

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY

**Quality Assurance in the In-Service Teacher Education Program in
Northern Namibia: A Case Study**

BY

Olia Ghiassi Razavi

A Thesis submitted to the
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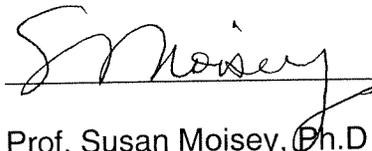
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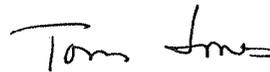
The undersigned certify that they have read and recommend to the Athabasca University Governing Council for acceptance a thesis "Quality Assurance in the In-Service Teacher Education Program in Northern Namibia: A Case Study" Submitted by Olia Ghiassi Razavi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF DISTANCE EDUCATION.



Prof. Ian Mugridge, Ph.D., Supervisor



Prof. Susan Moisey, Ph.D



Prof. Tom Jones, Ph. D

Date: March, 2003

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to my mother Mrs. Rouhieh Olfat Ghiassi Razavi, and eldest brother Riaz who have passed away.

To my father Mr. Mohammad Ali Ghiassi Razavi and my brothers Razi and Hami and their families.

My sincere appreciation goes to my husband Eduardo Juan Lopez Morales for his constant support and our son Jose Navid.

ABSTRACT

This study examined the in-service department of a college of education to find out the measures used for quality assurance. This four- year diploma program is offered to the unqualified and under-qualified teachers in Namibia.

Through 'case study' and by using a set of general criteria for knowledge, skills and attitudes and six questions this study was started. The questions were to know what mechanisms are in place for assuring quality in this program. In addition, it enquired about the internal and external obstacles to ensuring quality. A number of Current year 1 and year 4 inset students/teachers, graduates, tutors, principals, and administrators responded to questionnaires and interview questions.

The study's findings point out to the availability of the quality measures, but found it inadequate at the present to deal with the enormity of the task. The department of the in-service has to do a number of tasks. They are responsible for the logistical aspects since there are three contact sessions. They are also responsible for other tasks as deemed necessary. There are subject co-ordinators to foresee that the internal mechanisms for quality are in place. But they have other duties to perform that make it difficult to concentrate on their duties. The principals and mentors at the schools are to ensure that the inset teachers are supervised for parts of their activities. The quality assurance measures need to be very clear and those assigned should be able to do their responsibilities accordingly. The support systems that are in place play a crucial role for the maintenance and assurance of quality, but they lack adequate training for the fulfilment of their duties.

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Abbreviations & Keys

A	Administrator
BETD	Basic Education Teacher Diploma
DE	Distance Education
ECP	Education Certificate Primary
EMA	End of the module Assessment
G	Graduate
HOD	Head of Department
Inset	In-service training
LCE	Learner Centred Education
LCA	Learner Centred Approach
NEC	National Education Certificate
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
OTRC	Ongwediva Teachers' Resource Centre
P	Principal
PBI	Practice Based Inquiry
SBA	School Based Activities
SSG	Self Study Group
T	Tutor
TRC	Teachers' Resource Centre
UNAM	University of Namibia
Yr. 1 ST	Year one Student Teacher
Yr. 4 ST	Year four Student Teacher

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.1. Introduction

Namibia, a country in the southern part of Africa, received its independence from South Africa in 1990. Independence resulted in many changes in many spheres, including the education system.

As stated in the 'Toward Education for All':

“At that time, this Government inherited not one but eleven education systems and authorities. Although they shared a common administrative organization and orientation, they had different responsibilities, authority, and resources. That system of separation did not provide a solid foundation for effective integration.” (1993, p.28) and again:

“The Namibian education system is characterized by acute disparities, inequities, and tensions. Policies of racial discrimination have left a legacy of differential allocation of resources to different racial groups. Some schools have highly educated teachers, extensive equipment, and relatively small classes. At the same time, other schools have teachers who have limited training and classrooms that are overcrowded and poorly equipped.” (1993. p.19)

Education reform attempted to remove some of the barriers to quality education and make it accessible to everyone. Therefore effort focused on providing a basic education (grades 1-10) to all the children irrespective of race, class, etc.

This study tried to investigate an in-service teacher training program, and the quality assurance mechanisms that it has in place.

1.2. Teacher Education .

In the past the colleges of education had little say in the curriculum development of the courses that they offered. Most of the books, materials, etc. came from a central place in the Capital, Windhoek. This was usually attached to an external studies department of the university or Academy, as it was known. Teachers in these Teacher Training Colleges were required to use the prescribed booklets and study guides and comply with the requirements set by the head office.

There was a strong emphasis on rote learning and examinations with some practical work. The final exams were externally designed and moderated after marking.

With education reform, the teachers/lecturers were asked to participate in designing and developing the national curriculum. Experts were invited to the national seminars, and together with all the lecturers from the four colleges, were given the task of planning and devising the national curriculum for teacher education. This was a radical change for teachers who had previously accepted the materials and taught them, now they were planning the new curriculum and later would implement it.

1.3. Description of the Program

In addition to the move to a more learner centred approach, it was also noted that there were many under-qualified teachers in the field who needed to upgrade their education, knowledge, and skills to be able to cope with the new innovations and reforms. As a result, a four-year in-service program for these

teachers was introduced in the four colleges of education plus two regional offices in the country. The In-Service Teacher Education program at the Ongwediva College began in 1994. The colleges offer a four-year, part-time training program for under-qualified teachers, mostly from rural areas. These teachers have to participate in three contact sessions during each year of their study and complete 12 modules. To obtain the diploma, they have to complete 120 credit points successfully. These sessions occur during their school vacation. Many of the lecturers at the College also teach during the in-service contact sessions. However, there are other tutors who have been employed from outside the college and from secondary schools. Although there are three contact sessions, the teachers have to study on their own during the rest of the year. Many live in rural areas where there is no electricity and running water. Despite these and other setbacks, they persevere and complete their education via distance.

Chief amongst these setbacks is the official language, namely, English. Prior to independence the official language was Afrikaans, and right from 1990 it became English. This is yet another important issue, since almost the majority of the teachers already in the workplace were used to this language. They had to struggle to learn this language, not only for use in their classes, but to study and upgrade their qualifications in it.

1.4. The Problem

1.5. Rationale, Significance, or Need for the Study

As stated in the introduction the teacher education and more specifically the in-service program of a college of education was studied in the form of a case study.

“As of 1997, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture has classified 4000 of Namibia’s teachers as “trainee teachers”, that is individuals whose academic background and professional training do not make them fully qualified teachers.” And “Hence, our education system requires an effective programme of in-service education to enable our serving teachers to improve their skills and upgrade their status.” (Investing in People, Developing a Country, 1999, p.89)

It would be important to note how the in-service programme is offering a quality course of study and how it is trying to achieve it.

Some of the teachers register for this program out of necessity. Otherwise they will lose their teaching post for lack of qualifications. Others register in order to improve and continue improving their educational qualifications. Whatever the motivation, teachers attend the program in order to be better qualified.

In addition, “The highest priority for Namibia today is in–service training for professional and paraprofessional staff. The biggest single demand and need is for teacher in-service education at all levels, including pre-graduate diplomas, bachelor’s degrees and post-graduate degrees.” (Investing in People, Developing a Country, 1999, p.106)

Therefore to investigate this situation in the teacher training in-service programme seemed a worthy study to undertake.

1.6. Theoretical Framework for the Study

For this study the focus will be on a theory which outlines the three basic dimensions that teaching of quality requires. According to Fullan (1993) a teacher education program becomes effective if it can inculcate in teachers a sense of moral purpose, a knowledge base and the practical skills. (Nielsen, 1997, p.286)

The reason for this is that there should be a set of criteria based on the above- mentioned dimensions, through which one can to some extent examine whether quality has been assured or not. The three broad competency areas for the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) Inset program that are derived from the aims are teaching skills, professional attitudes and knowledge and understanding. It is explained further in the Broad Curriculum of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma that competency means an observable performance that can be evaluated in the school situation. (Broad Curriculum, 2002, p.5)

For **professional attitude** the general indicators or criteria are: willingness to work hard, professional ethics, commitment and morale, initiative, co-operative with colleagues, participation in school/class activities, punctuality and attendance, parental and community involvement, respect for learners, lesson preparations and classroom performance and positive attitude towards the study. (*Ibid*, pp. 10-11) Under **teaching skills** the general indicators or criteria are: classroom management and control, application of learner-centred teaching skills and techniques, appropriateness of teacher/learner activities, logical sequencing of lesson presentation, selection and preparation of teaching aids, clarity of expression, organization of learning opportunities, monitoring and

assessment of learners' progress, mastery of educational and pedagogical theory, lesson evaluation, presenting of subject content, appropriate selection of language forms, encouragement of learner's own language development e.g. formulation and expression of their own ideas. (*Ibid*, pp.11-12)

For **knowledge and understanding** the criteria or indicators mentioned are: knowledge and understanding of the content specific to a subject area, knowledge and understanding of concepts which give meaning and coherence to those content, application of knowledge and skills to those content, ability to compare and interpret information and constructive tutorial participation. (*Ibid*, p.12)

Therefore, the above criteria would assist in examining the effectiveness of the program.

1.7. Statement of the Problem

Quality assurance in the in-service teacher education program was studied. This is an issue of concern for many institutions of higher education and the distance education is no exception. Through the case study the writer intended to note for herself whether quality assurance is practiced and emphasized in the program.

1.8. Research Questions and Approach

Through a case study approach, utilizing both qualitative (e.g., interviews, document searches) and quantitative (e.g., survey questionnaires) methodologies, the writer investigated the extent to which quality is maintained and ensured in the program.

A review of the literature has resulted in a set of criteria through which one can determine whether quality is maintained or the extent to which it is practiced by the institution. These criteria and the following questions will guide the study:

1. What mechanisms, elements, or factors are in place for ensuring quality in this program?
2. As a distance program, what are the obstacles to ensuring quality? To what extent are these obstacles internal or external?
3. How are changes made to the program to enhance quality? What parts of the program appear to be open to change or modification? Are there parts that appear to be fixed?
4. Who is ultimately responsible for quality maintenance within the in-service program?
5. At the end of the four-year program, what changes do graduating teachers perceive in their knowledge, skills and attitudes?
6. How are these changes in their attitudes, knowledge and skills demonstrated in their teaching?

The theoretical connection to the above questions stems out of Calder's (1997) self-improving system. She mentions that it is essential to review and develop a program in order to have a self-improving system. (P.143) Though the people directly involved in the implementation of the program did not commission the study, it was assumed that, if they would evaluate their program, these types of questions could be asked. These questions would

indicate the potential successes and failures of the program in different areas. The questions are also related to the Aylette and Gregory's (1996) components for quality management.

The writer looked at different components of the program from March through August 2002. During the April-May school holiday, the author administered the student questionnaires. Interviews with various stakeholders took place between March and August 2002.

1.9. Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

The delimitation of the study is that the writer's intention was to look at only one college of education and its department of in-service training. The program is offered in four colleges of education plus the two regional offices in the country. Perhaps all these institutions should be studied to get a clear picture of what is really happening in the country.

1.10. Quality as a Goal

When the reforms started in Namibia, the education system instituted four major goals for achieving 'education for all'. These were access, equity, quality and democracy.

In November 2001, in a speech to the graduating class of the In-Service Teacher Education Program, Mr. Nahas Angula, the Minister of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation, talked about quality education. He mentioned that his government had tried to make education accessible and provide equity and democracy to all, but now the goal should be to ensure that quality is there. Mr. Angula's speech emphasized the necessity for quality education being offered and practiced.

According to Nielsen (1997) most of the literature on distance education for teachers has been descriptive. These usually describe the kinds of programs offered and the number of participants trained. It discusses types of program and numbers of students but he further states that: “ little effort has been devoted to documenting program effectiveness in terms of improvements in the quality of teacher performance.” (p. 307)

In response to this request and in recognition of the challenge of providing quality education in an in-service program for under-qualified teachers, a study was proposed to examine the extent to which quality is present within the In-service Teacher Education program located at the Northern Namibia College of Education.

Therefore the writer has decided to look into this area. As Nielsen (1997) further states, “The quality of distance education programs should thus be primarily assessed in terms of their ability to affect these kinds of knowledge, skills and disposition.” (p.287)

While the case study is still descriptive, it goes beyond mentioning the facts. It tries to give a glimpse of what is happening from the perspective of a few graduates, principals, tutors and current students.

1.11. Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the terms listed below are operationally defined as follows:

Distance education: A type of education whereby “the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of

tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or on the same premises, but which nevertheless, benefit from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organization.” (Holmberg, 1995, p.198)

INSET/In-Service: “is a unified general preparation for unqualified and partly qualified teachers in Basic Education, with opportunities for specialization in relation to phases of schooling and subject areas. It strikes a balance between professional insight and skills, and subject knowledge.” (The In-service Basic Education Teacher Diploma, Broad Curriculum, P.1)

Quality: Quality is an entity consisting of three interdependent and mutually reinforcing strands:

- “quality as efficiency in meeting set goals (not only reaching, but maintaining and improving standards);
- quality as relevance to human and environmental conditions and needs (to needs ‘now’ and needs ‘later’);
- Quality as ‘something more’ in relation to the pursuit of excellence and human betterment” (Hawes et al, 1990, p.188).

Quality Assessment System: A system that demonstrates “the extent to which students have acquired knowledge, skills and dispositions considered necessary for teaching well. Quality assurance systems are concerned with creating and maintaining the conditions by which students attain the desired outcomes.” (Nielsen, 1997, pp. 287-288).

Quality Assurance: The process of developing “standards which would be adhered to during the actual production process, thus eliminating variability in production standards and reducing the rejection rate from end-point quality control mechanisms.” (Nielsen, 1997, p. 305).

Quality Control: ‘the need to reject or fail a fair number of students at the end of their programme, increasingly viewed as an intolerable waste of physical and human resources.’ (Nielsen, 1997, p.305)

1.12. Summary

In conclusion to this section a few points would be summarized.

The purpose for conducting of this case study was to look at a teacher’s training program offered at a distance. The rationale for conducting this research was briefly stated earlier.

The search for quality is a quest of many educational institutions. Distance education systems are not any different from their conventional counterparts in this quest.

In ‘Investing in People, Developing a Country’, the Higher Education Policy for Namibia, it is stated: “We must establish standards directly relevant to Namibia and regularly and systematically assess our higher education students’ and institutions’ progress toward them. Those standards must reflect what is unique about Namibia and what we expect from our students and institutions, rather than what may be considered high quality in, say, Paris or Berlin or Berkeley or Hong Kong. For that, we shall have to be imaginative and innovative in developing appropriate approaches and procedures, especially because our higher education sector is so small.” (p.32)

This study aims to look at one college offering the program and the department responsible. It was felt that to solely mention numbers, whether the numbers of applicant's dropouts, success rates, etc., would not suffice for ascertaining quality. Therefore a set of criteria from the literature and the broad competencies of the program, and six questions were developed in conducting this research. However it should be noted that the writer is not claiming that she has found the right way to assess quality. But rather, just one way of looking at this important issue.

Not only the current year one and year four students were given questionnaires to know more about certain issues, but a few principals, graduates, tutors and administrative personnel were also interviewed. This allowed for the triangulation of certain issues from different perspectives. The next chapter looks at the literature and what is said in relation to quality.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

In this section, a look at what is mentioned in the literature about quality and the relevance of the present study is considered.

First, a discussion on the importance of emphasizing quality will be undertaken. Secondly the provisions of quality, quality assessment modes, the nature of quality, quality management and the three dimensions of the teacher will be discussed. It is hoped that this will provide a perspective on the importance of quality and why this topic was selected for the case study.

2.2. Why an emphasis on quality?

As was previously noted, the Minister of Higher Education, in his address to graduates in 2001, emphasized that they have achieved the three goals of access, equity and democracy and now all must strive for quality. In the book 'Toward Education for All', it is stated that:

“Perhaps the most important challenge in improving the quality of our education system is to ensure that our teachers are well prepared for the major responsibilities they carry. More than anything else, it is the teachers who structure the learning environment. It is they who can keep learning exciting and satisfying or alternatively who make schooling a pain to be endured.” (p.37)

Teacher training is considered an essential element for the delivery and improvement of quality in education. The In-service department is assisting unqualified and under-qualified teachers with mostly poor educational

background to become better teachers. Can these teachers achieve quality when they lack an adequate educational and linguistic background?

As Bailey, Kirkup and Taylor (1996) mention:

“The current preoccupation in the developed world with quality assurance and quality audit in relation to ODL (Open and Distance Learning) (Calder, 1994, Henderikx, 1992), stresses the need to monitor success in terms of the starting bases of the learner. However, diversity amongst learners is acknowledged as making quality assessments of education more difficult (Brennan, Khawas & Shah, 1994). If quality assessments monitor the degree of ‘value added’ to learners in overcoming barriers, both of access and of lacking previous qualification, by using support built into programs, then equality of opportunity is an aspect of quality enhancement.” (Mills & Tait, 1996, p.130)

2.3. The Namibian context

It is relevant to rectify what is considered to be of quality in the Namibian educational context. In ‘Investing in People, Developing a Country’, the higher education policy for Namibia (1999) it is stated that:

“We must be careful, however, that we do not rely solely on standards of quality set elsewhere. Though important, internationally recognized standards may not be relevant to the Namibian situation or may incorporate measures and rankings at odds with the priorities we assign in our own country. Even worse, international standards may function in practice to impose on us values, or ideas, or patterns of academic organization quite at odds with our own decisions about what matters most and why. Hence, uncritical adoption of internationally recognized standards will perpetuate our dependence on the very institutions

that must take the lead in ending that dependence and forging new directions.”

(p.32)

Therefore, even without a proper linguistic and educational background teachers are given an opportunity to enroll in the program. However, by this it doesn't mean that the teachers are all lacking in the above mentioned aspects. In fact there are those who do meet the requirements for entry to the program. What needs to be noted at this point is that providing equity and making the program accessible to some of these teachers may in fact be considered an aspect of quality provision. As stated in the book, 'Toward Education for All': "We must understand quality even more broadly. Access and equity are also measures of quality. Consider, for example, schools whose learners come from all parts of our society. If it turns out that students from only one racial group do well in their examinations, or that only boys concentrate on mathematics and science, or that children from only one ethnic group are chosen to represent the school, then something is wrong. Even if some of its learners do very well on their examinations, that school is not providing a high quality education." (p.39) And furthermore: " We need also to reconsider what we mean by high quality education to be sure that we do not unthinkingly carry the values of education for the few into the era of education for all. We are used to taking examination results as the principal and often the only indicator of the quality of our education system. Yet those scores are at best only a partial measure of the sort of education we need to provide."(p.38)

Therefore, one needs to take these points into consideration when trying to find out whether there is quality in an education system, or more specifically in

an in-service teacher training program. To determine quality it is important to look at all aspects of a teaching training program, not just examination results.

2.4. Provision of quality in distance education

Since the focus of this paper is an in-service teacher training program that is offered through distance with a face to face component, it would be useful to look at the literature in this field.

