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**STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF
THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN A SOUTH AFRICAN
UNIVERSITY**

by

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my wonderful husband, Professor Omphemetse Sibanda Snr. for his love, support and guidance. And to my daughter, Bontle Sibanda and my son, Omphemetse Sibanda Jnr. who had to endure my long hours of work and supported my intellectual journey.

I also dedicate this work to my late mother, Alleta Nogane Letsoalo, who was a professional teacher herself, and my greatest motivator and role model.

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Lastly, I would like to thank the student teachers who participated as respondents in the data collection phase for the invaluable information and responses given.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university**. The need to undertake this study followed the reported decline in the status of the teaching profession as well as the contradicting reports on the shortage of teachers and reasons for the choice of the teaching profession by student teachers.

It has been established in this study that student teachers still believe that teaching remains an important career for several reasons, including but not limited to the fact that teaching offers a steady career and a secure job; that the profession provides a reliable income and that it is a fulfilling career; and that student teachers make a conscious decision to join the profession due to their love of working with children and positive contribution to the society. But, other issues affecting the profession and the proper discharge of duties by teachers have been identified, such as the decline in teacher professionalism; over-crowding in classes and the increased administrative responsibilities assigned to teachers. In general, participants in the study reported to have joined teaching either for intrinsic or for altruistic reasons.

Recommendations drawn from what the researcher has found to be the most critical areas of the findings have been made with regard to: (a) the introduction of salary tax relief for teachers; (b) improvement of discipline; (c) transforming the teaching profession; (d) intensified capacity building and skilling of educators; (e) re-imagining educators' professional identity through improved professional virtue; (f) addressing safety and insecurity concerns at schools; (g) lessening administration work of teachers; (h) effective and sustainable infrastructure development and (i) reconsidering and reconfiguring the role of teacher unions.

In brief, the findings of this study have revealed some critical areas that need to be addressed for the betterment of the expectations and perceptions of student teachers at the university the sample was drawn from.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Gladys Mankoana Sibanda (student number 11322030), hereby declare that this dissertation titled **STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN A SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY** for the degree Magister of Education at the University of Pretoria, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that this is my own work in design and execution and that all material from published sources contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature

Date



RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

EM 13/08/01

DEGREE AND PROJECT

MEd

Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university

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7 November 2014

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

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This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following condition:

1. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Education
CHE	Council on Higher Education
COLT	Culture of Learning and Teaching
DoBE	Department of Basic Education
ELRC	South African Education Labour Relations Council
HOD	Head of Department
HSRC	South African Human Sciences Research Council
HTCC	Holland's Theory of Career Choice
MRC	Medical Research Council
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NSC	National Senior Certificate
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SACE	South African Council for Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SATU	South African Teachers' Union
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa

KEYWORDS

Expectations

Perceptions

Profession

Student teachers

Teaching

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In the year 2000 the Department of Education reported that a total of 90 070 students were enrolled in South African institutions of higher learning for educational studies, the highest number compared to other areas of specialisation, such as business-related sciences (Educational Statistics South Africa, 2000). The statistics further show that the number of students that graduated in education in the same year was 15 401. Nine years later in 2009, figures for students enrolled for education in South Africa were significantly higher, especially if one considers that redress policies made the training of more students necessary to lower the teacher-learner ratio in disadvantaged schools. A total of 137 471 students enrolled for education in South Africa in 2009. It must be noted that this figure includes all the students, irrespective of their year of registration.

It is evident that the figures for students enrolled for education have increased significantly in the space of nine years, considering also that the teacher education system underwent major structural changes. The changes according to the Council on Higher Education (CHE) (2010) included the rationalisation policy of the Government in the context of down scaling the teacher corps. Furthermore, it is reported that formerly 102 public teacher training colleges, 20 universities and 15 technikons trained teachers but that only 23 institutions do so currently. The report warns that this reduction has had, and continues to have implications for teacher supply and demand.

Therefore, in the light of the increasing enrolment of students coupled with the rationalisation policy of teachers in education this study proposes to establish the perceptions and expectations of student teachers regarding the teaching profession. The focal point of this study is to investigate what inspires student teachers to train for and join the teaching profession in the country today.

Many studies have reported on motivations for student teachers for choosing teaching as a career prospect (Stokes, 2007; Krečič & Grmek, 2005; Jantzen, 1981; Brown, 1992). The paucity of studies reporting on the motives of students registering for teaching in South Africa today was one of the reasons for this study. The researcher saw a void in the literature and decided to investigate why South African students are registering for teaching.

1.2 ORIENTATION

1.2.1 The context of the study

This research focuses on student teachers. Student teachers are understood to be those students training to become teachers – primary or secondary school teachers. The survey took place at an institution where student teachers were enrolled for education. No funding was required for this research; neither did it include a laboratory experiment. Research was conducted on first year student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession, particularly in South Africa.

1.3 THEORETICAL AND CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.3.1 Theoretical framework

A theoretical framework is understood to be a plan or a map towards the achievement of good outcomes and objectives. Sinclair (2007) warns that, “[at] the start of any research study, it is important to consider relevant theory underpinning the knowledge base of the phenomenon to be researched”. According to Krečič, and Grmek (2012:266) “[m]otivation has an important role when choosing a profession”, especially if that profession is teaching. Other careers offer higher salaries, clearer pathways for career development, greater social prestige and more agreeable working conditions while teaching seems to be less attractive as a career (Watt & Richardson, 2007). Krečič *et al.* (2012) suggest that the absence of motivating factors could cause dissatisfaction at work. This notion applies to

student teachers who aspire to become teachers. A lack of motivation could lead to dissatisfaction once they join the profession.

London (1983:620) introduced the concept of *career motivation*, which is defined as “the set of individual characteristics and associated career decisions and behaviours that reflect the person’s career identity, insight into factors affecting his or her career, and resilience in the face of unfavourable career conditions”. Lopes (2006), in his integrative literature review on career development of foreign born workers in 2006, asserts that London’s Career Motivation Inventory is a dynamic theoretical construct that consists of three central domains that make up career motivation: *career identity* (CI_d), *career resilience* (CR) and *career insight* (CI_n).

London (1983) explains that CR is the foundational domain of career motivation and that it is the “resistance to career disruption in a less than optimal environment, the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, even when the circumstances are discouraging or disruptive”. CI_n is described by Carson and Bedeian (1994) and London (1983) as the extent of realistic perceptions that people have with respect to how they relate to the organisation’s goals and their own personal career goals. Someone with strong CI_n can establish clearer career goals and knows his or her strengths and weaknesses. CI_d is defined by London (1983:62) as a measure of “how central one’s career is to one’s identity” created through “job, organizational and professional involvement and needs for advancement, recognition and a leadership role”. The career motivation theory relevant to this study is career resilience because teachers who lack resilience could leave the profession within a few years of joining it.

1.3.2 Contextual framework

South African researchers are in agreement that the teacher attrition rate in South Africa is not markedly different when compared internationally (Review of Education, Skills Development and Innovation (RESDI), 2011). Over many years, numerous appeals for the greater consideration of the reduction of teacher attrition and retention have appeared in the literature (Louw, Shisana, Peltzer & Zungu, 2008; Bradley & Loadman, 2005; Department of Education, 2005). In each case

the underlying message is the radical solution of the scourge of attrition to be considered by the education management and policy makers.

According to Arends and Phurutse (2011) teachers who leave the profession for either retirement or resignation should be replaced by an equal number to satisfy the supply and demand of teachers in South African schools. This theory is justified by Chisholm (2009) who asserts that teacher education experienced financial constraints in the period of 1994 to 1999 as preference existed only for distributional solutions as a way of improving quality in schools instead of investing in teacher education. These solutions came in the form of rationalisation, redeployment and redistribution of teachers rather than training new teachers, which led to overproduction of teachers in the teacher education colleges and the need for restructuring and incorporating teacher education into higher education.

The supply of teachers improved late during 1999 to 2004. Chisholm posits that the sufficient supply of teachers in schools was threatened by teacher migration and the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic (2009). Chisholm (2009) further reports that Government's ever-changing policies initiated to improve the quantity and quality of teachers have influenced negatively the attractiveness of the teaching profession. Department of Education managers and policy makers could improve the state of (teacher) education by attending to significant barriers related to teachers' conditions of work, and teacher preparation and professional development, warns Chisholm (2009). Furthermore, an efficient and effective system of teacher deployment, recruitment and retention should be put in place to attract aspirant teachers as this effort is hampered by the low attractiveness of teaching, working conditions and low salaries.

It is against this background that this study seeks to investigate South African student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession and why, despite all these challenges, students still want to join the teaching profession.

1.4 DEMARCATION/DELIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

Demarcations are restrictions or boundaries that the researcher imposes prior to the inception of the study to narrow the scope of the study. This study was limited to surveying male and female first-year student teachers in one South African university. The researcher focused on student teachers' motivations in joining the teaching profession in South Africa today as the main field of research. It is important to also note that there are only two "streams" available to students and that I could not cover all the teacher education endorsements.

First-year university students were chosen as the respondents of this study because they are suitable to provide informative data on their reasons for choosing the teaching profession as their career prospect. Furthermore, the researcher believes that first-year student teachers are better respondents for such a study because, unlike the second-, third- or fourth-year students who might have been through experiential learning, they have not been exposed to teaching conditions.

1.5 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Admittedly, as in every topical issue, there will always be debates and disagreements. For example, there is a point of view that there is no shortage of teachers and that there is an increase in the number of qualified but yet unemployed teachers (Vinjevold, 2008). On the other hand, certain studies argue to the contrary and point to the high demand for teachers and high teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2003). The common denominator between the two arguments is that there are numbers of students being trained as teachers, but whether they ultimately get employed or not, or if they are able to stay in employment is another issue.

The statistical information in the introduction on student teacher enrolments in South Africa paints a rather appealing picture for this discussion. More interesting in the context of the discussion about teacher recruitment and attrition is the likening of the recruitment of more teachers to the teaching profession to an act of

“[p]ouring more water into a bucket” which “will not do any good if we do not patch the holes first” (Ingersoll, 2003:33). It is clear from the latter submission by Ingersoll that there are issues that need to be addressed in the teaching profession. Moreover, teaching is often described as a “dead-end” job with low status, uncompetitive salaries and poor working conditions (Bradley & Loadman, 2005:3). There is also a lack of proper support in the teaching profession (Ibrahim, 2012) and in the recognition of the successes achieved (Maile, 2000).

Despite all these negative assertions about education, the enrolment of student teachers has not declined; for example, 90 070 students enrolled for educational studies in higher education institutions in South Africa in 2000. Nine years later, in 2009, the number of enrolments increased to 137 471 (Educational Statistics South Africa, 2012). Why is this the case? Part of finding an answer to this question may be first to consider the main question of this study: Why are students registering for teaching in South Africa today, despite the teaching profession being called an “unattractive career choice”? (South African Council for Educators, 2011, CHE, 2010). To borrow from a title of a study by Johnson, Berg and Donalson (2005), the researcher endeavoured to determine who enters and stays in the teaching profession, and why.

1.6 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

South African researchers (Wolhuter, Van der Walt, Potgieter & Mamiala, 2012; Maile, 2000) warn that South African school education is suffering from a quality problem and that it also lacks a national strategy for dealing with the development needs of teachers. Maile (2000:255) points out that teachers’ morale has declined substantially because of the following:

- Cynical criticism from the media and department officials.
- No rewards or praise but constant accusations.
- Inadequate and late supply of books and stationery.
- Overload (in fact in extremes cases one or two teachers are teaching all grades in schools)
- Shortage of staff.

- Lack of classrooms, laboratories, offices and library buildings, poor working conditions in terms of salaries and other benefits, and political pressure on teachers.

With this plethora of problems in the education system that may subsequently lead to teacher attrition or teachers abandoning the profession, it is almost impossible to comprehend why student teachers still choose the teaching profession as their prospective career. The purpose of this study is to investigate why students are registering for teaching in South Africa today amid many indications that teaching may not be an attractive career choice.

1.7 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

A great deal of academic literature reports on motivations for, and reasons why student teachers choose teaching as a career prospect (Williams, Graham, McCary-Henderson & Floyd, 2009; Kyriacou, Coulthard, Hultgren & Stephens, 2002; Fielstra, 1955). The research dates back to the 1980s and beyond (Weinstein, 1989). Student teachers have reported similar, and in other instances different reasons for choosing teaching, such as altruistic reasons (moral obligation to the society, the love of working with children and helping others), extrinsic or pragmatic reasons (money, security and possessions) and intrinsic/developmental reasons (self-identity, self-esteem and personal growth). One may look at the topic of the research and ask, *What makes this research different from other studies on the topic?*

This research is different in that it addresses a void in the relevant literature, and it addresses a less or scantily researched topic in South Africa, namely student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession. There is a dearth of literature that addresses this particular subject in South Africa; researchers concentrate more on the reasons why students choose teaching and do not substantively report on how students perceive the teaching profession and what students expect of the profession, except for a limited number of studies (Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012). Often the research is limited and sometimes contradictory, leaving a void to be filled.

As part of their longitudinal study of reviewing literature on teacher retention, Johnson, Berg and Donalson (2005) highlight a number of shortfalls. For example, quantitative studies about the effect of salary on teachers' career decisions omit to take into account other factors that influence teachers' priorities (Johnson *et al.*, 2005:47). This research promises new insights into a topic by examining it from a different angle and it also replicates aspects of earlier research. It also looks into intervention measures in the context of their education policy implications. Furthermore, it includes factors that dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students. In this respect the research provides an innovative perspective on the phenomenon explored.

1.8 POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION/SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

The following are among the possible contributions and significance of the findings of this study:

- This study could guide future research on aspects that are relevant and inherent to this study but have not been researched or reported on.
- The findings of this study may be vital and beneficial to teacher education policy makers and pre-service and in-service teacher institutions. Furthermore, the findings may assist policy makers in finding ways to recruit new teachers and retaining teachers who are already in the teaching workforce. In addition, aspirations by the Department of Basic Education to improve the quality and professionalism of the teaching force in South Africa may be enhanced by the findings.
- Finally, from the findings and recommendations of this research, policy makers may establish long-term mechanisms of how to make the teaching profession attractive and develop a career path for aspirant student teachers. It is for these reasons that the researcher believes that this study is different from similar studies that focus on reasons for choosing teaching as a career path.

1.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.9.1 Primary research question

Research shows that South Africa, like the rest of the world, faces the challenge of teacher attrition. Teachers leave the profession for various reasons within five years of entering it. Some of the factors identified as possible reasons for attrition include low teacher morale and motivation, the health status of teachers and job dissatisfaction (Department of Education, 2005; Robinson, 2003 & 2005; HRSC, 2005 & Wolhuter, Van der Walt, Potgieter, Meyer & Mamiala, 2012).

It is against this background that the following main question was formulated to guide the study: *What are South African student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession?*

1.9.2 Secondary research questions

1.9.2.1 What factors encourage student teachers to enrol as education students?

1.9.2.2 How do student teachers perceive the teaching profession?

1.9.2.3 What are student teachers' expectations of teaching as a profession?

1.9.2.4 What factors dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students?

1.10 RESEARCH AIMS

1.10.1 To explore factors that encourage student teachers to enrol as education students.

1.10.2 To investigate student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession.

1.10.3 To investigate student teachers' expectations of teaching as a profession.

1.10.4 To establish what factors dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students.

1.11 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The validity of an instrument, according to Pietersen and Maree (2011:215), refers to “the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure”. Face, content and criterion validity were used to check the validity of the instrument. To ensure a high degree of face validity the instrument was scrutinised by experts in the education field. Content validity, according to Pietersen and Maree (2011:217) refers to “the extent to which the instrument covers the complete content ... that it is set out to measure”. To ensure content validity of the instrument, a provisional version was presented to the experts in education and to statisticians for their comments before finalising the instrument.

Chapter 3 (Research Methods) describes in depth how validity and reliability were measured. It includes the acquisition of the opinions of experts on the content of the questionnaire.

1.12 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

It is important to define and explain concepts inherent to a study for a better understanding of their usage. These concepts form part of the topic of the study.

1.12.1 Student teachers

There are many online definitions of a student teacher. The common definition is that a student teacher is a college or university student studying for a teacher’s diploma or a degree to become a teacher after satisfying all the requirements of the same institution to become one. Student teaching is a college-supervised instructional experience; usually the culminating course in a university or college undergraduate education or graduate school programme leading to teacher education and certification, <http://www.collinsdictionary.com/-dictionary/-englishstudent-teacher>, accessed on 16 August 2013.

1.12.2 Perceptions

According to the Oxford South African Concise Dictionary *perception* refers to “a way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something”. It is about “intuitive understanding and insight”. In this regard perception is closely related to

perspective. According to Söhnge and Moletsane (1997) perspective concerns a broad mental view of an issue. For the purpose of this study the concept *perceptions* refers to “the mental view” or how student teachers regard and/or understand teaching as a profession. How they perceive the profession will most definitely influence their career choice. Candril (1968:5) regards perception as an “awareness that emerges as a result of a most complicated weighing process ... taking into account a whole host of factors or cues”.

1.12.3 Expectations

There is no academic authority on the definition of *expectation*. *Expectation* is simply a belief that something will happen or that something will be the case (Oxford South African Concise Dictionary, 2010). *Expectations* in the context of this study refer to assumptions and beliefs of student teachers about the teaching profession, particularly related to the value they will derive from joining the profession. It can be about environmental support; career security, etc.

1.12.4 Teaching

In their article titled “Social learning: ants and the meaning of teaching” Leadbeater, Raine and Chittka (2006:323) say that teaching “... must lead the pupil to learn a skill, or acquire knowledge that it would not otherwise obtain, or at least that it would take longer to acquire ...”. Another definition of teaching is provided by the Webster's International Dictionary (1971:2346) as “a general term for causing one to acquire knowledge or skill, usually with the imparting of necessary incidental information and the giving of incidental help and encouragement”. Thus, teaching is a process whereby a teacher imparts knowledge, values, attitudes and skills to his/her students.

1.12.5 Profession

A profession is defined by Oruç (2011:83) as “an occupation that seeks to regulate itself by (a) developing a consensus concerning what its practitioners must know and be able to do, and (b) developing an accreditation and licensing system to ensure the transmission of that knowledge and skill”. It is imperative for institutions

such as universities, countries and the public to accept that system for an occupation to become a profession. Other commonly accepted traits of a profession are the following:

- Its practice is based on intensive academic study, usually at a university.
- Service to clients is a major concern of practitioners.
- Practitioners have to be licensed to practise the profession (admitted to the register of practitioners) by a professional registration board before they can commence practising the profession.
- Unprofessional conduct exposes a member of a profession to sanctions (even deletion from the register of people allowed to practise the profession) by a professional registration board such as the South African Council for Educators.
- Licences to practise a profession are usually renewable after a certain number of years and professionals are expected to undergo professional development (obtain “credits”) to retain their registration (International Labour Organisation (ILO) 1966; Prinsloo & Beckmann, 1995).

