

## CHAPTER 1

### 1. ORIENTATION

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Teacher education should be a very important component of every educational system. In a developing country like Bophuthatswana, it should receive prominent attention by those concerned, because the quality of education received by our youth in schools depends largely upon the quality of education of the teachers.

The Second National Commission (1985: 86-89) recommended among other things that the induction of the new teachers be given priority and further went on to suggest that "formal induction of new teachers must be implemented as soon as possible, final certification should depend on satisfactory completion of the induction period". These words by the Lekhela Commission, spells out the concern of the commission regarding teacher education in Bophuthatswana. This concern has probably been created by the rapid changes taking place in our society.

To survive, especially in the teaching profession, men and women who are highly committed and dedicated need to be produced, and this can be facilitated through proper induction. Education today is faced with incredible challenges, different from and more serious than it has ever met in its long history. In my opinion, the question of whether it can meet these challenges will be one of the major factors in determining whether mankind moves forward or whether man destroys himself on this planet, leaving this earth to those few living things which can withstand atomic destruction and radio activity (Peterson, 1982: 25).

It is no secret that educationists dedicate more attention to the training given to the teachers-to-be in the teacher training institution. This dissertation poses questions which may set a stage for the thinking educationists and provide a direction for the education of the future. The world is changing at a rate beyond the conception of most people (Toffler, 1983: 11). This needs to be recognised and in recognising this problem as educationists, we should prepare ourselves for these changes.

The only way to prepare for these changes is by making the most significant contribution to teacher education because beginner teachers able to face these challenges will be those who possess a list of multipurpose list of desirable

qualities which a teacher must possess and develop.

The principals in schools should therefore help these young teachers close the gap between theory and practice.

"Theory without the check of practice is empty, and practice without theory to guide is blind" (Jacobson et al, 1985: 28). These young teachers should be prepared and helped to acquire skills essential to beginner teachers when they are posted.

Educators involved in teacher training express concern about the lack of cooperation between teacher training institutions and the schools when it comes to a follow-up of what the new teachers do in schools where they work. According to Jacobson (1982: 29) the Colleges of education and the Universities advocate a particular behaviour and approach according to which teachers should handle the subject matter, whereas the subject advisers want it to be handled another way; this means that the training institutions and the schools pursue different aims.

This would seem to imply as students at the Colleges of education, teachers are instructed to acquire abilities which they are not permitted to put into practice at schools, while abilities that school authorities expect from teachers are perhaps never taught at the training institutions. This conflict of ideas between the training institutions and the schools can possibly be better addressed by the induction that these young teachers undergo.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THE TOPICALITY OF THE RESEARCH**

Literature on the beginner teachers reflects that these teachers experience problems in their first years of teaching. This period of teaching has been described variously as the beginner teacher's paradox, trial and fire, the bridge, the period of fixedness of the joys and pains of giving birth (Andrews, 1974: 71).

Many Western countries have mounted induction programmes in order to cater for the novice teacher, during these initial years of real teaching. Induction is not a new phenomenon in professions other than the teaching profession and has been prevalent for many years. Professions such as Medicine, Law, and Accounting ensure that their trainees undergo an induction period as an ongoing professional development within their profession.

In Bophuthatswana, no induction programmes are followed to introduce the beginner teachers to their employment situations and environment. Teaching seems to be one of the few occupations where the beginner becomes fully responsible from the first working day and performs the same task as the twenty five year veteran (Lortie, 1982: 3).

The complex nature of the teaching and non-teaching related

adjustment required of the beginner teachers, and the abruptness of the transition from student to teacher surely present a case for a more gradual induction of the teacher. In Bophuthatswana the beginner teachers are appointed after their pre-service with the hope that the training they have received will help them to cope with all the problems they encounter in their new teaching environments. Sanderfur (1982: 43) asserts that the induction in its present form is a matter of survival, not of the fittest, but of the most durable. A further observation is that induction, or rather the lack of it, is the major cause of attrition from the teaching profession during the first three years of teaching.

Furthermore, Sanderfur (1982: 45) comments that this transition from Colleges to schools is a period of intense anxiety, a period when the beginner teachers are paralysed by the discovery that they don't know all that they need to know, and are unable to draw on previous training. Fuller (1970: 206-7) has indicated that beginner teachers have problems which at times even lead to drop-out.

She considers these problems to fall into four clusters. She suggests that beginner teachers are concerned with the unrelated, <sup>the</sup> self, the task, and the impact, all of which according to Fuller focus on the job of teaching. Furthermore, these beginner teachers expect help from their principals.

