers who indicated that they often developed their tests and exams on their own, and often with other lecturers.

A very important question related to lecturers' perceptions of what prevented students from doing better on their tests and exams. Overwhelmingly, language level was identified as the factor impeding students doing better on tests and exams. This factor was added to by one lecturer who found students' poor reading ability to be a hindering factor.

The responses to the question of what prevents students from doing better in tests and exams are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Views of lecturers on what prevents students from doing better in tests and exams (N = 8)

	Very important	Important	Minor importance	Not a problem
Lack of time to study the subject	1	0	2	3
Large teaching groups	4	1	0	1
Language level of students	8	0	0	0
Low student motivation	5	2	1	0
Low academic level of students	4	2	1	0
Lack of textbooks	0	3	3	1
Lack of practical facilities	0	3	2	1
Student disruption	0	0	4	2
Other: reading ability	1			

4.6   Curriculum development

There was a balance of lecturers who indicated that they planned their courses on their own, and with other lecturers. All indicated that they had devised course outlines for their courses, had written course material for their own courses and had worked with other lecturers to produce shared teaching material. Three indicated experience with working with lecturers at other universities to produce teaching materials, or working with NGOs on curriculum development projects.

4.7   Teaching Practice

Lecturers were asked how well they thought the programme's Teaching Practice model prepared students to teach in relation to a number of areas. Most responses to this question clustered around Adequate and tended towards Not Well. Clearly, lecturers at UWC themselves do not feel fully satisfied with the way in which the course prepares student teachers for Teaching Practice. The information is summarised in the table below.

Table 2: Views of lecturers on the extent to which the HDE course prepares student teachers for Teaching Practice (N = 8)

	Very well	Well	Adequate	Not well
Subject knowledge	1	1	3	3
Teaching skills	1	1	4	2
Classroom management	1	0	4	3
Professional attitudes	2	0	5	1
Use of teaching aids	0	2	4	2
Assessment	0	0	5	3

Most arrangements for Teaching Practice were rated by lecturers as good or adequate, including selection of schools, quality of experience for students, travel to school for UWC staff, duration and timing of Teaching Practice.

The issues of support from teachers and student teacher transport were rated as not good. Support from teachers is a theme which emerged strongly from the interviews with student teachers as well and which will be elaborated on in the conclusions. Student teacher transport is an annual problem, as very few students have their own transport, public transport is unreliable and expensive, and many students do not have financial resources to pay for daily transport to the school where they do their practice teaching for ten weeks.

Most lecturers felt that there were a range of initiatives which could make Teaching Practice preparation more valuable for student teachers. For all of the following, lecturers indicated that more or much more was needed: preparation at university, visits to schools by university lecturers, micro-teaching lessons at university, preparation in lesson planning, follow-up discussions at university and more involvement of school teachers. It was felt that no change was needed with regard to the provision of teaching materials, or the number of days on Teaching Practice.

Four lecturers indicated that they had assessed between five and ten students on Teaching Practice and three had assessed between eleven and fifteen student teachers. Two had visited between three and four schools, and five had visited one or two schools. This relates to the model of supervision at UWC, where lecturers assess student teachers in all subject methods, large numbers in some subject methods making it impossible for method lecturers to focus on their students only. All lecturers visited student teachers at least three times, with five lecturers going more than three times.

All lecturers indicated that they discuss the lessons with the students, that they give students written feedback on the lessons observed and that they mark student lesson plans. Significantly, only three discussed lessons they observed with the supervising school teacher.

It was interesting to note that lecturers could pinpoint the briefing and orientation before Teaching Practice as being at least ten hours. Preparation included lectures, discussion with lecturers, micro-teaching and, to a lesser extent, discussions with school teachers, school visits and project work. The responses to the question about discussion time after Teaching Practice were much more varied, however, with responses ranging from no discussion to more than twenty hours of discussion. The reason for this is probably that discussions at the university after Teaching Practice are not clearly timetabled and happen on a more random basis than the preparation before Teaching Practice. The issue of formal timetabling of reflection time after Teaching Practice is an important point for a teacher education programme that claims to be encouraging reflection on practice as a cornerstone of its approach.

Lecturers rated the lectures at the university as useful preparation for Teaching Practice. Discussions with lecturers and micro-teaching were also rated as useful or very useful. School

visits, teaching journals and discussions with school teachers were rated in a more varied way, with some lecturers seeing them as useful and some seeing them as not very useful.

4.8   Ideas on teaching

Lecturers were given a number of statements about teaching, teacher training and schools, and were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with these statements on the basis of their experience.   The statements are listed below, with a summary of responses.   A few interesting points are highlighted by the responses.

Firstly, it is noteworthy that lecturers have a high degree of confidence in their own programme. Most agree that the courses are well designed to prepare students for school teaching, that lecturers do know about teaching school learners, that there is not too much theory in the course, and that the subject courses are not too difficult.   In contrast, most believe that schools used for Teaching Practice do not provide good examples of teaching from which students can learn. Notwithstanding this last observation, the great majority of the lecturers feel that Teaching Practice is the most useful part of the training course.

With regard to university learning and lecturing, most lecturers indicated that they ask a lot of questions in class.   They repeat their earlier observation that students have weak study skills and that students' level of English prevents them from learning effectively.   Interestingly, in the light of recent policy reform, most do not agree that the Norms and Standards policy ensures that the student is better prepared for teaching. This may of course be due to the fact that new curricula within this policy had not yet been put into place at the time of the research.   Most do agree, however, that the impending changes in teacher education policy have inculcated a healthy debate about curriculum issues and contributed to lecturers' staff development.

The issue of large group teaching also stands out from the responses.   Most lecturers feel that student teachers learn best when in small groups.   They themselves also prefer working with student teachers in small groups.

Table 3: Views of lecturers on various aspects of teacher training (N = 8)

Relevance of Training	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Student teachers receive a lot of guidance from school teachers during teaching practice	0	2	4	2
The University courses are well designed to prepare students for school teaching	0	6	2	0
Most lecturers do not know much about teaching school learners	0	1	5	2
There is too much theory in the University courses	0	2	4	1
The subject courses at University are difficult for students	1	1	5	1
Teaching practice is the most useful part of the training course for teachers	0	7	1	0
Schools used for teaching practice do not provide good examples of teaching from which students can learn	2	4	2	0
University Learning and Lecturing				
I ask a lot of questions in class of my students	4	3	1	0
My students have very weak study skills	2	5	1	0
The English language level of my students prevents them from learning effectively	2	6	0	0
Students do not have to work hard at University to pass the examinations	0	3	3	2
I do not have a clear understanding of outcomes based education	0	1	5	2
NQF recommendations will not have much effect on my teaching	0	3	3	1
The Norms and Standards curriculum ensures that the student is better prepared for teaching	0	2	5	0
The changes in the teacher education curriculum has inculcated a healthy debate about curriculum issues and contributed to lecturers staff development.	0	6	1	0
Student teachers learn best when in small groups	2	4	1	0
Lecturers cannot do much to improve the academic ability of academically weak students	0	2	5	1
Young lecturers have better ideas about teaching than older lecturers	0	0	4	3
I prefer to lecture to student teachers in a large group rather than divide them into small groups	0	1	4	2
Students do not study independently and only do what they are asked to do.	3	1	3	0

4.9   Teacher education policy

At the time of the research, a new policy on teacher education was being introduced in South Africa, and many lecturers were involved in re-designing and re-registering their programmes according to this new policy.

Lecturers were asked how familiar they were with the COTEP (Committee on Teacher Education Policy, which was the precursor to the Norms and Standards) and the Norms and Standards for Educators. Nobody indicated a high degree of familiarity with COTEP, but four lecturers were at least familiar with its contents.   Three were unfamiliar with COTEP.   With regard to the Norms and Standards for Educators, two said they were very familiar with the policy, four were familiar, and one was unfamiliar with the document.

Two had been exposed to the contents of the Norms and Standards for Educators through seminars run by the Department of Education, and four by internal university seminars. Seven of the eight respondents had been exposed to the document by reading it. It is interesting to note the low level of active engagement of lecturers with the national Department of Education regarding the contents of the new policy and the extent to which lecturers have only drawn on their own internal resources in becoming familiar with the new policy.   Even institutionally, however, four of the lecturers indicated that they had discussed and/or debated the Norms and Standards with their colleagues only *"to some extent."*

One lecturer indicated strong support for what is envisaged in the Norms and Standards policy, four indicated mild support and two indicated little support.   Lecturers' support for the new teacher education policy is clearly not very strong, but they also do not oppose what is envisaged.   How this mild engagement with a new policy impacts on changing practice in teacher education would be an important follow-up piece of research.