1.13 ASSUMPTIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The research is based on the following assumptions:

There are specific and unique reasons why students choose education as a profession in South Africa at the present time. Some of the reasons will be the same as those identified by earlier studies, such as altruistic, pragmatic and developmental considerations. For example, idealism or a sense of vocation will be the main reason why students still select education as a profession. Some of the reasons will probably differ from those reported in earlier studies. Education offers students a way out of the poverty in which they have grown up, whereas to some it is the only available career choice, since they are unable to qualify for any other qualification.

1.14 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Three limitations to this research have been identified:

1.14.1 Limited scope of the research

The scope of the research is rather limited; it is based on only on one university in the Gauteng Province of South Africa. The results of this research may not be transferred to other similar organisations in the other eight provinces. In brief, the findings of this research may be generalisable to “theoretical propositions” (Yin, 2009:15) but not necessarily to other provinces or universities in South Africa or to other comparative national jurisdictions. Nevertheless this limitation regarding generalisability ought not to be viewed as an acknowledgement of the weakness of the study as a research approach, or as a demerit of its contribution to the general body of knowledge. This research has made possible an in-depth investigation of the matter under discussion. Thus it is valuable in the field of education by suggesting further research. The same sentiments are echoed by Flyvbjerg (2006) who holds the view that one should not overvalue formal generalisation at the expense of underestimating the value and force of examples.

1.14.2 Method of collecting data

The research employed the administration of a questionnaire only. This might have limited the amount of information received from respondents. In as much as questionnaires tend to be more reliable than interviews, they tend to produce a low percentage of return. The initial envisaged number of completed questionnaires was 500. However, only 222 completed questionnaires were collected. The instrument was not piloted. Chapter 3 explains alternative measures to piloting.

1.14.3 Time frame and costs

The constraints imposed by time frames and costs also form part of the significant limitation of the research. Furthermore, the data collection instrument, as well as the incidental subsequent processes, including data analysis, decisions regarding

sample sizes for the respondents were constrained largely by time. Moreover, a specific inherent and institutional limitation was that there is a limited time-frame for the completion of studies at master's level compared to doctoral studies.

1.15 RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Chapter 1 demarcates the field of the research and outlines the research design and methods. It includes a statement of the research problem, research questions, research objectives, delimitation and limitations, and serves to provide an overview of the entire study.

Chapter 2 contains the literature review, thus fully setting out current scholarship and debates engendered by such scholarship and is based on critical issues emanating from and guided by the research question and sub-questions. These issues are the motivation for considering education as a career path, teacher retention and other issues.

Chapter 3 describes in more detail the research methods used in the study. It addresses the rationale for the study, the research design and explains and describes theoretical frameworks employed. It includes issues such as the sampling design and procedures, as well as the method of data collection and analysis. Matters concerning the reliability, validity, limitations and delimitations of the research are also discussed.

Chapter 4 focuses on the analysis of the quantitative data. It includes the statistical and theoretical analysis. The statistical analysis was achieved through the use of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Furthermore this chapter serves to highlight the main purpose of this study by placing the issue of student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in an exploratory and analytical context. This is achieved through an exposition of research findings and results on student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in South Africa. A comparative overview of student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession is provided.

Chapter 5 entails general conclusions and recommendations arising from the study. In addition, the chapter identifies possible areas for further research.

1.16 SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to investigate why students are registering for teaching in South Africa today amid many indications that teaching may not be an attractive career choice. In Chapter 1 the reader is introduced to the study. Research questions and aims are included in this chapter. Concepts relevant to this study are defined.

In the following chapter the researcher records her theoretical and conceptual understanding on the reviewed literature relevant to this study. The literature relates to student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession.

CHAPTER 2

EXISTING STUDIES ON STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The overarching objective of this chapter is to explore the available and existing body of knowledge on student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession. In line with this objective the researcher examined six broad areas, namely (i) teaching as a career in South Africa; (ii) career motivators and de-motivators; (iii) perceptions of the teaching profession; (iv) student teachers' expectations of the teaching profession; (v) factors that student teachers consider before deciding to become teachers, and (vi) those factors that could dissuade them from enrolling as education students.

There is no denying, as correctly observed by Quan-Baffour and Arko-Achemfuor (2014), that teachers are very important in different communities and countries for the provision and dissemination of relevant knowledge, skills and values. This role of teachers cannot be overestimated nor lightly dismissed. Literature for this review was drawn from research articles, books, and reports and policies on the teaching profession. The literature reported on and discussed has involved a degree of processing of the consulted literature, which included activities such as summarising, appraising, differentiating, interpreting and contrasting.

2.2 FACTORS DISSUADING STUDENT TEACHERS FROM ENROLLING AS EDUCATION STUDENTS

2.2.1 General

It is apposite to discuss the status of the teaching profession in South Africa briefly before discussing in depth some of the factors that dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students. From the literature reviewed, it is evident that

teaching as a career is viewed from different perspectives and that various opinions are expressed by different scholars.

In Chapter 1 it was revealed that the teaching profession has been referred to as an “unattractive career choice”. Some researchers in South Africa have gone so far as to warn that the national school education system is besieged by a quality problem, and with substantially degenerated morale (Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012; Maile, 2000). Teaching as a profession is reported to have “fallen into disrepute” (Cosser & Sehlola, 2009:99); and has “for some years ... been losing its appeal” (Cosser & Sehlola, 2009:5). It must be noted that the reference to teaching losing its appeal was made particularly in reference to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD:2005) countries. But as already noted, some scholars have also posited that teaching is losing its appeal in South Africa (Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012; Maile, 2000). Cosser and Sehlola (2009) refer to *The National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa* of 2007 which, they posit is premised on addressing the problem of the shortage of teachers in South Africa.

Interestingly, a recent South African White Paper on Education (Department of Education, 2004) titled *Building an expanded, effective and integrated post-school system* reported that teaching is the preferred profession and that it enjoys the number one spot among the known professions in South Africa. Obviously the teaching profession is facing intermittent drops and pick-ups in interest.

2.2.2 Negative publicity and representation of teachers’ work

There have been numerous publicity and media reports on teachers’ work and the profession in general. These came through different channels, including the mass media. One particular often-publicised factor is the lack of security at schools. Both teachers and learners are negatively affected by the insecurity and unsafeness of the school environment. An observation was made by Oosthuizen (2004:2) that “successful educational teaching can only take place where there is security”. The potential vulnerability of teachers as a result of an insecure educational environment may be dissuading students from joining the teaching profession.

Unfortunately South African schools have reported high incidences of ill-discipline, disharmony and insecurity. There have been reports of high use of drugs and alcohol abuse at schools; learners carrying dangerous weapons to school and using them to intimidate, and threats to fellow learners and educators (Oosthuizen, 2004).

To be specific, some of the negative mass media publicity and representation of teachers' work as succinctly reported by Oosthuizen (2004) included, for example, a 1999 newspaper report on armed robbers that had stormed the Marken Primary School building and stolen R10 000. In another incident armed robbers entered a classroom at Olifantsvlei Primary School and shot dead an educator at point-blank range. In another school, the Town View High School, a learner allegedly walked into a classroom and shot dead an educator in front of a class of learners. In 1999 *The Teacher* reported that the political violence in the Province of Kwazulu-Natal had spread to schools in the area and in one school, Richmond Combined School, the principal had to be escorted and guarded daily by no fewer than 10 armed private security guards to and from school for fear of attacks by his learners (Oosthuizen, 2004:4; Park, 2006). According to Zulu Urbam, Van der Merwe and Van der Walt (2004:171) insecurity at schools and other factors have "a deleterious effect on the morale of both learners and educators".

The conduct of teachers themselves has done little to protect the profession against its representation as a disgraced profession. For instance, in 1999 *Beeld* newspaper reported the story of an educator of the Fordsburg Primary School who appeared in court for breaking a learner's arm in class because the latter slept during lessons (Oosthuizen, 2004). Incidents of educators raping their learners are also often reported by the mass media. Oosthuizen (2004) refers to a report in 2000 by the Medical Research Council (MRC) that revealed a disconcerting increase in the number of rape cases with a third of rapists being teachers. Other detrimental conduct and behaviour of teachers includes tardiness, absenteeism and dereliction of duties (Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012).

A recent study by Ncube and Harber (2013), quoting media reports, highlights the endemic nature of incidents of violence among learners. For example, the

stabbing to death of a 16-year old learner by another learner at Beauvallon Secondary School in Valhalla Park, Western Cape during break time (Ncube and Harber, 2013), leaving three more learners wounded. In another school, Vorentoe High School in Auckland Park, Johannesburg, an 18-year-old boy was reported to have been stabbed to death following a fight over a ball (Ncube & Harber, 2013).

All the above incidents and publicity constitute some of the factors that dissuade enrolment in the profession of teaching. They are instances of unpleasant working conditions. In my view, the level of violence is of such nature that it cannot be ignored; violence is perpetrated equally by both teachers and learners.

2.2.3 Changes in policy and political ideology

The South African education system has seen widespread reforms, and continues to experience such reforms. South Africa is a developing democracy that has over the years existed under the apartheid system that discriminated unfairly against the majority of the population, including having in place an education system which was set up along racial lines (Robinson, 2003; Grobler, Moloji, Bisschoff & Mestry, 2006). The education system relegated blacks to the so-called Bantu education, an inferior education system designed to preserve white domination in education (Ramoketsi, 2008). Moreover, developments in the education system under the apartheid regime were geared towards advancing white minority interests to the disadvantage of non-white groups (Grant, 2006). It thus came as a relief that at the dawn of post-apartheid South Africa a series of changes, including curriculum and school governance changes, were introduced to create a school environment in which “diversity can be recognised and can flourish” (Grobler *et al.*, 2006:449).

Laudable as they may be, some of the changes, particularly those that brought with them uncertainties, have had a discouraging effect on students wanting to enrol as educators. Grant (2006:512), for instance, observes that the “pace and complexity of the changes introduced have, in many instances, resulted in non-existent management competencies,” including those of school managers. This fact has been a concern for aspirant teachers since competent, purposeful and

good school leadership, and management are important to the entire teaching profession (Muijjs & Harris, 2007).

Maluleka (2012) reports that frequent changes to the curriculum have left teachers despondent. Not only are they struggling to comprehend the changes introduced, teachers also believe that there is little effective support and capacity building to enable them to implement these changes (Maluleka, 2012). In reality teachers have had to deal with at least three major curriculum changes, the first being the migration to Outcomes Based Education (OBE) introduced by the then Minister Prof Sibusiso Bhengu. There were also attempts by Minister Kader Asmal to revise the curriculum. The current Minister, Ms Angie Motshekga, implemented the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations introduced in 2010.

The NSC was accompanied by a number of changes that required teacher capacity building and support pursuant to the changes. Under Minister Motshekga some changes were made to the basic education curriculum in 2012, some good, through the changes to the Curriculum and Assessment policy under OBE. For instance, English in Grade 1 was introduced as a first additional language to be taught alongside a home language (Maluleka, 2012).

Maluleka (2012) quotes Allen Thompson of the National Teachers' Union in South Africa, who said that since teachers "... realised they did not understand the curriculum, they chose to leave for the private sector". The lack of clear directives and implementation of these education policies have been lamented as a major concern that has an impact on the attainment of educational goals (Rhodes & Roux, 2004). Similar curriculum and policy change effects were found to exist in Estonia, and led to teachers in that country questioning their professional identity (Timostsuk & Ugaste, 2010:1563).

2.2.4 Shifts towards the profession in public opinion

Public opinion about the profession is related to the culture of learning and teaching (COLT) of teachers and learners. COLT, explained as the "attitudes of

teachers and learners towards learning and teaching” (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001:222) was influenced by many factors, including trade unionism.

Historically teacher trade unionism in South Africa has played a critical role in the shaping and the reformation of the South African education landscape, dating back to the activities of the 1879 Native Educational Association (Heystek *et al.*, 2001). Currently the three main active teacher trade unions with different ideologies, policies and principles are the South African Teachers’ Union (SATU), which is predominantly white in membership, dominated by Afrikaans-speaking members mostly in the former white, coloured and Indian schools; the South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (SADTU), which is mainly black-associated and has a strong relationship with the ANC, and the National Professional Teachers’ Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA). NAPTOSA is a federated association comprising teachers’ organisations. Through NAPTOSA unions have non-racial membership and non-discriminatory constitutions; the majority of membership is reportedly 75% black (Heystek *et al.*, 2001).

However, the increasingly politicised nature and direction of the teacher trade unions has been a factor of concern; and it is becoming a factor dissuading aspirant teachers whose interest is only in the social welfare of learners and imparting information and knowledge from seriously considering the profession. For instance, the largest teacher union in South Africa, SADTU, is officially aligned to the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), and thus it leaves little room for those whose political ideologies do not fit in with those of the ANC. For these teachers, joining the profession is like becoming a party member of the ANC, sometimes against their will. According to Heystek *et al.* (2001:225, 227) the militancy for which SADTU is known has contributed to “a negative attitude of the public towards unions in general”.

The unions’ industrial actions include strikes, chalk-downs, class boycotts and sit-ins by teachers. These play a role in dissuading students from joining the profession, particularly considering the negative publicity attracted by the profession as discussed in Paragraph 2.2.3 above.

2.2.5 Exodus of teachers from the profession

Numerous studies have been conducted on the issue of teacher attrition for 40 years across various educational contexts, and for divergent reasons (Boe & Bobbit, 1997; Harrell, Leavell, Van Tassll & McKee, 2004; Latham & Vogt, 2007). Some of these studies show that the teacher attrition or the exodus of teachers from the profession has a chilling effect on students enrolling for education. The attrition rate and related factors have been extensively reported (United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) 2010; Gonzalez 1995; Utah Foundation 2007). Obviously there may be more personal reasons that have a direct influence on the decision of teachers to leave the profession, such as marriage, child rearing, death and others (SACE, 2010; Latham *et al.*, 2007). Thus, one should be careful of such reasons for the purpose of this study, and look specifically at school or climate-based reasons, such as, for example, lack of support; resources (Latham *et al.*, 2007) and resignations, particularly of beginner teachers in South Africa (Arends & Phurutse, 2009).

Arends and Phurutse (2009) blame South Africa's escalating problem of teacher supply partly on Government's teacher recruitment and retention strategies. The attrition rate is said to be higher than the rate of replacement (Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, a report commissioned by the South African Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) found that resignations, deaths and ageing of educators in 2005 had a significant effect on replacement demand for educators by 2009 (Peltzer *et al.*, 2005). The Minister of Basic Education announced that the number of teachers who left the profession between 2005 and 2008 was 24 750 (Pitsoe, 2013). Pitsoe (2013) points out that teacher demand and supply in South Africa has now reached the stage of national concern. Below is a tabular representation by Pitsoe (2013) of the teacher attrition in South Africa per province for the period 2005 to 2008.

Table 2.1: Total terminations by province and ethnic group during the years 2005 to 2008

<i>Province</i>	<i>Financial year</i>	<i>African</i>	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Coloured</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Total</i>
Eastern Cape	2005/2006	1379	12	122	135	1648
	2006/2007	1229	17	120	145	1511
	2007/2008	1316	10	118	160	1604
Free State	2005/2006	417	0	33	197	647
	2006/2007	407	1	20	208	636
	2007/2008	507	0	27	162	696
Gauteng	2005/2006	616	88	112	823	1639
	2006/2007	667	109	135	966	1877
	2007/2008	845	89	143	1021	2098
Kwa-Zulu Natal	2005/2006	1228	197	31	175	1631
	2006/2007	1289	190	52	227	1758
	2007/2008	1315	168	30	203	1716
Limpopo	2005/2006	707	3	0	50	760
	2006/2007	718	3	1	82	804
	2007/2008	677	4	2	70	753
Mpumalanga	2005/2006	416	7	2	146	571
	2006/2007	433	6	7	115	561
	2007/2008	410	5	4	135	554
North West	2005/2006	386	7	7	106	506
	2006/2007	505	5	8	135	653
	2007/2008	359	6	12	122	499
Northern Cape	2005/2006	32	0	99	64	195
	2006/2007	43	1	87	61	192
	2007/2008	75	0	94	55	224
Western Cape	2005/2006	144	5	601	310	1060
	2006/2007	127	5	478	316	926
	2007/2008	126	4	575	326	1031
Grand Total	2005/2006	5325	319	1007	2006	8657
	2006/2007	5418	337	908	2255	8918
	2007/2008	5630	286	1005	2254	9175

Source: Department of Education (2012), taken from Pitsoe (2013:312)

This part of the study would not be complete without looking at job satisfaction as it correlates with attrition (Ingersoll & Smith 2003). It has been confirmed by Park (2006:144) that “demand and supply in South Africa could also be harshly affected by the present low levels of job satisfaction and high levels of job stress that are experienced by South African teachers”. Job satisfaction relates generally to the perceptions and expectations of student teachers of the teaching profession, and covers broadly school and climate-based reasons for leaving the field. A 2010

SACE study (SACE, 2010) titled *A review of teacher demand and supply – Identifying Research Gaps and the Role of SACE* points to job satisfaction as one of the reasons for teacher attrition, which is caused by many variables, some of which have already been mentioned or discussed in other sections of this study.

An insightful study conducted in the United States by Tamir, titled *What Keeps Teachers In and What Drives Them Out: How Urban Public, Urban Catholic, and Jewish Day Schools Affect Beginning Teachers' Careers*, reveals that those who stay in “move frequently between schools, looking for improved working conditions” (Tamir, 2013:5). This decision to stay but move between schools looking for greener pastures, in my view, clearly addresses issues of job satisfaction as central to attrition and/or retention. For student teachers a high incidence of attrition can be dissuading to joining the profession because it is representative of elements of instability in the profession, and is indicative of the dwindling sense of belonging, and eroded professional identity and culture among teaching staff and administration in general (Tamir, 2013 referring to Kardos & Johnson, 2008).

2.2.6 Growing sizes of classes and workload, remuneration and unpleasant working conditions

The growing sizes of classes and workloads that are not synchronised with the salary and benefits of teachers may become dissuaders to joining the profession (Lumadi, 2008) and can also create despondency among novice teachers accompanied by “fear, anxiety, stress and feelings of inadequacy” (Steyn, 2004:87). According to Bull (2005:14) work overload has been “interpreted as endemic of dissatisfaction within the profession”.

Lumadi (2008) paints a bleak picture of many issues that are in my opinion, crucial in the career choice of student teachers. These issues, widely published, have eroded the confidence student teachers have regarding the education system in South Africa. For instance, Lumadi (2008:32) reports on a study in which:

“[t]eachers complained about overcrowded classrooms where large numbers of learners are gathered without an orderly arrangement. Abnormal ratios of one teacher to 94

learners and even 1:120 in Grade 8 were mentioned. In some cases teachers have to teach under trees. Teachers pointed out that they do not control the learners' work regularly because they find it difficult to handle such big groups and that they are not able to pay special attention to individual learners”.