They take this to be one of the many responsibilities of the principal in schools. But on the side of Bophuthatswana, it seems that there is very little being done for the principals by way of induction programmes. According to the 'Guide For Principals' (1982: 1), no special provision exists for the induction of principals. The guide is very quiet on the induction of the new principal except to remind the new principal that 'he bears full responsibility for anything that happens in his school'.

There is however, a procedure that entails the new principal being appointed on probation for a cycle of three years. It is acknowledged that a teacher becomes a principal mainly because he was a good subject teacher (Van der Westhuizen, 1986: 2-3). The conclusion can thus be reached that principals are not trained on the subject of the induction of teachers.

It is in the light of this observation that it was deemed necessary to investigate the problem of beginner teachers during their first years of teaching in Bophuthatswana and how their principals help them.

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

The aim of this research is to ascertain the responsibility of the principals in the induction of the beginner teachers in Bophuthatswana high schools. In order to reach this aim the following objectives could be stated;

To determine:

- 2.1 the problems experienced by the beginner teachers in Bophuthatswana high schools;
- 2.2 the principals' perceptions about the problems experienced by beginner teachers during the first years of teaching;
- 2.3 the relation that exists between 2.1 and 2.2;
- 2.4 the development of a framework in the form of a model within which the future planning for the induction programme can take place.

(N.B) The aim of this research is not to make an in-depth study of all the models of induction operating in most parts of the world, but to conduct a survey only of those that are relevant to the situation of Bophuthatswana as a developing country.

In the next section the method of investigation utilised in this study will be outlined.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH METHODS**

##### **1.4.1 LITERATURE STUDY**

An intensive study of the literature dealing with the induction of the beginner teachers was carried out to serve as a general background before embarking upon the specific aspects of the research.

The research concentrates on existing research in the area of induction. The literature which has a bearing on this research was also consulted. This literature falls in two clusters survey of literature on the

1.4.1.1 problems of the beginner teachers;

1.4.1.2 the managerial tasks of the principals with regard to the beginner teachers.

Both primary and secondary sources were consulted, such as relevant books from libraries, journals, and annual reports available from the Bophuthatswana Department of Education.

#### **1.4.2 EMPIRICAL STUDY**

The empirical survey method was utilised for collecting data. To gain insight into the theoretical background of the study, a questionnaire was submitted as an instrument of survey to selected high school principals and selected beginner teachers in the high schools in Bophuthatswana.

##### **1.4.2.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

To gain insight into the theoretical background of the study, a questionnaire was submitted to selected high school principals and selected beginner teachers in Bophuthatswana high schools.

The questionnaire fell in two clusters:

- the questionnaire to principals in the high school;
- the questionnaires to beginner teachers also in the high schools.

On the basis of the information acquired from respondents, the questionnaire data was analysed and interpreted with a view to a possible contribution towards the successful and efficient induction of the beginner teachers by the principals.

#### **1.4.2.2 POPULATION**

A suitable homogeneous population was determined as entailing teachers who are already in the field, but have one to three years of teaching experience after their pre-service training at their respective teacher training institutions, and principals who have been holding principalship posts for not less than five years.

The population of principals consists of all the principals in Bophuthatswana high schools. The sample number is (154) one hundred and fifty four principals randomly selected from the whole population.

The population of beginner teachers, on the other hand, consists of all teachers who after their Standard 10 went straight to the teacher training institutions. These are the teachers who never taught before graduating as teachers.

#### **1.4.2.3 STATISTICAL METHODS**

To process data, statistical methods were used, and these were done on the main frame computer of package of the Potchefstroom University, using the Statistical Analysis Programme (SAS Institute Inc. 1985).

Frequencies were also done by FREQ - Procedure of (SAS Institute, Inc. 1985)

## **1.5 DELIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

This research has focused on:

1.5.1 high school teachers with not more than three years experience as teachers;

1.5.2 high school principals with not less than three years experience as principals;

1.5.3 the provision of a framework in the form of a model of induction within which planning and implementing the induction model in Bophuthatswana can take place.

## **1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **- INDUCTION:**

It is a process of one to three years of actual teaching experience following the pre-service training.

### **- PROBATION;**

This is a process in which the new appointee is put to a test for a certain period. If he/she proves that he/she has the necessary skills he/she is appointed to a permanent post.

**PRINCIPALS**

All principals appointed to the rank of principal in high schools with less than three years' experience as principals.

- **BEGINNER TEACHERS/ NEW TEACHERS/ NOVICES**

Teachers who are on probation with at least one to three years teaching experience, following their pre-service training.