There are activities that are considered 'core' by some of the institutions offering distance education. These are the broad areas of academic content, tuition and learning experience, and assessment. (O'Shea et al, in Mills & Tait, 1996, p.199)

a) Academic Content: As to the academic content, the materials should be presented in a coherent fashion so as to guide and support the students. These materials should guide the students from the objectives through learning processes, to assessment. They should encourage reflection, and provide checkpoints. "They must be of an appropriate level and relate well to any prerequisites or assumed prerequisite knowledge." (*Ibid*, p. 200)

b) Tuition and Learning experience: When it comes to 'tuition and learning experience', the delivery process should be in line with the structure and content of the course materials. Here the role of the tutor is of paramount importance. This person ensures that the materials are interpreted correctly and guides the students through the learning process. It is suggested that it is indeed essential that the institution concerned assess the effectiveness of the service provided by the tutor. (*Ibid*, p.201) Also, extensive written feedback by the tutor for the

work done by the students is of great importance in a distance education program. It is mentioned that the quality of tuition provided by the tutor needs to be assessed. (*Ibid*, p.201)

c) Assessment: As to assessment, a variety of methods should be used. These are meant to determine whether the students have understood the teaching materials. As stated previously there is a need for comprehensive feedback from the tutors. Tutors are even provided with a detailed marking scheme, which indicates how the assignments should be marked and where feedback is necessary. A few of the marked assignments are then checked to monitor how the tutor awarded the specific grades. Grades awarded by the different tutors need monitoring and standardization should take place to ensure that students are assessed fairly by the different tutors. (*Ibid*, pp.201-202)

In evaluating teaching and learning in the distance institution and determining whether there is quality or not, there are several considerations.

According to O'Shea, Bearman and Downes (1996) in a conventional learning institution, the quality of teaching and learning can be discerned by observing a face to face session. But in open and distance teaching they suggest three components must be place. They are:

- "Teaching and learning materials which combine the presentation of the academic subject matter with structured patterns of learning.
- correspondence tuition, by marking and providing feedback on assignments

- Tutor and counselor support, both face-to-face (including formal tutorials) and other telephone, computer conference and correspondence contacts, by which groups of individuals are offered support in the course of their studies.”

(Mills & Tait, 1996, pp.197-198)

2.5. The Nature of Quality

Quality is a complex concept and there are various definitions. Several definitions of quality were provided in the previous section. The following will describe what is meant by quality:

Kerry (1993) stipulates that “as far as education is concerned we live through increasingly quality-conscious times. . . however, it has to be remembered that being quality-conscious does not guarantee instant success in delivering quality or even defining it adequately in any given situation.” (Cited in Bridges et al, 1993, p. 165).

West-Burnham (1995) identifies the following features of quality:

- “Quality is defined by the customer, not the supplier.
- Quality consists of meeting stated needs, requirements and standards.
- Quality is achieved through continuous improvement, by prevention, not detection.
- Quality is driven by senior management but is an equal responsibility of all those involved in any process.

- Quality is measured by statistical methods; the 'cost of quality' is the cost of non-conformance. Communicate with facts.
- Quality has to pervade human relationships in the work place; teams are the most powerful agents for managing quality.
- Quality can only be achieved by a valued work force; education, training and personal growth is essential to this.
- Quality has to be the criterion for reviewing every decision, every action and every process." (West-Burnham, 1995, p.46)

Frazer (1992), in a discussion of quality in higher education, delineates the following principles:

- "Everyone in the enterprise has a responsibility for maintaining the quality of the product or service (i.e. the sub-standard rarely reaches the quality controllers because it has been rejected at source).
- Everyone in the enterprise has a responsibility for enhancing the quality of the product or service.
- Everyone in the enterprise understands, uses and feels ownership of the systems, which are in place for maintaining and enhancing quality.
- Management (and sometimes the customer or client) regularly checks the validity and viability of the systems for checking quality." (Cited in Nielsen, 1997, p. 306)

Frazer (1992) continues by stating that: “ If we replace the word ‘enterprise’ with ‘university’, then a university which takes quality assurance seriously is ‘a self-critical community of students, teachers, support staff and senior managers each contributing to and striving for continued improvement’. (Cited in Nielsen, 1997, p. 306)

But this is not an easy task to do. As West-Burnham (1995) mentions:

“A starting point may be a concern with the current dependence on inspection and evaluation as means of measuring quality. Both can provide important data, although its validity may be problematic, but in both cases the problem, from a total quality viewpoint, is that they are historic activities. Both occur postfacto and, whilst they may well inform planning and policymaking, the cohort of students has moved on. In essence ‘all children are on short term contracts’. This is a fundamental issue for schools and colleges because most make promises in their aims which cannot be conditional on long term fulfillment.” (p. 25)

This is very true since, as mentioned in the quotation, most of the inspections and evaluation is done after the courses are offered. There should be an ongoing process of feedback and change.

2.6. Approaches to Quality Assessment

According to Barnett (1992), there are three approaches to quality assessment in higher education, namely objectivist, relativist and developmental.

In the **objectivist** approach, 'quantitative standards or criteria are set against which programme outcomes and conditioning factors are measured.' For example standards such as the 'pass' rates, student dropout rate, etc. He goes on to mention that the problem with this approach is that the standards are arbitrary and reveal little about the qualitative aspects of the learning and teaching process. (Nielsen, 1997, p.289)

In the **relativist** approach, system outcomes are compared with similar systems. Distance education programs are often subject to this kind of assessment according to Barnett (1992). This relies on external instruments such as achievement tests; etc. administered to the DE students/graduates and their comparison groups. One of the basic constraints for this approach is to find a suitable match for distance education groups. (Nielsen, 1997, p.289)

The **developmental** approach is 'that of internal members of an institution (staff and students) reviewing what they are doing for themselves'. This approach supports the identification of problems and finding solutions to them. (Barnett, 1992, cited in Nielsen, p.289) The purpose here is to improve the conditions of student learning and as such it is seen by Nielsen (1997), as a means of quality assurance rather than quality assessment. (p.289)

Barnett (1992) further points out that: " the objectivist and relativist approaches are both external to the teaching organizations, while the developmental approach is internal." (Cited in Nielsen, 1997, p.290)

2.7. Quality Management

Providing 'quality' in an institution needs both careful planning and implementation. All the stakeholders in the institution should be aware of its components and their own individual role in bringing it from theory into practice. Simply having idealistic and praiseworthy criteria without having it be known to all the stakeholders is a futile exercise. Neither is knowing the criteria sufficient. Only when all the stakeholders own it and try to implement it can those changes occur.

Aylett and Hilyer (1996) suggest the following for quality management:

1. "Identification of purpose: although a mission statement gives a general intention, but purposes need to be more specific in terms of services provided, potential customers, cost of provision etc.;
2. Assumption throughout the institution that all activities are directed towards these ends: departmental objectives, policies and practices need to be seen in the context of the overall purposes and not, as can often happen, as being in conflict with other sectional interests;
3. Collection of data to check reliability and consistency of achievement of these ends: sufficient data must be collected to identify what service is being provided and how good that service is, with the data made available as usable information;
4. Commitment to acquire customer feedback on quality of service: it is not sufficient, in a service industry context, to assume that good intentions are naturally translated into customer satisfaction;

5. Establishment of mechanisms to ensure that customer dissatisfaction is eliminated: there must be constant feedback mechanism to ensure that purposes are in line with demand and that demand is being met in a satisfactory manner;
6. Recognition that the provision of quality is made possible by the elimination of waste and the intensive use of resources.” (Aylett & Gregory, 1996, p.98)

Aylett and Hilyer (1996) go on to mention that in order to secure the above outcomes, there must be continuous improvement of the situation and the measurable outcomes should be checked with the purposes of any one program. (*Ibid*, 98)

It is interesting to note that they have acknowledged that there are usually ‘good intentions’ in any given program. But these do not automatically translate to customer satisfaction. There must be mechanisms in place, as suggested above, to ensure that quality is in fact being sought after and maintained through a continuous line of action.

2.8. Modes of Assessing Quality

According to Nielsen (1997), there are two main ways of assessing Distance Education programs. One is through examinations and the other is through impact studies.

Examinations may be categorized as follows: external examination systems, internal examination systems, and continuous assessment systems.

As for external examinations, this approach has been found to increase the credibility of the programme offered. However, its weakness is that it cannot predict whether the teacher/graduate would be effective in the actual situation. Also it restricts the curriculum to conventional topics which can be covered by both conventional and distance institutions (Nielsen, 1997, p. 291).

Internal examinations, on the other hand, while the Distance Education providers can set them themselves, are found to be quite unreliable. This is because they emphasize lower levels of cognitive skills (recall of knowledge). In addition, in order to avoid high numbers of failure, the standards can become very low and therefore externally unacceptable and unreliable. (Nielsen, 1997, p.293)

Continuous assessment offers different methods of assessment based on the blocks of instructions completed by the students. While it offers the students a chance to do a block on their own time, it lacks external validity. Furthermore, these tasks can be very time-consuming.

Impact studies “ have been organized under the assumption that programme effectiveness can only be truly assessed by examining actual performance in a ‘live’ classroom, and that teacher education programs rarely have the resources or mandates to examine post-programme teacher performance.” (Nielsen, 1997, p.295)

Impact studies are advantageous because they are not curriculum bound and can show effectiveness and whether Distance Education graduates can meet the criteria of performing in the field. They also have disadvantages, mainly the costs incurred by the institution. Implementers of the programs do

not feel that they 'own' impact studies and therefore would not be influenced by their results. (Nielsen, 1997, p.299)

2.9. What are the Conditions for the Development of Quality?

According to Nielsen (1997), there are internal and external constraints that can hamper the development of a quality programme.

Internal constraints include the following:

- “the relevance and quality of the curriculum and learning materials;
- the effectiveness of the learning processes;
- the quality of the student assessment systems;
- The effectiveness of the system management and control. (Nielsen, 1997, p.300)

For assessment of the students' work, different methods are used. The use of tests has been criticized because tests tend to emphasize rote learning.

Continuous assessment, on the other hand, has been used, but the feedback has sometimes come after long periods, making it irrelevant for any improvement to take place. Copying is yet another problem.

Neilsen (1997) also identifies external constraints to quality outcomes of distance teacher education program. These include the following:

- “the background and motivation of students;
- funding support;

- organizational support (from the principal, peers and supervisors);
- level of infrastructural development e.g. transportation, communication;
- distribution and professional networks;
- cultural differences. “(Nielsen, 1997,p.303)

The background and motivation of students is an important factor. Many are eager to continue their education but later drop out of the courses.

Funding for the distance education programme is yet another constraint. This has led to the use of learning materials, which have not been tested or have been found to be otherwise unsuitable.

As for organizational support, most of the teachers are isolated in their school and community. Not even the principal or other teachers value the professional development of the selected teacher, resulting in the isolation of the teacher and feelings of ‘solitary confinement’.

The infrastructural development or lack of it can also hamper the quality of the program. If these infrastructures are not in place, which is the case for most developing countries, then the delivery mechanisms are not to be found. This lack contributes to the failure of the programme.

As for cultural differences, most of the teachers are from subcultures in countries that use a different language other than the mother tongue of the teachers. Therefore they have the added disadvantage of not only having to learn the new materials; they have to do so in a different language as well.

(Nielsen, 1997, p. 305)

This is true for unqualified teachers, as stated previously, who have to struggle with the English language as the medium of instruction from grade 4. Their study materials and courses are all in English as well.

A recommendation by the Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (1999) for the pre-service teacher education and educator development and support is:

“The improvement of English, Mathematics and Science teaching is central to the improvement of education in Namibia and should be built into the structures of the ten-year Plan.” (p.185)

This recommendation is for the pre-service teacher training that mostly admits candidates who have passed grade 12. The successful candidate usually passes an entrance test and an interview. As far as the in-service teachers and unqualified or under-qualified ones are concerned, this is even more of a necessity.

Nielsen (1997) goes on to state that:

“The assumption here is that higher quality would result if these constraints were eliminated or at least minimized.” (p.299)

2.10. The Three Basic Dimensions of Trained Teachers

According to Fullan (1993), any teacher education programme can become an effective instrument for change if it inculcates in teachers a sense of moral purpose, a knowledge base and the practical skills. (Nielsen, 1997, p. 286)

Nielsen (1997, pp. 286-287) further states that although each education system has its own ideas about what it considers to be 'teaching of quality', there seems to be a consensus as to the following indicators: moral purpose or disposition; knowledge base, practical skills.

a) Moral Purpose or Disposition

1. a commitment to providing the best possible instruction to all students irrespective of their social or cultural background.
2. a sense of caring towards the students and a desire to 'make a difference' in their lives.
3. a concern for enculturating moral and civic values, through direct teaching and exemplification.
4. a sense of responsibility or 'stewardship' towards the school as a whole, namely, a willingness to join with others in building a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment.

b) Knowledge Base

1. a basic mastery of the subject matter to be taught.
2. a firm grasp of basic principles of pedagogy.
3. a knowledge of subject-specific pedagogy (appropriate ways of teaching particular subjects).
4. a basic understanding of child development concepts and the socio-cultural-historical context of schooling.

c) Practical Skills

1. the skillful use of a variety of approaches to classroom instruction;
2. the capacity to assess student progress and adjust instruction accordingly;
3. Competence in classroom organization and management.
4. the capacity to contribute to school-level decision-making and renewal processes.

Therefore it is not enough to compare the pass rates of different teacher training colleges and their distance education programs. These programs should be judged on the basis of whether they have been able to achieve the above. Only then can the extent of the quality of their programs be known.

Russell (1999) compiled research assessing the outcomes of distance education and found 248 studies that concluded that “no significant difference” exists between distance learning and conventional classroom learning (cited in Fender, 1999, p.26) However, when it comes to teacher training and the ‘follow-up’ on teachers, care should be taken to observe whether the above has been achieved or not.

2.11. Summary

Through a brief review of the literature, it is clear that quality assurance is an important and integral part of any educational institution. Distance education programs, like other educational institutions, are not excepted from acquiring, delivering and maintaining quality in their programs. This can only be achieved

by having mechanisms/systems in place for ensuring quality and providing feedback about the outcomes to all the stakeholders in the field.

The same Ministry and government employ the writer, and a conflict of interest is bound to happen. Because of the above, the writer would not undertake an impact study at this stage and suffice or confine her research to the available resources at hand. But she sees the importance of such studies in finding out the real issues. As Nielsen (1997) states “such assessment have also alerted researchers to a variety of other features and conditions which have influenced course impact.” (p.313)

But it would be valuable to find out through case study the extent to which the program is assuring quality. This will add to the literature in the way that it is not only stating statistical facts, but also rather what is actually happening and even the views of a few of the graduates, tutors and principals.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

The writer decided to choose case study as the research methodology in order to obtain a greater understanding of what is actually happening at the in-service section of the College of Education. Case study can be defined as follows:

“The background, development, current conditions, and environmental interactions of one or more individuals, groups, communities, businesses, or institutions are observed, recorded, and analyzed for stages or patterns in relation to internal and external influences.” (Mauch & Birch, 1998, p.117)

Cosley and Lury (1987) note the following:

“The case study uses a mixture of methods: personal observations, which for some periods or events may develop into participation; the use of informants for current and historical data; straightforward interviewing; and the tracing and study of relevant documents and records from local and central government, travelers, etc.” (Cited in Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1996, p. 66).

According to Yin (1993, cited in Blaxter et al, 1996, p. 68), six types of case study are identified as follows:

- the number of cases: single or multiple;
- the purpose of the study: exploratory, descriptive or explanatory.(p.68)

The writer therefore undertook a single descriptive case study as the research design.

3.2. Procedures

Steps needed to conduct this study are listed below.

1. Permissions were obtained from the following:
 - a. The two Ministries of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation and Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture through their regional offices. (Appendices G,H)
 - b. The Director of National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) whose In-service staff oversees the National program in the country.
 - c. The Rector of the Ongwediva College of Education, under which the In-service department falls.
 - d. The head of the In-service department where the study will take place.
2. Documents from the In-service department were reviewed to obtain information about their intake applications, criteria, number of students, and other relevant data.
3. Questionnaires were designed for year 1 and year 4 students. (Appendices A,B)
4. Questionnaires were piloted with a few students in each of years 1 and 4.
5. Questionnaires were administered to students who attended the contact sessions. Two classes of year 1 and two classes of year 4 were contacted

after obtaining the necessary permissions from their lecturers to administer the questionnaires.

6. Interview questions were designed for the head of the department. (see appendix F)
7. Interview questions were piloted with a person in the administration.
8. The head of the department was interviewed.
9. Interview questions for the tutors/lecturers were designed. (Appendix D)
10. The interview questions were piloted with a tutor.
11. Interviewed 4 lecturers who taught fourth-year students of the In-service program.
12. The interview questions for the graduates were designed. (Appendix C)
13. The interview questions were piloted with a graduate.
14. Five graduates of the program were interviewed after requesting their participation by face-to-face contact with them to make appointments.
15. Interview questions for the principals were designed. (Appendix E)
16. Interview questions were piloted with a deputy principal in the absence of the principal.
17. Three principals of the schools where graduates of the In-service program are employed were interviewed, after requesting them to participate through letters, face to face contact and making appointments.

18. Data from questionnaires were compiled.
19. Interviews were transcribed.
20. Interview data was analyzed.
21. Identified common themes and viewpoints with regard to quality
22. . Wrote the case study.
23. Thesis was written.

3.3. Participants

The research population was from the groups who attended the In-service program. These were teachers who were considered to be unqualified or under-qualified by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture. Therefore they were given the chance to continue or upgrade their education in this manner. Among these one could find younger as well as older teachers. Also, one could find teachers with only a few years of experience and teachers with many years of experience. Furthermore, the older teachers were educated in Afrikaans while the younger generations were to some extent exposed to the English language. This was in addition to their local languages that they used in their villages and towns.

A group was selected from the year 1 and year 4 teachers of the In-service program. There were about 10 classes of year 1 and 7 or 8 classes of year 4. Sixty-two questionnaires were distributed to two classes of year 1 (31 for each class). Of these 34 questionnaires were returned back. The same number of questionnaires (62) was distributed to two classes of year 4 (31 for each class).

Of these 38 questionnaires were returned. However, it should be noted, that this was a qualitative study and the purpose of the data collection was not to quantify the results as such (although that happened to some extent). The purpose was to know what the different stakeholders think about the program.

The choice became selective, since after piloting the questionnaires, it was realized that some of the teachers were unable to express themselves in English. Therefore, the groups were 'purposively' selected amongst the more articulate in English. The groups in Lower Primary were found to have problems in English, even in their fourth year of study.

Tutors selected were all from the college (4), in order to make comparisons with its pre-service students. Also the fact that they were more experienced with teaching at both levels of pre and in-service. There were two males and two females.

Principals were mostly from nearby schools. Though from the three selected, two could be said to be in the rural areas. One was a female and two were males.

Graduates were selected from nearby schools as well. Though from the 5 selected, 3 were from the rural areas. Of these, 2 were males and three females.

For obtaining information from the administration, 2 were selected from the national level and two from the local level.

3.4. Instrumentation

To have a better perspective of the case, different instruments were used. It was deemed necessary to triangulate the data collection. In order to do so, questionnaires were distributed to the current students at the Inset, there were interviews with the tutors who teach year 4, a few principals and a few graduates. Two separate questionnaires were distributed to the year 1 and year 4 student teachers. The reason for this was to understand some of the expectations of the year 1 students as compared to those in year 4. Year 4 students were selected for the purpose of checking whether some of their expectations were met. The researcher felt that the year 2 and year 3 student teachers would be busy with the courses and well on their way to continue their courses. Because of this, they were not given any questionnaires.