Unpleasant working conditions, including overcrowding of classrooms, for example, “impact negatively on the creation of a sound culture of teaching and learning” (Zulu *et al.*, 2004). These and other elements are discussed in 2.6.4 below. A study by Pitsoe (2013) refers to certain dispositions and work environmental factors. As noted by Zulu *et al.*, (2004:171) a culture of learning reference is made here to “the attitude of educators and learners towards teaching and learning, and the spirit of dedication and commitment in a school ...” It is apposite to note a report by Park (2006:144) that a study funded by the Education Labour Relations Council revealed that 55% of educators in South Africa expressed their intentions to leave the “education profession mainly because of unpleasant working conditions”. Mestry, Hendricks and Bisschoff (2009) have arrived at the same conclusion.

2.3. FACTORS STUDENT TEACHERS CONSIDER BEFORE DECIDING TO BECOME TEACHERS

2.3.1 General

Decisions concerning career selection and choice are one of the most important choices by learners nearing the end of their schooling (Akintomide & Oluwatusin, 2011). These decisions are not taken lightly, and can be influenced by many factors, which can be extrinsic, intrinsic or altruistic ((Akintomide & Oluwatusin, 2011).

A number of theories and doctrinal foundations are advanced to provide reasons why student teachers choose the teaching profession, and to identify factors that student teachers consider before deciding to become teachers. There are theories of labour choice and compensation theories. Underpinning these theories is the lure of the value individuals derive from their work. The South African Council for Educators (SACE, 2010) reports that the value may be pecuniary rewards

(earnings, monetary incentives) and/or non-pecuniary rewards (such as the status of the profession, probability of being employed, opportunity costs and more holidays).

Thomson, Turner and Nietfield (2012:324) observe that “the current literature in the field is unclear on why individuals choose teaching when so many leave the profession, how their entry motives and beliefs about teaching are connected, and how these might influence their decisions to remain or leave the profession”. The literature review is not overwhelmingly convincing and well-substantiated regarding the fact that some are joining the profession when others are leaving it. It is rather incomprehensible why student teachers still choose the teaching profession as their prospective career despite all the negatives associated with it. The prevailing observations about teaching as a career are dependent on what the main objective of the research undertaken is, and the interest that the researcher seeks to address.

Below is a discussion of selected factors that student teachers consider before enrolling for teacher education programmes. These factors are submitted as a link to the expectations of student teachers of the profession that are discussed in sections 2.5 and 2.6 of this study, and motivators as discussed in paragraph 2.4. Common to all the discussion themes of this study is that the issues discussed all draw on intrinsic, altruistic and extrinsic factors (Yaakub, 1990).

2.3.2 Variety of benefits and opportunities

Benefits and opportunities (Akintomide & Oluwatusin, 2011) available and accessible to teachers or in the teaching profession are one of the issues, if not great incentives, student teachers consider before choosing the teaching profession. Remuneration (Richardson & Watt, 2005:479) and other pecuniary and non-pecuniary benefits may also be factors to be considered (Mestry *et al.*, 2009). These are extrinsic factors. But it should be noted that remuneration may not be the ultimate influencing factor. For instance, in a study where students were asked why they would choose being doctors and lawyers, many pointed to the physical characteristics of lawyers instead of money, even when it is a known fact that

these professions are more lucrative than teaching in terms of remuneration (Akintomide & Oluwatusin, 2011:118). These characteristics included how smartly dressed doctors in their white coats with their stethoscopes hung on their necks are, and lawyers' good looks in their black outfits. Other benefits and opportunities include ample time outside the normal time of execution of professional duties, including frequent vacations, not having to work the whole day; and vocational security that teaching provides as a profession (Park, 2006).

2.3.3 Status of the profession, and professional identity

The status that a profession enjoys in a community is important as it enables those in the profession to hold a particular professional identity. Considering teaching as a noble profession, as discussed in section 2.5.2, is still one of the critical determinants in the choice of joining teaching as a profession. Linked to the nobility of the teaching profession is the derivative of professional identity, which has and remains a subject of research (Cooper & Olson, 1996; Lamote & Engels, 2010). The concept of professional identity is a very elusive one and has been reported to entail different aspects (Lamote & Engels, 2010; Sugrue, 1997; Van Huize, 2010; Timostsuk *et al.*, 2010). Timostsuk *et al.* (2010) highlight the division of identity research studies by Beijaard, Meijer and Verloop (2004:1564) into three broad categories, namely those studies that focus on teachers' professional identity formation; on the identification of characteristics of teachers' professional identity; and those that focus on professional identity as (re)presented by teachers' stories. Lamote *et al.* (2010) and Hong (2010) point to the fact that professional identity is very important in the practice of teacher education, and that such identity has had an influence on teachers' achievements in their key performance areas and on the performance of learners.

In their study that sought to determine the relevance of professional identity in the practice of teaching Lamote *et al.* (2010) assessed how teachers and student teachers perceived their professional identity at different times of their education. Similar studies have been undertaken (Canrinus, Helms-Lorenz, Berjaard & Buitink, 2008). Student teachers should not only have perceptions of who they are as student teachers but also of what kinds of teachers they would like to be

(Lamote *et al.*, 2010; Beijaard *et al.*, 2010; Cooper & Alvarado, 2006). Teachers' professional identity or rather broadly the identity of teaching as a profession in South Africa has again taken centre stage, with some institutions of higher learning emphasising different aspects of it. For example, the College of Education at the University of South Africa (Unisa) considers as its mission to re-image the profession of education, and of teacher education. The notion of re-imagining education relates to a number of issues, including bringing back professionalism; observing the best ethical and moral standards in the discipline of education; producing teachers who take pride in being teachers, and ensuring that the teaching profession reclaims its old glory days as the most noble of professions. Re-imagining teaching calls for a holistic approach to teaching (Korthagen, 2004).

2.3.4 Self-realisation, empowerment and professional development

This discourse must be read with section 2.6 of this study, dealing with expectations of the teaching profession. Student teachers consider a number of issues, as in any profession, before deciding to join the profession. In particular issues of self-realisation, empowerment opportunities and professional development are instrumental. Student teachers regard as one of the roles of educators the nurturing of learners as part of the virtue of professional development (Lamote *et al.*, 2010). Complementary to this is the professional autonomy afforded to teachers to demonstrate their skill in teaching and imparting knowledge to learners (Park, 2006). Teaching is also one of the careers with several development opportunities.

2.4 FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE STUDENT TEACHERS TO CHOOSE TEACHING AS A CAREER

2.4.1 Introductory remarks

Several studies on career motivation factors, ranging from general studies to profession-specific empirical studies (Arends *et al.*, 2009; Bastick 2000; Deci, Koestner & Ryan, 1999; Ethington 1987; Frusher & Newton 1987; Garrison 2004; Guay *et al.*, 2010; Gredler, Broussard & Garrison, 2004; Hayes, 1990; Krečič *et*

al., 2005; Larose *et al.*, 2010; Lavigne 2014; Olashinde 1972; Thomson *et al.*, 2012; Williams *et al.*, 2007) have been conducted. According to Thomson, Turner and Nietfield (2012:5) quoting Pintrich and Schunk's 2002 *Motivation in Education: Theory, Research and Applications*, motivation can be explained to include a process "whereby a goal-directed activity is initiated wherein "individuals have something in mind that they are trying to attain or avoid". Gredler *et al.* (2004:106) refer to motivation as "the attribute that moves us to do or not to do something". Guay *et al.* (2010:712) define motivation as "the reasons underlying behaviour".

A more comprehensive definition of career motivation is provided by London (1983:620) as "the set of individual characteristics and associated career decisions and behaviours that reflect the person's career identity, insight into factors affecting his or her career, and resilience in the face of unfavourable career conditions".

London (1983) sets out three features of motivation definition, namely career identity, career insight and career resilience. Career identity refers to how central one's career is to one's identity. It comprises work involvement and the desire for upward mobility. Work involvement includes job involvement, professional orientation and identification with the organisation. Thus, people with a high career identity are likely to be satisfied with their careers. Career insight refers to "... the extent to which the person has realistic perceptions of him- or herself and the organisation and relates these perceptions to career goals" (London, 1983:621). Thus, career insight should be related to individuals' goal flexibility and change in career. Lastly, *career resilience* entails one's resistance to career disruptions and dissatisfaction in the work environment. It also means one's ability to continue with one's work in the organisation, despite the less than optimal career conditions, including but not limited to barriers to career goals, uncertainty and poor relationships with co-workers. It implies the ability to cope more effectively in atrocious conditions within the organisation (London, 1983:621).

2.4.2 Components of career motivation

London (1983) identifies three components of career motivation:

- Individual characteristics that are linked to needs, interests and personality variables as a cluster of domains; for example, career identity, career insight and career resilience. These domains are described above.
- Situational variables are concerned with one's work environment, including salaries, relationship with colleagues, type of leadership and other job benefits. These elements are pivotal to an individual's career motivation.
- According to London (1983:624) career decisions *and* behaviours include "generating alternative courses of action, seeking information about them, evaluating the information, setting goals, making decisions to behave in various ways, and carrying out the decisions". Thus making decisions about career goals without observable actions would mean nothing.

The table below (Bray *et al.*, 1974) and Bray, 1982) links the individual characteristic dimensions of career motivation to situational characteristics.

Table 2.2: Career motivation variables Adapted from London, 1983: 622-623

Individual Characteristics	Situational Characteristics	Career Decisions and Behaviours
<p>Domain 1: Career identity – how central one's career is to one's identity.</p> <p>Work involvement subdomain: Job involvement – interest in and satisfaction from one's current job.</p> <p>Professional orientation – identification with an area of specialisation.</p>	<p>Career identity – work elements, such as the importance that one's job contributes to self-image.</p> <p>Encouragement of involvement subdomain: job challenge – the job's skill variety, autonomy, significance, etc.</p> <p>Encouragement of professionalism – support for involvement in professional activities, others in organisation are professionally oriented, etc.</p>	<p>Career identification – establishing career plans, giving up something of value for one's career, etc.</p> <p>Work involvement subdomain: demonstrating job involvement – working long hours, recommending the work to others.</p> <p>Professional behaviour – enhancing one's prestige in the profession, describing oneself as a professional rather than as an employee of the organisation.</p>
<p>Domain 2: Career insight – realistic perceptions of oneself and the organisation and relating these to career goals.</p> <p>Goal clarity – clarity of career goals.</p> <p>Path goal clarity – clarity of means of achieving career goals.</p> <p>Goal flexibility – willingness to modify or alter career goals (negativity related to career</p>	<p>Support for career development – career information and guidance.</p> <p>Structure for goal setting – existence of career alternatives, procedures, and assistance for setting career goals.</p> <p>Path goal structure – existence of standard career paths; helps in establishing career path; extent of career paths are realised.</p> <p>Organisational flexibility – requirements and procedures for establishing and changing career</p>	<p>Career planning – seeking career information and performance feedback; setting career goals.</p> <p>Establishing career goals – identifying specific goals and making them concrete (e.g. putting them in writing).</p> <p>Establishing a career path – identifying how goals can be achieved and working toward them.</p> <p>Changing goals – changing goals in response to changes in interests,</p>

insight).	goals, variety of alternatives.	circumstances, and influences.
<p>Domain 3: Career resilience – one's resistance to career disruption in a less than optimal environment. The opposite is career vulnerability – extent of psychological fragility (e.g. becoming upset and finding it difficult to function) when confronted by less than optimal career conditions.</p>	<p>Organisational strength and support – the clarity, harmony and certainty of organisational processes and procedures. Other factors include openness of communication, integrity, stability, growth and other indexes of organisational effectiveness. The opposite is organisational stress – the degree of ambiguity, conflict and uncertainty within the organisation.</p>	<p>Increasing individual effectiveness – demonstrating initiative, purposive action and high performance. The opposite is decreasing individual effectiveness – demonstrating withdrawal, anxiety and confusion (e.g. absenteeism, task avoidance, physical and/or psychological symptoms of stress, low performance).</p>
<p>Self-esteem – the extent to which one has a positive self-image.</p>	<p>Positive reinforcement – positive reinforcement and constructive feedback are given to employees.</p>	<p>Showing belief in oneself – requesting difficult assignments, expressing one's ideas; constructively dealing with criticism.</p>
<p>Need autonomy – need to be independent (also relevant to dependency subdomain).</p>	<p>Encouragement of autonomy – assignments are given to individuals not groups; individuals are encouraged to work alone; individual accomplishment is rewarded.</p>	<p>Striving for autonomy – choosing to work alone; taking independent action, not asking for assistance.</p>
<p>Adaptability – acceptance of and adjustment to job and organisational changes.</p>	<p>Organisational change – frequency and extent of changes in task assignments, job structures, reporting relationships, work locations, policies and regulations, assistance given by organisations in adapting to change.</p>	<p>Demonstrating adaptability – changing behaviours to meet changing demands; readily learning new procedure, rules, technology, etc.</p>

The significance of Table 2.2 is that it clarifies and emphasises the interconnectedness of individual and situational characteristics, and career decisions and behaviours in a work place (such as a school). The Table also links individual characteristics, situational characteristics and career decisions and behaviours as they are manifested in three domains, namely career identity, insight and resilience. For example, lack of career resilience and self-esteem in teachers would result in poor performance and subsequent teacher attrition. Furthermore, poor working conditions in some schools may be a deterrent for joining teaching for those who lack individual self-belief and do not demonstrate adaptability. The more of the above characteristics student teachers possess the stronger the belief that they will join and remain in the teaching profession despite any challenges.

What motivates student teachers to choose a teaching career in South Africa? A similar question has been posed and addressed through considerable empirical studies in developed countries. Bastick (2000) refers to research conducted in countries such as Australia, Canada, USA and the UK (Frusher *et al.*, 1987; Ethington 1987; Hayes, 1990). These studies point to numerous motivating factors given as reasons to enter the teaching profession, be they extrinsic, intrinsic or altruistic factors (Deci *et al.*, 1999).

2.4.3 Extrinsic, intrinsic, and altruistic motivators

Kyriacou and Coulthard, quoted in Thomson *et al.* (2012:325) describe these factors or categories of motivators as follows: (a) *altruistic reasons*: these deal with seeing teaching as a socially worthwhile and important job, a desire to help children succeed and a desire to help society improve; (b) *intrinsic reasons*: they cover aspects of the job activity itself, such as the activity of teaching children, and an interest in using their subject matter knowledge and expertise; and (c) *extrinsic reasons*: these cover aspects of the job that are not inherent in the work itself, such as long holidays and salary.

In the results of the study conducted on students in the Faculty of Education in Maribor, Slovenia, Krečič *et al.* (2005) succinctly summarise the many motivations

that lead to students choosing teaching as a career – in essence similar to those in the analysis by Thomson *et al.* (2012) but using different terms and phrases. They categorise motivation into different key groups, namely (a) Self-realisation reasons (*intrinsic reasons*) for personal and professional growth, and engaging in useful and influential activity (work); (b) Altruistic reasons: related to, for example, the expectation of job satisfaction, which will be important in their decision whether to stay in the profession or not once employed (Perrachione, Rosser & Petersen, 2008); (c) Material reasons: based on beneficial socio-economic considerations and incentives – e.g. attractive and flexible working conditions, including secured wages and frequent holidays (Arends *et al.*, 2009). Material reasons may be subsumed in the altruistic reasons category because materialism is about satisfaction. Considering materialism and success as impact factors whether to choose teaching as a career or not seems to place high value on teaching; (d) Reasons arising from aspirations or stereotypes: including, for example, that being an educator runs in the family and the stereotypical view that teaching is a career for women; and (e) Alternative reasons (*extrinsic reasons*): influenced by external motivation – for example, someone being in the education programme because there was no other alternative, or education regarded as an asylum camp for those who could not be admitted into their long-held career aspirations. Someone may be influenced because parents or families are of the view that teaching is a good career choice (Lortie, 1975). These are pull and push factors in the teaching profession (Arends *et al.*, 2009).

The fact that these factors are not mutually exclusive and may appear side by side is underscored. However, it should be noted that a purist conventional approach to motivation that believes in the clinical isolation of these factors holds a view that intrinsic and extrinsic motivations are contrasting, antagonistic and incompatible motivators (Thomson *et al.*, 2012). An observation by Lavigne (2014) is that those who choose teaching overwhelmingly do so for intrinsic (Ezer & Sagee, 2010) and altruistic reasons. A concern raised is that extrinsic motives of student teachers for choosing teaching may have an influence on their level of commitment to teaching (Bastick, 2000).

Deci *et al.* (1999:658) remark that “intrinsic motivation energizes and sustains activities through the spontaneous satisfaction inherent in effective volitional action. It manifests in behaviours such as play, exploration, and challenge seeking people often do for external rewards”. Extrinsic motivation, on the other hand, “is motivation governed by reinforcement contingencies” (Deci *et al.*, 1999). The gist of intrinsic motivation is that an activity is performed or a decision is made because of its inherent satisfaction despite lack of any reward.

Extrinsic motivators have a different rationale. A study by Thomson *et al.* (2012:325) reports that “extrinsic motivation emphasizes the instrumental value of an activity and differs thus from intrinsic motivation which refers to doing an activity, simply for enjoyment and personal satisfaction”. It is perhaps for this reason that conventional approaches to motivation seek to separate the two completely as not co-existent.

Bastick (2000) holds the view that in most cases student teachers in developed countries, or *metropolitan countries* to use his words, join the profession for altruistic reasons whereas in developing countries like Cameroon, Jamaica and Zimbabwe the major reasons are extrinsic (Bastick, 2000; Brown, 1992; Yong, 1995). The researcher’s initial observation is that South Africa is a developing country, but, unlike other developing countries, such as Zimbabwe, student teachers join the profession for either altruistic or extrinsic reasons, or both. Notable in many of the studies is their desire to work with children and to make a positive difference in the lives of children – that is being in a socially useful job that allows one to give back to the society by helping others and doing good (Duffy & Raque-Bogdan, 2010). This conviction would normally stem from workers who are “totally committed to their jobs and receive a great deal of personal pride and satisfaction from it,” according to Quan-Quan-Baffour and Arko-Achemfuor (2014:4). Evans (1993) and Thomas (1984) are also of the opinion that some student teachers are attracted to teaching because they harbour the desire to correct and improve the lives of many people and of their communities and also to work in an environment that is traditionally highly respected and that allows them the autonomy to express and /or demonstrate their creative abilities.

Pretorius and De Villiers (2009:37) observe that “educators experience greater job satisfaction in schools with more educator autonomy and better interpersonal relations.” Others indicate that they were motivated to follow in the footsteps of their models and to enjoy the benefits of long vacations (Richardson *et al.*, 2005; William *et al.*, 2009; Mokoena, 2012; Oruç, 2011). A study of Grade 12 learner aspirations, some of whom would later join the profession, reports that the variable of “wanting to make a difference to the lives of all South Africans” is one of the two variables motivating more strongly a choice of teaching as a profession than a choice in any other profession (Cosser *et al.*, 2009:96). According to Cosser *et al.* (2009) altruism is also an important factor as learners consider the status and privilege that comes with the teaching profession. It is noteworthy that, although the study by Cosser *et al.* (2009) has as its respondents/subjects Grade 12 learners, the findings and conclusions are important to the study undertaken because the authors thoroughly investigated the factors affecting aspirations and preferences of Grade 12 learners in South African schools – specifically regarding whether they have planned to study education at university.