Lecturers were asked the extent to which the subject they teach corresponds to the Norms and Standards. Most lecturers felt that their subject corresponded well to the new policy and that the following aspects of their course did not need changes or only needed minor changes: course objectives, knowledge content, practical work, relevance to student teachers, relevance to issues of diversity, recognition of language problems, recognition of conditions at schools. It was only in the area of assessment that the need for substantial change was strongly noted. The new policy is based on the notion of outcomes; it is not surprising, therefore, that lecturers should feel that they need to be more aware of the assessment of such outcomes.

CHAPTER 5

THE STUDENT TEACHERS ON THE HDE PROGRAMME

5.1   Introduction

This section of the report provides biographical information about the student teachers in the class of 2000, including such factors as age, gender, socio-economic status, educational level of parents, occupation of parents, financial position and academic history of the students. It also looks at student teachers' motivation to become a teacher. The data was collected by means of an entry questionnaire in March 2000, and a through a structured interview with a smaller sample of 18 students in October 2000.

5.2   Biographical information of student teachers interviewed

A total of four male and 14 female students were interviewed. Ten of the students were between 22 and 28 years old and seven were aged 30 to 38. One student did not divulge his age.
Eleven of the students were previously classified African (or Black) (according to apartheid policy and terminology). Eight were previously classified Coloured.

Eleven of the students were registered for the subject method History, ten for Xhosa, three for English, Guidance and Geography respectively, and one each for Afrikaans, Religious Education, Library, Business Economics and Latin. The most common combination of subject methods was that of History and Xhosa (9 student teachers). Again, this reflects the situation in the class as a whole, where in 2000, out of a class of 266, 170 were registered for the subject method of Xhosa and 148 for the subject method of History.

5.3   Biographical information of student teachers who completed the entry questionnaire

5.3.1   Age and Gender

The age range of the 178 student teachers who completed the entry level questionnaire was between 20 and 48 years (see Fig. 1). The majority (71.9%) of the students were between 22 and 30 years old, with a mean age of 25.7 years and a standard deviation of 8.05. More than two-thirds (68%) of the students were female and almost a third male (32%). Reflecting this trend, females predominated in all age groups (see Table 1)

Figure 1: Age distribution of student teachers (N = 178)
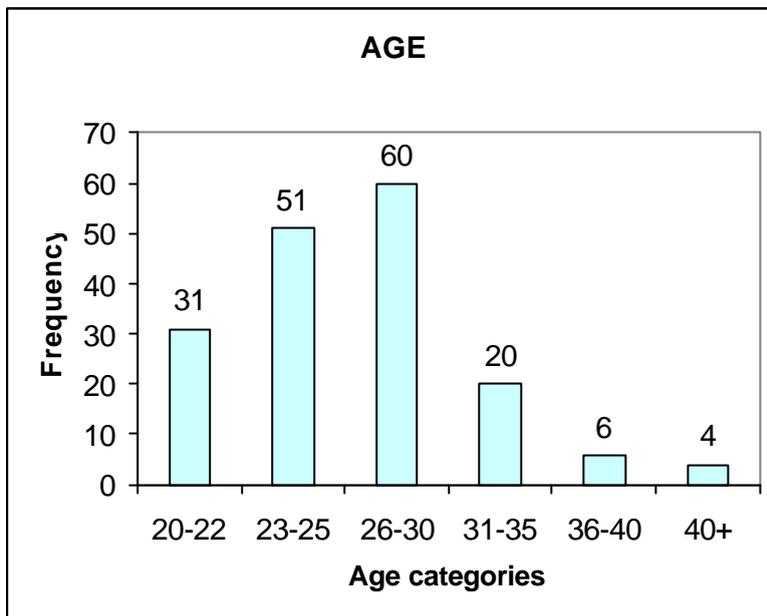
Table 4: Age by gender

Age	Female		Male	
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**
No response	5	2.8	1	.06
20-22	27	15.2	4	2.3
23-25	32	18.0	19	10.7
26-30	33	18.5	27	15.2
31-35	15	8.4	5	2.8
36-40	6	3.4	0	0
41+	3	1.7	1	.06

5.3.2   Home language and home province

The majority (83%) of the student teachers were Xhosa-speaking. The remainder spoke Afrikaans (5%), English (5%), Zulu (4%) and Tswana (1%). Most (73%) of the students came from the Eastern Cape, followed by the Western Cape (19%) and KwaZulu Natal (4%). The majority come from a rural background, with 74% having attended a rural primary school and only 21% an urban primary school.

5.3.3   Socio-economic status (SES)

A number of questions were asked that gave some indication about the socio-economic background of the students. From Table 5 below, it can be seen that most students came from families in which the parents owned their house (74%), although it must be kept in mind that of these, the majority came from rural areas, where house ownership is more common than in urban township areas. More than half of the students (54%), however, came from households without running water. Over 70% of the students came from homes with electricity and that own television sets. Most families also appeared to have access to a telephone (62%). However, owning a car and/or computer was rare, with less than 30% of families owning a car and less than 5% a computer.

Table 5: Indicators of socio-economic status

Parents own/have	YES		NO	
	N	%	N	%
Fridge	121	68.0	57	32.0
Video Recorder	57	32.0	121	68.0
Piped water	83	46.1	95	54.0
Electricity	127	71.3	51	28.7
Telephone	110	61.8	68	38.2
Computer	8	4.5	170	95.5
Car	48	27.0	130	73.0
Television	123	69.1	55	30.9
House	132	74.2	46	25.8

The highest educational level of the parents is also an indicator of SES. In response to the question on the highest educational level of their father, 25% of the students indicated that their fathers had attended high school, 24% that he had only attended primary school, and 13% that he had not attended school at all. Only nine percent indicated that their father had passed matric, and 3% each that their fathers had a university degree or technical diploma. As can be seen from these figures, just over a third (37%) of the students' fathers, therefore, had either left school during primary school and/or had no formal education at all. A large number of students did not respond to this question (N = 40) and it is possible that many of these did not respond because they felt embarrassed about the educational level of their fathers or felt that the question was intrusive or genuinely did not know the answer. It is therefore possible that a larger percentage of the students' fathers had only primary school and/or no formal education than the one-third cited above.

Similar figures were found regarding the highest educational level of the mothers, with 38% of the mothers with no formal education or only a primary level education (see Table 6). Slightly more of the mothers than the fathers had a matric certificate (12 % versus 9%), university degree (5% versus 3%) or a technical diploma (5% versus 3%).

Table 6: Highest educational level of parents

Highest educational level	Mother		Father	
	N	%	N	%
Did not attend school	25	14.04	23	12.92
Primary school	43	24.16	42	23.59
Standard 8	55	30.89	44	24.72
Matric	21	11.79	16	8.99
University degree	10	5.62	6	3.37
Technical diploma	8	4.49	5	2.81
No reply	16	8.99	42	23.59

From the replies to questions regarding the occupation of their parents, it appears that quite a number of mothers and/or fathers are either pensioners or receive a disability grant (15% of the mothers and 14% of the fathers). In addition 13% of the fathers and 3% of the mothers were deceased and a quarter of the mothers and 6% of the fathers were unemployed. Despite the fact that 63% of the sample said that they had a direct family member who was a teacher, only 10% of the mothers and 3% of the fathers were teachers. As can seen from Table 7 below, most of the other jobs mentioned are unskilled or semi-skilled, reflecting the low average educational level of the parents. Almost a quarter of the respondents did not reply to the question about their father's occupation and similarly 14% of the respondents did not give their mother's occupation. In line with the high rates of 'no response' to the questions regarding parental education level, this could similarly reflect discomfort and/or embarrassment about parents being either unemployed or working in subsistence agriculture or the informal sector.