Drafts of the questionnaires and interview questions are included in Appendices A-F.

In developing the interview questions and questionnaires, care was taken to ensure that the language was simple and understandable by all the respondents. As mentioned earlier there are quite a number of teachers in the In-service program for whom English is their third or fourth languages. The questionnaires were piloted to ensure that there would be no unnecessary delays and frustrations at the time of conducting the questionnaires.

3.5. Pilot Study

As mentioned previously, a pilot study was conducted to ensure that the actual exercise would take place without problems.

The pilot study was conducted from March to July 2002. This trial run was to eliminate misunderstandings, confusing words and questions before the actual questionnaire was administered and interviews were conducted. Certain questions were added or eliminated based on the results of the piloting. The questionnaires were compiled before the contact session that took place at the end of April. Unlike the school term that starts in January of each year, the In-service program starts in the August of each year.

For example, it was pointed to the writer that it would be important to know how the different stakeholders view quality. As can be seen in the appendix, the last three questions pertain to the question of quality and whether the person sees the program as a 'quality' program.

3.6. Data Collection

The writer was advised to meet with the national office before embarking on her research. This was exactly what she did by taking the instruments that were ready to this meeting. It seemed important to ensure what the intentions of the study were. The co-operation and assistance given at this level was very helpful. A few more questions were added to the instruments, since the office wanted to know the views of the students in the program about the different aspects. The writer accommodated these additions because they would shed more light on the program.

Once the permissions to conduct the study were granted by the ministries and departments involved, the writer made regular visits to the office of the In-service department at the college. With prior notice, the visits were arranged in such a way as not to inconvenience the members of the department. If they

mentioned specific days and times that they preferred, that was considered and adhered to strictly. Care was taken not to offend, irritate or disturb the members of this department since the writer needed their assistance and good will and cooperation throughout her research.

The interviews were conducted after the necessary consents were obtained. The writer had to be patient with this since, even with prior appointments, people tended to forget or unscheduled meetings or other events occurred that delayed the interviews. Therefore the author made a few attempts at interview, for example, before it could happen.

The anonymity of the respondents was assured in the letter and in person to make the individuals feel at ease and comfortable.

The questionnaires were scheduled and administered during the contact session in April 2002. After asking permission from four tutors (two for year one and two for year four), these questionnaires were given to the respective tutors to distribute to the Inset teachers while in face to face sessions. The Inset teachers could then hand their questionnaires to their tutors within the next few days, since they were too busy with their classes. The writer made daily visits to the College to obtain the completed forms. Once data were collected, the writer intended to use SPSS software to analyze the data.

3.7. Treatment of the Data

After collecting the data from different instruments, there was time to select what would be the most important issues to include in the results section. The

instruments provided a number of issues and concerns and information. Not all could be stated here because of the length of the paper.

The data would ascertain the extent to which certain criteria were met by the In-service department. Therefore the focus were on the criteria that have been mentioned in the literature section. All the questions for the interview and questionnaires focused on these criteria and some additional research questions.

These data would be kept in the possession of the writer, with no names written on any files. Only dates of the events and interviews would be mentioned. To distinguish the interviewees from one another, a number would be given with their positions; e.g. tutor 2, principal 3, graduate 4, etc.

The **quantitative** data was directly taken from the questionnaires. The writer examined the questionnaires for year one and year four students one by one and compiled the data. Based on the information provided in the questionnaires, the tables were devised. In the year one questionnaire, questions 1 through 11 were closed questions. These were examined one by one, recorded on plain sheets and later transferred in the form of tables that can be seen in the results section. The same procedure was followed for the questionnaires of year four students. Questions 1 through 8 were closed-ended and the writer compiled the responses by hand and devised tables with the help of computer that can be seen in the results sections.

The remaining questions were open-ended questions that asked about the different components of the program and also asked about suggestions for the improvement. All the responses under each question were re-written by the

writer and used to some extent in the results section. The actual written statements of the respondents are recorded. There might be grammatical errors but the writer decided not to alter any of the comments so as to keep these intact. However because of the length of this paper, it was not possible to include all of the findings. A few were selected and noted in the results section.

As to the **qualitative** data, these were in the form of interviews with the administrative staff, a few students in year one and four, principals, tutors and graduates. The data were numbered to distinguish the different contributors and to safeguard their anonymity. These were all handwritten notes by the writer during the interviews. The dates of the interviews were removed for confidentiality purposes and abbreviations used, e.g. G for graduate. The research questions mainly directed the selection of the items for the results section. The quotations were used to illustrate the real feelings of the participants.

3.8. Summary

In this section the research methodology was described. The different steps that needed to be taken were outlined.

While the steps and data collection procedures were mentioned, it must be noted at this point that there might be some procedures or data that the writer had not foreseen or had overlooked. However, once she started with the actual study, these could have surfaced and could be included and mentioned.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

The purpose of the study was to look at the In-service program of a teacher education college and find out how effective their quality assurance mechanisms are. A set of criteria, plus six questions guided this case study. The criteria were the moral or ethical aspects (attitudes), knowledge and practical skills that an effective teacher would have. To remind the reader the six questions were:

1. What mechanisms, elements, or factors are in place for ensuring quality in this program?
2. As a distance program, what are the obstacles to ensuring quality? To what extent are these obstacles internal or external?
3. How are changes made to the program to enhance quality? What parts of the program appear to be open to change or modifications? Are there parts that appear to be fixed?
4. Who is ultimately responsible for quality maintenance within the in-service program?
5. At the end of the four-year program, what changes do graduating teachers perceive in their knowledge, skills and attitudes?
6. How are these changes in their attitudes, knowledge and skills demonstrated in their teaching?

What appears in this section is the gist of the information collected. First, it would be important to know how the different stakeholders view quality. The actual statements by the participant are mentioned and indicated by using quotation marks. It is interesting to see what each person stated in his/her own words. The keys are as follows:

A for administration personnel (2 males and 2 females)

G for graduate (2 males and 4 females)

P for principal (2 males and 2 females)

T for tutor (2 males and 3 females)

ST, Yr. 1 for Student Teacher year 1

ST, Yr. 4 for Student Teacher year 4

4.2. The Question of Quality from the different perspectives

Quality was the main focus of this study. Therefore, it was pertinent to know how each participant viewed it. Different stakeholders were asked to state what they think quality is or what it means to them. Here are some of the responses:

“Quality means we should as tutors be in a position to help candidates (Inset teachers) to reflect on their practice and to see whether it makes any meaning, to enable candidates/tutees to be in a position to create an environment whereby learners are able to construct knowledge and meaning. Finally to help/enable teachers to be in a position to help learners to promote their understanding that is what you know already to create their own understanding/experience to show what they understand. Quality means teachers have to teach learners to experience success, not to de-motivate, not

to make them feel dropping school, not to make them feel school is not important.” (T4.)

“Quality, it means to give the same education to same people. People need to have the same education. Education we give should be of quality, to make sense. Learners to do something for themselves.” (G.2.)

“If I look from teacher’s point of view, we have to be effective teachers to practice quality. If we teach effectively we produce quality products. We can realise that in the performance of the learners. If passing rate is not high, our teaching was not effective.

“If learners we taught would never drop from school, and would like school. If relationship between him/her and the school would be good and the rate of drop out decrease, that is good. To be at school all the time. Quality then exists.

“Quality takes a long time before you know. Once you know your learners are in positions to have careers, it shows that my education was of quality. It is a broad issue.” (P.2)

“Quality in terms of what we do, in terms of services we give to the students. If it is of higher standard it is of high quality, supporting, counselling students. Also in terms of materials (resources), human resources. The tutors, we actually select the tutors. The level of competence, quality of tutoring (how is the standard), how efficient they are, how good they mark, comments/advise they give when reviewing the performances of teachers.

“Quality of modules, how user friendly, useful, how accurate information is, how many meaningful tasks that are prescribed in the modules.” (A.3)

“Quality is if a program of quality is up to standard. If it has achieved a set of criteria, also compared with other educational programs elsewhere in the region and as well as world wide.” (T. 3)

“Quality means teachers have to give education that is up to standard. Not to make things up. It is something in the future, to build a child mentality.” (P.3)

“Quality to me it means as a teacher she can prepare the activities that the learners can gain something. She can teach the learners to practice and motivate them. To respect the ideas of the learners.” (G.3)

“Quality means different things, there is no specific definition. What I can say there are factors that contribute to quality education, the input you give e.g. human and physical resources, it doesn't mean just by putting them there, you put the support to maintain the resources.

“Some think if the education system fails a lot of people, it is of high standard, but to me it is rather what the system is doing to the learner or help every learner to reach his/her maximum potential. That links with access, equity and democracy. I say because if you have learners in class and try to reach only the good ones, then you deny access in terms of knowledge and skills. If you don't provide access and equity, can you say if the education is of good quality? If you don't try to reach each and every learner and even teachers (we are demanding teachers to provide quality), what are we doing to have quality? We only demand from teachers and learners. This is a chain, if teachers do not get support, they lose moral and motivation. Whereas we believe schools are obliged to have high standards or with good grades, parents and community

should help the system. We cannot expect the government to have only the goal for quality.

“In the lens of the Namibian people, quality means high standard in terms of academic performance. I try to deviate a bit from them. In an education system, only learners who can reproduce and say facts without solving problem, without bringing new knowledge. Education system should be functional; they should reach people, if they cannot do anything from that from school, is that quality? I thought quality means that after schooling, people can help themselves. It is difficult to measure up to that point. We always improve on what we have achieved. Society is changing. I don't know whether we would say we have reached a certain point. We have tried quality, but we must thrive to have a balance between what we want to achieve and what the community wants to achieve.” (A.4)

In the next section a discussion will be made as to the above comments made by these participants.

4.3. Information from the Questionnaires

What will follow is the examination of the questionnaires distributed to year one and year four inset teachers.

4.3.1. Background of Year 1 and Year 4 Inset Teachers

The questionnaire for year 1 students/teachers was distributed to two classes that were purposively selected because of their language proficiency. Of the 62 questionnaires that were distributed, 34 were returned. This means 54.8 percent of the students answered the questionnaires. A sample of the questionnaire can be seen in Appendix A.

Of the 62 questionnaires distributed to year four (2 classes), 38 were returned. This means 61.2 percent returned the questionnaires. A sample can be seen in Appendix B.

During the piloting of the questionnaires, it became obvious that some students had problems with the language. Therefore the sample selected for the questionnaires was purposive. The questionnaires were distributed amongst groups that were more expressive and experienced linguistically because of the grade level that they taught.

The following table will indicate gender, educational background and years of experience as a teacher to provide a profile of the practising teachers who are admitted to the in-service program.

Table 1.

Background Information on the Respondents: n= 68

	male	female	blank	Educational Background				Total
				Gr.10	Gr.10	Gr.11	Gr.12	
Year1	12	20	2	0	3	0	31	68
Year 4	21	16	1	0	2	1	35	76
Total	33	36	3	0	5	1	66	144

According to the above information, one can see that the successful candidates mostly are in possession of a grade 12 certificate.

The following table addresses the issues of whether teachers have a professional certificate or diploma as well as their years of experience in the classroom.

Table 2.

Professional Certificate Holders and Years of Teaching Experiences

	Professional certificate/ diploma			Years of Teaching Experience					Total
	Yes	No	Blank	- 5	5-7	8-10	+ 10	Blank	
Year1	24	8	2	7	8	7	11	1	68
Year4	27	9	2	1	7	7	20	3	76
Total	51	17	4	8	15	14	31	4	144

From this table the teaching experiences of the Inset students can be seen. Furthermore, many of the respondents have a professional certificate or diploma and are upgrading or furthering their studies.

4.3.2. Level of Satisfaction with the Support for Year One Inset Teachers

The other point that was similar in both questionnaires was when they were asked to rate the level of support that they have received. It was important to note how the year 1 students perceived the assistance received from the different individuals and institutions. The respondents were asked to select the rate of support given by the different individual or support systems.

Table 3.

Level of Satisfaction with the Different Support. Year 1 Students n=34

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Little	Very little	Blank	Total
Tutor/lecturer	2	27	4	0	1	0	34
Fellow student	9	15	10	0	0	0	34
Inset Personnel	2	13	14	2	1	2	34
Colleagues at schools	9	17	6	1	1	0	34
Others	3	11	1	4	1	14	34
Total	25	83	35	7	4	16	170

From the above table one can note that the support given by tutors/lecturers were considered very good which translates to 79.4 percent. When it came to 'others', they mentioned different individuals' names, NIED (National Institute for Educational Development), parents, study groups, family, school library, their learners, inspectors and the community.

In addition to the support they obtained, year one students were asked to rate the level of access to the different individuals or support systems. The following table indicates their rating.

Table 4.

Rate of Access to the Different Support, Year 1 Students. n=34

	Excellent	Very good	Average	Little	Very Little	Blank	Total
Tutor/lecturer	4	21	6	2	1	0	34
Fellow - students	7	20	3	2	1	1	34
Inset - personnel	1	17	10	4	2	0	34
Library	1	11	9	6	7	0	34
Others	1	7	4	3	2	17	34
Total	14	76	32	17	13	18	170

This indicates that the rate of access to the tutors/lecturers is 61.76 percent.

4.3.3. Important Skills, Knowledge and Attitudes

In addition, the year one students were asked to number the following skills/knowledge that they hope to obtain by the end of the four years, 1 being the most important. (Question No. 11 on the questionnaire for year one, appendix A)

Table 5.

Important Knowledge, Skills that should be Attained by the End of Four Years.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
To know more theories related to Education	4	2	0	1	3	4	3	0	17
To have the skill of classroom management	2	2	3	2	4	2	3	0	18
To know how to discipline my learners	0	3	3	4	3	4	1	0	18
To know different methodologies	5	6	3	4	0	1	0	0	19
To be able to use different methods in my class	2	4	7	1	2	1	0	1	18
To be more prepared in terms of planning lessons	4	1	3	4	3	2	2	1	20
To be more professional in my attitude towards learners, colleagues, etc.	2	1	0	4	2	2	8	0	19
Other skills and knowledge, please specify	0	0	0	0	2	2	1	3	8
Total	19	19	19	20	19	18	18	5	137

Numbers 1 to 8 across the top of the table refer by importance, with 1 being the most important. Amongst the other skills mentioned were:

To be fully prepared on the implementation of the learner centred approach in my teaching, to master the content of my area of specialisation, subject content, to be confident, to motivate learners, to assess the learners, to make lesson plans,
To practice the teaching and learning process, to be co-operative with all people.

From the table one can see the degree of importance placed on each of the knowledge or skills mentioned.

4.3.4. Open- ended Questions from Year 1 Questionnaire

Questions 12 to 20 were open ended and respondents could comment on a variety of issues. Many did not answer these questions at all or they did so sparingly. Only a few provided some explanations and some mentioned that they do not understand a question.

Questions 12 through 16 inclusive asked specifically about the different aspects of the program. These were especially added to inform the national office of the students' responses.

Question 12 asked about their comments on face to face sessions and if they would change the structures of these sessions. Of the 34 responses, 9 were without any comments or blank. 8 mentioned that the time is too short, more days are needed, overworked for the week long, need to discuss the problems with the tutors. 8 stated that it is good, one can discuss/share ideas. 2 said it is properly organised. Other comments to this question were:

Long process of study, successful, we can have more centres at different places, some sessions too long, no need to change structure, there are some who are not teaching during face to face sessions, very good.

Question 13 asked whether they find School Based Activities useful, why or why not? There were 9 that did not answer this question. 19 said yes or it was useful and further commented that:

When observed by mentor and principal gain many help from them, they assist and make corrections, it equips teacher, teacher need to practice, but some of us find difficult to practice at school or failed to practice at school where subjects are offered, inset teacher correct when I go wrong, tutor can see how I did at school, it trained me to prepare my lesson and share ideas of teaching methods when I observe colleagues, we improve on our teaching through correction of mentor, can improve and identify mistake, it teaches you how to prepare lesson plans, get knowledge and skills from mentor, let teacher to have practical at school, observed mentors and discussed approaches and teaching methods, used to get in touch with colleagues and to share ideas and common problems, sometimes.

Some of the above was repeated by the respondents. 4 said no, asking why it should be done and why not once a year, indicating that they are already in practice, that it is a waste of time and lots of work. One said not yet does it and one said credited.

Question 14 asked how relevant they find the portfolios to their personal and professional growth. While 11 did not answer this question and one said no, the rest of the respondents had positive comments for it. Some of the comments can be read below, however, not all could be stated because of the length of the paper:

Keep all information in order and easy to follow, provide enough support both personal and professional development, it learned me organise my subjects' particulars, encourage me to learn hard in order to complete and give a willing to achieve my goal, train us to keep our information officially.

Question 15 asked if they think their assignments are in line with what they have been studying, why or why not? 7 did not answer this question. 17 said yes and commented that it was based on what they studied or on the module. Four said sometimes they are in line, but sometimes they are not in order to make them learn. 6 said no and their comments were:

Some are not found in modules, sometimes assignment asked difficult things, sometimes assignments are far from what we were taught, some tutors didn't return back on time.

Question 16 asked what their comments were in regards to the assessment of their assignments by the tutors and if they have suggestions for improvement?

Out of the 34 respondents, 9 did not respond, 3 said no, and one each for the following comments: nothing they are doing well, no problem, not applicable, nothing, and well I think. The remaining 17 made the following statements:

Positive: Some need to clarify their marking method. They assess them accordingly. I suggest that our tutor may explain to us the marking grid and mark accordingly to the mark allocated or explain everything that he/she expects from inset teachers. Some comments are good but some are bad they should look for both sides when they comment the assignment. Assessment always in line with the marking criteria as decided by NIED, tutors are always commenting assignments. They use to give positive comments to assignment, assessments need to be extended simply more things should be covered. Tutors should allocate the marks well and he/she should write graded in answer sheets, try to mark it early and send it to the owner.

Negative: Sometimes assignments do not come back on time from our tutor after marked. It is too difficult and receives late. The assessment must lost come

back late, where Inset teachers look his/her assignment. The assessments of my tutors I comment that they need to follow same strategies in order all portfolios look like the same. I suggest that tutors should mark assignments on time and give back to inset teachers to prepare for exam and re-assignment if you did not pass it. Tutors don't mark strictly other subjects except English classroom and they try to bring assignment before contact session. Some tutors don't give marks e.g. if some answers is out of 15 you get 0 like using → but you put — , Want tutors to explain modules in detail.

To the question of whether the program meets their expectations and why or why not (**question 17**, appendix A), 17 out of 34 said yes. While the other answers were:

“Maybe later”, “the study period is very long”, “no”, “satisfactory”, “not really.” Those who responded that the program did meet their expectations, made further comments such as:
“We share ideas,
I learn a lot,
gained more ideas,
because of wanting to change methodology,
brings improvement,
achieving things not known before,
because need teaching improvement,
program offers quality support to students,
study materials are well designed.”