Without discussing comprehensively all the theoretical and doctrinal positions relevant to this study (these will be discussed in Chapter 3) it remains apposite to begin the investigation of the existing numerous studies on career motivations with reference to the 1983 conceptualisation of career motivation by London (1983). In his study London (1983:620) defines career motivation as “the set of individual characteristics and associated career decisions and behaviours reflecting the person’s career identity, insight into factors affecting his or her career, and resilience in the face of unfavourable career conditions”. Related, albeit not similar in exposition, is Herzberg’s two-factor theory of job satisfaction, which dates back to 1959 and follows research on job attitudes conducted by Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman (USDC, 1976; Steyn, 2002). Part of Herzberg’s theory is the factors that translate into motivators or satisfiers. Applied in the context of student teachers, their positive attitude seems to be the motivators, irrespective of the driving forces behind their staying power in the allegedly eroding profession (Hongying, 2008).

Some additional relevant lessons may be learned from a feminist study undertaken by Lightbody, Siann, Tait and Walsh (1997) to determine what motivates female university students to enrol for qualifications that are generally considered male-dominated qualifications, such as engineering, physics and science. According to Lightbody *et al.* (1997) the entrance of females to these male-dominated professions is regarded as a measure to level the playing field, and also an opportunity to “offset any disadvantages, including gender discrimination”. Furthermore there is an element of altruism and intrinsic factors, with females committing themselves to having more contact with the public and to “play a useful role in society” (Lightbody, 1997:36). An opportunity for transformative transference has also been cited as the motivation to join teaching by students who participated in a study by William *et al.* (2009).

The study by Lightbody *et al.* (1997) is particularly important as it points towards many variables in any discussion on job motivators. For instance, cross-cultural issues may place a different perspective on intrinsic, extrinsic and altruistic motivators. However, there is a view that in a cross-cultural context career motivation differences may exist only in the theoretical realm (Lightbody *et al.*, (1997). On the contrary, a rather harsh exposition of motivation for the teaching career, although it might have been mooted by development, is adduced by Kohl (1984) in his 1984 book, *Growing Minds: On Becoming a Teacher* which states ardently:

I believe that the impulse to teach is fundamentally altruistic and represents a desire to share what you value and to empower others. Some people teach in order to dominate *others* or to support work they'd rather do or simply to earn a living.

Choosing teaching as a career in order to dominate others and, in this case, primarily children and youngsters, seems rather unethical and contrary to what is traditionally believed to be the essence of teaching — imparting information and growing minds.

2.5 PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

2.5.1 Introductory remarks

In the discussion of the literature in this chapter the researcher would like to agree in part with the proposition that perceptions or beliefs about the teaching profession, on one hand, and the motivations or reasons to choose teaching as a career on the other are somewhat interconnected (Thomson *et al.*, 2012). Thus, there may be repetitions of some of the points discussed in the previous sections.

2.5.2 Perceptions of teaching as a noble profession

Studies show that the dispositions of candidates also determine their perceptions (Williams *et al.*, 2009). The perceptions have been linked to a number of issues, including the nobility of the teaching profession itself (Hall & Langton, 2006; Oruç, 2011) and professional identity discussed in section 2.3.3 above. Literature seems to suggest that the nobility of the teaching profession is expressed as both a perception and an expectation. Teaching is a profession whose core is social responsibility, according to Archibong, Idaka and Edet (2009). They also contend that no career is more valuable than teaching as the latter is generally a pivot for all education and progression to one's chosen qualifications and careers (Archibong *et al.*, 2009). The nobility of teaching has been expressed in the status that the profession carries, and this linkage of the status and the status variable seems to be the case in different national jurisdictions. For example, a study conducted by Oruç (2011) to investigate the perception of teaching as a profession by trainee teachers studying at a state university found that the status of teaching as a profession is ranked very high among respondents. For these respondents teaching is a calling as it involves meaningful work that reflects positively on their self-integration and self-realisation.

Conklin (2012) holds the view that treating teaching as a calling will prompt questions about what the meaning of teaching is and whether it is worth doing for individuals. Dobrow and Tosti-Kharas (2012) note this perception of a career as a calling that makes people ignore career advice that contradicts their career

ambitions and makes them ignore negative discouraging career feedback. The viewpoint by Dobrow and Tosti-Kharas augurs well in explaining the rather interesting phenomenon of the continued interest in the teaching profession in South Africa, despite negative feedback about the profession.

Nobility and status are fundamentally two different things; it is thus interesting to note that there are student teachers who perceive teaching as a low-end job. Lawal (2012) reporting on the perception of the teaching profession in Nigeria, points out that some people perceive it as a low-end job and others as a profession. This was noted earlier by Archibong *et al.* (2009:483) who indicates that “youths in Nigeria appear not to be attracted to the noble role of teaching as a strategic profession”. Interestingly, their study reports that of the 233 respondents to a question whether education is the first choice career for final year students 154 (66.1%) responded positively and only 79 (33.9%) indicated that education was never their first choice of study. Conversely only 135 (57.9%) of the respondents wanted to be professional teachers after graduation, 61 (26.2%) expressed no desire to be professional teachers and 37 (15.9%) vowed not to become practising teachers (Archibong *et al.*, 2009). Thus these respondents regarded teaching “as a pain or necessary evil and only do it for survival” (Quan-Baffour & Arko-Achemfuor, 2014:4).

While noting the positive motivators for students choosing education studies, including but not limited to the opportunity to teach others and being able to contribute to the nation’s educational development, Archibong *et al.* (2009:488) make an important recommendation that “[a]dmission to study education should not be granted to students who view education as last resort course and have no interest in pursuing a teaching career after graduation”. Thus they are basically arguing that authorities and institutions must be pro-active by not allowing into the system individuals who are symptomatic of the many ills that beset the education profession today, such as the lack of dedication to the profession coupled with little or no commitment to serve humanity.

Richardson *et al.* (2005) report that in Australia the teaching profession is regarded as a low-end job due to the feminisation of teaching. Such a gender-

based position and perception to classify teaching as a low-end job is rather problematic, and unfortunate, as it demeans women and may have a chilling effect on their joining the profession. Researchers must be careful of equating the disposition of a certain gender or race to choose a particular career as confirmation of such a career being a low-end career. Pitsoe (2013) reports that there are similar sentiments of teaching being low-end or the last resort option as a career in South Africa. Factors contributing to this perception include the low monetary benefits people gain compared to other professions. Thus, teaching is seen by teachers as a stepping stone to careers that they feel are more respected and are better paying than teaching (Pitsoe, 2013:316). One of the earliest studies on career ranking by Thomas *et al.* (1975) found that the view is that the rewards of the “more respected” and prestigious jobs are substantial in terms of both the esteem and material benefits that they accrue to individuals.

In South Africa the view or perception of teaching as a low end profession is also attributable to the fact that during the pre-democracy era the non-white population was relegated to an “education system and ways of teaching that are seen as inferior and outdated” (Anangisye, Maarman & Wolhuter, 2009:56). In my view there has not been great improvement under the current democratic Government. It is for this reason that the country’s education system remains in a state of constant change, with the practice of bending and borrowing from other countries to get the most attractive and acceptable system of education (De Wet & Wolhuter, 2007).

2.5.3 Perception of phenomenological and idiosyncratic aspects

Caires, Almeida and Vieira (2012:165) lament the fact that some studies on perceptions of the teaching profession give superficial consideration, or total lack thereof, to its phenomenological and idiosyncratic aspects:

Who are these teacher candidates (their educational background, school biography/early school experiences, reasons for choosing the teaching profession)? ‘How’ do they experience their teaching practice (feelings, thoughts, and attitudes)? ‘What’ are their main difficulties and concerns, while coping with the constraints and challenges of teaching practice and their teaching career? ‘Which’

conditions determine the positive/negative resolution of these difficulties and concerns? 'Who are the student teachers' significant others during this process ...? 'Which' gains do they most frequently perceive as resulting from their first encounter with teaching?

To this end Caires *et al.* (2012) speak of the general perceptions of numerous aspects, including but not limited to (i) learning and supervision; (ii) professional and institutional socialisation; (iii) emotional and physical impact, and (iv) career aspects.

Most important is the observation that these general perceptions may be based on cultural dimensions that include gender, socio-economic factors and political foregrounding. Clearly these aspects relate to the different needs of individuals. This links this part of the discussion of the study to the discourse on teaching career motivation. Student teachers expect that teaching and mentoring will satisfy these aspects as part of the efforts to enhance their professional development (Caires *et al.*, 2012; Caires *et al.*, 2010). But Caires *et al.* (2012) note that the perceptions of student teachers of these aspects are less positive. In the study student teachers' perceptions of teacher education and their contribution to their professional life during the period as novice teachers were examined. Ezer *et al.* (2010) found that the perceptions of learners revolve around essentially intrinsic reasons. Ezer *et al.* (2010:400) state the following:

Teaching is perceived as self-realisation, providing a sense of purpose and mission, and enabling lifelong development. This finding is consistent with those of previous studies which reported that even at the beginning of their teacher education studies, students perceived the intrinsic rewards as motivating the choice of profession.

2.6 EXPECTATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

2.6.1 Introductory remarks

Part of the aims of this study, is to investigate the expectations of teaching as a career choice held by participating first-year student teachers of the Faculty of Education at a South African university. According to Quan-Baffour and Arko-

Achemfuor (2014) not meeting teachers' expectations may be an end result to inferior job performance and consequently may have an adverse impact on the interest and well-being of learners, parents, communities, tax payers and the country at large. Relevant to discussions in this section is Victor Vroom's expectancy theory, which is also known as the process theory of motivation because "it emphasises individual perceptions of the environment and subsequent interactions arising as a consequence of personal expectation" (Isaac, Zerbe & Pitt, 2001:214). Vroom (1964) suggests that people consciously choose a particular course of action, based upon perceptions, attitudes and beliefs as a consequence of their desires to enhance pleasure and avoid pain. Unlike Maslow and Herzberg, the Expectancy Theory does not concentrate on needs but rather focuses on outcomes and contains the following three components: valence, instrumentality and expectancy (Redmond, 2004).

2.6.2 Effective support, empowerment and professional development

One of the expectations is that the teaching profession must be an empowering profession, creating bridges between different facets of our society. For example, a study by Lawal (2012:117) proposes that "[e]ducation is the key to participation in the highly competitive global economy of the 21st century based on technological revolution, communication and transfer of information as well as major changes in production, transport, distribution and the economic value of knowledge." In other words, education is "the fulcrum of modern day socio-political and economic development. Related to the expectation of teaching as an empowering career is the view that studying education will and should facilitate mobility in the profession." (Cosser *et al.*, 2009:60).

An empowerment argument is sometimes advanced that education includes the development of cognitive skills – intellectual virtues. Jones (2013:76) posits that a "properly-educated student will know how, for example, to think for herself /himself, to be a critical thinker, to rehearse an argument, and to set up a basic empirical experiment". The observation by Jones (2013) applies, with the necessary qualifications, to student teachers. However, an observation by Arends *et al.* (2009:5) is that some teacher training programmes and courses fail to

empower teachers through adequate and proper training and thus nullify the “empowering argument”. Student teachers are sometimes thrown into the deep-end in the classrooms without proper support structures. Thus, to use the words of Arends *et al.* (2009:4), lack of support contribute to student teachers losing the “sense of purpose and development” – known as, nihilism.

Support is important to empowerment as well as influencing the length of time a teacher will stay in the teaching profession (Arends *et al.*, 2009). Robinson (1999) refers to systemic support as far as it is related to such features as implementable policies, adequate and proper communication networks, opportunities for training and follow-up support and financial and human resources, which are very important to teachers. Appropriate support and recognition are vital to those who regard teaching not merely as a survival occupation but as a career, otherwise they become disillusioned or dissatisfied. The disillusion and dissatisfaction translate to job dissatisfaction that aggravates teacher attrition (Pitsoe, 2013).

The following important observation was made regarding development assistance. According to Mestry *et al.* (2009:474):

raising the quality of teacher performance through teacher development programmes is essential, it is believed, to improve the overall performance of the education system, which makes the debate about school type, school-by-school performance, and class size, among others, look irrelevant.

Fortunately, in South Africa the professional development of teachers is regarded as integral to the profession in general, and to school improvement in particular (Mestry *et al.*, 2009:487). This includes the implementation of the integration of the Developmental Appraisal System, Whole School Evaluation and Performance Management System (IQMS). IQMS comprises three related systems, namely the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE) and the Performance Management System (PMS). The core aims and objectives of these systems are to identify the needs of teachers, their schools and district offices, and to provide the much needed support to teachers and school management “for continued growth, promoting accountability, monitoring an institution’s overall effectiveness; and evaluating teachers’ performance” (Mestry *et al.*, 2009:479). In-

service training (INSET) in South Africa is also regarded as an important aspect of the process of professional development of teachers (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009:477).

INSET, and also pre-service training (PRESET), can play an important role in the preparation of student teachers and novice teachers for classroom management by developing their competencies “that are based on practical, situated and implicit knowledge” (Piwovar, Thiel & Ophardt, 2013:1; Elik, Wiener & Corkum, 2010). Steyn (2004:86) observes that classroom “management and discipline are cited as serious problems for novice educators”. Teacher development initiatives may help to alleviate the problems associated with the transition from student teacher to newly-qualified practising educator (Steyn, 2004). Teacher development initiatives also complement the teacher training programmes, that, according to the literature, “seldom fully prepare teachers for the profession” (Steyn, 2004:82). Researchers point to initial self-concerns by student teachers and novice teachers, including feelings of inadequacy that may be remedied through development programmes. The resolution of these self-concerns will enable teachers to become “more concerned with the task of teaching which includes concerns about being responsible for too many students, lack of instructional materials, and the number of non-instructional duties which must be assumed” (Reeves & Kazelkis, 1985:267). This, in my view, is the domino effect of interventions.

Sharp criticism, sometimes unjustified, has been levelled against South Africa’s teacher development programmes and their implementation. For instance, Mestry *et al.* (2009:477) note that professional development in schools is at risk because some schools have not yet successfully implemented IQMS. This is aggravated by the fact that the Department of Education’s advocacy programme on IQMS is not intensively driven or accompanied by sufficient training and capacity building in the field of IQMS. Teachers have low morale due to their poor working conditions and low pay.

Though not a theme of this study, it is appropriate to refer to the categorisation by Crossman and Harris (2006) of factors that influence job satisfaction into “environmental (the job itself or the working environment), psychological

(personality, behaviour attitude) or demographic (age and gender) factors, to emphasise that the failure of teaching to empower may not be the only reason leading to disillusionment and dissatisfaction. It should be noted that the concept itself is placid, and to some extent it is an ambiguous term, which has been subject to definitions (Skaalvik & Skaalvik 2010; Alzaidi, 2008) leading to a simplistic approach of only listing factors that lead to job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Alzaidi, 2008:164; Skaalvik *et al.*, 2010:1061). Job satisfaction is viewed by Locke (1969) as a "... pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences".

2.6.3 Value-adding tuition

Writing on Comparative Education at universities in Tanzania and South Africa respectively and the expectations and motivations of student teachers, Anangisye (2009:56) reflected on the preferences and expectations of the South African student teachers for a "course that will be of value to improve the South African education system and to assist them to improve their teaching endeavour". The South African student teachers' expectations on the nature and value of education seem to be intrinsic and altruistic.

Another expectation stems from the value of teaching itself as the function of the teaching environment. There seems to be a variation in the critical aspects of student teachers' expectations of teaching (Sander, Stevenson, King & Coats, 2000). For example, as far as teaching is concerned, the students expect good presentation of knowledge; development of their understanding; widening conceptual application; promotion of their intellectual independence and critical thinking; and facilitation of their personal development and agency. These expectations are at the heart of their teaching competence which, in turn, is relevant to job satisfaction once in practice (MacMillian, 1999). Thus, there is an expectation that tuition must address the disconnection between teacher preparation and the real-life classroom environment. Student teachers want to be taught in an environment that will make them good teachers. In her study that examines teacher education students' expectations about future teaching

performance, Weinstein (1989) found that some of the expectations are unrealistic and show the self-serving biases of student teachers.

2.6.4 Positive work environment elements

In his study about teacher attrition in South Africa Pitsoe (2013) points to several dispositions and work environmental factors. The environmental factors that motivate teachers to leave their jobs are high school teaching assignments, large class size or caseload or both, unsupportive administrators, excessive article work, ambiguous or conflicting role demands, few job rewards and lack of decision-making opportunities. Also, people will definitely opt for jobs that give them the highest monetary benefit, and financially seen teaching may not be their first option.

2.7 CONCLUSION

Literature on the themes and sub-themes discussed in this chapter shows a multiplicity of variables to be considered in each and every theme and that all points of arguments have their own merits and demerits. Notwithstanding the difference in observations, it has been discerned that there are certain common principles and factors that cut across the various observations. These include the fact that the teaching profession has experienced downward movement due to various challenges it faces and that there is a need to re-imagine teaching as a profession.

The literature review also shows that significant research has been done on career motivation in the teaching profession. What emerged is that there are several factors that can be regarded as motivators, and these will vary according to whether the investigation relates to educators in a developed country or educators in a less developed or developing country (Bastick, 2000; Thomson *et al.*, 2012). What can be deduced from the literature review is that similar factors have been identified as motivators in other studies to the level that one may assume that they form the core of the commonly cited factors (William *et al.*, 2009; Richardson *et al.*, 2005; Mokoena, 2012; Weinstein, 1989).

Studies have shown that perceptions and expectations may be different from the specific dispositions of the cohort of students considered for the study. In some cases the existing literature also shows that motivations and perceptions may differ, based on gender and race. From the literature reviewed there seems to be a good perception of teaching as a profession; however, there is still a need to promote better understanding of teaching as a professional career (Oruç, 2011:87). A good point highlighted by William *et al.* (2009) is that the self-perception of student teachers should not be discounted as one of the variables to be considered in similar studies. There have already been studies that look into self-perceptions of beginner teachers in South Africa – that is, newly qualified teachers with less than four years teaching experience (Arends *et al.*, 2009). What is clear from the empirical studies is that student teachers are sensitive to many influencing factors; and that there are positive and less positive perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession expressed by student teachers (Park, 2006).

Moreover, many of the reasons for motivating a career choice, perceptions and expectations stem from different positions in the existing literature. London (1983) looks at career choices that are likely to lead to job success and satisfaction and also at other variables that influence a certain career choice. As far as the factors that student teachers consider when choosing teaching as a career, or put otherwise, not to choose teaching as a career are concerned, a report on the study by Park (2006) provides a good summary. According to Park (2006:153), when a group of learners were asked to give their reasons for not wanting to follow a career in teaching, they listed these reasons in order of importance: “Pupils no longer respect teachers (53.8%); teachers earn too little money (41.5%); poor discipline in schools creates unpleasant working conditions (22.7%); teachers do not look very happy in their jobs (19.7%); the violence in schools makes the teaching environment unsafe to work in (15.9%)”.