Table 7: Occupation of parents

Occupation	Mother		Father	
	N	%	N	%
No response	23	13.5	46	25.8
Pensioner/Disability	27	15.2	24	13.5
Deceased	5	2.8	23	12.9
Unemployed	45	25.3	11	6.2
Teacher	17	9.6	6	3.4
Driver			9	5.1
Supervisor/Manager	1	0.6	5	2.8
Caretaker			4	2.2
General Assistant/ Stock controller			3	1.7
Office job	4	2.3		
Labourer/Painter/ Building contractor	3	1.7	14	7.9
Chief Executive Officer			1	0.6
Agriculturist			1	0.6
First Aid Worker/Nurse	7	3.9	1	0.6
Operator/Dry cleaner/ Cutter/Factory Worker	3	1.7	4	2.2
Self-employed	9	5.1	3	1.7
Waiter/Waitress/ Grill hand	1	0.6	1	0.6
Business person			1	0.6
Security Guard			3	1.7
Domestic/Municipal worker	33	18.5	4	2.2
Interpreter/TLC member			2	1.1
Crewman/Navy Sailor			2	1.1
Depot Scheduler			1	0.6
Sales Rep			1	0.6

In summary, it appears as if the majority of the UWC students in the 2000 cohort came from poorly educated or even illiterate families, with parents often living off pensions or disability grants or unemployed. In addition, in a number of cases one or both parents were deceased, which placed a grave financial burden on the family. Among the small percentage who had white collar jobs, a large percentage of these appeared to be teachers. However, overall only a very small percentage of the students came from families with a tertiary education background and it is probable that in a large percentage of the cases they were the first generation of the family to enter into tertiary education.

5.4   Financing of studies at UWC

The low socio-economic status and economic hardship of the majority of the students in the HDE course was substantiated by the replies to an open-ended question on how they financed their studies at UWC. Almost half (45%) said that they were hoping for a TEFSA loan, which would be the only way that they could finance their studies.   An additional 17% also relied on TEFSA funding, even though their parents contributed to the fees where possible. Only 8% of the students' fees were paid solely by their family members. A further 8% worked part-time over weekends and in the evenings to finance their studies. Many of these also relied on TEFSA loans. A number of students (17%) had no idea where they would get money for their studies and in a number of cases the students mentioned high levels of stress related to financial insecurity as can be seen from the quotes below.

> " *It is unclear where I will get money because I did not even pay my registration fees. So it is very painful and I do not want to talk about this issue" (male, 25 years)*
> " *I am in a financial crisis, because this year the one who is responsible for me was attacked by a stroke" (female, 30 years)*

The overwhelming impression from the responses, is that this student cohort was very poor and that problem of finding enough money to pay for their studies was a huge and ongoing problem. A number of the students were being supported by parents who were pensioners and/or living off disability grants. Others were desperate because the family member who had helped pay for their studies was unemployed or deceased. Many had huge outstanding financial debts and did not even have the money to pay their registration fees. The quotes below illustrate the dire financial straits of the students:

> *"I'm still saving to try to study, because the one who sent me to university is not working and he's go too much problems at home" (male, 25 years old)*
> *"I don't have enough money, so I think TEFSA will help because it is my only help all these years" (female, 24 years old)*
> *"My mother loaned some money in the bank to help me with my studies, because she doesn't have money, she is a single parent, and she has been medically boarded at work. She is waiting for her pension money and my father doesn't support me" (female, 21 years)*
> *"My parents are struggling to pay for me, as a result I owe a lot of money and it is frustrating" (female, 29 years)*
> *"I am struggling and hoping for a loan – both of my parents are unemployed" (male 26 years old)*
> *"I do not know because my mother is not working and I'm depending on her because my father died. So I do not know where I can get money for my studies. I did not get bursaries" (Female, 26 years)*

5.5   Academic history of students

The majority of student teachers attended either an ex-DET school or a school in one of the previous homelands or independent states (49% and 38% respectively). Only 11 of the students attended ex-House of Representative schools and two each ex- House of Assembly or House of Delegate schools. Only one student had attended a private school (see Table 8)

Table 8: Type of school attended by students

Previous education department	N	%
House of Assembly	2	1.1
House of Delegates	2	1.1
House of Representatives	11	6.2
Department of Education and Training	88	49.4
Department under ex-homeland	70	39.3
Private school	1	0.6
No response / don't know	4	2.3

The majority of the students matriculated between 1992 and 1996 as indicated in Table 9. However the range of matriculation years is from 1973 to 1996 . From Table 10, it is evident that the majority of the students had English and History as subjects in matric and in those cases where science and mathematics were taken, these were taken at a standard grade level in the majority of cases (64% and 91% respectively). The average symbols obtained were quite poor, with Ds and Es predominating. Only one student obtained an A in maths and there were no As in English, Science or History

Table 9: Matriculation year of student teachers

Year Matriculated	N	%
No response	14	7.86
1973-1988	6	3.37
1989	5	2.80
1990	5	2.80
1991	3	1.68
1992	10	5.62
1993	23	12.92
1994	53	29.78
1995	35	19.66
1996	24	13.48

Table 10: Matric grades of student teachers for English, Maths, Science and History

SUBJECTS	N3		HG		SG	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
English (n = 171)			163	95.32	8	4.68
Mathematics (n = 32)	1	3.13	4	12.5	29	90.62
Science (n = 28)			10	35.71	18	64.29
History (n = 115)			82	73.91	33	28.69

Table 11: Matric subjects and symbols of student teachers

Subjects	A		B		C		D		E		F		G	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
English (n = 171)			2	1.17	30	17.54	67	39.18	4	2.34	1	0.58	1	0.58
Mathematics (n = 32)	1	3.13	1	3.13	3	9.38	12	37.5	7	21.88	7	21.88	4	12.5
Science (n = 28)					5	17.86	8	28.57	9	32.14	6	21.43		
History (n = 115)			8	6.96	13	11.30	48	41.74	36	31.30	9	7.83	3	2.61

5.6   Previous teaching experience

As can be seen from Table 12, 88% of the student teachers had no previous teaching experience, 3% had between one and two years experience and 1% had taught for more than three years. It is interesting to note that 63% of the sample had family members who were teachers. However, these were often not their parents, but rather aunts, uncles, cousins or siblings.

Table 12: Previous teaching experience of student teachers

Number of Years of teaching experience	N	%
No response	10	5.6
Never taught before	157	88.2
Less than one year	3	1.7
1-2 years	6	3.4
More than 3 years	2	1.1

As Table 13 shows, the most common pattern (nearly half) was to have taken a Bachelors Degree, though a few (8%) had a Diploma. The large number of 'no response' most likely included those who came through the non-graduate route.

Table 13: Entry experience (Qualifications held)

Degree	N	%
Yes response	111	62.0
No response	67	37.6
Type of qualification mentioned		
BA	86	48.3
B Sc	1	0.6
B Comm.	3	1.7
Diploma	14	7.9
Other (Music/HDE etc)	7	3.9

5.7 Method subjects

As can be seen from Table 14, the majority of the students had an African language (64%) and/or History (60%) as their teaching subjects. This was followed by Guidance (15%), English (15%) and Geography (16%). Notable were the very few students who had science and/or maths as their subject methods, which reflects the low numbers that either did not take or did not pass these subjects at matric level.

Table 14: Method subjects

Subjects	N	%
No response	7	3.9
Geography	29	16.3
Guidance	27	15.2
English	19	10.7
Afrikaans	7	4.0
African Languages	115	64.6
History	107	60.1
Economics	9	5.0
Music	2	1.2
Physics	1	0.6
Mathematics	3	1.7
Home Economics	13	7.3
HMS	3	1.7
Biblical Studies	4	2.3

5.8   Motivation for studying to become a teacher

The responses to an open-ended question on what motivated them to become a teacher, reveal that almost 40% of the students wanted to become a teacher for altruistic reasons. These include reasons such as wanting to help build the community, wanting to help improve the matric results of their community, and wanting to give the learners of tomorrow a better education than they had experienced themselves. The following quotes illustrate these types of responses:

>   *"The high failure rate forced me to become a teacher in order to improve the educational status of our brothers and sisters" (male, 24 years)*
>   *"Because of the poor education I got, I decided to become a teacher so that I can encourage and teach children what I did not get" (female, 30 years)*
>   *"I want to help the children in the community, so that they become a minister and teacher of tomorrow" (female, 30 years)*
>   *"I would like to help our brothers and sisters who are struggling to cope in the classroom" (male, 31 years)*
>   *"I decided to become a teacher because in the place where I come from, I have encountered situations where the teachers couldn't care less about the learners' education. They only care about going to class when the month end is approaching" (male, 20 years)*

An almost equal number (38%) mentioned intrinsic reasons, such as loving teaching and/or working with children, as motivating their decision to become a teacher As can be seen from the quotes below, a number of students mentioned that they had always dreamt of becoming a teacher and that as children they already play-acted teaching situations in which they were

always the teacher. Others stressed that they loved teaching and/or felt that they had the qualities to become a teacher.