Question 18 asked what do they consider the top three problems with the Program? 10 did not answer this question and one said that s/he doesn't understand this question. Not all mentioned three points, some wrote one, others two. Of these, three said that they don't have enough time due to school work, four said that time for the session is short, four stated that the program is expensive. The following will provide more information as to what kind of problems were mentioned:

Late assignments. Too little info in the books that are given to us and scarcity on the prescribed textbook apart from the learners' books we are using at schools. Duration of the program too long. Too many activities. More work including un-useful method like Maths. This program not good according to the exam because they dislike to indicate the marks. Marking method of some tutors. They didn't give us enough materials. We expect them to open the hostel at 7 am. Buying exercise books to write in. Materials to the portfolio. Late distribution of modules. Time should be allocated well when it comes to end of the module exam. Too much work according to portfolios. Lack of materials. NIED increases study fees on annual basis. Study materials should be given beforehand. More info to the program. Make use of college library. Long distances between the Inset unit and some inset teachers. Arguments from the inset unit staff. Materials are not well enough. No food for inset teachers. Lack of communication between teachers and staff, and accommodation.

Question 19 asked the top three strengths of this program. There were 16 who did not answer this question, 2 gave invalid answers e.g. good, and 1 said that s/he didn't understand the question. The rest either mentioned one, two or three points. In order to acquaint the reader with the responses they will be stated here:

Group discussions, work in pairs, portfolio checking, assignment marking, quality support, quality study materials, quality tutorial service and support, working atmosphere among colleagues, assessment, encourage us to learn hard, improve our professional, give as a willing to achieve, improve the skills of the inset teachers, get new methods, how to put discipline in class, motivate the teacher, write EMA, teaching methodology, acquire skills, knowledge, practice at school, improve teacher teaching ability, conducting sessions, providing materials, marked of assignment on time, gain more money from Inset teachers. **Some responses looked like suggestions:** provide adequate time, provide modules two weeks before contact session, occasional meetings with HOD.

Question 20 asked if they have any suggestions or recommendations for improving the program? 16 did not answer this question, one said no, and there was one invalid answer. These are what they wrote:

Let it be progress. Increasing amount of the study fees needs to be considered. Submission of assignments at circuit level to be implemented. Behaviours of some Inset unit staff need to be looked at by the HOD. Equip classroom. Enough time for contact session. Advance salary adjustment every after the year completion. Provide tours to gain more knowledge about Namibia environment. Program should provide enough materials. Marked assignments must reach the owner before contact sessions. Indicate marks to the questions. Arrange the assignments in appropriate box. Time change when it comes to End of the module exams. Checking of module to be allocated at good time. It need to give us much time that is the day we write exam is not the day we were taught. The suggestion I have is for personnel of BETD as in OTRC they are not serving people in a good way. And when assignments are submitted there should be somewhere to record that it is submitted. The program should also treat teachers equally, some were credited to year 2 if they have ECP, some are not, some teachers got diplomas without writing exam, others with open books, while now the program want to remove this, why if we all get the same diplomas? My suggestion is I want each and every teacher to go through in this program, Each and every under-qualified teacher must be successfully in this program. I wish it to continue like that, tutors must be serious to help inset teacher. Yes, I think the sessions need to be prolonged, materials need to be increased, like write materials just special for the portfolio activities. I suggest that more prescribed textbooks apart from those we are using at school should be brought to our attention, so for us to gain broad knowledge. There should be formal tutorial method. To be given admission letters stating what subject you have enrolled for, because there are some of us who are still struggling. Better to change amount of money (fees) to \$500.

4.3.5. Rate of Support for Year Four Inset Teachers

The year four teachers were also asked to rate the support given by the different individuals and support systems.

Table 6.

Rate of Support for the Year 4 Students. (n=38)

	Excellent	Very Good	Average	Little	Very little	Blank	Total
Tutor/lecturer	3	24	10	0	1	0	38
Inset Personnel	4	14	14	5	1	0	38
Fellow student	4	24	9	0	0	1	38
Colleagues at schools	4	19	12	3	0	0	38
Others	2	11	6	5	1	13	38
Total	17	92	51	13	3	14	190

As can be seen from the above table, the rate of support given by the tutors and fellow students received equal numbers and was considered very good.

4.3.6. Open- ended Questions from Year 4 Questionnaire

Questions 8 through 18 were open-ended questions. The participants could make comments on different aspects of the program. (Appendix B)

Question 9, for example, asked: are you generally satisfied with the courses that were offered to you? If not, what do you suggest should be included or

excluded? Of the 38 participants who returned their questionnaires, 32 said yes, 1 said very satisfied, 3 were blank, one said no and one said not really satisfied.

Among the suggestions given were:

should extend time of classes; one week is not enough. The inset teachers, not all of them, can absorb all the info in a short time.
Courses to continue for us to upgrade in HED (Higher Education Diploma)- BEd (Bachelor of Education).
Inset staff members are very few to run the whole group. They seem exhausted by the heavy work. It will be better to have more than 4 persons.
Tutors must tutor for understanding and not for marks only.

The respondent who said no, made the comment that: “it lacks academic development, instead (it offers) professional development.” The one who answered ‘not really satisfied’ added this comment: “this is simple because some tutors don’t really know their work.”

Question 10 asked what do you think about School Based Activities? Of the 38 respondents 4 did not respond to this question. Comments would be stated here for the reader to know what comments they made:

The positive idea were as follows:

It improves my teaching process. I learned how to do lesson plan, observation, grading. This is very good activities, it encourages teachers to work hard. Best way how to handle the different situation prevailing at schools. SBA has motivated me a lot. SBA must be there to train teachers more special in learning and teaching situation. It helped me by receive some advice, support and success in my teaching and learning process. It is a lot of work. It is good, but some teachers having a lot of work. It trains me and encourages me to practice what I intended and what I teach. This is part of PBI where I do all my practice in teaching and being observed by, commented where I need to improve, it has helped me a lot.

The negative comments were as follows:

It is helpful, but colleagues and principal at some school are not willing to help. Mentors are refusing to make up lesson plan and saying no to the task/responsibility. This is very helpful but some principals are not interesting by the reason that they are busy and they have no time in dealing with BETD issues. It needs to be clearly explained and principals at schools must be informed on this. Mentors who are pointed/chosen at schools, to work with student teachers are not interested in, they found it as a waste of their times. SBA, I think should be done by tutors during the 4th year because some of us we have those old people who are taught long ago. And another thing is that the SSG meeting are not useful to me, not at all. Principals need to be well trained because they are always reluctant to offer assistance, some just keep quiet. Some school principals have no knowledge or understanding on how to fill/complete, therefore they need good guidance, e.g. workshops. There must be invigilators to monitor all the activities done at school, not only principals. Not all principals are confident in this. Principals should attend workshops on how to assist the inset teachers regard to SBA. It is also okay. But we need to be observed by our tutors individually even not all of us.

Question 11 asked how were your face to face sessions, do you have any comments on them? Of the 38 respondents, 3 did not answer this question and one said no. Some comments can be seen here, for lack of space only a five positive and five negative ones will be quoted:

Positive: was good, this opportunity you can ask what you want to know or you share ideas. Yes, as from year 1 to year 4, I did not experience any doubt in my contact sessions. They are good because we have the time to ask questions where something is unclear. They are very helpful because tutors are trying to explain our modules to us. We improve our learning process by sharing ideas with our fellow students.

Negative: Somehow, because some of the tutors apply to teach subjects in which only they have little knowledge or got only knowledge on one part of the subject. It is ok, but tutors need to give more info on the important topics because they cannot finish all modules in a short time. They were very good, but some tutors did very little in giving the lesson by the reason that we are teachers and we know much. I think what should be done here is that tutors should try by their utmost means to fulfil inset teachers needs, they should be punctual at all times. The time is short.

Question 12 asked how do you perceive the assignments, your tutor's comments? 4 did not answer this question and the rest of the comments were:

Positive: Their comments were constructive. Comments are relevant because they direct inset teachers on what to do next. They are good and give it to let us know where we are correct or wrong and where we need to make a change. The comments are very correct and provide us with a better clear understanding the assignment. I am very happy by these comments because they let me improve.

Negative: Tutors were very strictly in marking assignments and most of them use to award D grade to teachers. A tutor has to indicate why inset teacher get A, B, C., they must indicate what is wrong and what he/she was supposed to do. Other tutors didn't comment, they only upgrade you, you continue to struggle again with the corrections. Some assignments are not very well structured and explained and even tutors do not understand these. Some tutors never give comments even though he/she gives a D grade.

Question 13 asked what do you think about the end of year examinations?

Again four did not answer this question out of 38 respondents. The rest of the comments are:

Positive: was very good and motivate me to learn more. Helpful to measure competencies. I support the end of the year exams. Those EMA is helpful because is where we can reflect ourselves if we studied in the term, year or not. This is good because if it taken away inset teachers will not read through the modules after completed the assignment.

Negative: Some EMA are at our level but some are not. Sometimes mis-arrangement of the office the questions are not enough to all the inset, we have to wait questions to be duplicated and this should be done while some write. It is delaying by some tutors who is not interested to do his/her job on time. The end of the year is not suitable in this case because the inset teacher happen to fail he/she won't have a chance to rewrite. Time is very short, it is better to add 1 hour.

Question 14 asked what do you think about portfolios, in what ways have

They contributed towards your personal and professional growth? 3 did not

Respond to this question. There were mostly positive remarks for this question

with very few negative ones that follows:

Positive: It is good for like me if it was not this in service I don't know if teachers can have portfolio, the portfolio as well give us info of how to arrange

our records, different subjects. Teach me to keep my documents or useful handouts in order. They are useful, all references I could find them in the activities which are in my portfolios. It forces inset teacher to read their modules by doing more activities. It reminds me of the progress I made, in it I keeping all the record of my performance during the 4 years of study.

Negative: It is tough work. Should only checking on the last term, but not in each term. Portfolios contributed me to know more concepts, but when it comes to some EMA nothing was asked from what you file in portfolio. Because we pay a lot of money, I need NIED to give us a file for portfolio.

Question 15 asked has this program fulfilled your expectations for the teacher's diploma? Whether yes or no, give your reasons. 3 did not answer this question, and 33 said yes. The remarks can be seen below:

I learned many important things which change my way of teaching and improve the learning of my learners. Because I really learn how LCE can be used to replace teacher centred, it fulfilled my expectations. Because all the materials are provided to us and arrangements are done well. Because I acquire knowledge more specially in the specialised subject, but the program was supposed to include management in education to help the current principals and the principals to be. Because the program made many of us active and benefit their learners. Because now I'm very much improved in my teaching and I am no longer in categories of underqualified. Because most of the tutors even though not all of them have tried their best to help us complete our modules.

Those who didn't agree:

But too long time for lower category. Not really, this is simply because in Maths tutors who have been giving us this subject they really spoiled us, even in English Communication Skills years 2 & 3 tutor never say any comments on the modules. But especially for us who doing maths we don't know what is going on with our Maths subject.

Question 16 asked: Mention three strengths that you notice with the inset program. 5 did not answer this question. Not all could be quoted here because of the length of the paper. Also it seems that some mistook this question and were reporting on what they learned instead of the program's strength. Some remarks are like these:

Modules are at our knowledge level. Relationships between tutor and inset teachers. Gaining of more knowledge. Get skills on teaching. Language

communication. Hardworking tutors. LC approach. Academic exposure. Breaking language barrier. The way assignments are designed. The way of approaching Learner Centred method. It fulfils its' responsibility. Improvement of the teaching and learning situation. To share ideas. It trained us in the official language. It buried parrot learning and rise up learner centred education. Feeling inside me I now look like other professional teachers. It let us know how to help our learners.

Question 17 asked: mention three problems that you notice with the inset program? 6 did not answer this question and one wrote not applicable. There were many points that were mentioned, but not all could be written here.

Following are some of these statements:

Exams and classes at the same time causing Inset teachers not near to participate well. The officials do not respond professionally to our problems. Marking of assignment done late. Info is delivered late. It is expensive. Some assignments are not clear. 1 week need to be extended to 2 weeks. Too long program for a BETD. Results come late to the owners. Time management of school and program work. Confusion of tutors' marking. Personnel staff are computer illiterate, because sometimes they said you did not pay the fee, your name does not appear in the computer, go and collect your previous pay slip. Honest speaking you pay, it force you to go back and collect the slip. They should change their way of saving info on computer. High marking criteria. Some assignments and activities are too difficult to understand. Ways used to return back marked EMA. Not complete the module according to the lazy tutor. Overloaded work. Some tutors gave little support. INS/Maths faced a lot of disorganised exams and modules. Employee at our inset unit don't treat us in a good way, it is as if you have ever quarrelled. Some modules have very little info. No enough materials or facilities.

The last question, **no. 18** asked for the improvement of the program, what would be your suggestions? 6 did not answer this question. Of the rest the suggestions were varied and pertaining to the different components of the program. Here are some of these:

Provide enough facilities. Improve administration. Enrolling of more inset teachers in future so that the problem of under-qualified in our teaching personnel should be ceased completely. To deduct fees from inset teachers salaries. Let this program proceed, that's helpful. 4 years are many to be trained in this course if you are already having the teaching qualifications. I

think 3 years are enough, plan modules accordingly. Some more staff members should be added. Modules must compile necessary info. I suggest that the officials attend to our problems in a very kind manner. The program must provide us with all materials as it was done at the beginning of the program (pens, writing pads, etc.) For info to reach the people timely sometimes must be advertised through the media. Tutors should give the assignments before contact session. Officers should reveal our results from the computer before it's too late. HOD should solve our problems on time, before it is too late. To provide enough tutors. To provide free accommodation. 1 week is not enough for going through all the modules. People need different days of writing exams and tutoring. If this is to continue committee should be established to represent inset. TRC should provide results on time. Tutors must teach not only mere giving work to tutee. Add the course of degrees at OTRC. Shorten the study duration. The program must have the video cassette from other countries on how to teach effectively, examples of solving problems at school or learner/learner, teacher/learner, etc.

As explained before not all the statements made by the respondents could be written in this section. But it is important for the reader to note what types of comments were made for the different questions. These can be read to give an idea of what the inset teachers thought about different issues.

4.4. Results of the Interviews with the Different Stakeholders

For a better understanding of the program as well as for triangulation purposes several different people were interviewed.

The national co-ordinator, head of the department in the region, another two from the national and regional department for In-service, and a few graduates, principals and tutors were interviewed. (Appendix C, D, E, and F)

4.4.1. Interview with an Administrator

Following are the results of some of the information provided by one of the key informants in the administration.

Question 1, What mechanisms, elements, or factors are in place for ensuring quality in this program?

a) Candidates to the program: “The applicants/students are selected on the basis of their performance at their schools. Regional offices and advisory teachers make up a selection committee in each region. There are specific criteria used for selection. The successful candidates are all practising teachers; allowed to specialise in subjects they teach at their schools. This is to ensure the integration of theory and practice.” (A1)

a) Tutors: “Then comes the selection of the tutors for their respective subject area. This usually takes place at the Inset and Teacher Resource Centre (TRC) units, at the regions. At the national level, they try to train the tutors for their tasks. There is one workshop every year before the start of the academic year in August.” (A1)

b) Subject Co-ordinators: “There are subject co-ordinators for various subject areas. They are in charge of:

The training of the tutors, the development of assignments, the assessment papers, the marking schedules, guidelines to the tutors (for example activities during the contact sessions). They also monitor the assessment of the marking scripts.” (A1)

c) Assessment: “There are different ways of assessing the students. These are:

- Assignments: which are done throughout a module.
- End of the module assessment (EMA): this takes place at the end of each module. There are 12 modules that have to be completed. There are exams at the end of each module. If one fails, there is only one opportunity to improve. In other words, reassessment takes place only once if one fails. If failure happens again, the teacher has to try in the next cycle.

- Portfolios: this is to be kept for 4 years. This is the evidence that is moderated externally by the UNAM (University of Namibia), colleges, and regional offices.
- School based activities (SBA): These are activities done by the teachers and supervised by the mentors at school who do 'focused observations'. Principals have to do 'graded observations'. This happens three times per year and they have to complete a 'professional profile form' for each teacher." (A1)

d) Compulsory contact sessions: "There are three contact sessions per year that start in August. In August, orientation to the program takes place. August through December, there is self-study period. In December, tutors are available again for the second session. The Inset teachers will be trained and oriented towards the end of the year module assessment. In April session the end of the module exams take place and teachers would be ready for their second year in August, and so on till the fourth year." (A1)

Question 2: As a distance program, what are the obstacles to ensuring quality? To what extent are these obstacles internal or external?

"There are a few obstacles to ensuring quality in the program. These are:

- Lack of permanent staff for the Inset. There is not enough staff in place to check the contents of the materials.
- Performance of the tutors: in contact sessions as well as in other work, the tutors are not monitored. There are not enough observations. The subject co-ordinators cannot properly monitor and control the tutors' work. Though many tutors are very good, there are those who are there only for the money.

Some are not doing their duties and are not committed towards the work they are doing.

- Unsure of whom is doing and writing the assignments. In a distance program, that cannot be controlled.
- School-based activities are another area of concern. Some of the mentors are not doing their work properly. Some principals are inclined to give high grades to the teachers. The principals are sometimes intimidated by the community.
- Lack of training for the mentors and principals. There are about 2300 students nationally, and all the mentors and principals for these teachers need to be trained. One way of doing it is to do it in clusters.
- Financial constraints are yet another obstacle. The program has to compete with the University who pays a higher fee for the tutors.” (A1)

Question 3: How are changes made to the program to enhance quality?

What parts of the program appear to be open to change or modifications? Are there parts that appear to be fixed?

“Revising of the modules to bring it in line with the pre-service and their syllabi, is an area that can be changed. The program also takes note of the moderation team report. The points made about the delivery, assessment, content, tutor-training workshop, subject groups, assignment, assessment and activities done during contact session. All these are totally open to change and to enhance quality in the program.

“The module structure of the program might be changed, in which case the program will change considerably. When it comes to fixed components of the program, the standards are fixed and cannot be lowered.” (A1)

Question 4: Who is ultimately responsible for quality maintenance within the in-service program?

“Subject co-ordinators are responsible for the overall content of the various subjects. These are the internal moderators for the program.” (A1)

Questions 5 and 6 dealt with the graduates and how they perceived their studies and the practice of the theories learned during the program. The results for these two questions will be discussed under the graduates’ interview.

4.4.2. Results from Interviews with the Graduates

After piloting the interview questions with one graduate, five other graduates were interviewed. Appendix D contains the interview questions.

Question 3 asked the following:

Would you say that you are better equipped now? In what ways, can you elaborate? All the graduates pointed to the improvements that they have experienced. One said:” In Maths, I only knew how to give formulas. I didn’t know how to use teaching aids, where the formula came from. In physical science, when doing experiments, I used a lot of time, now I have improved a lot.” (G4)

Another one said:” Now is better, the way I apply teaching, preparing activities, the way I am arranging the class. One of my colleagues came to ask my help, I could help her, also to share ideas with my colleagues which is good.” (G3)

Another said: “ in learner centred approach. I also improved my language; how to communicate with parents and community.” (G5)

Question 4 asked: What are some of the knowledge, skills that you have gained and are practising/utilising now?

