

# **CHAPTER 1 : ORIENTATION**

## **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

There is nothing new about educationists having concerns for quality. While all providers of teacher training doubtlessly would regard themselves as providing a quality service, any teacher training institutions that complacently assumes that quality will look after itself, will rapidly be overtaken by those who create mechanisms to improve and to assure quality.

The approach that manufacturing industry has taken to achieve the quality edge, is quality assurance. While a number of higher education institutions, including teacher training institutions, have also attempted some forms of quality assurance, the products of these institutions remain subject to fierce criticism. Little evidence exists of the successful implementation of internal quality assurance in teacher training.

The next section presents the statement of the study problem so as to highlight the problem under investigation. This is followed by the research design of the study.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Concerns about the nature of educational services at all levels are rapidly emerging in the developed world. Government and industry are not satisfied with the performance of higher educational institutions, especially in terms of the increasing call for more and more expenditure. In the context of these concerns, government, communities and industry are responding with a variety of initiatives, all focusing on questions about the quality of performance of educational institutions (Murgatroyd & Morgan, 1993:iv).

According to the Green Paper on Higher Education Transformation (1996a: 27) the field of teacher training is very large, fragmented and increasingly diverse and the quality of teacher training generally poor. Many of the problems that South African education currently faces, can directly be related to the unsatisfactory quality of its teachers (DoE, 1992:6).

In relation to the total population, South Africa has one of the largest youth populations in the world. Statistics illustrate that 70% of South Africa's total population is under the age of 34, and 74% of its African population under the age of

34. Most significant is the fact that 48% of the African population is under the age of 19. The future of South Africa will to a great extent depend on how this generation of young people is educated ( DoE, 1997a:9).

The school system is presently dominated, in many cases, by disruptive behaviour ranging from alienation from school work, classroom disobedience, school boycotts, social crime, vandalism, gangsterism, violent behaviour, drug abuse and disrespect for teachers. This has a considerable impact on teacher performance and student achievement. Amongst teachers this is often reflected in a lack of professional attitude to teaching and a general lack of commitment to the profession. According to the Green Paper on Further Education and Training ( DoE, 1996a:9) this tendency is referred to as the collapse of a culture of teaching and learning. Sustainable strategies to transform social, institutional and pedagogical relationships and a tremendous input from teachers will be required for the restoring of effective teaching and learning. Teacher training institutions will have a central role to play in addressing the issue of quality in education (DoE, 1997a:9).

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995b:12) defines quality as maintaining and applying academic and educational standards, both in the sense of specific expectations and requirements that should be complied with and in the sense of excellence that should be aimed at. The current quality procedures in teacher training colleges are mainly located within the Department of Education and can be characterised as differentiated top-down quality controls, unable to monitor and develop quality (DoE, 1997a: 136).

The setting of new norms and standards for teacher training will not necessarily bring about quality improvement. Quality can only be achieved through a dynamic and developmental system in which quality procedures are systematic and operate within a developed quality assurance paradigm. Although most quality assurance systems include both an initial self-evaluation process and an external review of results and processes of self-evaluation, the Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (DoE, 1998:23) strongly recommends a shift from past bureaucratic quality control mechanisms to a quality assurance model founded on the notion of institutional self-regulation. The proposed quality assurance model shifts accountability for quality to the institution.

Quality mainly concerns the supply of services and products (Barnett, 1992:45). In the context of teacher training, quality concerns products (students) that should meet the requirements of the customer or client, for the purpose of this research, the school and its community. As the main providers of teachers in South Africa, the theory and practice of teacher training institutions are often quite disconnected from the needs and expectations of the environment which they serve (O'Connell, 1993:192). An essential dimension in responding to increasing demands is high quality in the development of teachers. According to the Technical Committee on the Revision of Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (DoE, 1998:138), teacher training institutions will have to establish and maintain internal self-improving processes towards the development of institutional capacity to deliver better professional teachers.