> *"I think it is something I grew up with. I love teaching. Mostly when I was a young boy I like playing the role of being a teacher and I think I am making a right choice following my dream" (male, 26 years)*
> *" As I was growing up, there was nothing on my mind rather than to go for teaching profession" (male, 26 years)*
> *"I love teaching very much and it is the first choice of all my careers" (female, 23 years)*
> *"It is because it is my dream to become one" (male 25 years)*
> *" I decided to become a teacher because I happen to like teaching when I was young. I remember when I was young, we used to do teaching play with my friends and I was always the teacher. I knew it then that my career is teaching" (female, 23 years)*

A number of responses combined both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons as is illustrated by the following quotes:

> *"I like to work with children, want to help them, love them, respect them" (female, 31 years)*
> *" I love teaching and working with children. I feel that I can help build our community to a better standard of life, knowing it all starts with our children" (male, 27 years)*

The strong desire to help their communities and country by becoming a teacher was also reflected in some of the answers given in the in-depth interviews with students towards the end of the course. In response to a question on whether they felt motivated to go and work as a teacher in South Africa today, fifteen of the 18 students interviewed replied in the affirmative. They saw themselves as being able to contribute to the growth of learners, as well as the growth of the country. they spoke about wanting *"to come with a solution to what is happening in South Africa today", "to change the lives of other people, to contribute to the development of the learners socially and intellectually".* Others indicated a concern for the future of South Africa and a wish to *"build the children for my country".* They were aware that there were learners with many problems and that the education sector *"needs people like me".*

In the responses to the questionnaire, approximately 14% of the students cited that they were studying HDE because this was the only option open to them due to their poor matric results and that this was not their first choice of career. Others had applied either at other institutions or at other faculties at UWC and had not been accepted due to their poor marks. This is obviously very worrying, firstly because it means that a number of students who are academically very weak will be entering the profession and in addition, some of them did not want to be teachers in the first place.

> *"Because I did not get my matric exemption and so I had to do HDE" (female, 21 years)*
> *"Because I was not accepted at the Technikon to do fashion design, so I ended up enrolling for teaching because my exam marks were not that good" (female, 21 years)*

"I decided to become a teacher because I don't have any other choice. I passed my matric with a conditional exemption and I am still under age to qualify for an age exemption. I did HDE because I did not want to stay at home" (female, 20 years)

"I did not choose this career, but as I came here without exemption I was told that I qualify for this course" (male, 26 years)

"I didn't decide to become a teacher but I could only get space in education at university. I had an 's' in standard 10 so I had to do education – not that I don't want or don't like it, but when I came here I did not intend to do it." (female, 24 years)

However, encouraging is that a number of this group of students said that despite the fact that this had been the only option open to them, they now really liked the profession and felt committed to helping their communities as teachers.

"It was never my decision. I wanted to be something else but I find teaching an interesting career for this generation because of the new curriculum which was introduced a few years ago, so I feel confident about teaching now!" (female, 23 years)

"I didn't have a choice, but on the other hand I like the job" (female, 23 years)

"Its because I didn't qualify for social work, but when I did HDE (non-grad) it makes me love teaching because I will not only teach but deal with social problems of my students" (female, 24 years)

A few students said that they had decided to study HDE as a step in furthering their studies and others chose this course of study because they hope that they can find a job.

"I see it as a way through – it will allow me to continue with different qualifications otherwise I'm not interested at all" (female, 22 years)

Table 15: Reasons for deciding to become a teacher

Reason for becoming a teacher	N	%
no other choice due to poor matric results	25	14.0
altruistic reasons (e.g. build community; help children; make a difference)	70	39.3
intrinsic reasons (e.g. love teaching, like working with children, have always wanted to become a teacher)	68	38.2
important/respected job	5	2.8
easy to find work	5	2.8
pathway to other jobs/qualifications	3	1.7
parents/friends advised	3	1.7

(students sometimes responded in more than one category)

The above reasons for becoming a teacher were substantiated in the interviews where the overwhelming majority of the student teachers interviewed expressed a positive motivation for their choice of the HDE course. Twelve of the eighteen spoke of being interested in teaching, wanting to be a teacher and of enjoying working with children. Four expressed a desire to make a

difference to people's lives and seeing teaching as a way of doing this. Three interviewees indicated that they had chosen the HDE because they had little other choice due to university entrance requirements. All, however, said that they had come to like the idea of becoming a teacher. "*I had no exemption (university entrance) so it was my only option. Later I enjoyed it. My dream is now to become a teacher. I like teaching.*"

In summary, most of the students appear to have chosen to become a teacher for positive reasons, namely either to improve teaching in their communities and/or for intrinsic reasons, such as a love of teaching. Most of the responses showed that the students are enthusiastic, passionate and committed to the profession of teaching. However, there was a small group that appear to have landed in the HDE course because this was the only option open to them due to their poor matric results or because they could not get into other courses.

5.9 Reasons for studying HDE at UWC

The responses to an open-ended question on why they had chosen to study their HDE at UWC revealed that a large number of students chose UWC for positive reasons (see Table 16). These include that they thought it was a good or the best university (12%), that it had good lecturers (2%), that UWC was a democratic institution with a good human rights record and/or that they liked UWC (11%). Seventeen percent of the responses indicated that they felt that the education faculty was highly respected and had a good reputation.

"*It is the best institution that offers the best HDE course*" (male, 31 years)
"*It is the institution that produces good teachers when compared to other institutions around the Western Cape*" (female, 29 years)
"*Because UWC is the best institution that can produce good teachers. Most of the people who are in the present government come from UWC. So UWC is the best institution here in South Africa. Even the Minister of Education, Mr Kadar Asmal, was one of the lecturers at UWC*" (female, 25 years)
"*I love UWC. I have learned many things from this institution and I regard it as one of the best universities in Africa*" (male, 26 years)
"*Because of the rumours that UWC works hard to produce motivated teachers who can make changes in the community*" (male, 27 years)
"*I found that by doing a course of HDE at UWC you have a greater opportunity of finding work at a senior secondary school in my home town*" (male, 20 years)

Table 16: Reasons for studying HDE at UWC

Reason	N	%
advised/encouraged by family members or past students	9	5.1
UWC good/the best university	22	12.4
did previous degree at UWC	12	6.7
UWC – best/good lecturers	4	2.3
wanted to be in Cape Town	10	5.6
like UWC	19	10.7
only university that would accept student – due to poor matric results	20	11.2
affordable/financial reasons	23	12.9
ideological reasons (home of the left; human rights record; democratic)	6	3.4
Education Faculty good reputation/highly respected	31	17.4
only place that offered HDE non-graduate course	10	5.6
close to where student lives	3	1.7

(students could respond in more than one category)

A number of students stressed that UWC had a reputation for looking after poorer students and that it was more affordable than other universities.

> *"I like UWC because it is one of the universities that always looks after the disadvantaged students as compared to other universities" (male, 24 years)*
> *"I liked UWC since I was in Transkei when I heard about it and how affordable it is as far as UNITRA and others are concerned in terms of fees" (male, 26 years)*
> *"That is the only university that accepts the black poor people" (female, 25 years)*
> *"It considers the disadvantaged student and our poor backgrounds" (female, 22 years)*

Some students, however, appeared to have no option but to study further at UWC due to the large amount of money that they owed the university.

> *"Because I have no option. My balance says I must still study at UWC whether I like it or not" (male, 26 years)*

Other reasons cited for coming to study HDE at UWC were the advice of family members, because friends had studied there, because they wanted to be in the Western Cape or because they had done their undergraduate studies there.

> *"It was my wish to study here because my family is here in this province" (male, 26 years)*
> *"I respect UWC and I was also encouraged by people who were once HDE students at UWC" (male, 23 years)*
> *"I did my BA at UWC, so I wish to do my HDE here as well" (male, 27 years)*

5.10   Summary

The student teachers in the 2000 cohort were mainly Xhosa-speaking and came from the rural Eastern Cape. Their average age was 26 years, which is older than might be expected in a course of this nature. Most of them come from families that are struggling to survive financially, in which the parents are often either illiterate or only have a primary school education. Many of them are either unemployed, pensioners or on disability grants. Of those that are employed, very few are in high-income earning jobs. As a result of this, virtually all of the students struggle to pay for their university fees and have to rely on loans to finance their studies. The constant struggle to survive financially places a huge psychological burden on many students. Many of the student teachers appear to be academically weak and their matric results reveal average to below average marks. Some of them are only studying the course because this is the only the way that they could study at university. Almost 40% of the cohort followed the non-graduate route, which means that they did not get a matric exemption.