One mentioned:” learner centred approach, communication with others, how to solve problems, how to use your own teaching aids, for any subject you can make your own materials.” (G1)

Another stated: “to write an action plan, research skills, teaching itself and practising it, what learner centred approach is. Teaching and learning materials to include all the learners.” (G2)

Yet another said: ”preparing the activities, prepare group work, pair work and individual work, also dramatising, I can put the life cycle of beans into drama or demonstration, learners learn better.” (G3)

One other said: “ for example, in science grade 7, I gained how to set up a worksheet that direct a learner to observe and collect information, before I introduce the lesson. This is a worksheet without many explanations. It wasn’t clear for the learners before and was giving me problems in marking because I didn’t know how to do it.” (G. 4)

Yet another said: “ I know how to make my own scheme of work, daily preparation and how to evaluate learners.”(G. 5)

Question 6 asked: When you reflect on your past experiences, do you see any changes in your attitude towards schools, learners, etc.? Why this is so?

One mentioned that: ”Co-operation is a change that I notice, with my colleagues, working together as a team. Also discipline to my headmaster (principal). If he told me, delegated me to do something, I don’t complain.” (G. 1)

Another one said: “when I finished, I had NEC, when I compare my first teaching and now, now is easy for me to teach, how to handle the class, it is easy now.” (G. 2)

Yet another comment was: “before going to the In-service, I didn’t know what is happening in teaching, now I know. Because we learned the educational policies, etc.” (G.3)

One other commented that: ”I have got a change. Now I am willing to help with problems, before I used to say “that is dull, it is wasting my time. If a colleague came to ask for help, I was thinking why, he is a teacher and asking me. Now, I think differently, sharing of ideas/experiences is better. I prepare my lessons and asking others, it becomes more perfect, they can add to it.” (G. 4)

Another one said that: “yes, there is, for example, at school there is some change. I know how to communicate with learners and other teachers. Before I didn’t know how to express my feelings towards learners, but now I know.” (G. 5)

And yet another: “I got something. Before I had a lot of problems, with methods of teaching and how to deal with learners, but now I learned many methods of teaching.” (G. 6)

4.4.3. Results of Interview with the Principals

After piloting the interview questions with a vice-principal (in the absence of the principal), 3 other principals were interviewed. The following is a result of what their comments were on some of the issues.

Question 4 of the interview asked: Do you see a difference in these graduates in terms of their attitudes, skills and knowledge? How would you know?

A response was: ”yes, there are some differences. They know how to prepare lessons, they used to come with teaching aids. They do more tests, give more tests to the learners. They are punctual. (P.1)

Another one said: “They use learner centred approach. They know how to give group work. They assess their learners in a different way.” (P.3)

Yet another one mentioned: “They have changed. Their attitude towards learners is better now, they know how to handle and motivate them. Others (other teachers) fail to understand them, these teachers help learners, I like the way they treat their learners.” (P.2)

And finally one said: “Yes, I realise their attitudes have changed. Before they were mostly having personal excuses (to do whatever, etc.), now that is finished. They leave after classes. They mostly don’t have intention to leave during classes, only afterwards”. (P.4)

Question 9 asked: what could be the most common characteristics that these new graduates display?

The responses were:

- “They are better now than before because they teach better, they have better knowledge about teaching. They know much about education now. They contribute much in the staff meetings, to assist the other teachers.” (P. 1)
- “As I said earlier, they work very hard to implement some of the methods that they’ve learned, they are motivated, use local resources, they have the ability to produce their own materials, they don’t wait for textbooks. They have good relationships between teacher and learner, teacher and parents and other teachers. They are easy to consult with other teachers, parents and learners.” (P. 2)
- “Characteristic, they are really professional, doing their work accordingly.” (P.4)

- “They show that they learned to do their job differently than before. They are better than before at least.” (P.3)

Question 10 asked if they had any recommendations for the improvement of the program. The answers were as follows:

- “I am recommending that it should be offered to all the unqualified and under-qualified teachers, so that they can be up to date. It is good for the principals to see the change or difference when they observe these teachers. It is a good practice. Some principals are under-qualified, they also have to do the program to support the others. If the principal is unqualified, he cannot give comments to the students. School based activities don’t affect the teachers. Only during exams, they are at the same time as for the learners. This is not good, it is better to write these exams at another time. The program is very good, and I am happy with the results.” (P. 1)
- “What I see need improvement is when possible, should be provided, we are here to fill their forms, even we are not told about their outcomes, when they are assessed. We need to be informed about the results, we just do the observations, we are not informed if we did it the right way, or half/half, we need to know. (After probing further) We do not receive any training for observations, only through reading, we are not provided training for that before. Also regarding their attendance: they go for the program during holidays, we don’t know their whereabouts, if they are punctual and present. We do need also workshop, those are not in the area, we need to be called in just us principals, so we can be aware of everything. If there are two at school, people from the Resource Centre or college to come and talk to the mentors. Or principals given workshops so that we can help the mentors.

Some of our teachers will be specialised in science, but we don't have facilities. Because of the unavailability of resources, they will perform poorly. If the Inset teachers are supported to buy their own (resources, equipments), we are not informed on that. To make a lesson on Mercury, Magnesium, they need materials, whether they were informed to buy their own or what? The teacher will be graded a C or D because of unavailability of materials in the observation forms. The lesson is well prepared, but it is theoretical.” (P.3)

- “The fields that they study are only in one direction, not different. Most of the teachers are in one field; maths/science, there are not many choices. Music/arts is suffering, needlework is very important, still it is neglected by the college, some subjects are neglected by the BETD.” (P. 4)
- “Maybe language usage, because sometimes as teachers they have to report or implement, to come and write their reflections. They find it difficult to express themselves. English communication course should be extended to enable teachers to express themselves. They do but are not in a position to express even in their schools due to language problems. Maybe language course need some extension.” (P.2)

4.4.4. Results of the Interviews with the Tutors

After piloting the interview questions, four other tutors were contacted. All are also pre-service lecturers working full-time at the college. The following are some of the comments that they made about a number of questions:

Question 5 asked whether they are always available for assistance to the tutees. And what kind of arrangements are there to mark their assignments, arrange for tutorials, etc.?

The responses were:

- “During contact sessions, they can see me by appointment only. Also contact is made by telephone or by writing. Some are from very far away. We are forced to write detailed comments, helping them with the references.” (T. 1)
- “Yes, they can come for anything. If they find assignments difficult, if they are not happy with the mark/grade given, they can come to me. They do phone during my free time after work.” (T. 2)
- “I used to select a day of the week to see my tutees on Wednesday or Friday, after hours. They came here to submit assignment or be given advice, but this is on voluntary basis, it is not the arrangement of the Centre, it is an arrangement between tutor and inset teachers.” (T. 3)
- “Not really, they might call and make appointment, but because of the nature of my position here at the college, I cannot always see them. There are meetings, etc. If not on holidays or busy with other responsibilities, my priority is for the inset teachers.” (T. 4)
- “No, it is not possible, I have other work. For in-service I have told them to make appointments. It is possible in the afternoons, but still they have to check.” (T. 5)

Question 6 asked tutors to compare their inset teachers from the time that they began until the time that they are in year 4 (if they taught in other levels of the program). They were asked whether they see any differences or changes in them and if so, what exactly are these.

They answered as follows:

- “Yes, I have taught in Years 1,2 and 4, not in year 3. Yes, there are major differences on the outlook of the course. When they come, some hardly understand Learner Centred Approach. During the course of the program, they get to see what it means. Language expression is very poor both orally and in writing, but in the 4th year, you see some changes, some improvement, not major, but one can see that there is improvement. Even disciplining: most believe in corporal punishment for their learners, but later they realise other ways of disciplining. It comes out of the discussions, they have different outlook on disciplining the children. It might not be a major difference in some, but still there is a difference in many of them.” (T.1)
- “Sometimes I start from year 1 to year 4 going up with the teachers. I teach them English Communication Skills (ECS). When they come, they couldn’t express themselves at all, but in year 3 or year 4, they can at least discuss something with you. Also in the way that they approach you. In the first and second year, they cannot come and ask for help, but in their third or fourth year, they are free to come and discuss things academically.
“Communication, writing and attitudes towards the tutors to discuss problems change.”(T. 2)
- “I taught in years 1,2, and 3. Their academic as well as their professional growth changes gradually from year one to year 4. They are gaining in confidence in terms of acquiring content, in terms of teaching too. Their English also improves as they proceed from year 1 to year 4.”(T. 3)
- “I have taught in years 1, 2 and 4, not year 3. Yes, especially the nature of the program that you have to practice and to reflect on practice. Whenever in year 1, they hardly understand the module, they like to memorise, rather

than understand. And most of the tasks are to reflect, having completed most of the modules in year 1 and 2, they are able to understand the philosophy of the program, the nature of the program. To teach in year 1 is very difficult, they are not used to the philosophy. Most of the concepts are new to them, they are used to memorising. To change/transform them how to learn, how to construct knowledge is very difficult. While when you teach in year 4, you teach people who are able to understand the philosophy and modules. I enjoy to teach in year 4.” (T. 4)

- “Year 3, year 1 and year 4. There are slight changes, depends on which area they are specialising. For the Lower Primary group, most of them, at the end, there isn’t very much improvement, especially in the spoken language and fluency. Or maybe I expect too much.” (T. 5)

Question 8 asked tutors to mention some of the support that the tutees have during their studies and the types of support for them. They answered:

- “They have study groups that are made up of students. They themselves do it. The administration helps them to set up the groups and they consider the distance from their homes. Those who live closer to one another in one group. Some assignments are designed to compel them to work in groups before they finally submit it. This is for the purpose of assisting one another. When they are in contact sessions, tutors outline what they should do, how they should do their assignments when they are on their own. All the guidelines, due dates, how they should go through the modules is explained; because some of the activities to be done on their own and some during the contact sessions. Any time they can call, or come to the tutors. Tutors even

give their home telephone numbers so the tutees can contact them. Not all of us, but some have done it. When it comes to the tutors: we usually have a workshop before each contact session. Of these two are held at the College level which is usually one afternoon session before the face to face session starts. One is an inter-college workshop held at the beginning of each academic year in Aug/Sept. for 2-3 days. During these workshops we go through what is expected from us, how we should assist students, what is required from students while they are in contact session and while they are gone. We discuss the assignments that they supposed to do. We look at the content and how it should be covered. We bring our concerns and problems to the workshops and get answers to. We have teleconferencing at the UNAM Centre, we pick a topic, e.g. assessment and together with UNAM Professors have a discussion about it. This happens once a year. We have discussions on how continuous assessment can be done. What are its' advantages and disadvantages. How to give support to students at a distance. Culture of reading, was another discussion, how to improve the culture of reading amongst the students, especially those who are doing it on their own." (T. 1)

- "They have support groups, I don't know how often they meet. You find one isolated teacher here and there. They can also ask help from colleagues at school where they teach. School-Based Activities also help them. Principals observe and perhaps help them. I am not sure, if not colleagues help them." As for us, we get the materials from NIED, we go occasionally for workshop at NIED. It does help, you have other colleagues who help. We have

workshop here before the contact session, if you have a query you can ask from them. Inset unit itself, you can always pop in, they support you.” (T. 5)

- “ Supposed to have study groups, it has been suggested by the modules. It seems it doesn’t work. They don’t form a group, they don’t support one another. My proof is: from nearby schools, teachers submit their assignments, but they didn’t consult, don’t have common understanding, they don’t ask one another. Most of them are not reformed, they only ask help from the tutor, that they cannot get any support from one another. Before they come to tutors, they need to see if they can solve problems amongst themselves, afterwards to come to the tutors. One proof is some have understanding, some don’t even in the same school/neighbourhood. They don’t consult one another and don’t support one another. They don’t rely on one another, only on the tutors.” (T. 4)
- “From Teacher’s Resource Centres in their region, they can consult materials pertaining to the area of subject specialisation. Also they can consult the relevant textbooks. They can also ask help from experienced colleagues at their work places, those who are qualified.” (T. 3)
- “Only in contact sessions, that is not enough, only when arranged to see tutees. They have study groups in their circuits, they can also get help from their qualified teachers at schools. I gave them the guarantee to come and see me, most don’t use it. We do get support from workshops, we always have workshop before the contact session. If any tutor has problem, that can be discussed during workshop. Also we get support from Inset unit, they are there to help us. We can also get support from colleagues if we teach the same subjects.” (T. 2)

Question 9 asked the tutors, in their opinion, what are some of the factors that hamper the tutees' success in studies, while away from the Centre. They mentioned the following:

- “Materials, additional and supplementary materials. They don't have access to these materials. They don't have time to use the library. During the contact session, there is no time to use the library. Language is a major problem. A lot of them find it very difficult to express themselves or to read and comprehend. Another factor is their workload. They are full-time employees and at the same time studying, this hampers their success. They are supposed to do a lot when on their own, we only see them for 5 days. They are expected to do a lot. Teaching, having families and studying is a lot for them.” (T.1)
- “The distance between working places and the Centre. Because they need help, but because of the distance, they cannot come anytime they want to seek help.”(T. 2)
- “Time constraints. They have limited time to work on assignments, workload at their schools and family commitments. And perhaps lack of relevant support materials, e.g. guides. They have modules, but it is not sufficient enough, they should be given guidebooks in how to complete assignments or any relevant materials. In geography, maps should be used along with modules. Many times they have modules but don't know which materials should be used with it.” (T. 3)
- “Most lack commitment. They don't feel that they have to put a lot of effort to succeed. That makes them think as long as they submit their assignments, they succeed without effort. Most of them have their basic understandings at

a low level, when they start and communication is a problem. Not all tutors are having the necessary skills and knowledge of supporting tutees, of understanding the philosophy of the program to support tutees. Tutors from outside (the college) have this problem. The program has a unique philosophy and approaches which some cannot understand on spot, unless gone through the reform process.” (T. 4)

- “Main concern is the language. The inset tutees do not have the required language level to read and understand the materials. What they do gain, there is not enough time to go over it. The main problem is language, they don’t have it, so they don’t study. Also commitment, some appear to be not really interested. They have the module, only one book for a specific subject. When they are away, you expect them to read, but they don’t. Laziness, lack of interest or commitment whichever. I am concerned with the Lower primary teachers, language is a big problem. I wonder if Lower primary teachers need to have a very good English as other teachers when they teach, because they have home language as the medium of instruction. Maybe it is to pass the BETD, to understand, communicate probably. If BETD could design an entry test, and some are found not having the requirement, so they can have a language course before starting, that would be helpful.” (T. 5)

Question 10 asked them if they were satisfied with the overall infrastructure and for recommendations for the improvement of the program. Following were their responses:

- “I wish there was a Centre where they could go to, to support one another and could read with specific materials to read. A Centre open all the time,

even on Saturdays to meet, read, chat and discuss. A place where they could go for more support, both for information and moral support.”(T. 1)

- “It is impossible, but if they organise officers from the Inset to visit the circuits that if they have problems to communicate the problems. Or maybe should have circuit study groups and have group leaders to communicate problems to the office, instead of giving the problems to circuit offices. But they don’t take these seriously. If they can organise themselves and take leadership in the circuits to do things for themselves, it would be good.” (T. 2)
- “Entrance test: quality control and quality of the work expected from both Inset tutors and teachers need to be looked at. You give an assignment to do, you find three assignments with the same ideas, same wording from beginning to end, whose assignments are you marking? It does happen, when you ask them, they say because we do it in study groups. There is a misconception of study groups. How many people do that? What if they do it with another tutor? When it comes to tutors: we don’t have the same standards. What I give an A, someone give a C. I give D and someone gives the same assignment A. They complain that we are strict. If we can set the same standard, we have something like standardisation (In-service in the regions), how to mark should be standard. If we can discuss these things that are not acceptable, and it is sensitive, it has not really been brought up in that sense.” (T.5)
- “I am basically satisfied with the duration of the course, with the modules, and the practical arrangements and incentives. The only thing that I am not happy with is that some of the teachers’ understanding is at the low level, this is one of the main issues. Some of the tutors are not well informed

about it as well. If I have the power, the screening criteria to the program should be strict. There should be better screening both for the candidates and the tutors.” (T. 4)

- “I am satisfied with the content covered, but unfortunately don’t have appropriate facilities, classrooms, maps, overhead projectors and things like video, audio visual materials to view materials, e.g. in geography to see volcanic eruption and conceptualise better. Reference books as well. There should be major exams at the end of year 3 and year 4. Whether the teacher should be promoted to the fourth year, that will ensure the quality of the program. For in-service, because teachers do it on a part time basis they need exam to determine the level of the abilities and to ensure they have acquired enough content in their area of specialisation. Inset teachers do not have sufficient time to study as opposed to pre-service, also tutoring for one week is not enough.” (T.3)

4.4.5. Results of the Interview with some Key Individuals in the

Administration

A few key individuals in the administration of the in-service program, both nationally and locally were interviewed. Following is a look at the comments they made in response to some of the questions.

One of the complaints by the tutees is about the ‘missing’ assignments. This is one of the biggest problems in the office. The writer could see the ‘pigeon hole’ structure named after each of the regions in the area. Apparently when the inspectors come, they take these assignments back to their inspectorates and bring these from their areas. (A.2)

Another complaint is about the tutors who are absent during the contact sessions. This is true for the students who are absent as well. Many complain that the feedback from the tutor is insufficient. They are also unhappy about the allocation of grades, thinking that they deserve better grades. (A.2)

Complaints on the side of the tutors are about the absenteeism of the students. Students also come to the contact sessions unprepared. They don't understand distance education and expect the tutor to go line by line explaining, but that is not possible in one-week time. Copying from each other's assignments is another complaint. (A.2)

On the other hand, it was mentioned that, when they want to change something about the program, they give questionnaires to all the students. For example, in the beginning the contact session was for a 2 week period. But the students decided that one week would be enough. (A.2)

When it comes to assignments, according to an administrator, it takes 2 or 3 months before the students receive assignments. One month to go to the tutor, one month to mark it, and then another one month to reach the students. One major problem in this is that students who failed cannot pass the subject, since they claim that the tutor did not give them proper feedback to pass.

On the question of the selection of the tutors, it was mentioned that they advertise the posts in the newspapers. They have a set of criteria: they must have a bachelor's degree plus a diploma in teaching for their specialisation in the subject. The constraint is that for the 'Lower Primary', there are not enough people who have bachelor's degree or those who have degrees in tertiary education. (A.2)

According to the same person, since the marking scripts were looked at and not satisfactorily marked, it was decided that preliminary marking sessions should be held with the tutors. Subject co-ordinators for different subject areas at the Centre assisted. The co-ordinator only checks some of the scripts, not all. The National co-ordinator also looks at some of the scripts. Usually the national co-ordinators compile the questions for the tests. (A 2)

Question 8 asked if there are any follow-ups made on the graduates once they finish the program. They were asked if they think it is necessary to do so and why.

One answered that it is necessary, but that they haven't done so. Neither at the local level, nor at the national level. It was a way to find out how well or poorly the program has enabled them and prepared them for effective teaching. Especially, one should find out if they practice a learner centred approach, the philosophy that they use as a guiding principal. The opinions of graduates should be solicited in planning for their future development. What do they need for career progression? This information is important to the program developers who review and update the program, the format and the materials, etc. (A.3)

4.5. Unanticipated Results

1. An administrator pointed out that there are no additional media, such as teleconferencing and radio. Why not look into this area seriously? Many of the inset teachers are isolated, because of long distances. To assist these, why not use the radio? Radio is relatively cheap, affordable and accessible to all. The national broadcasting frequency covers most of the areas in the country. Perhaps it is time to see whether this medium can be used, even as a pilot project at first.

