

CHAPTER I

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION AND PROBLEM OF STUDY

Faced with the challenges of a new era in its history the independent Republic of Bophuthatswana established the National Education Commission in 1977 with the express intention:

- "- to make a thorough, impartial and broad study of the state of education in Bophuthatswana;
- to make recommendations on the medium of instruction in the education policy;
- to study the Education Act, Act No.9 of 1973 and its amendments, in order to determine its shortcomings and suggest necessary amendments to the said Education Act;
- to report its findings and opinions and to submit its recommendations on measures to be taken to ensure progress of education in Bophuthatswana (Bophuthatswana Government, 1978 : 1x)".

The Commission recommended a basic change in the philosophy and fundamental principles of education as the point of departure towards reforming the educational system. An educational ideal of Popagano was identified as the one in which the cultural beliefs, values and highest aspirations of the Batswana could be crystallized (Bophuthatswana Government, 1978 : 18).

The recommendations encompassed broad policy orientations which would necessitate a rethinking of educational goals and objectives and a restructuring of the curricula, learning activities and teaching approaches as well as a changed attitude towards the learner.

The purpose of this study is to identify the educational changes, which manifest themselves as innovations and reforms, over the period 1978 - 1988 and to determine the extent of preparation and planning that preceded the implementation of these changes.

It is important that the need for any major reform in education should be fully recognized and accepted by the society which is being served by the educational system. Only then will the change process result in outcomes that are durable, measurable and provide answers to perceived problems (Obanya, 1989 : 346).

With regard to the introduction of innovations and reforms in education, Watson and Wilson (in Moorish, 1976 : 38) observe that

"some innovations usually lack the necessary planning and organization in sufficient detail to predict and control the consequences of change. The innovations are produced in a sporadic rather than in a continuous manner; as such most changes result from reasons of expediency rather than as a result of deliberate planning."

Finally, the study will provide answers to the following identified problems:

- what is the nature and extent of the educational changes that manifested themselves as innovations and reforms within the educational system of Bophuthatswana between 1978-1988?
- to what extent were the reform goals realized?
- which model, of planned educational change, if any, was used to ensure the successful implementation of any of the educational reforms?

1.2 THE AIM OF THIS STUDY

This study is intended to:

- investigate the nature and extent of educational change;
- identify the models of planned educational change which can be used to understand the success and failure of educational change;
- give an exposition of the educational changes that manifest themselves as innovations and reforms, within the education system of Bophuthatswana during 1978 - 1988;
- determine the extent to which the envisaged goals were realised and to identify problems encountered in the implementation process; and
- make recommendations based on selected models and strategies for educational planning which would ensure co-ordinated implementation of educational changes at national, regional and local level.

1.3 DELIMITATION OF THE FIELD

Individual studies about education in Bophuthatswana have been carried out.

A detailed description of the situation of education prior to Bophuthatswana's independence in 1977 was given by Brazelle, 1978 Die Onderwysstelsel van Bophuthatswana : 'n Situasie en Behoeftebepaling, a study which provides information about the education system which the first National Education Commission was called upon to investigate with the intention of reforming it.

The study by Malao (1983), focuses on educational planning per se as a prerequisite for an efficient educational system.

Through an analysis of the developments within the education system of Bophuthatswana during the post independence decade 1978 - 1988, this study will describe and evaluate the educational changes which manifest themselves as innovations and reforms. The role of planning in the successful implementation of the reforms will be determined.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

In the context of this study:

- 1.4.1 Change will denote the act of making the existing educational system different in one or more ways. The process entails the addition, substitution, alteration and restructuring of certain aspects of the educational system. Change may manifest itself in the form of innovation and reform (see also Havelock, 1969 : 8.49).
- 1.4.2 Innovation will refer to changes aimed at the introduction of something new that deviates from existing practice within the educational system. It will involve the substitution of existing goals, customs, approaches and practices; it seeks new and better solutions to existing problems (Adair, 1985 : 150).
- 1.4.3 Reform will refer to changes and developments which are aimed at improving and making the educational system more effective, efficient and relevant to the needs of the community or society being served. According to Webster (1973) reform entails a change, an improvement or rearrangement which brings a better order of things through correction of weaknesses or

deficiencies. This is achieved by correcting visible structural flaws like changing the school-going age; or reducing the pupil-teacher ratio without affecting the more durable, cultural values which will lead to the transformation of a nation's fundamental character and identity (Deal, 1990 : 9). The recommended reforms of the Bophuthatswana educational system were intended both to correct educational deficiencies and eventually to create a nation with a new outlook.

- 1.4.4 Planning, in the context of this study, will refer to the act of giving purpose and direction to the organization, to decide what needs to be done, when, and by whom. The process entails a careful diagnosis of the need for change and reform, the formulation of the reform objectives and criteria of effectiveness, the assessment of alternative solutions, the translation of plans into action and the evaluation of the reform process with a view to providing feedback (Stoner and Wankel, 1986 : 84-85).

1.5 METHOD OF RESEARCH

The study of education systems falls within the domain of Comparative Education. The study will follow a pattern of area studies which will entail an analysis, description and evaluation of the same educational system at different periods of its development (Brazelle, 1978 : 5).

The descriptive research method will be used to describe the developments and changes that occurred within the education system of Bophuthatswana in order to determine the role played by efficient planning in the implementation process.

Information will also be collected by examining records and documents like annual reports, commission reports and literature on criteria for educational planning.

1.6 CONTENT OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 will be an introduction that will give the orientation and purpose of the study.

Chapter 2 will describe the planning process per se and the models for planned educational change. The prerequisites for planning successful change as well as constraints that militate against educational change will also be determined.

Chapter 3 is an account of the educational changes which manifest themselves as innovations and reforms which were intended to impact on the educational system leading to an improvement in the quality of education being delivered.

Chapter 4 will be an evaluation of the educational reforms to determine the extent to which planning or lack of it has influenced their success or failure. The planning process of the Primary Education Upgrading Project will be used to illustrate the centre-periphery strategy of the Research Development and Diffusion model of planning.

Chapter 5 will give a summary of the study. An implementation strategy for planned educational change and reform will be discussed. Recommended areas of research flowing from this study will be made.

1.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Chapter 1 gives an overview of the purpose and aims of the study. It also embraces the delimitation of the field of study and a definition of terms which are key to this evaluation. Research methods to be used are discussed briefly and the chapter closes by indicating the contents of this study.