Encouraging is the fact that the majority of the students are highly motivated to become teachers and want to make a difference by serving and improving their communities. Many of them really love teaching and have always wanted to be teachers. Approximately 14%, however, are only doing the course because there was not other option available to them to study. Their reasons for studying at UWC are largely positive. UWC appears to be highly rated academically by the students and is seen as a progressive institution that provides good teacher training. It is also seen as an institution that looks after the needs of the poor black students and has a reputation for being financially more affordable than other institutions, which is one of the reasons that many students appear to be studying at UWC.

CHAPTER 6

STUDENT TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE HDE PROGRAMME

6.1 Introduction

This section of the report details student teacher responses to questions about their expectations and experiences of the HDE programme. Again the data has been collected through the entry questionnaire and interviews with a select group of students at the end of the year. The data is supplemented by the exit questionnaire. However, this data needs to be treated with caution, as only 48 students completed the exit questionnaire and in a number of cases they did not reply to all the questions.

6.2 Organisation of HDE course

In response to a question in the entry questionnaire on how they would like the HDE course to be organised, students appeared to prefer that demonstrations by lecturers (43%), small group work (38%), observation in schools (37%) and micro-teaching (28%) be used in the course. However, it is noteworthy that 19% of the sample felt that they did not want to observe what was happening in schools. Most of the students (65%) did not want the lecturers to dictate notes and preferred small group to large group teaching. However, 29% felt that they would like large group teaching to happen at times and a similar percentage felt that small group teaching should only take place 'sometimes'. Although almost a third were in favour of micro-teaching, the large percentage that did not respond to this question (38%) probably indicated that entry level students did not know what micro-teaching was. Similarly, it is possible that many of those that did not reply to the question on observation in school, also did not know exactly what this entailed.

Table 17: Responses to question: "How would you like the HDE course to be organised?"
(entry questionnaire) (N = 178)

Reponses	Never		Sometimes		Often		Very often		No response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Lectures with lecturers dictating notes	36	20.2	79	44.4	22	12.4	6	3.4	34	19.1
Lectures with large groups	51	28.7	49	27.5	24	13.5	14	7.9	40	22.4
Small group teaching	27	15.2	50	28.1	36	20.2	32	18.0	33	18.5
Micro teaching	20	11.2	42	23.6	27	15.2	22	12.4	67	37.6
Observation in schools	34	19.1	34	19.1	36	20.2	29	16.3	45	25.3
Demonstration by lecturers	6	3.4	60	33.7	36	20.2	41	23.0	35	19.7

6.3 Teaching Practice

Regarding the preferred length of the Teaching Practice period, at the start of the course the majority (58%) of students felt that it should remain one school term in length. Almost a third of the group (31%), however, felt that it should be increased by three months, with very few (5%) indicating that the period should be decreased. At the end of their HDE year there was a definite shift towards more students feeling that the Teaching Practice period should be increased by 3 months and less students feeling that it should remain the same length than had been the case at the beginning of the HDE course (see Table 18 below).

Table 18: Responses to question regarding ideal length of Teaching Practice

Length of Teaching Practice	entry questionnaire		exit questionnaire	
	N	%	N	%
Remain the same as at present (i.e. one school term)	103	57.9	22	46.8
Increased by three months	55	30.9	19	40.4
Decreased by one month	9	5.1	4	8.5
No response/ do not know	11	6.1	2	4.3

The importance that students attach to getting practical experience in teaching is substantiated by some of the responses to an open-ended question included in the exit questionnaire, in which students could comment on any aspect of the course. Most of the respondents chose not to reply to this question, but of those that did, the majority commented on the Teaching Practice period, with a number feeling that the period should be increased. The main reasons cited were that they needed more time to adapt to what was happening in classrooms and that a lack of appropriate educational background necessitated a longer teaching practice period.

"I wish the faculty can give more time for student teachers on practice teaching, especially those who have no foundation in education" (female, 30 years)
"Teaching practice must be increased. Some of us take a long time to adapt in the classroom to the teaching process. These people need to be given enough time. Teaching Practice is too short." (male, 23 years)
"Nothing can prepare you for teaching practice, except teaching practice itself" (female, 21 years).

The responses to a question posed to the students in the entry questionnaire on what would make their Teaching Practice more valuable showed that over 70% felt that they needed teaching and learning materials, help with lesson planning, and to be able to watch experienced teachers (see Table 19). Approximately 60% felt that they needed preparation in the faculty, visits by lecturers during their Teaching Practice period and demonstration lessons by lecturers. Approximately half felt that they needed input from the school principal and follow-up discussions in the faculty of education.

A similar question was posed in the exit questionnaire in which students were asked what they felt would make the Teaching Practice period more valuable for the students (see Table 20). Over 60% of the students felt that they needed more preparation in faculty, more visits by lecturers, greater input from the school teachers, more time to watch experienced teachers. more teaching and learning materials and more help in lesson planning. Note needs to be taken of the large number of 'no responses' to this question will which affect the validity of this data. Nevertheless, the responses are very similar to those given in the entry questionnaire.

Table 19: Responses to the question: "What will make Teaching Practice valuable? " (entry questionnaire) (N = 178)

Item	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Preparation in Faculty of Education	107	60.1	71	39.9
Visits by Faculty of Education Lecturers	113	63.5	63	35.4
Demonstration lessons by Lecturers	103	57.9	75	42.1
School teachers input	129	72.5	49	27.5
Principals input	90	50.6	88	49.4
Teaching and learning materials	162	91.0	16	9.0
Help in lesson planning	139	78.1	38	21.3
Watching experienced teachers	130	73.0	48	27.0
Follow-up discussions in Faculty of Education	88	49.4	90	50.6

Table 20: Responses to the question: "How can teaching practice be changed to make it more valuable for student teachers? " (exit questionnaire) (N = 48)

Item	Yes		No		No response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
More preparation in Faculty of Education	30	62.5	7	14.6	11	22.9
More visits by Faculty of Education Lecturers	31	64.6	6	12.5	11	22.9
More demonstration lessons by Lecturers	26	54.2	10	20.8	12	25.0
More school teachers' input	34	70.8	3	6.3	11	22.9
More input from the principal	32	66.7	4	8.3	12	25.0
More teaching and learning materials	31	64.6	3	6.3	14	29.2
More help in lesson planning	30	62.5	4	8.3	14	29.2
Watching experienced teachers	30	62.5	4	8.3	14	29.2
More follow-up discussions in Faculty of Education	28	58.3	5	10.4	15	31.2
Increasing the number of days on teaching practice	23	47.9	13	27.1	12	25.0

It appears from the responses that the students were able to teach a fair number of lessons during their Teaching Practice period. However, most did not seem to meet the required average of teaching two new lessons per day during the period that they were at schools. Almost half (51%) of the students only taught between one and four lessons per week, 21% between 5 and 10 lessons and 13% between 11 and 15 lessons per week. Most students appeared to have also observed lessons during their teaching practice period, but 19% said that they had not observed any lessons during this period. This was despite the fact that observing an average of two lessons per day is a requirement of their Teaching Practice. If what these students reported is correct, then this implies that quite a number of students did not fulfil the basic requirements for the number of lessons taught and/or lessons observed and that this is not being picked up by the monitoring and evaluation system that is currently in place.

As far as observation and supervision of the lessons taught by the students, it appears as if the class teacher observed lessons in most cases (see Table 21). Worrying is the fact that in 19% of the cases students said that they had not been observed by their lecturer. However, this could have been due to misunderstanding the question, as some students were supervised by people outside of the faculty, who are not lecturers.

Table 21: Observation of lessons taught by students during the teaching practice period

No. of times	Class teacher		Other teacher		Principal		Lecturer		Others	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
No response	9	19.1	11	23.4	9	19.1	9	19.1	33	70.2
None	1	2.1	16	34.0	27	57.4	9	19.1		
1-4	15	31.9	7	14.9	9	19.1	27	57.4	5	10.6
5-10	12	25.5	8	17.0	2	4.3	2	4.3	3	6.4
More than 11	10	21.3	5	10.6					6	12.8

In reflecting back on the teaching practice period, 68% of the students felt that they had been well-prepared for their term in the schools and a further 19% that the preparation had been 'average'. Only 4% felt that their preparation had been poor.

Most of the students (77%) felt that the assessment of their teaching practice was a good measure of their achievement. Roughly one-third of the students (35%), however, felt that the schools where they had done their teaching practice did not have enough resources for their practice. However, the remaining two-thirds appeared to feel that enough resources were available at their schools.