According to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993:55) quality in an institution does not happen by chance - it has to be managed. The management of an institution has the prime responsibility for quality and quality assurance. They must set the policy and drive improvement and their actions must support the integrity of the process of continuous improvement. It is the responsibility of management to ensure that the quality assurance process is right from the onset and that it is maintained in a stable and controlled manner (Macdonald & Piggott, 1990:72). To achieve this, an effective management strategy for purposes of internal quality assurance should be developed.

The development of a management strategy for internal quality assurance in teacher training institutions, would depend largely on two factors: (a) the nature of the management of internal quality assurance in education, and (b) shortcomings in the management of internal quality assurance in teacher training institutions. Once this information has been obtained and evaluated, a management strategy to close or narrow performance gaps can be developed (Phala, 1990:116).

Ineffective management of quality and quality assurance in education has led to the development of quality control models, for example Total Quality Management (Murgatroyd & Morgan, 1993:x). However, these models focus on the principle of participative management. In the context of current inefficiencies in the management of internal quality assurance in teacher training institutions, there seems to be a

definite need for an effective management strategy for assuring quality in the training of teachers towards restoring a culture of teaching and learning.

The problem of this research seems to be vested in the following questions:

- what is the nature of teacher training in South Africa?
- what is the nature of the management of internal quality assurance in education?
- which models exist for internal quality assurance in education?
- what are the existing practices regarding the management of internal quality assurance in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province?
- which management strategy can be developed for internal quality assurance in the training of student teachers in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province?

### **1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

The aims of this research were to:

- determine the nature of teacher training;
- determine the nature of the management of internal quality assurance in education;
- investigate the assiting model for internal quality assurance in education;
- empirically determine the existing practices regarding the management of internal quality assurance in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province; and
- develop a management strategy for internal quality assurance in the training of student teachers in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province.

### **1.4 METHOD OF RESEARCH**

#### **1.4.1 Literature study**

A literature study was undertaken to:

- determine the nature of teacher training;
- determine the nature of the management of internal quality assurance in education;

- investigate existing models for internal quality assurance in education.

## **1.4.2 Empirical research**

### **1.4.2.1 Aim**

The empirical investigation was conducted to gather information about existing practices regarding the management of internal quality assurance in the training of student teachers in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province.

### **1.4.2.2 Measuring instrument**

From the findings of the literature study a questionnaire was structured to gather information from managers and/or units or departments concerned with quality assurance at teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province.

### **1.4.2.3 Pilot study**

The questionnaire was pretested with a selected number of respondents from the target population regarding its qualities of measurement and appropriateness.

### **1.4.2.4 Population and sampling**

The target population (N=66) consisted of managers and/or units or departments concerned with quality assurance at teacher training institutions (N=8) in the Gauteng province.

### **1.4.2.5 Statistical techniques**

The Statistical Consultancy Services of the Potchefstroom University for CHO: Vaal Triangle Campus was approached for assistance in the analysis and interpretation of data collected. The SAS-programme was used to process the data by computer.

## **1.4.3 Model development**

A model for the management of internal quality assurance in the training of student teachers in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province was developed to:

- provide a simplified indication of relations between the main elements in the management of internal quality assurance; and

- highlight specific themes, relations and dimensions in the implementation of a management strategy for internal quality assurance in the professional development of student teachers

## **1.5 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS**

The research will be reported according to the following chapters:

CHAPTER 1: Orientation

CHAPTER 2: The nature of teacher training in South Africa

CHAPTER 3: The nature of the management of internal quality assurance in education

CHAPTER 4: Models for the management of internal quality assurance in education

CHAPTER 5: Empirical research design

CHAPTER 6: Data analysis and interpretation

CHAPTER 7: A model for the management of internal quality assurance in the training of student teachers in teacher training institutions in the Gauteng Province

CHAPTER 8: Summary, findings and recommendations

## **1.6 SUMMARY**

This chapter gave an orientation to the research. This involved the research problem, a brief outline of the research aims and methods to realise the research aims. The population and sampling techniques were indicated. The chapter divisions were also indicated.

The next chapter exposes the nature of teacher training in South Africa.