In the following chapter, the focus is on the research design of the study and related aspects.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters, the researcher outlined in the literature review the constructs and maxims that are fundamental to the perceptions and expectations of student teachers of the teaching profession. The literature review revealed that the education profession is often regarded as an unattractive career choice and there is a need to investigate and understand why student teachers still enrol for teaching in South Africa. As such the purpose of this research was to determine, through empirical research, the expectations and perceptions of the student teachers regarding the teaching profession.

This chapter focuses on the empirical research conducted to collect data to answer a particular research question(s) (Moody, 2002). The empirical research was undertaken in order to do the following:

- a) Explore the theoretical foundations of the theories discussed in the previous chapters.
- b) Experience and understand the different aspects of the situation.
- c) Investigate the extent of the problem (Maile, 2000).

This method does not attempt to duplicate or criticize previous theories but to complement them instead. Therefore, empirical research should be built on the foundation laid by the literature review.

3.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

As stated in section paragraph 1.5 of Chapter 1 above, in every topical issue, there will always be debates and disagreements. For example, there is the view that there is no shortage of teachers and that there is an increase in the number of

qualified but yet unemployed teachers (Vinjevold, 2008). Other studies state the contrary and point to the high demand for teachers and teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2003). The common denominator between the two arguments is that there are numbers of students being trained as teachers. Whether they ultimately get employed or not, or whether they remain employed, is another issue.

The statistical information on student teacher enrolments in South Africa paints a rather interesting picture for this discussion. More interesting in the context of the discussion about teacher recruitment and attrition is the likening of the recruitment of more teachers to the teaching profession to an act of “[p]ouring more water into a bucket” which “will not do any good if we do not patch the holes first” (Ingersoll, 2003:33). It is clear from the latter argument by Ingersoll that there are issues that need to be addressed in the teaching profession. Moreover, teaching is often described as a dead-end job with a low status, uncompetitive salaries and poor working conditions (Bradley *et al.*, 2005:3). There is also a lack of proper support in the teaching profession (Ibrahim, 2012) and recognition of the successes achieved (Maile, 2000).

Despite all these negative assertions about education, the enrolment of student teachers has not declined. 90 070 students enrolled for educational studies in higher education institutions in South Africa in 2000. Nine years later, in 2009, the number of the enrolments had increased to 137 471 (Educational Statistics South Africa, 2000). Why is this the case? Part of finding an answer to this question may be to consider the main question of this study: Why are students registering for teaching in South Africa today, despite the teaching profession being called an “unattractive career choice” (SACE, 2011; CHE, 2010). To borrow from a title of a study by Johnson, Berg *et al.* (2005) the researcher endeavoured to establish who enters and stays in the teaching profession, and why.

3.3 RESEARCH QUESTION AND SUB-QUESTIONS

3.3.1 Main research question

Research shows that, like in the rest of the world, South Africa faces the challenge of teacher attrition. For various reasons, many teachers leave the profession within five years after entering it. Some of the factors identified as reasons for attrition include low teacher morale and motivation, the health status of teachers, and job dissatisfaction (Robinson, 2003 & 2005; HRSC, 2005; Wolhuter *et al.*, 2012).

It is against this background, that the following main question was formulated to guide the study: *What are South African student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession?*

3.3.2 Sub-questions

The following sub-questions guided the study to answer the main question:

3.3.2.1 What factors encourage student teachers to enrol as education students?

3.3.2.2 How do student teachers perceive the teaching profession?

3.3.2.3 What are the student teachers' expectations of teaching as a profession?

3.3.2.4 What factors would dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students?

3.4 RESEARCH AIMS

3.4.1 To explore factors that encourage student teachers to enrol as education students.

3.4.2 To investigate student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession.

3.4.3 To investigate student teachers' expectations of teaching as a profession.

3.4.4 To establish what factors would dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students.

3.5 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Various authors define the term paradigm as “worldview” and maintain that it is “a set of beliefs and assumptions that guide the researcher’s study” (Creswell, 2009a: 6; Creswell *et al.*, 2011:39; Fraenkel *et al.*, 2007; Trochim, 2001). *Worldview*, according to Creswell and Clark (2011), is a term used to describe philosophical assumptions that consist of a basic set of beliefs or assumptions that guide an enquiry. Agreeing with Creswell (2011), Fraenkel and Wallen (2007) suggest that these basic sets of beliefs or assumptions guide the way researchers approach their investigation. Thus each researcher approaches research with a plethora of interlocking and sometimes contradicting philosophical assumptions and stances. These assumptions are related to the views researchers hold concerning the nature of reality, the relationship of the researcher to that which she or he is studying, the role of values in a study, and the process of research itself (Fraenkel and Wallem, 2007).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007:5) assert that “there is a view that moves us beyond regarding research methods as simply a technical exercise and as concerned with understanding the world; this is informed by how we view our world(s), what we take understanding to be, and what we see as the purpose of understanding”. Cohen *et al.* (2007:5) suggest that ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions, which in turn give rise to methodological considerations; and these in turn give rise to issues of instrumentation and data collection.

Cohen identifies the following four sets of assumption:

- a) Ontological assumptions – assumptions that concern the very nature or essence of the social phenomenon being investigated, thus asking, “Is reality of an objective nature, or the result of individual cognition?”
- b) Epistemological assumptions – these concern the nature and forms of knowledge and how it is communicated to other human beings.
- c) The third assumption concerns human nature and, in particular, the relationship between human beings and their environment.

d) Methodological assumptions – these concern the identification and the methods of collecting data.

Below is a summary of these assumptions, using terms known in the literature of social philosophy.

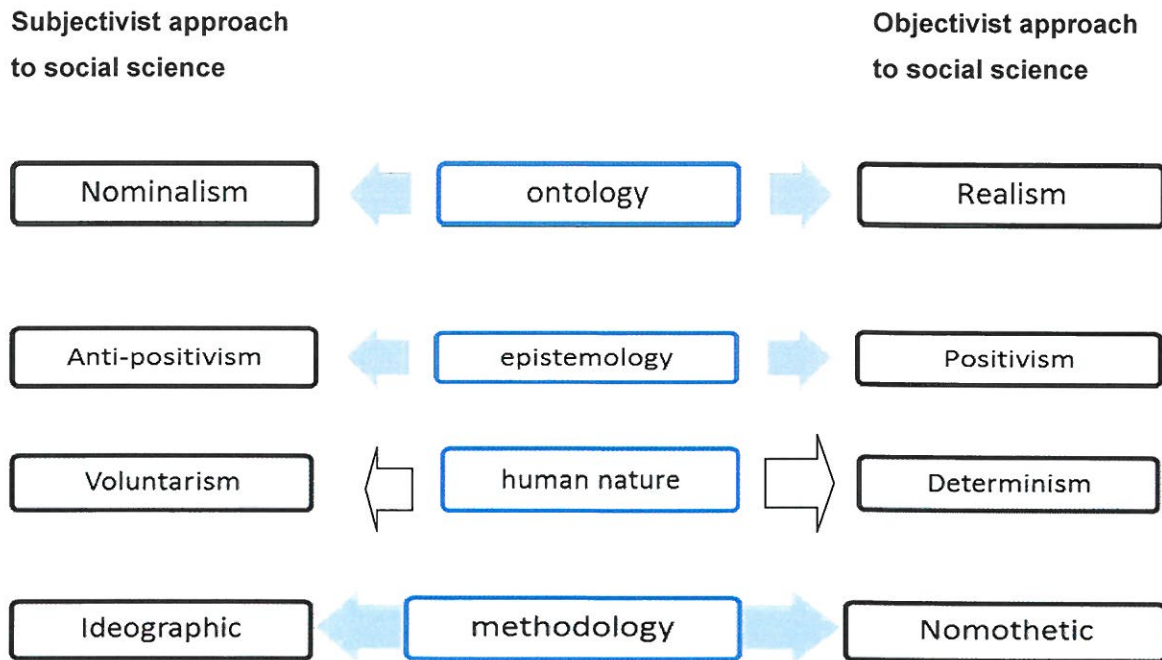


Figure 3.1: The subjective-objective dimension (Adopted from Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007)

Fraenkel *et al.* (2007) opine that there are differences between quantitative and qualitative researchers in terms of differing paradigms or worldviews; differences in the basic beliefs or assumptions that guide the way researchers approach their investigations. Thus, before and during the research process, researchers view the world differently and interpret differently the views they hold concerning the nature of reality. Fraenkel *et al.* (2007) differentiate philosophical assumptions of quantitative and qualitative researchers in the table below.

Table 3.2: Differing philosophical assumptions of quantitative and qualitative researchers (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2007)

Assumptions of quantitative researchers	Assumptions of qualitative researchers
There exists a reality "out there", independent of us, waiting to be known. The task of science is to reveal the nature of reality and how it works.	The individuals involved in the research situation construct reality; thus, realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions.
Research investigations can potentially result in accurate statements about the way the world really is.	Research investigations produce alternative visions of what the world is like.
It is possible for the researcher to remove himself or herself – to stand apart – from that which is being researched.	It is impossible for the researcher to stand apart from the individuals he or she is studying.
Facts stand independent of the knower and can be known in an undistorted way.	Values are an integral part of the research process.
Facts and values are distinct from one another.	Facts and values are inextricably intertwined.
The proper design of research investigations will lead to accurate conclusions about the nature of the world.	The initial ambiguity that occurs in a study is desirable.
The purpose of educational research is to explain and be able to predict relationships. The ultimate goal is the development of laws that make prediction possible.	The purpose of educational research is an understanding of what things mean to others. Highly generalisable "laws", as such, can never be found.

For the analysis of social theory and defining different perspectives, Burrell and Morgan (1979) identify four paradigms and their relationships. The four paradigms define four views for the social world based upon different meta-theoretical assumptions with regard to the nature of science and society; and to be located in a particular paradigm is to view the world in a particular way (Burrell & Morgan, 1979:24).

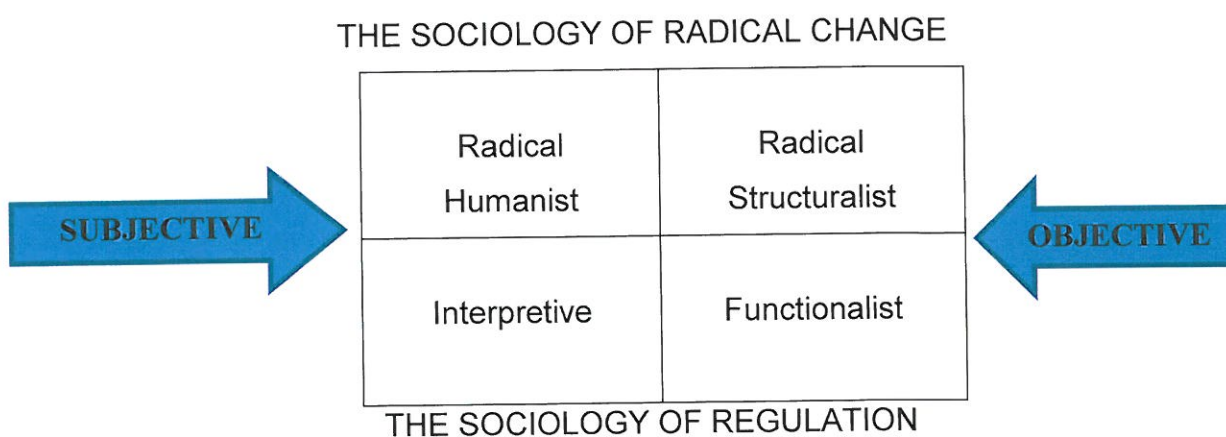


Figure 3.3: Four paradigms for the analysis of social theory (Burrell & Morgan, 1979:22)

Quantitative research is the approach employed in this study. The paradigms associated with quantitative research suitable to this study are positivism, objectivism, and descriptivism, explanatory and deductive. Looking at figure 3.2

above, radical structuralist and functionalist will be discussed as objective paradigms in this study.

According to Burrell and Morgan (1979) a radical structuralist concerns radical critique of society from an objectivist standpoint. It is realistic, positivistic, deterministic and nomothetic and focuses on the structure and analysis of power relationships. Burrell and Morgan (1979) describe a functionalist paradigm as a paradigm that focuses predominantly on the study of organisations and, like the radical structuralist paradigm, it takes an objectivist stance.

From the paradigms explained above, positivism is the most suited one to be associated with my quantitative descriptive study. My choice of a positivist paradigm was motivated by the fact that through positivism knowledge is based on experience and it is the “paradigm of human knowledge” through a deductive approach (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:9). Furthermore, my role as a researcher is “to be objective and detached from the research process” (Bobbitt, 1990:3).

A questionnaire was used primarily to collect data in order to provide answers descriptively to theoretical perspectives and expectations of the teaching profession by the student teachers.

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

Different authors define research design differently. The following are definitions of research design:

Creswell *et al.* (2011:53) define research designs as procedures for collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in research studies. Creswell *et al.* (2011) point out that there are different types of research design with distinct names and procedures attached to them; they operate as guidelines for researchers to make logic of their interpretations at the end of their studies.

A research design is “a plan for selecting subjects, research sites, and data collection procedures to answer the research question(s)” (McMillan &

Schumacher, 2001:166). They further suggest that the goal of a comprehensive research design is to provide results that are judged to be credible.

Trochim (2001:186) defines a research design as a structure of research and says that it tells the researcher how all the elements in a research project fit together. He explains that researchers often use concise notations to describe a design, which enables them to summarise a complex design structure efficiently.

From the definitions of a research design above, it is fitting to conclude that a research design is a process, plan or strategy that the researcher employs to gather data, identify respondents and research sites and analyse and interpret data to answer a research question or phenomenon.

The design chosen for this study was a quantitative case study of the perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession of first year education students at a South African university.

3.7 EPISTEMOLOGY

Bryman (2012: 27) suggests that epistemological issues concern the question of what is or should be regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline. Whether the social world can and should be studied through similar principles, procedures, and ethos as the natural sciences is a contentious issue. Creswell *et al.* (2011:41) concur with Bryman, positing that epistemology is concerned with how we gain knowledge of what we know.

Similar to Bryman and Creswell, Trochim (2001:8) reports that the term epistemology comes from the Greek word *episteme*, which means knowledge. In addition, epistemology is the philosophy of knowledge or how one comes to know. Thus, what the researcher knows and how he/she comes to know what he or she knows, is described as epistemology.

The researcher's epistemology is that reliable knowledge of the expectations and perceptions of first-year education students at a South African university can be

obtained through a survey questionnaire. The data was collected through respondents' answers extracted from the questionnaire.

3.8 HYPOTHESIS

Before discussing the hypothesis of this study, it is important to begin with a discussion of a hypothesis and by defining the concept. Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009:71) define a hypothesis as "a researcher's prediction of the research findings, a statement of the researcher's expectations about the relations among the variables in the research topic". This definition is echoed by that of McMillan *et al.* (2010:62) who define a hypothesis as "the investigator's expectation or prediction of what the results will show". Fraenkel *et al.* (2007) simply define a hypothesis as "a prediction of the possible outcomes of a study".

From the definitions of a hypothesis provided by three authors, it is my understanding that as a researcher one has to form a hypothesis by predicting the result of the study, based on the existing literature and knowledge. Thus, an hypothetical statement is a prediction made by the researcher prior to data collection.

An hypothesis can either be supported or not supported through data collected by the researcher. The researcher does not set out to prove an hypothesis but to find an answer(s) to his or her question(s). An hypothesis can therefore be supported or disproved by data.

Quantitative and qualitative hypotheses differ in accordance with the nature of the approach. It is important to note that only quantitative hypotheses are discussed in this study as it uses a quantitative approach. According to Gay *et al.* (2009) a quantitative researcher formulates a hypothesis prior to conducting a study because every aspect of the research is affected, including respondents, measuring instruments, design, procedures, data analysis and conclusions.

Gay *et al.* (2009: 71-72) and McMillan *et al.* (2010: 62) provide guidelines to ensure the development of a good hypothesis because even though hypotheses are based on theory or previous knowledge, not all are of equal worth.

3.8.1 Guidelines for developing a good hypothesis

- A hypothesis should be based on a sound rationale. It should be derived from previous research or theory and its confirmation or disconfirmation should contribute to educational theory or practice.
- A good hypothesis provides a reasonable explanation for the predicted outcome.
- A good hypothesis states as clearly and concisely as possible the expected relation (or difference) between variables and defines those variables in operational, measurable terms.
- A well-stated and well-defined hypothesis must also be testable – it will be testable if it is well formulated and stated.

Fraenkel *et al.* (2007: 46) point out that stating a hypothesis has both advantages and disadvantages.

3.8.2 Advantages of stating a hypothesis

- A hypothesis forces researchers to think more deeply and specifically about the possible outcomes of a study.
- A hypothesis involves a philosophy of life. For example, if one is attempting to build a body of knowledge in addition to answering a specific question, then stating a hypothesis is a good strategy because it enables one to make specific predictions based on prior evidence or theoretical argument.
- Stating a hypothesis helps one to see if one is, or is not, investigating a relationship. If not, one may be prompted to formulate one.

3.8.3 Disadvantages of stating a hypothesis

- Stating a hypothesis may lead to bias, either consciously or unconsciously, on the part of the researcher.
- Stating a hypothesis may sometimes be unnecessary, or even inappropriate, in research projects of certain types, such as descriptive surveys and ethnographic studies.
- Focusing on a hypothesis may prevent researchers from noticing other phenomena that might be important to study.

3.8.4 Types of hypothesis

- Inductive hypothesis – a generalisation based on specific observations.
- Deductive hypothesis – is derived from theory and provides evidence that supports, expands or contradicts the theory.
- Non-directional hypothesis – states simply that a relation or differences between variables exists.
- Directional hypothesis – states the expected direction of the relation or difference.
- Null hypothesis – states that there is no significant relation or difference between variables.

The above definitions and discussion of a hypothesis influenced the formulation of my hypothesis. In line with the topic of my research I found that a deductive hypothesis is appropriate to my study. In contrast to hypotheses formulated as generalisations from observed relationships (inductive hypothesis) some hypotheses are derived by deduction from theory (deductive hypothesis). These hypotheses, according to Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen and Razavieh (2010:88), have the advantage of leading to a more general system of knowledge because the framework for incorporating them meaningfully into the body of knowledge already exists within the theory. Ary *et al.* (2010) further assert that a science cannot develop efficiently if each study results in an isolated bit of knowledge. Choosing a deductive hypothesis as the researcher's theory of interest, the researcher used deductive reasoning to arrive at the logical consequences of the theory.