6.4   Expectations regarding the course

The majority of respondents to the entry questionnaire had positive expectations regarding the teaching and subject expertise of the HDE lecturers (see Table 22). Thus, 87% felt that the lecturers would know their subject well, 79% that they would teach content that would be helpful in teaching in schools and 88% that they would teach content that would be easy to understand. However, less favourable views were held relating to the more personal characteristics of the lecturers. Quite a number of students felt that lecturers would often not mark and return students' work (43%), be strict (47%), unapproachable (24%) and uncaring (23%). Approximately two-thirds of the students (66%), however, expected that lecturers would mark fairly. Over 60% of the students expected that the lecturers would rarely link theory to practice in schools, which appears to contradict the 79% that expected that lecturers would teach content that will help them teach in the schools. This could be due to the fact that the question on 'rarely linking theory to practice in schools' was reverse-coded and the students did not pick this up.

Table 22: Expectations of students regarding lecturers who are going to teach on the HDE course – entry questionnaire (N = 178)

Lecturers will:	Very Often		Quite Often		Quite Rarely		Very Rarely		No response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Know their subject well	130	73.0	24	13.5			4	2.2	20	11.2
Rarely link theory to practice in schools	68	38.2	44	24.7	10	5.6	23	12.9	33	18.5
Encourage small group work activity	107	60.1	46	25.8	5	2.8	2	1.1	18	10.1
Never mark and return students' work	62	34.8	15	8.4	23	12.9	21	11.8	57	32.1
Be strict	35	19.7	49	27.5	20	11.2	31	17.4	43	32.6
Be unapproachable	21	11.8	21	11.8	15	8.4	63	35.4	58	32.6
Be uncaring	21	11.8	19	10.7	13	7.3	71	39.3	54	30.3
Teach only theory	27	15.2	27	15.2	16	9.0	58	32.6	50	28.0
Be fair in marking	76	42.7	42	23.6	9	5.1	12	6.7	39	22.0
Teach content, which can help us teach in schools	114	64.0	26	14.6	6	3.4	3	1.7	29	16.3
Present lectures that are easy to understand	96	53.9	43	24.2	5	2.8	6	3.4	28	15.7

Regarding their expectations of the course, the responses to an open-ended question in this regard in the entry questionnaire showed that 23% of the students hoped that the course would train them to become good, professional and competent teachers (see Table 23).

> *" I expect to get as much skills as possible so that I can be a professional teacher" (female, 30 years)*
> *"To help me become a good educator" (female, 22 years)*
> *"To be trained well in order to be a good teacher tomorrow" (male, 28 years)*
> *"how to be a competent teacher – something worthwhile to carry across to the learners" (female, 37 years)*
> *"I have great expectations in this course in terms of moulding me to become a better teacher who sill be able to facilitate learning in our schools" (female, 37 years)*
> *"to equip myself to become an excellent teacher" (female, 22 years)*

An additional 4% expected to gain the knowledge, skills and values to become a good teacher, showing familiarity with some of the terminology used in Curriculum 2005.

> *"I expect to gain more knowledge, skills and values so that I can be able to transform the learners" (female, 45 years)*
> *"I expect it to give me the knowledge, skills, values and confidence to be an effective and helpful teacher" (female, 22 years)*

For some students (11%), their main expectation was to either pass the course and/or pass with good marks as illustrated by the following quotes:

"I expect everybody on the course to be passed" (female, 28 years)
"I expect to pass as I would love to" (female, 20 years)
"To get good symbols in my practice teaching and education theory exams in June and December" (male, 29 years)
" I expect to pass my HDE course and get good results" (female, 24 years)

A number of students specifically wanted to learn more about curriculum 2005 and outcomes based education (OBE):

"The things I expect from HDE course this year is the big change – students have to do HDE course this year must use that OBE" (female, 30 years)
"I expect to know more about OBE because I see it as the only way to change the old system of teaching. At the end of this year, I will know what our learners need out there" (male, 23 years)
"I need to understand this kind of OBE" (male, 27 years)

Table 23: Responses to question, "What do you expect from the HDE course?" – entry questionnaire (N = 178)

Expectations	N	%
pass the course/get good results	20	11.2
training to become a good & professional teacher	40	22.5
understand curriculum 2005/OBE	15	8.4
become a teacher that can help the community	10	5.6
gain confidence to teach	8	4.4
enjoyable/exciting/challenging course	4	2.2
help find a job	3	1.7
lesson-planning	2	1.1
knowledge, skills & values to become a good teacher	8	4.4
good practice teaching/good practical preparation	11	6.2
good, caring, fair lecturers	5	2.8
preparation for a range of jobs	2	1.1
fees for traveling	2	1.1
upgrade non-graduate to graduate course	2	1.1
how to deal with discipline problems	2	1.1

(note: respondents sometimes answered in more than one category)

6.5   Exam preparation

The responses to the question, "What do you think you will need for examinations?" were interesting in that the majority of the students (75%) stressed more study time and enough time for revision (58%) were necessary. However, more than half did not feel that they needed good teaching (56%) and/or good notes (64%) to prepare them for exams. This is perhaps a reflection of how they have learnt in the past and also how they conceptualise learning. A similar question was posed in the exit questionnaire, namely, "What would help you do better for your examinations?". As can be seen from Table 24 below there was very little change between the views of the students at the beginning and end of the course.

Table 24: What students feel that they need in order to prepare better for exams

Need to prepare for exams:	entry questionnaire (N = 178)				exit questionnaire (N = 48)			
	Yes		No		Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Enough/more time for revision	104	58.4	74	41.6	25	53.2	19	40.4
Good/better teaching	79	44.4	99	55.6	20	42.6	24	51.1
Good/better notes	65	36.5	113	63.5	16	34.0	28	59.6
Enough/more study time	133	74.7	44	24.7	34	72.3	10	21.3

6.6   Views of students about the HDE course

In the exit questionnaire, the overall ratings given by the students to the various course components were very favourable. Thus 79% of the students rated the education theory course as good or excellent. Similar ratings were given to the various method courses. Most of the students felt that the lecturers on the course knew their subject well or very well (89%), were able to link theory to practice (92%), and taught content which would help them teach in schools (83%). Just over half of students, however, appeared to have difficulty understanding the theory lectures (51%), which could be related to the language difficulties already mentioned in this paper.

The data from the exit questionnaire indicate that some of the fears regarding the personal qualities of the lecturers that the students had at the beginning of the course appear to have been substantiated during the year. Students, however, had much more negative ratings of the personal qualities of theory lecturers than method lecturers. This could be due to the fact that because of the smaller groups in the various method subjects they were able to get to know their lecturers better and more personally. In the large theory classes, where a large number of different lecturers teach, this is virtually impossible, Thus 32% of the students felt that the theory lecturers on the course were often unapproachable, and 42.% that they were often uncaring. However, 85% of the students felt that the theory lecturers had been fair in their assessment of the students' work during the year.

From the responses to a question regarding the resources that were available to the students during the course, it appears as if the majority felt that the university library had enough books on education (77%). Almost half (46%), however, felt that the library did not have enough books relating to their subject methods. Three-quarters of the students felt that the course readers provided by the faculty were sufficient for the course.

Table 25: Students' views on resources made available to them during the HDE course

Item	Agree		Disagree		No response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
The university library has enough books on education	37	77.1	7	14.6	4	8.3
The course readers provided by the Department were sufficient for the course	36	75.0	3	6.3	9	18.8
The school where I did my teaching had enough resources for my work	14	29.2	27	56.3	7	14.6
The university library has enough books on my subject methods	22	45.8	20	41.7	6	12.5

In response to a question on what would improve the HDE course in the exit questionnaire (see Table 26), the overwhelming majority of the students felt that more time should be spent on all the major components of the course (i.e. Teaching Practice, subject methods and education theory). They also felt that having smaller teaching groups, more time for and help with exam preparation, more time to study on their own, and more group work activity would improve the course. The majority were also in favour of more time being spent in the schools.

Table 26: Responses to question on what would improve the HDE course (exit questionnaire) (N = 48)

Item	important		not important		no response	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
more teaching on content of Education Theory	42	87.5	2	4.3	4	8.3
more teaching on Method subjects	45	93.8	2	4.3	1	2.1
smaller teaching groups	42	87.5	2	4.3	4	8.3
more time for exam preparation	41	85.4	2	4.3	5	10.4
more time to study on my own	40	83.3	4	8.3	4	8.3
more notes from lecturers	29	60.4	13	27.1	6	12.5
more help in preparing for final exams	41	85.4	4	8.3	3	6.3
more group work activity	38	79.2	7	14.6	3	6.3
more time working in schools	37	77.1	8	16.7	3	6.3

6.7 Levels of confidence at the end of the course

The exit level questionnaire showed that students felt most confidence in preparing lessons (70.4%), followed by knowing their subject content (62%) and methodology (62%) (see Table 27). Between 50% and 60% of the students felt confident to assess learners' work, control the class, deal with individual learners' needs and make teaching and learning aids. Less than half of the students, however, felt confident about education theory (47%). In comparing entry and exit levels of confidence, the largest improvement in levels of confidence was in the areas of lesson preparation and subject methodology. In most of the other areas, levels of confidence appeared to have decreased between the entry and exit level questionnaires. The exit level data, however, needs to be treated with caution both due to the small sample size and the large numbers who did not respond to the questions.