2. Language problems (English) have also been mentioned by the tutors and witnessed by the writer. According to the 'Report on research into English proficiency of Namibia's teachers and student teachers' (2000), for improving one's language proficiency it takes about 100 and 120 hours of contact teaching/learning for a person to move from one level of competency to the next. It goes on to state that: "an individual with a very low level of language proficiency might need at least 480 to 600 hours of contact tuition in a language before being asked to go into a classroom and teach in that language." (p.72) As one of their suggestions, they have also recommended the use of radio especially to reach out to rural teachers. (p.77) The initial costs would be to prepare programs. Later these could be taped and re-taped for repeated usage. This is a medium that could be utilised in distance education to the great advantage of the teachers.

The Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (1999) has stated that: "The improvement of English, Mathematics and Science teaching is central to the improvement of education in Namibia and should be built into the structures of the Ten-Year Plan. (p.185) In the section on Language Policy of the same Presidential report, point No. 63 mentions that: "No students should be allowed to graduate as BETD or BEd or with a Postgraduate Certificate in Education without passing a test of competence in English. Notice should be given that within a short period (say three years) no learner should be allowed to enter a teacher training course without such a qualification. Similarly no serving un-or under-qualified teachers may be upgraded unless they are able to pass this test of competence in English." (p.111) The problem is encountered in grade 4 when learners switch to English for all of their subjects. In the first three years,

they have English as a subject and are taught in their mother tongue. As one tutor remarked earlier, there is no change in Lower Primary teachers since they don't benefit much from the English offered for it is too little time for a meaningful competency to be developed.

3. Many of the current year one and year four students commented about the duration of the sessions. The contact sessions for at least year one and year two should be extended to two weeks each. Based on the above observations on the importance of language and the lack of proficiency of the teachers in this area, it is suggested to have a prolonged session for the first two years. This additional first immersion in the language, together with the radio programs can in the long run assist the teachers greatly.

4.6. Summary

In this section, the result of the questionnaires, and interviews with the different stakeholders were reported. It should be noted that not all the questions and responses could be reviewed. The length of the thesis does not allow for elaborate and complete results of all the questions.

Therefore, only some questions that were deemed important or of interest to the reader were selected to report in this section.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Introduction

In this section, some of the results will be discussed in more detail.

Interpretations and suggestions and/or recommendations accompany the selected parts of the report.

5.2. The Stakeholders' View of Quality

In the results section, the viewpoints of different interviewees in regards to the meaning of quality were quoted.

It was a very informative account of how each of these participants thought of quality. As a graduate noted, it means that everyone receives the same education. Possibly the graduate remembers the previous education system whereby only the selected ones would be privileged to have a better education. A principal and a tutor mentioned that, when the learners like school and will not drop out, it means quality. How important this is for the teachers, principals, learners and parents to have a good relationship and make the learners feel good about their schools. Again for the learners to feel achievement and make or construct their own knowledge, this is quality. One rightly pointed out that it takes time before quality can be measured. Perhaps it will take years to find out how effective the program is. Another person mentioned the standards have to be at the level of regional or even international ones.

According to Gerwel (1995): "Quality is not easily quantifiable, and its effects are realised over a period of time. Within teacher education, it would be used to refer to the extent to which it is accessible and relevant to the needs of the community, equips teachers with skills to be effective in their duties, the

availability of resources for effective teaching to take place, and the relevance of the curriculum offered.” (Kiangi, ed., Reform Forum, p.4).

Earlier it was mentioned that a principal was wondering about a theoretical science lesson in the absence of the real magnesium, etc. In science, if the equipment and materials are not available, could it be called a quality lesson? The human resources are equally important and pertinent to the provision of a quality program. In the same article it is stated that: "availability and training of qualified personnel competent to deliver the educational programmes constitute an important element for delivery of effective education programmes. In this regard; teacher educators become crucial. The question of who qualifies to be a teacher educator has been a subject of debate in literature on teacher education....Teaching or educating teachers is both a practical and a theoretical exercise, and both components i.e. theoretical grounding and practical experience are necessary for effective and quality education." (Reform Forum, 1995, p.4) Based on the observations of the current year one and four students, even tutors themselves, some tutors are not fully abreast of what they are supposed to be doing. Having a degree or just the qualifications without the experience is not sufficient for the training of the teachers. Especially when it comes to the philosophy of the programme, it must be ensured that all the tutors have an understanding of this philosophy and its' implications for teaching and learning. This can be done by having compulsory orientation and workshops for both veteran and new tutors.

The availability of resources is an issue that cannot be tackled in this paper, but it remains an important dilemma in the lives of the affected teachers and learners.

5.3. Indicators of Quality

The criteria used for this case study looked at the knowledge, skills and attitudes that teachers should have as an indicator of quality. From the perspectives of the principals and graduates themselves, one can see that there are changes in the graduates. Of the 6 graduates who were interviewed, all noticed positive changes in themselves. The fact that they could reflect on their experiences as a teacher both before and after the course of study, and note some of the differences, points to these changes. Some of their comments were mentioned in the results section of this paper. Interestingly enough, they even mentioned that their attitudes have changed. One said he no longer complains when asked to do something by the principal. To share ideas or to ask for assistance is yet another point that was mentioned by the graduates. The attitude of co-operation and giving assistance and asking for it was alien to them before whereas it comes naturally to them now.

The principals also noted these changes of attitude. For example, one mentioned that teachers no longer find excuses to absent themselves during class time. They ask permission to leave only after finishing their classes. Another principal pointed out that the way they treat learners is better now. One can see the good relationship and respect that they show towards the learners. A graduate even mentioned that she feels comfortable sharing her feelings with the learners. One can feel a more relaxed and positive attitude towards school, learners, colleagues and authorities. The writer felt that the graduates were proud of their achievements, and relaxed about being interviewed by a stranger. Again the principals mentioned that the communication patterns of the graduates have changed. They are communicating better with learners,

colleagues, parents and community members. In fact, the graduates were very co-operative and accommodating with the writer in her interviews.

Another interesting point is that many of the graduates already had another professional teaching certificate. Though the purpose of this research was not to make any comparisons with the previous programs offered, this issue came up many times during the interviews. Many compared the BETD with the previous certificates and were more impressed with their diploma. As one said: “When I compare BETD with ECP, there was a lot of theory when I came to the field, I didn’t know how to start. The practice was only for 1 or 2 weeks. But with BETD the whole year I am practising the activities in the book, you just practice them.” (G.3)

It seems that the element of practice, in addition to the theory is a point that many preferred in this diploma program for the teachers. Another comment was:

“To me, I think there is a big difference between those who attended BETD and NEC/ECP. BETD they do things in practice and theory (others, they know theory). Those teachers doing BETD know how to assess, create own materials for teaching and learning. They have action plans for learners. They can assist those who have problems with learning.” (G.2)

The principals, graduates and tutors mentioned the word, reflection, a few times. This is an attitude that is necessary for a reflective practice. Tutors were complaining that because of the inadequacy in language expression, many teachers could not articulate their reflections. To have reflective teachers in practice can be considered to be an achievement of any educational program.

But on the negative side, it was recorded earlier that not all inset teachers are up to the task and some seem not to be committed as such.

5.4. Research Question No. 1 asked about what mechanisms, elements, or factors are in place for ensuring quality in this program?

In the results section some of these were mentioned. To recapture the ideas once more; there are internal mechanisms in place such as:

- The department for the In-service, through its Head of Department and staff. They provide support structures for the Inset teachers.
- School mentors: these are teachers at schools where the Inset teachers are working who have more experiences and/or qualifications. They are mostly selected from the same area of specialisation as the teacher.
- Principals: they have to do focused observation on these teachers' teachings and make comments about their work.
- Tutors: they teach during the contact sessions. They are also available throughout the year to assist teachers by either by appointments or by phone.
- Self-study groups: these are groups of teachers from nearby homes or neighbouring schools. The Inset teachers assist one another with their assignments, etc.
- Subject co-ordinators: these support the tutors, check the marking and comments of the tutors and are responsible for any problems that might arise. They look at the modules, tasks assigned, modes of assessing inset teachers, etc.

The above are all support systems to assist the Inset teachers throughout their studies.

5.4.1. Implications and Suggestions

But there are problems with these support groups. Below these are discussed in some more detail.

5.4.2. Principals

As a principal mentioned earlier, they do not get any training. They are not sure whether their comments are useful or not. The same goes for the mentors. There is no training for them to know exactly what is expected from them. According to one graduate, in her self-study group, she has heard that one principal had said to a teacher, “what symbol do you want me to put.” And another had given a low symbol, although it was not a bad presentation. She was suggesting that people from NIED must come and visit to see what happens in the classrooms from year 1 to year 4. She further stated that they should come once a year to observe the teachers in the classrooms. This was because the principals lacked the knowledge or expertise to do the observations and make thoughtful comments. (G. 3)

This is also confirmed from the questionnaires of year one and year four students. Question 10 for year four students indicated that some notice that the principals are too busy or are not confident in doing it or simply not interested and reluctant.

Suggestions from the students are for principals to attend workshops.

Furthermore for tutors to observe them even if in year 4 only and not all of them.

5.4.3. Mentors: The same can be said about the mentors. While some are good and helpful, others don't have a clue as to what is expected from them or don't care. As confirmed by the questionnaires of year one and year four inset students the practice is highly praised and is very useful. But as was said

in question 10 of the questionnaire for year four, mentors are refusing to make up lesson plans and say no to their responsibility.

Suggestion: it was suggested that they should be trained, and that there should be invigilators to monitor all the activities and the principal should not do it or won't do it. It was mentioned that the staff at NIED has just finished producing a video about School Based Activities, articulating the expectations of principals, mentors and even the inset teachers. (A.4)

5.4.4. Tutors

As for the tutors, assistance is there on an appointment basis. But as mentioned earlier, year 1 and 2 Inset teachers are generally too shy to approach them for assistance, while some tutors were not really committed or concerned or had the knowledge and expertise to assist. This is confirmed in the questionnaires of year one and year four inset students. There are complaints about the marking of the assignments as well. According to one tutor: "I don't think people who are concerned with the program know what is happening in the classes. Because there is nothing when it comes to recruitment (to have certain certificate to be in the diploma program), but nobody knows what you are doing in the class, whether you are doing your job. Most of us can do whatever we want, nobody really knows what is happening. There is no supervision or proper monitoring of what is going on in the classroom. I was a co-ordinator once and found tutors have difficulty to understand the modules. If he finds it difficult, how is he going to teach it in class? And especially at the beginning, it is not easy to be a tutor. The workshop is not as practical as before. They assumed we are old and we know it, but there are new people who don't know. What is the need for workshops to look at old materials, there

is no need. All new tutors should have proper training before starting. From 1994, which is a long time till now, as tutors we don't feel we belong to the program. We feel we come, teach and go. The program didn't involve us fully. The people in the administration feel they belong, us (tutors) we have to renew one- year contract. We are not recognised as part of the program. They can hire or fire us any time, one-year is not a good thing. The program is here to stay, why not make it five- years contract. They did this because they don't want to sacrifice. They don't want to take responsibility for us. They think we are people who come and go. Because "if we belong, we take proper responsibility". If we are in Higher education, our department, our Ministry, it is my job to do it, but if on a part-time basis, we are not fully employed. The contract of one-year is not a good thing. With their help, the tutor who is not good can be trained by people and kept rather than changing every year." (T.2)

Suggestion: One suggested idea was to provide enough tutors. They should also be knowledgeable in their fields, as mentioned in the results section, there were complains that some do not have the expertise.

5.4.5. Self-Study Group

As to the self-study groups, an earlier comment by a tutor indicated that he doesn't think that these groups are effective. He said as a proof of his claim, that there are teachers from the same or neighbouring schools who have totally different understandings about an assignment. He noted that they do not rely on one another but only on the tutors.

A current year 4 student made the following observations on the same subject: "Fellow students sometimes are lazy. Sometimes you invite them to group meetings, they rarely come or not always." He further stated that: "It is better if

the tutor plays an important role in division and selection of groups.” (Yr. 4 ST.) While a year 1 student commented that: ” We do not experience any problems, everyone is contributing.” (Yr. 1 ST.) In the questionnaires to the year one and four Inset students one commented that it doesn’t really work.

Suggestion: to model it while the contact sessions are being held. In this way the students can see how this works or to make use of videos to show a good and bad example of how it could be done.

5.5. Research Question No. 2 asked that as a distance program, what are the obstacles to ensuring quality? To what extent are these obstacles internal or external?

In the results section, these obstacles were pointed out. When it comes to **internal obstacles**, the support systems offered by the program need to have better quality assurance and control. The viewpoints of principals, graduates, student teachers and tutors were mentioned and they even suggested to some extent how these obstacles could be overcome, e.g. training for the principals, mentors, etc.

As to the **external constraints** the background and motivation of students is one important factor. Some called for a better screening of the candidates to the program. The suggestion went so far as recommending that an entrance test be given. But as one administrator pointed out; one has to think of supporting all the teachers. Could there be quality if some teachers could not have access to these support programs?

Another tutor stated that: ”**commitment** and quality go hand in hand, you cannot promote quality if there is no commitment.” (T. 4) An entrance exam cannot indicate whether a teacher is committed or not. What makes matters

worse in the opinion of the same tutor is that: “The perception of the tutees is that when you submit/write something, you need to be promoted. It is not the question of submitting only, but how you did it and to show understanding. If you don’t demonstrate understanding, then you don’t deserve it.” (T. 4)

It is of note at this point to mention that, of the 520 teachers who started the program in 1994, only 418 fulfilled all the requirements of the diploma and graduated. According to an administrator “quality control mechanisms are there. If you are not up to standard, you won’t make it.” (A.3)

Commitment is an attitude that can be learned only by observation and exemplification of those around us. It cannot be taught at any teacher’s training program as such. It can be discussed at length, but internalising it is another matter, which goes beyond the scope of the present paper. It is an attitude that develops gradually through observation and practice.

The **lack of educational background** of the successful candidates in some areas of specialisation is another problem. This affects how well they will be able to cope with the subject or subjects in their field. As an administrator points out: “In Maths, because of an historical situation where students were not really encouraged to take it or didn’t receive good instructions, the level of skills is poor. So many teachers who take Maths have problems. The historical background does have an effect on performance. Language is yet another problem. The medium of instruction is English and, because many teachers are not fluent in English, it is difficult for them to meet the requirements of the program. (A. 3)

Another external factor is the **long distances** from the Centre to the homes of the teachers. According to another administrator, the students are scattered

all over. It is difficult to contact them both for the administration and tutor. There are physical or geographical constraints that prevent students from getting help in a timely manner. They get delayed feedback instead of immediate feedback, according to the same person. (A. 3)

The other constraint is **material resources**. The TRC (Teacher Resource Centre) library and the college library are not fully equipped to support the teachers. Moreover, they are often closed during the contact sessions. There are not enough photocopy machines to respond to the demands put upon them. This is an important issue to be looked at. The libraries that are available at the TRC and the college should be equipped with sufficient books to support the teachers. They also need to be open not only to encourage a culture of reading but also to lend a supporting hand to the teachers in their studies.

Submission of assignments is yet another constraint that needs to be looked at. According to one administrator, tutors are advised to submit the grades 2 weeks after the submission of the assignments. "It does happen with some tutors who return these in time. We do face delays every now and then. The problem is that these part-time tutors have full-time jobs, one doesn't get these on time. The problem is when teachers cannot get the assignments back because of the work and distance (some have to travel 2-3 days to get to the Centre, in extreme cases), they lose time. Transport is not available on time. Mailing the assignments may be even worse. We use inspectors to deliver these as well in their circuits." (A. 3)

With regards to the assignments, a current year 4 student made the following comments: "What I am not satisfied with is the distribution of the marked assignments. Sometimes other students can cheat the personnel by taking

other students' assignments in the pretext of returning these to their rightful owners. We are talking about marked ones. In the circuit's pigeon holes located in the administration of the In-service Department at the TRC. Sometimes these are lost." He goes on to state that: "students used to cheat one another. Staff /personnel at the Centre should look into this problem." (Yr. 4 ST.)

Suggestion: In the literature review, the internal and external constraints were mentioned by Nielsen (1997). These fall under the "conditions for the development of quality". Unless these conditions are met, and obstacles minimised there can be no quality.

5.6. Research Question No. 3 asked how are changes made to the program to enhance quality? What parts of the program appear to be open to change or modification? Are there parts that appear to be fixed?

As noted before in the results section, there are certain changes that can be made to the program. Revising the modules to bring them in line with the pre-service training is one way. They do take note of the moderation team's comments on the assessment, delivery and content of the program. In all the other activities such as tutor training workshops for subject groups, assignments and assessment and contact sessions, they are open to enhance quality. What they are unwilling to do is to lower their standards.

According to one administrator, they do get complaints from the Inset teachers about various issues and the administration tries to solve these problems. For example, there are some principals who do not allow teachers to come and consult with their tutors. Or there are misunderstandings amongst the principals and mentors. In such cases the inset staff try to visit and consult with

them. They do organise meetings to consult with the stakeholders at schools to solve the problems and misunderstandings. If there are complains about the tutors, they consult those tutors. They might even ask that the complaint be put in writing so that it becomes part of the permanent record. (A. 3)

Inset teachers also complain about the grades awarded. These complaints are referred to the subject co-ordinator, once the administration feels that they need to be addressed.

Teachers in the program do complain about certain tutors. In those cases, the administration consults with the tutors and the teachers in an attempt to solve the problems. But as the person stated: "Tutors work on a one-year contract, if it is severe, we stop that. It didn't happen yet. We had minor complains, it was a misunderstanding and we were able to solve it." (A. 3)

The graduates usually suggest who they want to have as their guest speaker at the graduation function. They also register their complaints about modules. These are then passed on to the subject co-ordinators. They may complain about the format of a certain assignment or task. The relevant subject area co-ordinators can take these up.(A. 3)

Duration of the program is an issue that was brought up in questionnaires, and interviews. Therefore it is an **unanticipated result**. Many complained that 4 years is too long for the diploma program especially since some of them already possess a teaching qualification. Sometimes candidates are admitted to the second year of the program depending on their previous qualifications. Perhaps this is a fixed part of the program that needs to be looked at.

Suggestions: with better quality assurance mechanisms many of the problems could be avoided instead of reacting to problems. Although problems

that one can not foresee will always arise, there are regular procedures that need to be followed to avoid mishaps.

When it comes to the duration of the program (4 years), this seems to be fixed. But it would be important to review this decision, as there are many teachers who have at least a teacher qualification although there are those who have none.

5.7. Research Question No. 4 asked who is ultimately responsible for quality maintenance within the in-service program?

The answer to this question as was already mentioned in the result section is that subject co-ordinators carry overall responsibility for the subjects.

This seems to be a huge responsibility for the subject co-ordinators. They not only have to assess the work of the tutors and how their comments are in relation to a specific subject, but also have to make sure that the assignments and assessments are in line with the modules, and the modules are relevant. In addition they check on the quality of the work of the tutors.