The researcher expected a high number of respondents to be female because it is often believed that the teaching profession is primarily for females. Another hypothesis the researcher formulated is that student teachers join teaching because it is their last resort and not because they like it. The researcher also expected to find motives for joining the profession differing from the ones already described in literature to explain the current interest in teaching despite the prevalent adverse views of the profession.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION

Chen *et al.* (2007) describe methods as a range of approaches used to gather data that is to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation and, for explanation and prediction. Data collection thus entails techniques associated with the positivistic model and interpretive paradigms, eliciting responses to predetermined questions, recording measurements, describing phenomena and performing experiments. Since methods refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data-gathering, the aim of methodology is “to describe approaches to kinds and paradigms of research” (Cohen *et al.*, 2007:47).

Below is the discussion of the research methods used in this study.

3.9.1 Quantitative research methodology

Quantitative research is the approach employed predominantly in this research. A quantitative approach, according to Creswell (2003:18), is one in which the investigator primarily uses post-positivist claims for developing knowledge, employs strategies of inquiry such as experiments and surveys, and collects data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data. The role of the researcher in quantitative research is, in the opinion of Bobbitt (1990), to be objective and detached from the research processes. Van der Merwe (1996) concurs with Bobbitt when he emphasises that researchers in quantitative research do not get involved in the events of the study but instead keep a distance with the purpose of achieving a higher level of objectivity.

Bobbitt (1990) further opines that in empirical studies, the researcher gains knowledge about how humans interact, function and transact with their systems and environments and ask specific research questions that generate hypotheses. Maree and Pietersen (2011) define quantitative research as “a process that is systematic and objective in its ways of using numerical data from a population to generalise the findings to the population that is being studied”. Maree and Pietersen’s (2011) definition contains three most important element, namely objectivity, numerical data and generalisability. The latter element does not feature in the definitions of Creswell (2003), Bobbitt (1990) and Van der Merwe (1996). In concert with Maree and Pietersen (2011) Gay *et al.* (2009:7) define quantitative research “as the collection and analysis of numerical data to describe, explain, predict, or control phenomenon of interest”. Underlying quantitative research methods, according to Gay *et al.* (2009:7), is the philosophical belief or assumption that researchers inhabit a relatively stable, uniform and coherent world that researchers can measure, understand and generalise about it.

This study was designed as a cross-sectional one employing a positivist paradigm to investigate university student teachers’ perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession.

Section 3.9.3 on page 61 deals with the questionnaire used in this study.

3.9.2 Literature review

The premise for this study is the literature reviewed by the researcher in Chapter 2. This study investigates why student teachers enrol for education in South Africa. Through the reviewed literature related to this study, the researcher was in a better position to dichotomise and understand the various reasons provided by students for enrolling in education in South Africa. Furthermore, the development of the questionnaire was conducted through what other authors said or reported about why students enrol for education in general. In addition, the literature reviewed assisted in the formulation and answering of the research questions. In my opinion, the reviewed literature played a pivotal role in the shaping of the study and the development of the topic. The literature reviewed in this study included

articles, abstracts, monographs, reviews, dissertations, books, multiple research reports and electronic media material.

Gay *et al.* (2009:80) report that a “review of related literature involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem”. The purpose of a literature review is:

- to determine studies that have already been conducted related to the topic;
- to discover research strategies and specific data collection related to the study; and
- to be in a position to facilitate the interpretation of the results of the study (Gay *et al.*, 2009).

According to Gay *et al.* (2009) the main benefit of a literature study is to prevent duplication of another person’s research and to acquire the understanding and insight necessary to place one’s topic within a logical framework.

Thus, a rigorous and exhaustive consultation of the literature was conducted by the researcher to place this study within an apposite conceptual framework. The reviewed literature channelled or steered this study into a survey design utilising a questionnaire as the method of collecting data.

3.9.3 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is an inquiry form consisting of structured questions to be administered to individuals in order to collect data on the topic researched. A questionnaire is an instrument associated mostly with survey studies in the quantitative approach. It presents the same questions for all the respondents and “can ensure anonymity” (McMillan *et al.*, 2010:195).

As was mentioned in section 3.9.2, the literature reviewed assisted significantly in the development of the questionnaire for this study. A questionnaire was the only method employed for data collection in this study. The questionnaire was administered to first-year students enrolled for education in the Educational

Studies Department of the Faculty of Humanities of the sampled university. Assistance was sought from the Statistics Department of the University of Pretoria for refining the questions and for ensuring the validity of the items.

3.9.3.1 Construction and structure of the questionnaire

(a) Construction of the questionnaire

After consultation of the existing literature and previous research findings the researcher was certain that a questionnaire was the most appropriate data collection method for this study. The study focused on student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession and why students enrol for teaching in South Africa today. The construction of the questionnaire was aided by the literature study and the researcher's experience as a former teacher. It enabled all respondents to answer the same questions and also choose options from a list of answers provided. The researcher constructed a new questionnaire; however, some items were added to the instrument from literature on the theme of this study.

The questionnaire was designed in such a way that the respondents' names, identity numbers and/or addresses were not necessary. However, it is important to note that respondents' race was required only for statistical purposes and nothing else (this was made clear in the questionnaire). In addition to race, biographical and demographical information included gender, age, home language, course specification, highest qualification, and who was paying for the students' studies.

The construction of the questionnaire was done in such a way that the researcher would be able to elicit information on why respondents chose to become a teacher, their perceptions and their expectations of the teaching profession and lastly, factors that might have dissuaded them from choosing to become a teacher.

Questionnaires have the following strengths:

- They are economical.

- They can be anonymous.
- They contain standard questions and uniform procedures.
- They are usually easy to score.
- They provide time for respondents to think about responses (McMillan *et al.*, 2010:212).

However, questionnaires, like any other method of collecting data, have weaknesses as enumerated by McMillan *et al.* (2010:212):

- Response rates may be low.
- They do not allow probing and clarification.
- The use of open-ended items could present problems.
- Respondents provide answers in line with their perceptions of social desirability.
- Participation is restricted to respondents who can read and write.
- Some items may be biased and ambiguous.
- Response formats are set.

(b) Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire comprises five sections: section A deals with biographical and demographical details; Section B deals with factors that encourage student teachers to enrol as education students; Section C deals with student teachers' perceptions on the teaching profession; Section D deals with student teachers' expectations of the teaching profession and Section E deals with factors that made student teachers doubt their choice of the teaching profession.

Section A sought to elicit information on gender, home language, race, course specification, geographical background, highest qualification, result of matriculation examination, who pays for the student's studies, language in which the student would like to teach and location of school at which he or she would like to teach. The questionnaire format is a four-item Likert-type scale with 91 statements. The respondents were asked to choose only one of the four choices

listed as *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, and *strongly disagree* in Sections B, C, D and E. The language of the questionnaire was English.

3.9.3.2 Distribution and collection of the questionnaire

The researcher opted to administer and collect the questionnaires by herself. The questionnaire was group-administered. This was convenient for the researcher as it ensured a high response rate. Data was collected from student teachers enrolled in education in the Department of Educational Studies in the Faculty of Education to avoid duplication of respondents; the questionnaire was group-administered once a day. Thus, respondents had one day to complete the questionnaire.

The researcher was present at all times when respondents completed the questionnaires and collected them after completion. A group-administered questionnaire was chosen because of the following advantages:

- Many respondents can complete the questionnaire in a short space of time.
- This method is relatively cheap and easy to use.
- Respondents can be reached across long distances.
- The response rate is optimal.
- The interviewer can immediately assist with issues in the questionnaires that are not clear to the respondents (Maree *et al.*, 2011:156).

Maree *et al.* (2011:156) outline the disadvantages of group-administered questionnaires that do not apply to this study. The disadvantages focus mainly on the use of different administrators, which is not the case in this study. The researcher administered and collected completed questionnaires without the help of administrators or other researchers.

3.10 RESEARCH PROCESS

It was pointed out in the previous chapters that a questionnaire was distributed to all the first-year students enrolled for educational studies in the Faculty of

Humanities. The questionnaire was used to elicit information to provide statistical description and analysis. A questionnaire was the only method used to collect data.

3.10.1 Sampling

The purposive sampling included 222 first-year students enrolled for educational studies selected through convenient sampling. Due to factors such as expense, time and accessibility it was fitting for the researcher to decide on using one university. In selecting the sample the researcher considered the following key factors highlighted by Cohen *et al.* (2007:100):

- The sample
- Representativeness and parameters of the sample
- Access to the sample
- The sampling strategy to be used

The researcher as an administrative employee of the same university where the sampling was done had easy access and a high response rate because of her own presence during the administration of the questionnaire and the collection of the completed instruments.

First-year educational students are a suitable sample because it was assumed that they would provide suitable information on why they chose to become teachers.

3.10.2 Critical readers

Generally a study like this is preceded by a pilot study. Ray *et al.* (2010) assert that pilot studies save time and effort if done properly because unforeseen problems can be solved during this phase. In practice a small group of students from the sample would be used for the pilot study purposes. Their participation would assist in the determination on whether respondents understand the meaning of the questions, to check the relevance of the questions, ascertain respondents'

3.12 DATA ANALYSIS

As stated by Cohen *et al.* (2007:501) “[q]uantitative data analysis is a powerful research form, emanating in part from the positivist tradition”. As has been mentioned in the previous chapters, this study employed a quantitative approach that “emanated from a positivist approach” – to borrow from Cohen’s words. Data collection was done by utilising a questionnaire administered to first-year students enrolled for educational studies. The literature review (research articles, books, newspapers, etc.) was pivotal in structuring and developing the questionnaire. The instrument was used to elicit statistical information from respondents using the SPSS, which applies statistical formulae and carries out computations. Assistance for the analysis of data was obtained from the statisticians at the Department of Statistics of the University of Pretoria.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. Descriptive statistics, according to Cohen *et al.* (2007:503) “describe and present data in terms of summary frequencies”. These include the mode, the mean, the median, the range and the standard deviation. Inferential statistics were employed to infer and predict on the basis of the data collected, including hypothesis testing.

Further analysis and interpretation of data was done using tables that included frequencies and percentages of respondents’ responses. Boxplots were also used in the analysis and interpretation of data.

3.13 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

The validity of an instrument, according to Pietersen and Maree (2011:215), refers to “the extent to which it measures what it is supposed to measure”. Face, content and criterion validity were used to check the validity of the instrument. To ensure a high degree of validity the instrument was scrutinised by two experts in the field of education. Content validity, according to Pietersen and Maree (2011:217), refers to “the extent to which the instrument covers the complete content ... that it is set out to measure”. To ensure content validity of an instrument, a provisional version was presented to the statisticians for their comments and observation before finalising the instrument. A pilot study was not conducted. However, the experts’

opinions assisted in clarifying other concepts and the structure of the questionnaire.

According to Pietersen and Maree (2011), face validity refers to what the instrument looks like and whether it measures what it purports to measure. There is no test for face validity but expert opinion was used to confirm the face validity of the instrument.

3.14 LIMITATIONS

This study explores the reasons why student teachers choose teaching as their career. It further explores how student teachers perceive and what they expect from the teaching profession. Initially the researcher planned to use two universities to collect data from the sample of first-year university students enrolled to become teachers. The study unfortunately had to be limited to only one university as permission to administer the questionnaire could not be obtained from one of the universities.

A purposive sampling of 222 (14.3%) of the enrolled student teachers in educational studies – female and male – completed the questionnaire.

It would be inappropriate to generalise the findings to the whole population of all the first-year university students enrolled to become teachers in South Africa. Therefore the findings for this study will be generalised only to the population of the responding university.

3.15 CONCLUSION

This chapter detailed the methods employed, among other things, to collect data, choose the sampling method and the research design, etc. The concept of quantitative research was extensively covered and explained in this chapter. This chapter also outlined the route that the researcher took to map the whole study.

The following chapter presents the data analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapters the researcher contextualised the study, set out its background utilising a literature review and a discussion of methodological considerations. This chapter contains the statistical and theoretical analyses of the quantitative data collected on the student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in South Africa. A methodical overview of student teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession is provided.

4.2 FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW

It is important to report on the findings of the literature review because most items in the questionnaire were informed by the arguments and hypothesis derived from the literature review. A report on these findings is provided in a short comparative analysis from previous until recent years. This is done in order to note changes in trends.

In his analysis of factors influencing the decision of university students in the USA to become a teacher fifty-nine years ago, Fielstra (1955) found that a considerable number of respondents (male and female) chose to become teachers because of their love for children, to make a possible contribution to the community, and because of desirable working conditions. Interestingly, teacher salaries were rated very low by respondents as a reason for choosing teaching as a career. The study also found that former teachers were the most influential factor in students' choices of teaching as a career.

An interesting point was made in a study twenty-eight years later by Roberson, Keith and Page (1983) in the USA that those who joined teaching, while less concerned with salaries, often lacked the ability to teach. The study found that

male teachers were less concerned about teacher salaries, contrary to the findings by Fielstra (1955), who found that male respondents were more concerned about income than their female counterparts.

Another interesting point, made by Roberson *et al.* (1983), is that teachers who leave the profession do so because of their desire for a higher income. This raises the question why students join teaching in the first place. The implication could be that students join teaching with preconceived expectations that a teacher's income will eventually satisfy their needs and, when this does not happen, they leave the profession to seek better paying jobs. This observation contradicts the altruistic reasons purported to be a strong factor for joining teaching. Brown (1992) questions this notion quoting Joseph and Green (1986) who ask: Can one trust the notion that people want to become teachers for altruistic reasons, just because they say so?

This question supports the observation by the researcher that teachers leave the profession to seek higher paying jobs if they joined it for altruistic reasons. Fielstra (1955) also found that working with friendly staff was highly valued by most respondents, with job security rated very low.

The study on Caribbean first-year teachers' reasons for choosing teaching as a career conducted by Brown (1992) found that love of children, the influence of others, vacations and working hours were ranked high by respondents as reasons why they chose teaching. Career status, steady work and income were not indicated as strong reasons for joining teaching.

A study conducted twelve years ago by Kyriacou *et al.* (2002:109) on Norwegian university students' views on a career in teaching indicated that factors such as "working with children", "a secure job", "a job where I will contribute to society", "a job which gives me responsibility" and "a job where I can care for others" received high ratings, and that students expected the teaching profession to satisfy these expectations. Factors such as a "good starting salary", "a job with high quality resources and equipment" and "the opportunity to travel abroad" were rated very low as factors that students believed the teaching profession could offer.

It would be a mistake not to report on a literature review on the recent trends in South Africa. Considering the dearth of research on why students choose teaching in South Africa, Mokoena (2012:122), conducted a study on student teachers' expectations of teaching as a career in South Africa. The study reported that a considerable percentage expect to have healthy relationships with fellow teachers, resources available at schools, to be involved in decision-making and to have enough time to do their work. Furthermore, a significant number of the respondents "perceive teaching as the right career for them".

Multiple studies were conducted in various countries around the world as early as in 1955, "exploring the motivation of those who decide to become school teachers" (Kyriacou *et al.*, 2002:103). A variety of factors emerged as motivators for joining the teaching profession, ranging from the love of children to contributing to the community. Interestingly, in the various reasons provided, teacher salary was the lowest ranked factor motivating students to become teachers. The implication is that altruistic reasons motivate students to become teachers. One could argue that if those who choose to become teachers do so are less concerned about teacher salary, why then do they exit the profession within five years of entering it?

4.3 DETERMINING THE RELIABILITY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTS USING CRONBACH ALPHA

Santos (1999:2) describes Cronbach Alpha as "an index of reliability associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the underlying construct". Statisticians of the University of Pretoria tested the reliability of Sections B, C, D and E of the questionnaire as a research instrument. An acceptable reliability coefficient is reported to be 0.7 by Santos (1999) whereby anything higher than this is believed to be more reliable.

The overall reliability evaluation of the raw data of the instrument with its 91 items for this study has been found to be 0.906. The reliability coefficient for Section B (*factors that encourage students to enrol as education students*) with 15 items was 0.883. The reliability coefficients for Sections C (*students' perceptions of the*

teaching profession), D (*students' expectations of the teaching profession*) and E (*factors that made students doubt their choice of the teaching profession*) were 0.782, 0.748 and 0.759 respectively. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was therefore high as it is uniformly significantly higher than the acceptable level of 0.70.

4.4 PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE SURVEY DATA

4.4.1 Introduction

The data in this section was derived from the answers provided by students enrolled for Educational Studies at one South African university. These were first-year students, enrolled for the first time in an education programme and they were requested to complete a questionnaire.

Two statisticians from the Department of Statistics of the University of Pretoria assisted in the analysis of data, using SPSS software. The presentation of data was twofold: single frequencies ("raw data") and double frequencies.

4.4.1.1 Single frequencies

Data in this paragraph focuses on the biographical and demographical information of the respondents. Responses to the factors that encouraged students to enrol as education students, their perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession, and factors that made them doubt their choice of becoming a teacher are covered in this paragraph. However, a complete analysis of the raw data appears in Appendix G. The analysis and presentation of the results does not include all the items in the questionnaire but only a selection of the most significant questions.

(a) Biographical data

Table 4.1: Biographical data

A1 Gender	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Male	143	64.4
Female	79	35.6
Total	222	100
A2 Age (in years)	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
17	1	0.5
18	31	14.0
19	60	27.0
20	67	30.2
21	21	9.5
22	16	7.2
23	12	5.4
24 +	14	6.7
Total	222	100
A3 Home language	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sesotho	8	3.6
IsiXhosa	6	2.7
English	3	1.4
Sepedi	40	18.1
IsiZulu	79	35.7
IsiNdebele	10	4.5
SiSwati	28	12.7
Tshivenda	2	0.9
Xitsonga	16	7.2
Afrikaans	1	0.5
Setswana	29	12.7
Total	222	100
A4 Race	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Black	221	99.5
Coloured	1	0.5
Total	222	100

A6 Geographical background	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Rural	117	52.7
Township	94	42.3
Urban	11	5.0
Total	222	100
A11 Location of school at which you would like to teach	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Rural	82	36.9
Township	72	32.4
Urban	44	19.8
No preference	24	10.9
Totals=	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.1 on page 74 indicates that the respondents were predominantly male (64.4%) while their female counterparts recorded a mere 35.6%. These results were a complete contradiction of the assumption that teaching is a profession for females. It also implies that more men have made a conscious decision to join teaching, for various reasons, as revealed in this study.

Only one of the students is not black. This implies that no statistically significant differences between the perceptions and opinions of various race groups can be inferred from the data.

The ages of the respondents as shown in Table 4.2 range from 17 to 24 plus years, male and female. It was informative that a 17-year old was enrolled for educational studies in a tertiary institution. The general entry level at a tertiary institution in South Africa is at least 19 years. This view is based on the assumption that a child should be 18 years in Grade 12 if he/she started school at age seven years (Grade 1) and never repeated a grade up to and until Grade 12. One could argue that a 17-year old in higher education and training must have been so intelligent at school level that he or she skipped the other grades. However, it is notable that the admission policy to public schools makes provision for early admission (younger than 7 years).

Another interesting observation is that a 32-year old student was enrolled in educational studies for the first time. This could mean that this respondent had obtained post-matriculation qualifications prior to joining teaching or, there could be other reasons; for example, financial or others.

The statistical mean and median scores for age were 20:22 and 20:00 respectively, which seemed to be in line with the provisions regarding the school-leaving age.