Table 27: Level of confidence regarding different teaching areas: comparison of entry and exit questionnaires

Teaching area	confident				not very confident				no response			
	entry		exit		entry		exit		entry		exit	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Subject content	109	61.3	29	61.7	39	25.9	2	4.3	23	12.9	16	34.0
Subject methodology	83	46.7	29	61.7	64	36.0	3	6.4	31	17.4	15	32.0
Preparing lessons	104	58.4	33	70.4	49	27.5	1	2.1	25	14.0	13	27.7
Assessing learners' work	97	54.5	27	57.4	55	30.9	6	12.7	26	14.6	14	29.8
Controlling the class	88	49.5	28	59.6	68	38.2	6	12.7	22	12.4	13	27.7
Dealing with individual learners' needs	104	58.4	25	53.2	48	27.0	7	14.9	26	14.7	15	32.0
Making teaching and learning aids	112	62.9	27	57.4	47	26.4	5	10.6	19	10.6	15	32.0
Education theory	103	57.9	22	46.8	46	25.8	8	17.0	29	16.3	17	36.2

6.8   Future plans and preferences

In Tables 28 to 30 below, entry and exit level data are compared regarding future work preferences and expectations. The exit level data, however, needs to be treated with caution due to the small number who replied to the questionnaire and also the large number of 'no responses' to many of the items.

At the beginning of the HDE course, almost one-third of the students (32%) said they would prefer teaching in an urban secondary school, followed by a rural secondary school (23%). It is, however, interesting to note that twenty percent of the students said they would prefer to teach in a primary school one day, despite the fact that the HDE course is exclusively aimed at training secondary school teachers.

In response to a question on what they thought they would most likely be doing in five years time, only 29% expected to be teaching at a secondary school, 12% expected to be doing a different job to teaching and a third (33%) that they would be studying further (Table 29). It appears, therefore, as if for the majority of students, the HDE course is seen as a stepping stone to further studies and not necessarily as a course that will lead them to a secondary school teaching post. If one compares these responses to what students hoped to be doing in five years time, it can be seen that the expectations and hopes do not differ greatly. As can be seen from Table 30, only 29% of the students hoped to be in secondary school teaching, which means that over two-thirds of the students did not wish to be in teaching in five years time. This leads one to question why these students are doing the HDE course. Almost half of the students (46%) hope to be studying further in five years time, which is significantly more than the 33% who felt that this would actually happen. It is interesting that only 11% hoped to find another job outside

teaching. It would, therefore, be interesting to find out if the 46% who hoped to be studying further in five years time, envisaged that after that they would still remain in the teaching profession.

Table 28: Preferences regarding teaching posts: entry and exit level data

Type of school	entry		exit	
	N	%	N	%
No response	44	24.8	25	53.2
Urban secondary	57	32.0	3	6.4
Rural secondary	41	23	11	23.4
Urban primary	23	12.9	1	2.1
Rural primary	13	7.3	7	14.9

Table 29: Most likely to be doing in five years time: entry and exit level data

Future plans	entry		exit	
	N	%	N	%
No response	33	18.5	23	48.9
Teaching at a primary school	10	5.6	1	2.1
Teaching at a secondary school	52	29.2	12	25.5
Find another job and leave teaching	21	11.8	1	2.1
Gone on to further studies	59	33.1	10	21.3
OTHER	3	1.7	0	0

Table 30: Hope to be doing in five years time

Future hopes	entry		exit	
	N	%	N	%
No response	21	11.8	19	40.4
Teaching at a secondary school	53	29.8	13	27.7
Find another job outside teaching	19	10.7	3	6.4
Study further for another qualification	81	45.5	12	25.5
Other	4	2.2	0	0

The responses to the open-ended question on why they decided to become a teacher, could shed some light on the reasons why so many hoped to study further, rather than enter the teaching profession directly. From these responses it is apparent that some students were studying HDE because it was the only course that they could get into, given their poor matric results. Other students chose teaching because they could not get into courses such as social work and physiotherapy. This is illustrated by the quotes below:

"I did not choose this career, but as I came here without exemption, I was told that I qualify for this course" (male, 24 years)
"I had no other choice, I qualified to do HDE" (female, 21 years)
"I was obliged by university faculties selecting criteria. I did not want to become a teacher" (male 32 years)
"I did not qualify for social work" (female, 24 years)
"I didn't plan to be a teacher. I became a teacher because I did not qualify to do the course I wanted to do" (female, 29 years)

The responses to some of the questions posed to the students in the in-depth interviews provide further explanations about some of the reasons why students did not all want to become teachers one day. The interviewees were asked whether they felt motivated to go and work as a teacher in South Africa today. Those who did not feel motivated to go and work as a teacher focused on the violence and lack of discipline in the schools, as well as on their own lack of confidence to manage classrooms and to master their subject matter. As one student said: *"I'm not cut out to be a teacher because I must admit I am too soft for the learners."* Another said that: *"I feel that I am not competent in my subject and that I will end up teaching the learners the wrong things"*.

6.9   Summary

The student teachers rated most components of the course highly and felt that it was helpful in preparing them to be good teachers. Some problems appeared to have been experienced relating to understanding the theory lectures, which are most probably related to language issues. Students also mentioned problems with resources that they needed for teaching, particularly in some of the schools that they did their practice teaching in.

Suggestions for improvement included that more time should be spent on all the major components of the course. This seems to suggest that most students needed to have more training before going out to teach. However, the levels of confidence at the end of the course were quite high, particularly relating to the preparation of lessons, subject content and the methodology. Students were less confident with regard to the theory, which underlines the fact that some of them appear to have difficulty understanding the theory classes.

Generally, lecturers were viewed as showing expertise in their subject areas and being fair in their assessment of the students' work. Theory lecturers were, however, sometimes perceived as being distant and not very caring. This could be due to the fact that there are a large number of different lecturers teaching on the theory course and that students do not have much direct and personal contact with them due to the large classes.

Many of the students appear to be using the HDE course as a stepping stone to further studies, and do not plan to teach immediately after the course. This could be related to the realities of retrenchment and the difficulties in finding a teaching job rather than the fact that they did not want to be teachers. Worrying, however, is the fact that some students appear to be doing the course because they could not get into other courses or because this was the only way they could

study. Encouraging, however, is that the majority of the students show a strong sense of social responsibility and educational commitment and like teaching.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this final section, key themes are drawn together for discussion. Common issues that emerged from the different sources of data are highlighted, as well as significant issues for further research.

7.1   Students' life histories

The account of the biographies of the students in the HDE class of 2000 indicates that the vast majority come from very poor backgrounds. The majority are Xhosa-speaking and come from the rural Eastern Cape. Many students are older than the expected age for those in their fourth year of tertiary education. Most come from very disadvantaged and poor backgrounds and have severe financial difficulties, which means that they struggle to pay their fees as well as support themselves during their HDE year.

The social disadvantages faced by these students impact significantly on the HDE programme. Students struggle to pay transport costs to Teaching Practice schools. No reading is prescribed outside of the course readers, as lecturers know that students cannot afford to buy books. This has a negative effect on the culture of reflection which the programme aims to promote. This results in enormous amounts of pressure and stress, which impacts negatively on their concentration and learning ability.

In addition, the academic history of many of the students is very weak and most did not have maths and science subjects for matric. This means that they end up with teaching subjects such as History and Xhosa for which there is a limited demand. More than a third of the students entered the course via the non-graduate route, which means that they did not get a matriculation exemption. A number of students are doing the course because this was the only way that they could study at university. This raises a number of very difficult dilemmas. On the one hand, UWC has a history of caring for the disadvantaged and opening the doors of learning as far as possible. The fact that a number of students said that they are studying at UWC because it is an institution that cares for the poor black student and is seen as being financially more lenient and affordable than other institutions, means that it attracts students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. While this is very laudable it brings a number of problems with it that seem almost insurmountable. Their poor academic background, coupled with language difficulties, and the fact that many students live under severe stress due to financial problems, means that these students are not necessarily going to make the best teachers. They often struggle with critical reflection, have a very poor general and subject specific knowledge, and have a low self-esteem.