During the interviews, at least three individuals mentioned that they have been subject co-ordinators, one presently, one who has been doing it in the past and one at the national level.

The one at the national level produced documents that indicated, in detail, how subject co-ordinators try to assist the tutors. When it comes to assessment, the different grades (A, B, etc.) are differentiated and the criteria for each of these levels of competencies are delineated in detail. But the concern voiced by this co-ordinator was that the tutors, on the whole, do not read the relevant documents and papers that could provide them with very relevant guidance. They are simply too occupied with their other work to really make time for

reading these important documents that could be of great benefit to them. (A. 4)

As a result, discrepancies in marking happen, misinterpretations and misunderstandings are rife.

Another subject co-ordinator said that: "We have to talk about teaching materials/modules, the activities planned for the contact session, the assignments, and the tests. These things are not properly prepared always. I think, they must be serious, whoever is in charge preparing the materials. These materials should be revised all the time. Especially some of the modules from the beginning are the same, or they are the repetitions of the modules. The work to be done is not challenging, it is easy. Sometimes they may be difficult for the students because of their poor educational background, but for the diploma level is not worth it. For example, as assignment is to write a simple letter and you mark it (only one page). For someone who is doing diploma program and you are being paid for marking one page, this is worse. Other subjects, it is worst. An assignment the person is paid for, is nothing, in Maths, for example." (T.2) The tutor goes on to say that as a co-ordinator, one checks 5 or 6 papers regarding the comments and that some tutors have difficulty understanding the modules and are thus unable to help the tutees. This was confirmed from the questionnaire of year one and year four inset students. In question 12 of year four questionnaire, one said that the tutor also doesn't understand the assignment.

Many of the subject co-ordinators are tutoring and have little time to do real supervision. According to the above statement, the modules or, at least some of them, are not well written and current. They are simply repetitions of the old

modules. Also assignments are not challenging enough for the teachers' level of study.

Suggestions: one would be for these subject co-ordinators to work only on the modules, tasks and assignments. They would develop criteria for standard assessment of the work, and conduct meaningful workshops with the tutors and especially assist the new tutors. They should not be both subject co-ordinators and tutors. This interferes with their responsibilities. If they have more freedom they could also pay more attention to all of the grievances raised by the tutees. As it is, they are not able to maintain quality if that is their role within the in-service program. Some might not be aware of the importance and challenge that this title designates and what is expected from them. Another important thing is that they can attend contact sessions to find out what really happens in the classes. They could also be used to observe the year four Inset students in their schools and train principals and mentors but no longer to have a teaching load in addition to their other responsibilities.

5.8. Research Question No. 5 asked that at the end of the four-year program, what changes do graduating teachers perceive in their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Without exception, the graduates mentioned knowledge, skills and attitudes that were gained after the four years. Some were mentioned in the results section and two cases will be presented here.

The different knowledge and skills pertaining to teaching were mentioned by nearly all that were interviewed. There were visible signs around the classroom where some of the interviews took place. There were many hand-made posters and flip charts and colourful teaching aids on the walls. Though it cannot be

ascertained whether these were there before the training took place, in one case, the teacher said that she has just moved to her present school this year. Was she the one who prepared all the materials? Also, it is true that the writer did not attend any of the graduate's classes to observe for herself what is happening. But that would not be useful, since graduates were not observed four years ago by the same writer. Therefore, no comparisons could be made at this point in the conduct of the research. Many mentioned that they understood and practised learner centred education, and how to make their own materials instead of waiting for the textbooks. This shows creativity and initiative on their part.

With regard to attitude, they also mentioned positive attributes such as co-operation, willingness to share their ideas or concerns, better attitude towards the learners, colleagues and principals. According to one administrator, teachers do receive reports from the principals. These teachers are an asset to their schools and their professionalism has grown. These are comments from the reports that the principals have written regarding the teachers. (A.2) Year four students also attest to this in the question No. 15 from their questionnaire. Many said that they are better skilled now in their final year. One said, "I think that I do my work very well. We learned how to help all the learners even the dull, special needs and weaker ones, rather than ignore them". (Yr. 4 St.) They see improvement in their teaching. Even year one students in response to question no. 17 of their questionnaire mentioned that the program brings improvements and that they learned a lot.

Suggestion: to ensure this by training the principals and mentors to give meaningful comments when observing the teachers. Also to let the subject co-

ordinators to observe the inset students in their schools, even if it is once in a while and only for the year four students, though all the teachers would benefit from such an exercise.

5.9. Research Question No. 6 asked how are these changes in their attitudes, knowledge and skills demonstrated in their teaching?

From the graduates and principals we read some comments about how these changes are manifested.

The principals all noted that there are visible changes in these graduates. One commented that they no longer try to excuse themselves from classes during school time, which is an important attitude change. The other noticed that the relationships between these and the learners, colleagues and community and parents have changed for the better. They all noticed an improvement in these graduates.

As for the graduates themselves, they do see and point in detail, areas where they have improved. As one said, he no longer complains when his principal asks him to do something! Or as another pointed out, she could express her feelings to the learners, while before she couldn't. Even sharing ideas or asking help from other teachers that, at one time, was a 'taboo' for some of them is now a natural thing. As one mentioned, asking others will improve the teaching and learning processes in the classroom.

Year one and year four Inset students also attested to these changes in their questionnaires. In question 19 of the questionnaire for year one Inset students, some referred to the strengths of the program by remarking on their own changes such as: improve the skills of Inset teachers, improve teacher's teaching ability, give us a willing to achieve, get new methods, practice at

school, etc. In question 16 of year four questionnaire, it was mentioned: equip teachers with new knowledge, skills, etc. learner centred education in classroom situation, how to plan, the way of approaching learner centred method, create good relationship between learners and teachers and invite community experts, etc.

Suggestions: principals and mentors to be trained to assist in the endeavours of the inset students. Subject co-ordinators to do some observations for year one to year four inset students.

5.10. Discussions and Recommendations

In conclusion to this section, many aspects of this in-service program were looked at from different perspectives.

Current year one and year four students gave their ideas about the program. In addition, a few graduates, administrators, principals and tutors were interviewed to triangulate the data and have a better perspective of the case under study.

No one would deny that there are difficulties with the present system. Although there are support systems and mechanisms for ensuring quality in the program, there seems to be a lack of cohesiveness. The different stakeholders are not sure about their responsibilities or, if they are, they are not getting appropriate feedback that would serve to reassure them as well as improve their performances.

5.10.1. Department of the In-service

Starting with the department of the in-service, a few people are undertaking a huge amount of responsibility. An administrator noted that in the past they used to write modules. Even now, they sometimes set up assignments and tests for

some of the subjects. The administrator further elucidated that the task of re-writing some of the modules would be theirs. (A.2)

It is not clear who re-writes these modules and modifies or brings changes or whether it is done on a regular basis. But as was explained by the same person, they not only do administrative tasks, but they also have the task of materials development for the program. They seem to have many responsibilities: registration of the candidates, module writing, keeping of the records, receiving of the payments, answering queries, overseeing the preparation of the assignments, receiving the assignments and making sure that they go to the relevant tutor from their tutees and vice versa., meeting the principals together with the teachers when there is a problem, arranging workshops, report writing, handling of the face to face infrastructure and many more.

They not only have to provide the technical support, e.g. registration, handling of the fees, selection of the tutors and tutees, setting up of the timetables, arranging workshops, planning for the year, report writing 3 times a year, being in charge of the sending and receiving assignments, responding to queries from all the stakeholders, but they are also responsible for the development of the modules. All this is expected but without the resources needed to adequately carry out the many tasks. There are insufficient photocopy machines. Libraries are not well stocked with relevant materials and neither are they open for long hours and during the contact sessions.

No wonder, that one current student remarked that: the personnel look tired, maybe because there is too much to do for only 4 persons. It should also be

noted, that they are really busy during and around the time of the contact sessions and have relative quiet time during other times.

5.10.2. The relevant Literature

To act only if there is a problem or once there are issues that are out of hand should not be the operating principle of the program. More informed decisions, more mechanisms, more human and material resources are needed for the delivery of a quality program. More internal evaluations should take place to detect problems. It is not enough to react only to external moderators. A system of quality should have its' own internal evaluations. As stated in the literature section, that there must be constant feedback mechanisms to ensure that purposes are in line with demand and that demand is being met in a satisfactory manner. (Aylette & Hilyer, 1996, p.98) And again that there must be commitment to acquire customer feedback on quality of service and one should not assume that good intentions are naturally translated into customer satisfaction. (*Ibid*, p.98)

As Calder (1997), notes:

“An evaluation system therefore needs to take into account both internal and external demands for information. Many providers already have a considerable investment in evaluation and data collection. The most common problem is that it is rarely co-ordinated and systematised. The pressures with which educational institutions in particular have had to deal over the last few years has meant that evaluation activities have on the whole developed in an ad hoc fashion, to deal with the concerns of the moment.” (pp.43-44)

That is what is happening here. The pressures are too much to give a thorough look and ongoing attention to the problems. There is no time to be

proactive. Issues are dealt with as they arise not in a systematic way. Calder (1997) has the following to offer when it comes to quality and accountability. She suggests the following table to deal with the different issues within the accountability and quality process. In page 37 of her book *Programme Evaluation and Quality*, she offers:

Table 7.

Quality and Accountability Methods (Calder, 1997, p.37)

Term	Purpose	Method
Quality Audit	Assess the quality assurance systems and procedures used by the organisation	Usually using peer review, internal or external audits can be carried out by either internal staff or external assessors as appropriate
Quality Assessment	Assesses the teaching quality in specific subjects	Uses both self assessment and external peer review
Accreditation	Formal recognition by a recognised body that the level of provision is of an agreed standard	Normally uses both self-evaluation and on-site peer review
Quality Assurance	Achieves defined standards through application of agreed procedures	Can use range of formative evaluation approaches
Quality Control	Rejection of products which fail to come up to a defined standard	Can use a range of summative evaluation approaches

Self-Evaluation	Externally or internally initiated self-critical review of achievements against specified goals	Both formative and summative evaluation approaches may be used
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According to this table and depending on the purpose, one can look at the different components of quality. It is quite clear from interviews with the administrators that they are aware of some, if not most of the problems. But what is done to solve some of these issues? Do they react only when there is a crisis? If workshops are done to please 'whomever' without tackling the real issues and problems, is that necessary? As one tutor pointed out, the real issues are not dealt with. The question is why? Are people perhaps too busy with their other commitments? Then a quality audit should point to this issue. Why have workshops if they are pointless? Rather through peer review or internal audit, find another useful way to find out the real issues and concerns. The other issue is dealing with these 'regional' problems at the national level. Isn't that perhaps too much to cope with? Can people at the national level really ensure quality at the regions? The main or general plans, curriculum, duration, modules, etc. should be the same for the sake of unifying the different regions. For that reason, it is important to have a national or central think tank. But is this plan really working out at the regional levels?

In 'Toward Education for All', it is written:

"The most important influences on the quality of our education and many of the most significant resources for improving it are located at the local level...To improve our education system and to upgrade the quality of our schools require

a good deal of work in our schools and communities. To achieve that, and to maximise the local contributions to our education system, we shall need to decentralise both responsibility and authority.” (p.168)

The literature also supports the developmental approach whereby the internal members of an institution review what they are doing and find solutions to them. This is a means of quality assurance. (Nielsen, 1997) But as was mentioned in the literature section, all this needs to pertain and be relevant to the Namibian context. Relevance is of utmost importance.

5.10.3. Recommendation 1: is for the department to set quality assurance measures and supervise these. If subject area co-ordinators take some of the responsibilities of the administration, there would be more time for these administrators to tackle the quality issues. Perhaps with more personnel they can decentralise and concentrate on the region where they are responsible. Although national co-ordination is essential for a unified vision, some kind of autonomy should be given to the regions. An internal evaluation system can be planned and devised locally or nationally but should be implemented locally. With greater autonomy and better co-operation between the regional education offices, inspectorates, subject advisors and principals, quality assurance would be more internalised and emphasised by all the stakeholders. The receipt and dispatch of the assignments will also be improved through a better co-operation between all the stakeholders. In ‘Toward Education for All’, it is mentioned that: “Reforms for which no one is directly responsible are unlikely to get very far. Successful reform requires that those who direct or implement the new programmes feel personally responsible for them.” (p.162)

5.10.4. Principals and Mentors

Principals and mentors are the main providers of support when the inset teachers are at work throughout the year. Yet these important pillars of support are not trained adequately if at all. It was mentioned earlier that because of the lack of human resources to undertake the training, a video has been produced to explain everyone's roles.

According to authors White and Stephenson (2000), "supervised teaching Practice is the practical experience of teaching under the tutelage of an established teacher." The fact that the programme has these support mechanisms for the Inset teachers is important. But for it to be effective it has to be done in a proper way.

5.10.5. Recommendation 2

There are three contact sessions per year during the school holidays. Why not invite principals and mentors for a two to three day training session to the college? These can be divided into manageable numbers. Subject co-ordinators plus tutors can assist in their training. Tutors are not teaching the whole time. Actual samples of their work can be given as examples without mentioning names. Videos, role-playing and other methods could be used to model the effective supervision. The emphasis should be on the practical operation of the supervision and not so much theoretical. School inspectors can play a very vital role in this whole collaboration too. One might say that this takes a long time to implement. While true, in the long run, the practice is invaluable. If there is a concerted effort in this direction, the benefits are obvious to the schools, teachers and learners.

5.10.6. Tutors

Tutors are instrumental in the delivery of the face to face sessions. They are also responsible for marking the assignments. Students may refer to them for assistance with their assignments, etc.

As a tutor mentioned, some do not have a clue about what they are teaching. In the literature section, it was pointed out that tutors are in fact a very important component for the delivery of tuition. They are the ones who would ensure that the contents are correctly conveyed. But not one, but two mentioned that some tutors are not really serious with their work and even have problems with it. How much less could they assist the students if they are unclear about some issues themselves.

As was mentioned in the literature section, tutors have a crucial role in the delivery of the curriculum. It was stated there that the institution concerned should assess the effectiveness of the service provided by the tutor.

5.10.7. Recommendation 3

As for the tutors, they are employed on a one-year contract. If there were complaints about them, the contract would be terminated. But is this the solution for continuity and development in the long run? As one tutor pointed out, they do not feel that they belong to the program. Why not prolong the duration of the contract to three or five years thereby encouraging a sense of belonging? Those tutors who are new or those who have problems can be trained and maintained. This is more cost effective and useful than the current practice of one-year contract. Many tutors do not feel committed to the program because of their limited contract. At any time, the department can get rid of them within the year. A longer contract term could reduce some of the problems

with the tutors. The other point is that if one is only hired for one year, one will not put as much effort into it as one whom is there for a longer time. One knows that is only for one year, so why bother with all the details. The cycle continues.

5.10.8. Subject co-ordinators

Subject co-ordinators are there to maintain the quality, train the tutors and support them, to look at the tasks and assignments, check the marking sheets of the tutors, provide assistance to the tutors and perhaps check and revise the modules, as well as arranging and discussing issues in workshops. But as one co-ordinator pointed out some of the workshops are useless, in the sense, that they just rehash the old information. The new tutors are left out by all accounts. And most importantly, no one knows what is happening in the classes during the contact sessions.

The subject co-ordinators are tutors amongst their many other roles. Though this is cost effective, in practical term this is a waste of money and resources. They should either be this or that. The responsibilities within each role are too many for any one individual to handle in practical terms, no matter how competent the individual is.

There is no regular collection of information and feedback from the different stakeholders. Though the administrators remain cognisant of some of the issues, this is not done in a regular way. Through reporting three times a year, through conducting workshops at the national and local levels, there must be a flow of information within the in-service sector. But is it sufficient? Are feedback really sought for from the tutors, students, subject co-ordinator, principals and mentors on a regular basis? Or they only happen to hear about the concerns when there is a complaint? A tutor mentioned that some issues are sensitive

and cannot be taken up. Or that the workshops superficially repeat the same things over and over. Even a co-ordinator mentioned that tutors are not interested to read about materials that are useful and pertinent to their teaching. Then what should or could be done to alleviate the situation?

More importantly, is the top-down evaluation working? By this is meant that all the stakeholders should give regular feedback to the administration.

As was related in the literature section, all the stakeholders should feel responsible for quality maintenance and assurance. All should take ownership of the programme and try to improve it. In the literature section, it was stated that the assessment marks should be clear to all the tutors and all assessment should be standardised. This is part of the role of the subject co-ordinators to assure that all the tutors are aware of the marking procedures and that there are regular check-ups for maintaining quality.

5.10.9. Recommendation 4

As a recommendation these subject co-ordinators should be left for their tasks only. They can then arrange more useful and meaningful workshops. They can read, modify and bring changes to the modules, thus relieving the administrators of this duty. They can set meaningful tasks and assignments. They can supervise and monitor the tutors during the contact sessions, and check their work more closely to see if the assignments are marked properly. They can develop criteria for marking and discuss these in workshops with new and veteran tutors. They might even be able to be utilised for conducting workshops for principals and mentors once in a while, and make class visits throughout the year. They can even visit the teachers in their respective schools and make regular observations. In other words, they can take some 'load' off

the administrators and take a more active role in the assurance and maintenance of quality. They should be carefully screened and selected and be duly trained for their tasks. The types of duties and responsibilities that they are required to perform, calls for selecting committed and serious individuals. The programme has been cost effective, since the government pays the salaries of the permanent staff and also provides transport, accommodation, etc. for the workshops, etc. This is a great achievement, and therefore, some funds should be available to better modify the different components. To assign the above to the subject co-ordinators and relieve them from tutoring, and by remunerating them accordingly, could be one of needed steps.

Another point is the supervision of the tutors during the contact sessions. Why can't the subject co-ordinators be assigned to do this task? These are individuals selected because of their knowledge and experiences in the field. They should definitely be college teacher educators and not from secondary schools, however expert these may be. This is for the reason that these lecturers have more experience with the learner centred approach than their colleagues are. Though this cannot be ascertained, it is assumed that they are more experienced with the pre-service curricula and the methodologies applied.

5.10.10. Achievement of the Graduates

But it should also be noted that the other purpose of this case study was to look at what the graduates have achieved. Whether there are demonstrable knowledge, skills and attitudes that the teachers are displaying. On that account, the changes are obvious. Not only the graduates themselves are able to discern these changes, but principals also attest to these improvements. Many of the graduates suggested that the in-service program to start a BEd

(Bachelor of Education) program. They seemed quite content with what was offered and the way that it was presented. As noted earlier, it could be that the teachers are not used to criticising the authorities. They take things as they come along.