The fact that the university at which the data was collected is situated in a township has affected the percentage of the race of the respondents. Almost all of the respondents were black (99.5%) with 0.5% coloured. A significant number (35.7%) of respondents indicated IsiZulu as their home language while 0.9% indicated Tshivenda as their home language. This correlates with the percentages on Q10 (*language you will teach in*): 46.9% indicated that they would like to teach in English and 17.3% and 0.3% in IsiZulu and Tshivenda respectively. This suggests that most students expect to teach through the medium of English.

There was a link between A3 (*Home language*) and Q10 (*Language you will teach in*). The latter statement and percentages agreed further with A11 (*Location at which they would like to teach*); 36.9% indicated that they would like to teach in rural areas and 32.4% in townships. 19.8% and 10.8% indicated urban and no preference respectively. In addition, there was an association between A6 and A11: 52.7% are from rural areas, 42.3% from townships and 36.9% and 32.4% indicated that they would like to work at schools located in rural and township areas respectively. This implied that most students preferred to go back and make a contribution to the environment they came from. 19.8% preferred to work in urban areas whereas 10.8% have no preference regarding the location of the school.

(b) Course specification, highest qualification and result of matriculation examinations

Table 4.2: Course specification, highest qualification and result of matriculation examinations

A5 Course specification	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Further Education and Training (FET – High Schools)	168	76.0
General Education and Training (GET – Primary Schools)	54	24.0
Total	222	100
A7 Highest qualification level	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Matriculation Certificate	198	89.1
National Diploma/Certificate	4	1.8
Bachelor's Degree/Equivalent	17	7.7
B.Ed./Honours Degree	3	1.4
Total	222	100
Matriculation examination results	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
School-leaving certificate (diploma)	13	5.9
Admission to bachelor's degree studies	204	91.9
Other	5	2.2
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data contained in Table 4.2 reveals that most of the respondents (76%) have enrolled in Further Education and Training (FET) which allows them to teach in high school. Only 24% constitutes those who enrolled in General Education and Training (GET), which allows them to teach in primary schools and up to Grade 9. When viewed with A1 (gender), an interesting scenario emerges: the probability that most males fall within the 76% is relatively high.

A7 (highest qualification level) clearly shows that most respondents (89.2%) enrolled for teaching immediately after completing their matriculation and a few

had a Bachelor's degree (1.8%). When considering that this study targeted first-year student teachers enrolled for teaching the first time, and taking into account the age distribution of respondents, it seems possible that respondents with a Bachelor's degree qualification had a different career before enrolling for teaching, equivalent to 7.7% respondents with a degree or its equivalent. A small percentage (1.4%) of respondents had a B.Ed. or Honours degree.

A8 (Result of matriculation examination) illustrates that most of the student teachers (92.3%) had passed Grade 12 with admission to Bachelor's degree studies, 5.9% and 1.8% with school-leaving certificates and other qualifications respectively.

It should be noted that the University, which was the data collection site, offered only two initial teacher education programmes, namely, Further Education and Training and General Education and Training. In order to have a more complete picture of all education students, further studies seem to be required.

(c) Multiple responses to who pays for respondents' studies

Table 4.3: Who pays for your studies?

Q9 Who pays for your studies?	Number (N)	Percentage (%)
Father	22	7.7
Mother	45	15.8
Family member	23	8.1
Relative	18	6.3
Bursary	26	9.1
Tertiary loans	147	51.6
Other	4	1.4
Total	285	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

It is important to note that a sample of size $n = (222)$ was requested to indicate in multiple responses who assisted in paying students' tuition fees, and this is why the total number of responses is greater than the number of respondents as

students could have been assisted by more than one party. Table 4.3 above reveals persons/institutions responsible for the payment of respondents' studies. Interestingly, the Table shows that most respondents indicated that tertiary loans are the major source by which their studies are paid. This is closely followed by mothers at 15.8% with fathers observed to pay just 7.7%, a mere 50% of the number of mothers who pay.

Statistically this implies that tertiary loans play a pivotal role in advancing instruction and learning among the poor communities and the country as a whole; as 79.3% of the respondents indicated that they came from townships or rural areas. Furthermore, it could be argued that mothers are financially more stable compared to the households headed by fathers. This is contrary to societal beliefs that fathers are the ones responsible for all the financial needs within households. A total of 9.1% students indicated that bursaries pay for their studies, while 8.1% indicated that a family member is responsible for such payment. The remainder of the respondents indicated relatives (6.3%) and others (1.4%) as the ones responsible for the payment of their studies.

(d) Factors that encouraged students to enrol as education students

Table 4.4 I am interested in teaching

B1 I am interested in teaching	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Agree	213	95.95
Disagree	9	4.05
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data in Table 4.4 illustrates that most students sampled (95.95%) entered teaching because of their interest in the profession. This may augur well for the retention of teachers in the profession and lead to low attrition. Fewer than 5% of the students disagreed on having an interest in the teaching profession. This could mean that this low number of students were unsure regarding their decisions to join teaching. Those who disagreed could represent a group of those teachers who leave the teaching profession in the space of five years after joining teaching.

Table 4.5 Teaching offers a reasonable assurance of an adequate income

B2 Teaching offers a reasonable assurance of an adequate income	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	176	79.28
Disagree	46	20.72
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The statistics in Table 4.5 indicate that a significant number (79.28%) of respondents agree that teaching offers a reasonable assurance of an adequate income while 20.72% disagree. These percentages resonate well with the findings in Table 4.6 where 82.43% students agree that teaching provides a reliable income. Of the respondents 17.57% answered in the negative.

Respondents seem optimistic about their prospective career and they joined it with a positive frame of mind. Another observation could be that those who agreed that teaching offers a reasonable assurance of an adequate income and that it provides a reliable income, did so because of their geographical background. The percentages of those who disagreed, namely 20.72% and 17.57% in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 respectively are not insignificant. It is possible that that they represent teachers who joined teaching as a last resort.

Table 4.6 Teaching will provide a reliable income

B44 Teaching will provide a reliable income	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	183	82.43
Disagree	39	17.57
Total	222	100

See the analysis and interpretation of data narrative in Table 4.5.

Table 4.7 I did not qualify for enrolment in any other university programme

B30 I did not qualify for enrolment in any other university programme	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	27	12.16
Disagree	195	87.84
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.7 reveals the significant finding that 87.84% of students disagreed that they had enrolled for teaching because they did not qualify for enrolment in any other university programme. This is probably the group of students who agreed that they enrolled for teaching because of their interest to work with children (86.04%); they want to make a worthwhile social contribution (93.25%) and because they believe that teaching will offer them a steady career path (90.54%). Although one cannot guarantee that students in universities enrolled for teaching despite qualifying for other programmes, it is possible to conclude that generally these students choose teaching as their career of choice. Therefore, teacher retention could be maximised. 95.95% of the student teachers agree that they joined teaching because they have the qualities of a good teacher. This augurs well for the retention of skilled teachers in the system because 79.73% in B48 disagree that they joined teaching because they were not accepted into their first choice career. Therefore there is a need to redefine the education profession for it to be competitive with other professions, in particular, availability of resources and adequate facilities to ensure that prospective teachers join and remain in the profession and not to disappoint those who really want to be in the profession.

Table 4.8 I like the possibilities for advancement within the profession

B4 I like the possibilities for advancement within the profession	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	203	91.44
Disagree	19	8.56
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data contained in Table 4.8 indicates that a large number of respondents (91.44%) go into the teaching career expecting possibilities of advancement within the profession. Advancement in the teaching profession may not be as easy as students seem to think. The students may not be aware of the fact that the possibility of advancement is strongly linked to self-development and continuous learning by teachers to empower themselves.

Those who disagree constitute 8.56%. This percentage could represent a group of student teachers who do not care much about self-development and continuous learning. However, this may change once they become teachers and realise the benefits that come with promotions.

Table 4.9 My parents wanted me to be a teacher

B8 My parents wanted me to be a teacher	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	64	28.83
Disagree	158	71.17
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data contained in Table 4.9 reveals that most respondents (71.17%) disagreed that their parents encouraged them to go into teaching. Only 28.83% agreed to the statement that their parents wanted them to be teachers. One could argue that the group that disagreed chose to become teachers for different

reasons, such as the love for teaching, their teaching ability, social contribution, etc. Also, they did not receive encouragement or support from their parents.

Table 4.10 The reported ease of getting a teaching position has greatly influenced my choice

B12 The reported ease of getting a teaching position has greatly influenced my choice	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	184	82.88
Disagree	38	17.12
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.10 clearly shows that a small percentage of students (17.12%) disagreed that they had joined teaching because of the reported ease of getting a teaching position. One would like to think that this group joined teaching for altruistic reasons and not because it is easy to get a teaching post. This group constitutes those student teachers who remain dedicated to the profession because they were sure of their choice of becoming teachers. However, it could also mean that they have had access to information that persuaded them that it is not easy to get a teaching position.

A large percentage of respondents (82.88%) agreed that they chose to become teachers because of the reported ease of getting a teaching position. One could argue that this group constitutes those teachers who join teaching as a stepping stone to other professions. The implication is that these respondents may not contribute positively towards teaching and learning once they become teachers. They do not have a desire to become teachers nor do they have an interest in the profession. However, it could also be nothing more than a statement of fact because they are aware of the shortage of teachers in this country and because they believe that they will be studying to acquire scarce knowledge and skills, which will stand them in good stead when applying for positions in education.

Table 4.11 I like teaching

B20 I like teaching	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	203	91.44
Disagree	19	8.56
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.11 above indicates that most students (91.44%) chose teaching because they like teaching and that they want to be teachers. This fact militates against the popular view that it is only those that cannot find other occupations that join the teaching profession. This is especially significant in light of the fact that students enter university at a time when most professions have opened up to all races and to both genders. This was not the case in the past.

Table 4.12 Teaching hours will fit with the responsibility of having a family

B29 Teaching hours will fit with the responsibility of having a family	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	204	91.89
Disagree	18	8.11
Total	222	100

Analysis and presentation of data

There is a general view that teachers enjoy working fewer hours compared to other professions. The findings in Table 4.12 resonate with this view; 91.89% of the student teachers agreed that teaching hours fit the responsibility of having a family. Unlike other professions teachers are believed to have more free hours in a day's work. This notion might contradict the legal provisions that require teachers to work for 180 hours per year. The opportunity of having time to spend with family seems to be a great influence in becoming a teacher and the truth regarding this expectation cannot be denied.

85.59% indicated that the availability of long holidays influenced their decision into joining teaching for the purposes of study, travel and relaxation whereas 14.41%

disagreed; in response to the statement in B14 (*Long holidays are available for purposes of study, travel and relaxation*). Another interesting observation is that 26.58% of the respondents disagreed that as teachers they have lengthy holidays. This could mean that this group joined the teaching profession not only for holidays but for an opportunity to make a difference in their communities. It could also suggest that they know that the belief that teachers have long holidays is mistaken in the sense that teachers may have commitments related to their positions during holidays.

4.13 The ethics of the profession has been a deciding factor

B22 The ethics of the profession has been a deciding factor	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	189	85.14
Disagree	33	14.86
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

It was reported in the previous chapters that negative media reports on the teaching profession may have adverse results on prospective teachers' choice of the profession. On the contrary, Table 4.13 indicates that this view may not be true as 85.14% of the respondents agreed that the ethics of the profession has been a deciding factor in enrolling for teaching. This group constitutes those student teachers who, despite the negative publicity, were driven and motivated by their passion for teaching. Furthermore, it could be that the negative publicity of the profession by media has, unexpectedly, influenced these respondents to enrol for teaching in order to make a worthwhile contribution to the society in which they live.

In fact B22 could be interpreted differently by different respondents. Some respondents may feel that the profession lacks good ethics, hence the negative responses (14.86%). This group could represent student teachers who viewed the ethics of the teaching profession in a negative way and that despite the negativity they still chose to become teachers.

Table 4.14 Teaching will be a secure job

B38 Teaching will be a secure job	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Agree	207	93.24
Disagree	15	6.76
Total	222	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data contained in Table 4.14 indicates that 6.76% of the respondents disagreed that teaching offers a secure job. One could argue that their choice for becoming teachers was not done because of the commitment to teaching as a lifelong career. This group could represent those teachers who will leave the teaching profession for other professions they believe would guarantee them more job security. However, a significant percentage of student teachers (93.24%) agree that teaching will offer them job security. It could be that these respondents agree with this view, considering their geographical background. For instance, a person who is from rural areas or has a poor background could more easily be satisfied with becoming a teacher as compared to those from the townships and urban areas.

87.39 percent of the respondents agreed that teaching is a fulfilling career and 12.61% disagreed; responding to statement in B56 (*Teaching is a fulfilling career*). It is difficult to imagine that those who disagreed that teaching is a fulfilling career could become good teachers with a passion for teaching considering their negative view of their prospective profession.

(e) Student teachers' expectations of the teaching profession by gender

In this section, respondents were requested to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed on expected aspects in the teaching profession. This section was categorised into gender. It is equally important to reiterate that the sample consisted of 222 respondents (male and female). Table 4.15 (see nex page), indicates responses provided by males and females separately.

Table 4.15 I think teachers have a heavy workload

C59 I think teachers have a heavy workload		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	33 23.08	19 24.05
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	110 76.92	60 75.95
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

It is interesting to note that almost the same percentage of males (23.08%) and females (24.05%) disagreed that teachers have a heavy workload. This could imply that these respondents will experience a reality shock when they finally become teachers and realise that teachers do indeed have a heavy workload. This realisation could result in frustration and dissatisfaction for this group of respondents. Frustration and dissatisfaction are undeniably a cause of teacher attrition. Interestingly, large percentages of males (76.92%) and females (75.95%) agreed that teachers have a heavy workload. One can conclude that this group is likely to enter and remain in the teaching profession despite the heavy workload.

Table 4.16 I think teachers earn a good salary

C60 I think teachers earn a good salary workload		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	53 37.06	34 43.04
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	90 62.94	45 56.96
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.16 indicates that considerable percentages of males (37.06%) and females (43.04%) disagreed that teachers earn a good salary. This is a clear

indication that teacher salaries did not have a great influence on their decisions to become teachers. This could simply mean that the student teachers chose teaching as their prospective career merely because of their interest in it, rather than to earn big salaries. Literature studies also reveal that teacher salaries are not regarded as a motivation to join teaching.

A significant number of males (62.94%) agreed that teachers earn a good salary compared to their female counterparts (56.96%). Males are reported to be the ones leaving the profession in droves, seeking professions with better salaries; teaching is reported to be the lowest paying job compared to other professions, which poses challenges in the retention of skilled teachers (Roberson *et al.*, 1983). Viewed as a whole, the respondents seemed to believe that teachers earn reasonable salaries.

Table 4.17 I think teachers are perceived as professionals

C61 I think teachers are perceived as professionals		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	9 6.29	7 8.86
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	134 93.71	72 91.14
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data in Table 4.17 clearly shows that both males (93.71%) and females (91.14%) viewed teachers as professionals, whereas small percentages (6.29% and 8.86% males and females respectively) disagreed. The fact that the respondents in this study regarded teachers as professionals probably suggests that they will strive to act and behave as professionals once they become teachers. The status of any occupation and/or profession is an important factor when deciding on a career, teaching included. The behaviour of teachers in schools and public areas could be a major influencing factor on someone who

intends to join the profession. Therefore it is imperative that teachers behave in a proper manner in order to preserve the dignity of the teaching profession.

Table 4.18 I think teachers have high morale

C62 I think teachers have high morale		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	5 3.50	13 16.46
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	138 96.50	66 83.54
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Teaching is one of the professions facing a number of challenges, e.g. low pass rates, violence in schools, lack of discipline, lack of resources, to name but a few. Despite all these challenges, teacher intake has not declined; instead it grows rapidly year after year (Department of Educational, 2000). The statistics in Table 4.18 show that males at 96.50% and females at 83.54% agree that teachers have high morale. On the contrary, studies have reported that teachers' morale and self-esteem have declined due to heavy workloads, rapid changes in policies, and a lack of support (Bull, 2005; Lumadi, 2008; Zulu *et al.*, 2004) etc. This group could represent teachers who find it difficult to cope with all the challenges experienced in schools, subsequently leading them to leave the profession. A miniscule percentage of males (3.50%) disagreed that teachers have high morale compared to (16.46%) indicated by their female counterparts.

Table 4.19 I think teaching is emotionally demanding

C64 I think teaching is emotionally demanding		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	31 21.68	14 17.72
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	112 78.32	65 82.28
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

A significant number of male respondents (21.68%) do not think that teaching is emotionally demanding compared to females (17.72%). Emotional intelligence is a prerequisite to becoming a good teacher. Teachers with high emotional intelligence are able to cope with almost all situations during their working hours. Teaching requires teachers who are able to overcome challenges experienced in their line of work. Teachers are engaged in diverse classrooms with learners from different backgrounds although it seems that this particular sample of respondents is not likely to teach in diverse classrooms in terms of language, culture and race. It is therefore imperative for teachers to exhibit high emotional intelligence.

Table 4.20 I think teaching is perceived as a high-status occupation

C65 I think teaching is perceived as a high-status occupation		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	36 25.17	19 24.05
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	107 74.83	60 75.95
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The data contained in Table 4.20 above indicates that a significant percentage (74.83%) of males perceive teaching as a high-status occupation. Females (75.95%) agree that teaching is perceived as a high status occupation. This could be the group that represents 91.61% males and 89.87% females who agreed that teachers feel valued by the society; males (88.81%) and females (73.08%) who agreed that teaching is a well-respected career and that teachers feel that their occupation has high social status – males (84.62%) and females (79.49%). These reported percentages are indicated in items C66, C69 and C70 respectively; these items draw similar information from the table above. The conclusion could be drawn that student teachers in this study have a positive view of their prospective career.

Table 4.21 I think teaching requires a high level of expert knowledge

C67 I think teaching requires a high level of expert knowledge		Males	Females
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	10 6.99	10 12.66
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	133 93.01	69 87.34
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	143 100	79 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

The statistics in Table 4.21 show that both males (93.01%) and females (87.34%) agreed that teaching requires a high level of expert knowledge. Regarding this expectation, student teachers need to prepare themselves thoroughly for when they enter the profession. A teacher who is prepared exhibits expert knowledge of his/her profession. This group could represent those who have confidence in their ability to teach, which in turn is reflected in a high pass rate. It is easy to assume that anyone who becomes a teacher can teach. On the contrary, if one lacks expert knowledge of the domain knowledge one has to teach, chances are that learners will be the ones suffering the consequences of one's unpreparedness.

The statistics in items C71 and C72 indicate that 88.11% of the male respondents agree that teachers need a high level of technical knowledge to ensure the efficient use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in schools, with 87.34% of females agreeing and 93.67% females agreeing that teachers need highly specialised knowledge, with their male counterparts reporting 90.91%. These findings are an indication that student teachers enrol for teaching with the knowledge that the profession requires specific skills. This is the group that will probably not become complacent in their work or accept mediocrity. It is encouraging that significant numbers of both males and females agreed that teaching requires a high level of expert knowledge. This view is supported by Hargreaves (2000:7) who asserts that teachers need expert knowledge to improve their teaching styles and also to ensure efficient use of the emerging new information technologies at schools.