UWC is faced with the dilemma of having to increase student numbers in order to survive, and of having to try to attract better students and more students with a maths and science background. This means that it has to try and compete for a market that has been largely tapped by the sister universities in the area. At the same time, it wants to remain true to its mission of serving the poorer and previously disadvantaged communities who cannot afford to pay for their studies.

7.2   Language and learning

A related feature of the above discussion is the fact that the majority of students do not have English as their mother tongue, and that many, particularly those from rural areas, have probably had limited exposure to English as a language of learning.   South African has eleven official languages and English is usually used as a common language of instruction.   However it is evident from the data in this study that this gives rise to enormous problems, both for lecturers and students.   There are students who find the course material inaccessible, and there are lecturers who are frustrated by what they perceive as the students, lack of reading ability.

It seems obvious that this challenge needs to be faced head on, both by the university and by the Faculty.   Some ways in which this might be addressed would be through language support programmes, the recruitment of more Xhosa-speaking lecturers and support staff, and the availability of more course materials in languages other than English.   However, the limited financial and human resources of the Faculty means that this is a challenge that is unlikely to be addressed in the short term.

7.3   Curriculum design

It is useful to note the suggestions for curriculum changes to the HDE programme that emerged from the interviews with student teachers.   These include inserting more 'practical' moments into the course, like peer teaching and board technique.   They also include a suggestion that the course deal more directly with the fears of student teachers, like having to face racism in schools, or not being able to cope with a lack of discipline in schools.

Suggestions were also made about the design and timetable of the programme as a whole. Presently, the HDE student teachers follow both Education Theory courses and subject method courses. The Education Theory course is divided into six modules and is taught over three terms, with about four hours of contact time per week.   Interviews with subject method course lecturers indicated a perception that there is an overemphasis on Education Theory.   In fact one of the lecturers interviewed was of the opinion that it is the subject method courses that will *"ultimately help student teachers translate theory into practice and therefore more time should be accorded to subject method courses"*.   Extending time for subject methods would also allow subject method lecturers more opportunity to address the students' lack of exposure to the very subject disciplines which they are expected to teach.   It is worth noting that the issue of extending time for subject methods was one of the key recommendations of the review of the HDE programme at the end of 2000.   With a new school curriculum, and with student teachers having to learn to

design lessons to give shape to outcomes-based education, such a suggestion seems to be particularly important.

An examination of the objectives of the HDE programme (Student Guide 2000) shows that three out of the four aims are skills-based. Student teachers are expected to develop skills in managing classroom environments, designing teaching and learning resources and teaching specific subject areas. The fourth aim is the only one that is knowledge-based. Based on these objectives, it would seem appropriate that the programme be orientated towards practice more than it perhaps currently is. One way this can be achieved, as has already been mentioned, is to give more emphasis to subject method courses. However as was rightly pointed by one of the lecturers interviewed, subject method courses are more expensive to run than Education Theory courses. The Education Theory courses have been described as very cost effective, in that they reach large numbers of students in a relatively short space of time, and with limited resources. In order to produce future teachers of high calibre it would, however, be necessary to consider in detail the pedagogical effectiveness of the programme alongside its cost effectiveness.

7.4   Teaching Practice

Another way in which skills can be developed in student teachers is to give greater field experience to the trainees. In other words the Teaching Practice period should be of a reasonable length to allow for experiential learning to take place. Currently, the ten weeks spent in schools does seem to be adequate for this purpose. There are, however, a number of issues related to the quality of the Teaching Practice experience which arise from the data.

One of the main issues raised during interviews with several lecturers was the block arrangement of Teaching Practice. The one-block ten week period has, according to some lectures, its pitfalls compared to a split Teaching Practice period. Being placed in only one school can limit the student teachers' experience, as school environments and cultures differ greatly. This is particularly true in the case of South Africa, which is undergoing a transition in every sphere of life. If the student teachers are to be aware of the great diversity in school environments and cultures then, it is argued, they must be given the opportunity to do their Teaching Practice at two or more sites. Robinson (1999:196) found that student teachers on Teaching Practice report both positive and negative experiences. The placement of student teachers in a second school could also open the way for improvements for student teachers who have not done well in the first school for whatever reason.

The concern about which students to send to which schools for Teaching Practice remains a complex and important issue, even more so in a post-apartheid era. The process of allocating student teachers to schools raises dilemmas, not only of language and instruction, but also of racial identity. Many student teachers indicate that they wish to be placed at a school for Teaching Practice which resembles schools with which they are familiar and many students feel insecure at schools which are different from the type of school where they were pupils. While lecturers in the Faculty of Education may wish students to break through racial identities which

are the product of an apartheid past, they cannot at the same time compound students' feelings of anxiety about Teaching Practice by sending them to teach in unfamiliar environments.

The choice of schools is made more difficult by the fact that, at a socio-economic level, many of the schools in both the former Black and Coloured areas remain characterised by high levels of poverty, poor resources and ongoing problems of a lack of safety and security. A lack of resources, large classes, and prevailing social tensions may mean that the ability to create and manage a conducive learning environment (one of the aims of the HDE programme) is a skill that cannot be acquired easily.

Outside the school much has changed in South African life, but changes in the school usually take a longer time. The student teachers may witness conditions and situations that are still traditional or similar to the ones they had experienced while at school. This could give the impression that creating and managing a conducive learning environment is not at all possible given the circumstances they are in. It is in this regard that the support of the teachers in the school becomes especially crucial, something which, however, the data reveals is not always optimal.

One of the recommendations of the review of the HDE programme was to develop the relationship with schools. The discussion above seems to indicate that this is crucial; however, once again, limited internal resources in the Faculty make this a difficult task.

7.5   Recruitment of students

One of the major issues raised in the interviews with the lecturers was that of the quality and number of student teachers recruited to the HDE programme. The number of student teachers applying to go on the programme is dwindling due to teaching not being seen as an attractive career option. Although this is a national problem and one that is faced by most other teacher education institutions in the country, the course designers will have to endeavour to make the HDE programme more attractive.

Suggestions for making the course more attractive include paying greater attention to the issue of language, investing more money in the ongoing training of lecturers and mentor teachers, and equipping the Faculty of Education with better facilities. Most important of all would seem to be the provision of adequate study bursaries to students.

Notwithstanding the above, one of the most significant findings of the student questionnaire was the fact that students who are at UWC express great enthusiasm for the university and strong motivation for becoming a teacher. This is correlated by the interviews in which student teachers indicated that they are very positive about the HDE course itself, about the contribution of the course to their own development and about eventually working as a teacher. In the light of much of the negative publicity about schools and teachers in South Africa, it is highly encouraging to note the sense of social responsibility and educational commitment emanating from these student teachers. What is interesting, however, is that lecturers do not seem to share this image of the

student teachers, with "*low student motivation*" being rated as a very important factor contributing to students' (lack of) achievement on tests and exams.

Although the student teachers interviewed expressed optimism about their potential contribution to education, they were also sober and realistic about the social and educational problems that exist in schools. Comments about a lack of teacher professionalism and about violence and gangsterism did not, however, seem to go hand in hand with a defeatist attitude. The student teachers who were negative about themselves as teachers were more concerned with what they perceived as personal deficiencies, like weak subject knowledge or *"not being cut out for teaching",* rather than with a hostile educational environment.

7.6   Follow up research

As a final comment, a number of areas for further research are identified. The first of these (and one which goes beyond the case of UWC) is the need to investigate whether the new policy currently being introduced into teacher education, the Norms and Standards for Educators, does in fact lead to improvements in the practice of teaching and of teacher education. It will be most important to see how the existence of legislated benchmarks for teacher education across the country impacts on providers, their programmes and their students (Parker, 2002) and whether the quality of teachers improves through the new policy.

At a more local level, it would be useful to track what happens to the HDE class after graduation. Many of them, while expressing a strong interest in becoming a teacher, also indicated an interest in other careers and in further studies. The stories of these students' lives - both their pasts and their futures - would be a fascinating tale of ambition in the context of social disadvantage.

A last point relates to the importance of doing further conceptual work around the notion of teacher education for transformation. This paper began by outlining the transformative intentions of the UWC HDE programme. It then outlined the many difficulties and challenges of the programme. An analysis of the goals and achievements of this one small programme against the backdrop of the many social and educational challenges of South Africa could contribute to the international literature by developing the base for a truly grounded theory of teacher education for social reconstruction.

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