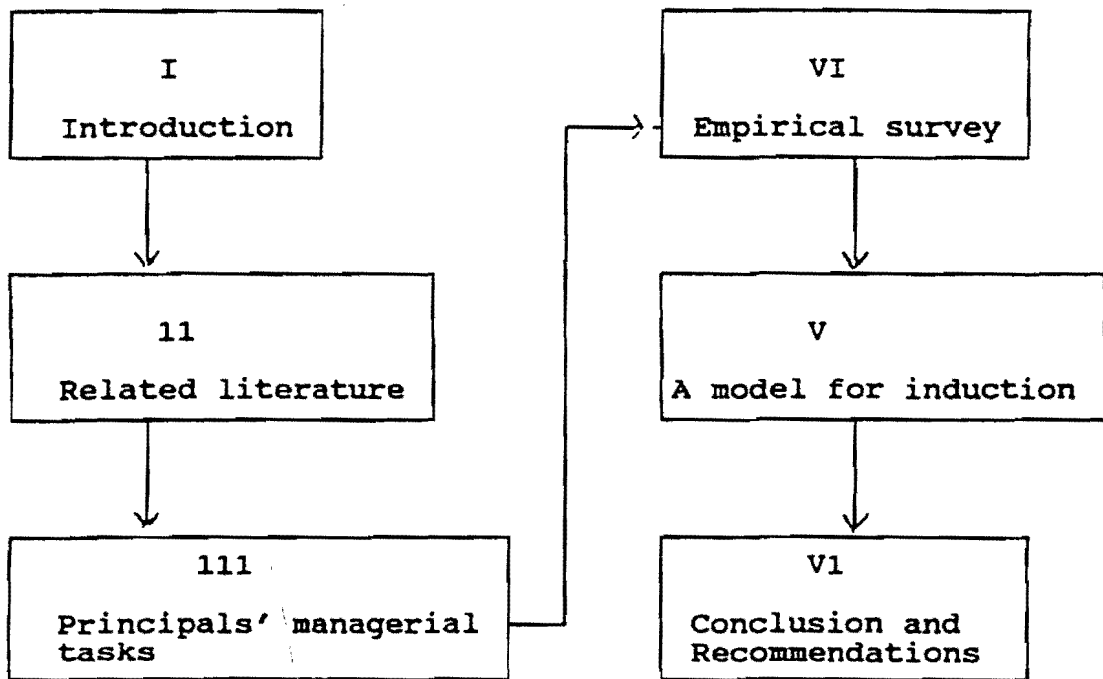
- **CIRCUIT OFFICES**

Administrative regions of schools

1.7 RESEARCH PROGRAMME

1.7.1 THE FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR THE RESEARCH

CHAPTERS



As can be seen from the schematic representation;

- Chapter 1 (the introductory chapter) deals with the statement of the problem, the aims of the research, the research methods, the delimitations of the study and the definition of terms.
  
- Chapter 11 is devoted to the question of the beginner teachers literature survey, considering among other aspects: the problems of the beginner teachers and how the beginner teachers solve their own problems.
  
- Chapter 111 is devoted to the managerial tasks of the principal with regard to the beginner teacher, such as<sup>1</sup> planning, organising, leading and controlling, as well as aspects of the additional management responsibility such as motivation, communication, coordination, decision-making and delegating.
  
- Chapter 1V is devoted to research methods. Among others, the following aspects are considered: the review of related literature, the empirical survey method where the questionnaire data will be analysed, summarized, tabulated and interpreted.

- Chapter V presents an envisaged model of the induction of the beginner teachers. Among other things, this chapter has considered the investigation of the models used in other countries of the world. It was on the basis of these models that the researcher was able to design the envisaged model suggested for implementation in Bophuthatswana.
  
- Chapter VI contains a conclusion and presents recommendations.

## 1.8 CONCLUSION

In chapter 1 the proposed research is put into perspective. In chapter 2 related literature is consulted, so as to support the fact that the beginner teachers in Bophuthatswana need induction during their years of teaching.

Despite the lack of hard data which would demonstrate the value of inducting the beginner teachers, many compelling arguments for paying attention to this area have been set forth in the literature.

Chapter 3 is devoted to the managerial tasks of the principals with regard to the beginner teachers. Evidence is presented of the beginner teachers' desire for assistance, and conviction of the principals' responsibility in providing the help in order to facilitate adjustment at their schools.

It is, however, important to note that chapter 4 focuses mainly on the empirical survey. It is from the results of the empirical survey that it was possible to ascertain whether the principals helped the beginner teachers with their problems or not.

The complex nature of the adjustment of the beginner teachers led to the development of the model suggested to aid in inducting beginner teachers. Based on the findings in all the chapters of this study, the conclusion is made, as well as recommendations suggested as to what can be done in order to help the beginner teachers in what seems to be the abrupt transition from being student teachers to being full-time teachers.

In the next chapter the related literature will be surveyed, and specific emphasis placed on the problems of the beginner teachers and how they solve their problems.