Students' lack of commitment was mentioned a few times by the tutors. While these are adult learners they are pre-occupied with many responsibilities which make it difficult for them to wholeheartedly commit to the training. This cannot be used as an excuse. The same can be said for the tutors and other stakeholders. As an administrator noted; everyone needs to be committed for the program to be a success. There is a general lack of commitment. According to Meyer (1998), the liturgical form of education is still quite common. "In the northern Namibia context, teachers seem to feel that important content is transmitted by such forms. We have no direct evidence from the interviews, but observations suggest that the more formalistic or liturgical approaches of the teachers do not simply reflect traditionalism or ignorance or the laziness that impatient outside critics sometimes label them with. There is an educational point to the ceremony in a context in which there are great gaps (of meaning, income and status) between the high cosmopolitan knowledge and the depressed local social reality. " (Snyder & Voigts, p.141) He goes on to assert that: "It is important for those attempting to improve instruction in Namibia to understand that a variety of instructional strategies and methods that make perfect sense given a teacher who functions as an interactive service-delivery professional individual may be very inefficient when carried out ceremonially in a liturgical way. Under such conditions, many aspects of learner-centred instruction look quite cumbersome, as do many forms of continuous assessment

and of the flexible use of materials and methods.” (*Ibid*, p.141) According to the above statement, the liturgical forms of instructions are still very much alive and practised in the north. Could this be the reason for a lack of commitment to the new methodology? Change is not an easy process for members of any culture. Could it be that teachers feel and think that this is yet another program that they have to “deal” with before another one comes along? Or are they so entrenched in the formalistic or liturgical kinds of education that to break away from it would be tantamount to a betrayal of one’s sense of identity? Perhaps there should be more research in this area to find out the above statements. But one has to look for the reasons in order to know and understand the patterns of change better. However, this point is brought up to note that the whole process of education and training is very complex and there are many issues of importance that cannot be solved by the present writer.

5.11. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations was that the number of the people interviewed was small. Though this was a case study and the purpose was to look at the in-service program, still it would be better to consult more individuals. More tutors principals and graduates should have been interviewed. Another was to ask the views of the school Inspectors and the administrators in the regional offices. Since they are important stakeholders in the field, their ideas and opinions should have been solicited through interviews. Subject co-ordinators should have been interviewed separately and with a new set of questions. As mentioned previously, three of the tutors also happened to be co-ordinators. But this was an error of judgement and short-sightedness on the part of the writer, though she had intended to undertake such interviews earlier in the study.

Mentors could have also given their views, but the writer did not accommodate them.

5.12. Relevance of the Study

The study set out to examine an in-service department of a teacher education college and whether there are quality assurance measures. The purpose was to set this program against the criteria of knowledge, skills and attitudes and the research questions. The findings in the results section and the conclusion and recommendations were based on the collected data.

It was important to do this study at this time since the question of quality is one of the national goals of education in Namibia. This study will contribute to the understanding of this program and what it sets out to achieve. However small its contribution, the study will give the reader a glimpse into the in-service teacher education. This is not purely a programme evaluation as such or a moderation exercise. These usually look at the curriculum or a particular component or components of the programme and evaluate it on that or those basis. Mainly these evaluators are concerned with the present or current students in the programme and are not really interested to know how the graduates are performing in the field or what the principals are saying about them. Though this study was guided by the general criteria of knowledge, skills and attitudes and the six research questions, it did not set out to discredit or validate any points. Its approach was to find out at first hand what is happening through knowing more about it.

Through the findings and from the perspectives of current students, graduates, administrators, principals and tutors a picture of the programme materialises. This adds to the literature in the sense that it provides not only the

results of how many passed and failed or other statistical information, but also a deeper idea of how the new reforms have impacted on the education of the teachers. It also tried to find out from the graduates and the principals how effective their teacher education training has been.

Another important aspect is that, since the author contacted the administration of the programme before conducting her research, she was asked to particularly enquire about some aspects of the programme and find out what the students think about them. These can be clearly seen in the questionnaires of year 1 and year 4 Inset students and referred to in the 'results' section. According to Nentwig (1999): One approach that seems to be the most promising in the in-service field is based on the needs of those involved in an in-service activity and was expounded by Daniel Stoffelbaum (1971). (Cited in Nentwig, 1999) And again from Nentwig (1999): "During the INSET process, evaluation results at one stage may lead to the revision of earlier stages. This model has been used to analyse case studies of evaluation of in-service activity."

Therefore, the additional questions have addressed the needs of the in-service administration to know what the Inset students think about certain aspects of the programme.

The study doesn't claim to have solved any problems and the recommendations can be seen in the light of the suggestions from the participants or the writer.

5.13. Adherence to the Principles for Evaluation of an INSET

At this point another look at the literature concerning principles for evaluation would clarify how the writer fared in this respect.

According to Nentwig (1999), there are a few principles for evaluation in the In-service education that need to be observed:

- The purpose of evaluation is not to prove but to improve. (Stuffel, 1971 in Nentwig) He further explains that it is in the interest of everyone to improve an INSET activity. Also by respecting different perspectives of the different parties. The writer did not start her study by trying to prove or disapprove of any component of the in-service.
- Evaluation activities must be transparent. By this, he means that they should inform everyone involved about the purpose, the method and the consequences of the study. That was done through the permission letters from the different ministries and individuals concerned.
- Evaluation activities must be meaningful. By this, he means that the information should lead to noticeable consequences. This was a study that the writer did. She was not commissioned by the In-service to undertake such a study. Therefore the writer cannot guarantee this.
- Evaluation activities must be sensitive. By this he means that evaluation should be an integral part of an INSET and not an alien element. Any shortcomings or deficits should be handled with care. The writer reported the findings, but ensured that the identity of the participants would remain confidential.
- Evaluation activities must be flexible. He explains this that since an INSET situation is a dynamic process, evaluators should be prepared to react flexibly and adjust their instruments. This happened and was reported that an Inset administrator expressed a desire to include a number of questions related to the program. The writer did this as attested by the questionnaires.

- Evaluation needs to be embedded in the structure of the INSET activity. By this he means that the place of the evaluation is not at the end. This could be done at any stage. As explained before, though the writer works for the same college, she is not involved in any way with the in-service department.
- Return-on-Income (ROI). He explains that since the resources are scarce, most evaluators evaluate the ROI effectiveness of an INSET. This entails information such as the numbers of participants passed, etc. However, it is the quality of change that counts. The writer just reported that the program is cost effective. She tried to concentrate on the quality assurance measures within the program. (Nentwig, 1999)

The writer tried to evaluate herself on the study that she undertook by the above principles.

5.14. Future Research Questions

Future research should look into whether quality can be maintained by providing access and equity. If there were teachers who lack sufficient background, both linguistically and educationally, would it be possible to expect quality without providing any additional bridging courses? There was an earlier discussion that stated that no education could be considered to be of quality if it denies access to certain groups of people, for whatever reason. While that is true, what mechanisms should there be to assure quality at the end of the program?

Another issue relating to quality would be to know whether the provisions of better facilities for receiving and dispatching assignments, better tutor tuition and marking, and all the other support systems do in fact contribute to better quality. These are external factors that were mentioned in the literature section.

It would be interesting to find out whether internal evaluations and action on them would bring and maintain quality in this context.

The other point is about decentralisation. Would it work or it would be better to have a national programme?

5.15. Conclusion

This study tried to find out whether there are quality maintenance and mechanisms in place for assuring quality in a distance programme. Though qualitative research is very much subjective, it was decided to quote as much as possible from the participants themselves. In this way, the reader can decide for herself/himself about different issues under discussion. In the document, 'Investing in People, Developing a Country,' it is stated:

“Innovation and critique are inherently risky. Often, we are reluctant to try new things or to give up old ways. In families, in industry, in business, even in education, it frequently seems preferable to leave things the way they are, to avoid the undesirable and perhaps unforeseen consequences associated with change.....Still, if we do not change, we stagnate. As a nation, if we do not develop our own national agenda and priorities, if we do not take charge of our own economy, we will remain a dependent country, pushed about by the decision of countries, companies and organisations elsewhere. Hence we need our higher education system to play an essential and generative developmental role.” (P. 47)

For the changes to happen there must be a constant feedback from the stakeholders as to the quality of the students and the programme. In the same document it is mentioned: “Assessing quality, therefore, must involve evaluating both students’ achievements and the accomplishments of our higher education

institutions. That institutional evaluation, in turn, must be both individual and collective, since in many areas the quality of higher education in Namibia depends on effective co-operation among our institutions.” (*Ibid*, p.33)

It is hoped that the above was accommodated in this study and reading it provides some insight into the In-service programme.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for Year 1 Student teachers

Dear participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program and need your assistance in filling out this questionnaire.

Please do **Not** write your name on this page. No one will be able to connect your answers to you or to your school. Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible. Place a check mark in the boxes or write in the spaces provided (or on the back of the page if you need more space).

Thank you for your participation.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Educational background:

Less than grade 10

Grade 10

Grade 11

Grade 12

3. Do you have a professional certificate or diploma? Yes No

If yes, what is the name of this certificate or diploma?

4. Years of teaching experience:

Less than 5 years

5 – 7 years

8 – 10 years

more than 10 years

5. What grade do you teach?

6. What subjects do you teach?

7. Of the courses you are taking now, which one(s) seem to be **easy**? Why?

8. Of the courses you are taking now, which one(s) seem to be **difficult**? Why?

9. How would you rate **support** given by the following?

a. Lecturers/tutors:

Excellent Very good Average Little Very little

b. Fellow students:

Excellent Very good Average Little Very little

c. Inset personnel/staff:

Excellent Very good Average Little Very little

d. Colleagues at school:

Excellent Very good Average Little Very little

e. Others (please name) _____

Excellent Very good Average Little Very little

10. How would you rate the **access** you have to the following?

a. Lecturers/Tutors

Excellent Very good Average Little Very Little

b. Fellow students

Excellent Very good Average Little Very Little

c. Inset personnel/staff

Excellent Very good Average Little Very Little

d. Library

Excellent Very good Average Little Very Little

e. Others (please name) _____

Excellent Very good Average Little Very Little

11. What skills and knowledge would you like to obtain by the end of the four years? Number the skills/knowledge in the following list according to their importance to you, from 1 being the most important.

_____ To Know more theories related to education

_____ to have the skill of classroom management

_____ To know how to discipline my learners

_____ To know different methodologies

_____ To be able to use different methods in my class

_____ To be more prepared in terms of planning lessons

_____ To be more professional in my attitude toward learners, colleagues, etc.

_____ Other skills and knowledge, please specify _____

12. What are your comments about the face to face sessions? If you could, how would you change the structure of these sessions?

13. Do you find the School Based Activities useful? Why or why not?

14. How relevant do you find the portfolios to your personal and professional growth?

15. Do you think your assignments are in line with what you have been studying? Why or why not?

16. What are your comments about the assessment of your assignments by your tutors? Do you have any suggestions to improve this?

17. In general, does this program meet your expectations? Why or why not?

18. What do you consider the top three problems with this program?

19. What do you consider the top three strengths of this program?

20. Do you have any other suggestions or recommendations for improving the program? Please write these below.

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Year 4 Student Teachers

Dear Participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program and need your assistance in filling out this questionnaire.

Please do **Not** write your name on this page. No one will be able to connect your answers to you or to your school. Please answer all the questions as honestly as possible. Place a check mark in the boxes or write in the spaces provided (or on the back of the page if you need more space).

Thank you for your participation.

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Educational background:
 - a. less than grade 10
 - b. Grade 10
 - c. Grade 11
 - d. Grade 12

3. Do you have a professional certificate or diploma? Yes No.
If yes, what is the name of this certificate or diploma?

4. Years of teaching experiences:
 - a. less than 5 years
 - b. 5 – 7 years
 - c. 8 – 10 years
 - d. more than 10 years

5. What grade do you teach?

6. What subjects do you teach?

7. What are some of the skills that you have learned during these 4 years?

8. How would you rate support given by the following?
 - a. lecturers/tutors:
 Excellent Very good Good Little Very little

b. Inset personnel/staff

Excellent Very Good Good Little Very Little

c. Fellow students:

Excellent Very good Good Little Very Little

d. Colleagues at school:

Excellent Very good Good Little Very Little

e. Others (please name) _____

Excellent Very good Good Little Very Little

9. Are you generally satisfied with the courses that were offered to you? If not, what do you suggest should be included or excluded?

10. What do you think about School Based Activities?

11. How were you face to face sessions, do you have any comments on them?

12. How do you perceive the assignments, your tutor's comments?

13. What do you think about the end of the year examinations?

14. What do you think about portfolios? In what ways have they contributed towards your personal and professional growth?

15. Has this program fulfilled your expectations for the teacher's diploma?
Whether yes or no, give your reasons.

16. Mention 3 strengths that you notice with the inset program?

17. Mention 3 problems that you notice with the inset program?

18. For the improvement of the program, what would be your suggestions?

Appendix C

Questions for the Interview with the Graduates

Dear participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program.

Your name will not appear on this or any other papers that I will write. No one can trace your contributions to these questions to you or to your school. I thank you for your participation.

Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. This should take between 20-25 minutes of your time.

1. When did you graduate from the In-service program?
2. Are you still teaching in the same grade or a different grade?
3. Would you say that you are better equipped now? In what ways, can you elaborate?
4. What are some of the knowledge/skills that you have gained and are practising/utilising now?
5. Would you suggest any other additional skills/ knowledge, etc. that were not offered at the time?
6. When you reflect on your past experiences, do you see any changes in your attitude towards schools, learners, etc.? Why this is so?
7. Would you recommend this program to your fellow teachers who are not professionally trained? If yes, why? If no, why?
8. What aspects of the program would you say contributed greatly to your better understanding of certain skills or knowledge?

9. What aspects of the program hampered your understanding or learning at the time?
10. What or who supported you during your studies and when you were on your own here away from the Centre?
11. If you were asked to recommend some improvements to this program, what would these be?
12. What does 'quality' mean to you?
13. Based on what you said, would you say that this is a 'quality' program? Why yes or no.
14. What characteristics or aspects tell you that there is quality (or lack of it), in this program?

Appendix D

Questions for interview with the Tutors/lecturers of year 4

Dear participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program.

Your name will not appear on this or any other papers that I will write. No one can trace your contributions to these questions to you or to your school. I thank you for your participation. Please answer the following questions as honestly as you can. This should take between 20-25 minutes of your time.

1. How long have you been teaching in the in-service program?
2. How many students are assigned to you in this program?
3. When you compare with the pre-service program, do you have more or less students?
4. Apart from the 3 contact sessions during the year, do you see your students/tutees at other times during the year? Please elaborate how often?
5. Are you always available for assistance to your tutees? What kind of arrangements are there to see them, mark their assignments, arrange for tutorials, etc.?
6. Have you taught in other years of the program? What I would like to know from you is that, do you see any major differences from the time these teachers start and in their fourth year? If yes, what are these changes that you notice?
7. Do you ever get to visit any of your tutees in their schools, even while they teach? If not, do you think that this component is important or even necessary?

8. What are some of the supports that your tutees have during their studies?
And what types of support are there for you?
9. In your opinion, what are some of the factors that hamper the tutees' success in studies, while away from the Centre?
10. Are you satisfied with the overall infra-structure, courses, etc.? If not, what changes would you recommend for the improvement?
11. What does 'quality' mean to you?
12. Based on what you said, would you say that this is a 'quality' program? Why yes or no.
13. What characteristics or aspects tell you that there is quality (or lack of it), in this program?

Appendix E

Questions for interview with the Principals

Dear Participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program.

Your name will not appear on this or any other papers that I will write. No one can trace your contributions to these questions to you or to your school. I thank you for your participation. Please answer these questions as honestly as you can. This should take between 20-25 minutes of your time.

1. How many graduates of the In-service program, do you have in your school?
2. Do you notice a change in them before and after their training? In what ways, would you please elaborate? E.g. productivity, knowledge, skills, etc.
3. Have you ever personally attended their classes to be able to make any such comparisons?
4. Do you see a difference in these graduates in terms of their attitudes, skills and knowledge? How would you know?
5. During their studies, did they approach you or any of their colleagues for assistance in their studies? Why yes, or why not?
6. You are aware that the program runs for 4 years, how were you able to support these teachers?
7. Would you recommend this program to your other unqualified teachers? Why yes, or why not?
8. To your best of knowledge, did these teachers choose the program voluntarily to upgrade their knowledge and skills, or were they forced by their circumstances to go for this course in order not to lose their employment?

Please elaborate, and state whether there is a difference between these two groups of teachers in terms of their overall attitude, skills and knowledge.

9. What could be the most common characteristics that these new graduates display?
10. If you were in a position to recommend to the In-service program, what would these be in terms of developing this program to its fullest possible potential to train unqualified teachers?
11. What does 'quality' mean to you?
12. Based on what you said, would you say that this is a 'quality' program? Why yes or no.
13. What characteristics or aspects tell you that there is quality (or lack of it), in this program?

Appendix F

Interview for the Head of the department of In-service

Dear Participant:

As part of the requirements for a Master's degree, I am researching about quality education in the in-service program.

Your name will not appear on this or any other papers that I will write. No one can trace your contributions to these questions to you or to your school. I thank you for your participation. Please answer the questions as honestly as possible.

This should take between 30-40 minutes of your time.

1. What are the criteria used for selecting the suitable candidates?
2. What are your main responsibilities as the head of the department?
3. Are there mechanisms in place for ensuring 'quality' in the program?
If yes, may I have a copy of such a document. If no, do you think there should be such mechanisms in place?
4. What do you consider to be an indication that there is 'quality' in this in-service program?
5. Based on what you just mentioned, do you think that 'quality' is maintained or sought after in this program?
6. In your opinion, what are some of the constraints preventing 'quality' in this program?
7. Are there any follow-ups made on the graduates once they finish the program? Do you think it is necessary to do so? Why yes or why no?
8. How do you support the tutees during the year, except the contact sessions?

9. Are tutees able to contact you and your office or the lecturers/tutors at any time?
10. Are there enough facilities, library, photocopy machine, etc. to support your work and the work of the tutees?
11. What is the turn around time for the submission of the assignments and grades by the tutors?
12. Do you have any idea of the kinds of support that the tutees receive or the types of support that they receive during their normal teaching schedules?
13. Do you ever get complains from the tutees about lack of co-operation from the tutors?
14. If I may ask, what kinds of complaints do you normally receive?
15. Are the tutees able to recommend any ideas or suggestions? And are these taken into consideration?
16. Are there internal or external moderators for the program?

Appendix G

Olia Ghiassi Razavi
P.O. Box 1595,
Oshakati
Tel: 065-220773h/230001w
10 Jan. 2002

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Request for Permission to conduct a Research

I am writing to you to request your permission in conducting a research. As a teacher educator at Ongwediva College of Education and a graduate student, I am requesting your assistance with regards to this research that will take place at the in-service section of the college.

The research title is 'Quality assurance in the In-service Teacher Education program in Northern Namibia: a case study'. The purpose of this research is to find out first hand how quality is maintained and assured at the in-service department of the college. I will distribute some questionnaires to the teachers who are taking the course, interview some of the graduates, principals, teacher educators and the head of the department. Also I would like to have access to some of the data at the office of the in-service at Ongwediva Resource Centre. This is to provide some background information.

The research to be conducted is for the purpose of fulfilling the requirement of a Master's degree in Distance Education from Athabasca University in Canada.

It is hoped that the above information would be of benefit to you in your decision to grant this permission. Should you need any additional information, please do

not hesitate to contact the writer at the above telephone numbers. Attached you'll find the permission letter that has been included for your convenience.

Awaiting your favourable response, I remain

Faithfully yours

Olia G. Razavi
Teacher educator,
Ongwediva College of Education

Appendix H

To Whom it May Concern:

I hereby grant permission to Olia G. Razavi to conduct her research in the In-service Department of the Ongwediva College of Education as mentioned in the attached letter.

Responsible person

Signed

Date