(f) Student teachers' expectations of the teaching profession by age group

In this section respondents were requested to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed on expected aspects in the teaching profession. The section is categorised into three age-groups, namely, 17/18 year-olds, 19/20 year-olds and 21 year-olds and above. Categories of age groups are henceforth referred to as Groups 1, 2 and 3.

Table 4.22 I think teachers have a heavy workload

C59 I think teachers have a heavy workload		17/18 year-olds (1)	19/20 year-olds (2)	21 year-olds and above (3)
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	6 15.62	28 22.05	19 30.65
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	27 84.38	99 77.95	43 69.35
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	33 100	127 100	62 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

It is evident from Table 4.22 that a large number of respondents (127) fall within the age group 19/20 year-olds, followed by 62 respondents in age groups 21 and above, and finally 33 respondents in the age group 17/18 year-olds. Among all three groups, 22.05% of the 19/20 year-olds group disagreed that teachers have a heavy workload. This is followed by 30.65% and 15.62% within age groups 21+ and 17/18 year-olds respectively.

Percentages of respondents 84.38%, 77.95% and 69.35% in age Groups 1, 2 and 3 respectively indicate that teachers have a heavy workload. It is an interesting observation that these percentages are evidently higher than those who indicated the opposite. It is therefore acceptable to expect these respondents to manage their work efficiently once they become teachers. The older the respondents are, the more likely they are to disagree that teachers have a heavy workload, and the younger they are, the more likely they are to agree that teachers have a heavy workload.

Table 4.23 I think teachers earn a good salary

C60 I think teachers earn a good salary		17/18 year-olds (1)	19/20 year olds (2)	21 year- olds and above3)
Disagree	Frequency (F)	11	50	26
	Percentage (%)	34.38	39.37	41.94
Agree	Frequency (F)	21	77	36
	Percentage (%)	65.63	60.63	26.87
Total	Frequency (F)	32	127	62
	Percentage (%)	100	100	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Teacher salaries are a contentious issue worldwide. 34.38%, 39.37% and 41.94% of educators in the respective groups disagreed that teachers earn a good salary. These are large enough numbers for policy-makers and law makers to be concerned. However, one could argue that these respondents enrolled for teaching purely for the love of it, or for possible opportunities to contribute to their communities. They took an informed decision to join the profession despite low salaries.

On the other hand, 65.63%, 60.63% and 26.87% of the respondents in the 17/18 year-old, 19/20 year-old and 21 year-old and above age groups respectively agree that teachers earn a good salary. This group of respondents makes one question reasons behind their choice of enrolling as student teachers. If these respondents chose to become teachers because of their belief in high salaries it is probable that they may not remain in the profession once they realise that the salary is not what they thought it could be. This could result in a large number of teachers exiting the profession in search of better salaries.

It is noticeable that the older the respondents are, the more likely they are to think that teachers do not earn good salaries. This may explain why teachers with approximately five years' experience are more likely to leave the profession than others. This phenomenon also suggests a lack of career progress opportunities and it seems that the older the respondents are, the more likely they are to be aware of limited career progress opportunities.

Table 4.24 I think teachers are perceived as professionals

C61 I think teachers are perceived as professionals		17/18 year-olds (1)	19/20 year-olds (2)	21year-olds and above (3)
Disagree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	0 0.00	10 7.87	6 9.68
Agree	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	32 100	117 92.13	56 90.32
Total	Frequency (F) Percentage (%)	32 100	127 100	62 100

Analysis and interpretation of data

None of the respondents in age-group 17/18 disagreed that teachers are perceived as professionals. This points to a high degree of optimism about education. 9.68% of respondents in the third age-group disagreed that teachers are perceived as professionals. One could ask why these respondents think that teachers are not perceived as professionals. The older the respondents, the more likely they are to believe that teachers are not perceived as professionals and this would suggest a declining degree of optimism about teaching as a career corresponding with the age of the prospective teacher.

100% of the respondents in group 1 believed that teachers are viewed as professionals and this number declines slightly to 90.32% with those who are in group 3 containing the oldest respondents. This finding corresponds with 91.34% of respondents (group 2) in item C63 who agreed that teaching is a highly skilled occupation.

Table 4.25 I think teachers have a high morale

C62 I think teachers have a high morale		17/18 year-olds (1)	19/20 year olds (2)	21-year- olds and(3)
Disagree	Frequency (F)	3	10	5
	Percentage (%)	9.38	7.87	8.06
Agree	Frequency (F)	29	117	57
	Percentage (%)	90.63	92.13	91.94
Total	Frequency (F)	32	127	62
	Percentage (%)	100	100	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.25 shows clearly that a significant number of respondents (92.13% in the second group) agree that teachers have a high morale. This is followed by 91.94% in the third group and 90.63% in the first group. Percentages of respondents who disagreed that teachers have high morale are below 10%. This implies that the majority of respondents agreed that teachers have a high morale. Were it not for the numbers provided by group 2, the table would have presented declining numbers from group 1 and group 3 but, as it is, the numbers in group 2 are higher than those in group 3. It is difficult to think of a reason for this anomaly.

Table 4.26 I believe teaching is perceived as a high status occupation

C65 I believe teaching is perceived as a high status occupation		17/18 year-olds (1)	19/20 year olds (2)	21 year- olds and over(3)
Disagree	Frequency (F)	8	31	16
	Percentage (%)	25.00	24.41	25.81
Agree	Frequency (F)	24	96	46
	Percentage (%)	75.00	75.59	74.19
Total	Frequency (F)	32	127	62
	Percentage (%)	100	100	100

Analysis and interpretation of data

25.00%, 24.41% and 25.81% respectively of the respondents disagreed that teaching is a high status occupation. A further 9.38%, 9.45% and 8.06% of respondents in age groups 1, 2 and 3 disagreed that teachers feel valued by

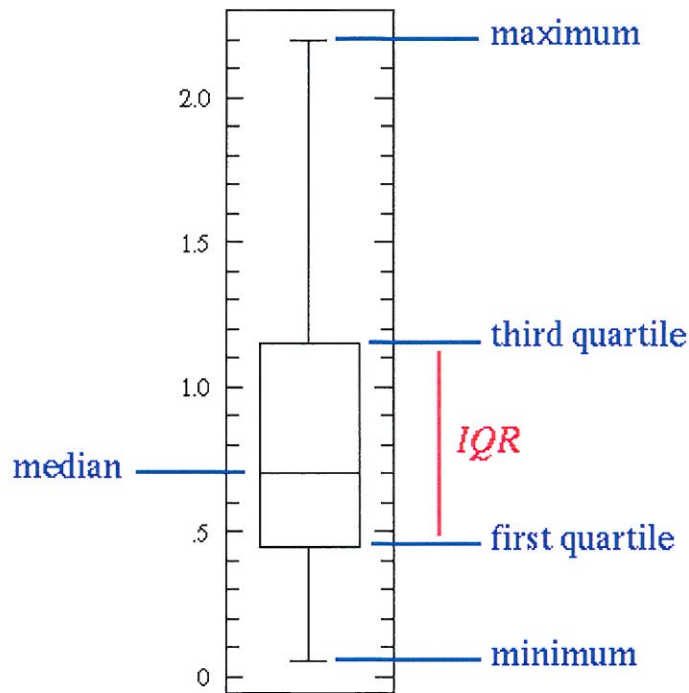
society; 15.63%, 16.54% and 18.03% in all three age groups did not agree that teaching is a well-respected career. These findings are indicated in items C66 and C69, which respectively asked for similar information. These respondents could represent those who joined teaching not because they were interested in the profession but because teaching was the only qualification they could be accepted in. Their negative view of the profession could have a serious and negative impact on their teaching ability once they become teachers. It is my opinion that the way one perceives a career could influence one's decision on whether or not to enter it.

Interestingly, all three groups indicated similar percentages (75.00%, 75.59% and 74.19%) when agreeing that teaching is a high status occupation. This could suggest that the teaching profession is regarded as a high status occupation by all ages across the board. Approximately 25% of the respondents do not agree and that fact could militate against the recruitment of teachers.

(g) Box plots

The researcher has, from the raw data, categorised responses into a) career prospects, b) flexibility and working hours, c) teaching ability and d) influence to join teaching. These categories are represented according to age-group, gender and geographical background, respectively in the box plots below.

Figure A. Configuration and construction of a box plot (Example of a box plot)



Wickham and Stryjewski (2011) describe a box plot:

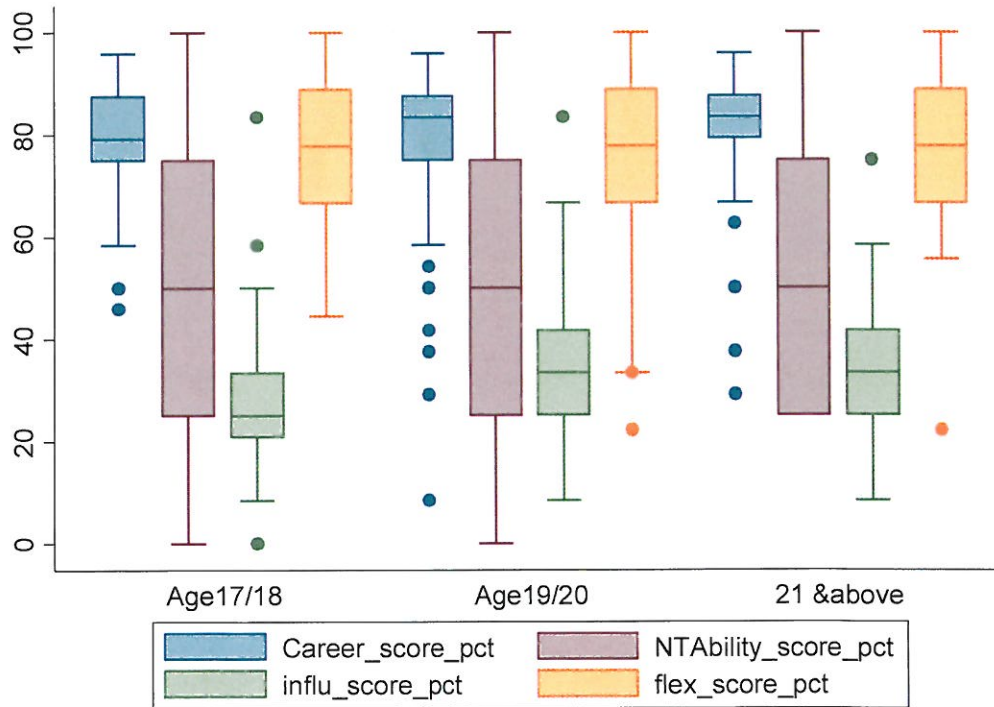
as a compact distributional summary, displaying less detail than a histogram or kernel density, but also taking up less space. Box plots use robust summary statistics that are always located at actual data points, are quickly computable (originally by hand), and have no tuning parameters. They are particularly useful for comparing distributions across groups.

Box plots were introduced as a toolkit for exploratory data analysis by Tukey and only became widely known after formal publication (Tukey, 1977).

The box plot (also known as a *box and whisker* diagram) is a standardised way of displaying the distribution of data based on the five number summary: minimum, first quartile, median, third quartile, and maximum. In the simplest box plot the central rectangle spans the first quartile to the third quartile (the *interquartile range* or *IQR*). A segment inside the rectangle shows the median, and "whiskers" above and below the box show the locations of the minimum and maximum. This simplest possible box plot displays the full range of variation (from minimum to

maximum), the likely range of variation (the *IQR*), and a typical value (the median), like the one above.

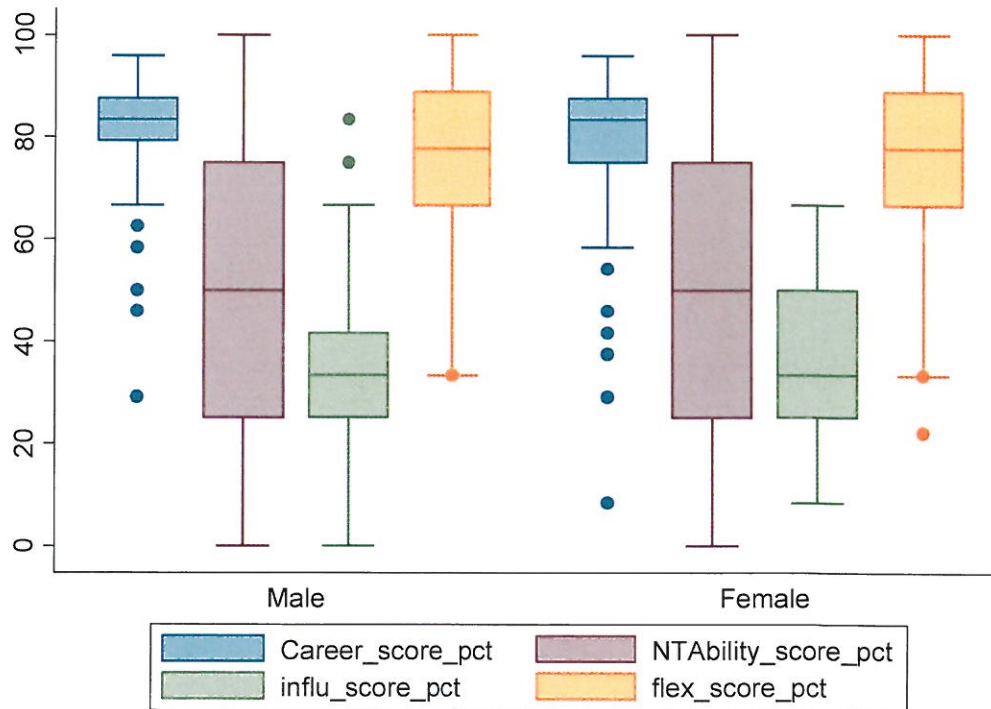
(a) Box plot of scales by age group



The box plot above indicates scores on career prospects, flexibility and working hours, teaching ability and influence to join the teaching profession. Scores are represented according to age groups.

From the box plot (a) above, it is clear that the level of agreement is highest on the ability to teach in all the age groups (17/18 yrs., 19/20 yrs. and 21 yrs. and above) and weakest in the career prospects category. The weakest score on the career prospect is not alarming. It is my opinion that this group could develop a love for teaching once they join teaching. This view is made possible because of the highest score on the ability to teach. They might enjoy teaching and consequently decide to remain in the profession.

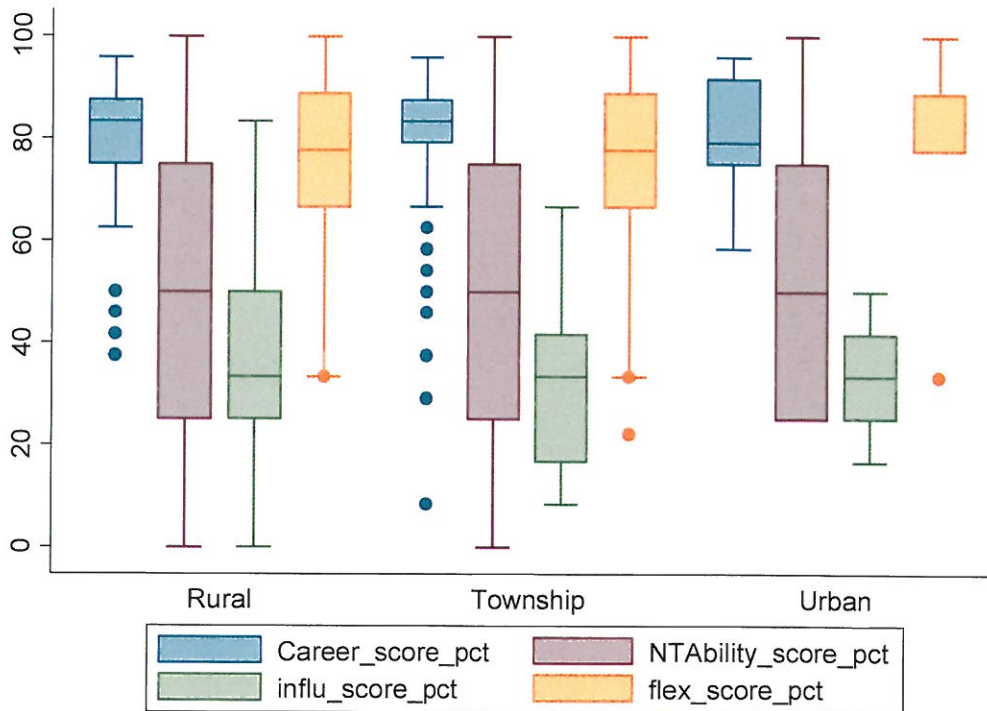
(b) Box plot of scales by gender



The box plot above indicates scores on career prospects, flexibility and working hours, teaching ability and influence to join the teaching profession. Scores are represented according to gender.

Statistics show that the level of agreement is highest on the ability to teach in both male and female respondents. The level of agreement is weakest on career prospects in both genders. There is a similarity of scores in this box plot and box plot (a) above; scores are high on the ability to teach and weakest on career prospects in both box plots. This implies that most respondents intend to teach because they believe they have an ability to teach. This finding could influence teacher recruitment and retention strategies in the teaching profession.

(c) Box plot of scales by geographical background



The box plot above indicates scores on career prospects, flexibility and working hours, teaching ability and influence to join the teaching profession. Scores are represented according to the geographical background of respondents.

The box plot clearly indicates that the level of agreement in geographical background is highest in the ability to teach and weakest in career prospects. This implies that all respondents, irrespective of where they come from, were motivated by their ability to join teaching. Respondents' belief in their ability to teach and to become teachers is not determined by their geographical background. Recruitment initiatives should therefore reflect similar effort in all geographical locations.

(h) Association of student teachers' expectations of the teaching profession with gender, age group and location of school at which they would like to teach

The significance of association regarding doubts about the choice of the teaching profession is indicated in Tables 4.28 and 4.29 below. The statistics are presented with the use of Fisher's exact test. According to Pietersen and Maree (2011:247) Fisher's exact test is used to "examine the significance of the association between two nominal variables ..." The *sig* and *NS* in the tables below stand for *significance* and *no significance* respectively. Although Fisher's exact test is used where "variables have only two categories" (Pietersen *et al.*, 2011:247), the researcher opted for an additional category to examine the significance of gender, age-group and location of school at which respondents would like to teach at for the decision for choosing teaching as a career.

The location of the school at which respondents would like to teach was found to be associated with items 74 and 75 in Table 4.28 below.

Table 4.27 Demographic factors associated with doubts about the choice of the teaching profession

	SECTION D: YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION	GENDER		AGE GROUP		LOCATION OF SCHOOL AT WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO TEACH	
		Fisher's Test	Remark	Fisher's Test	Remark	Fisher's test	Remark
73.	I am very sure that I will stay in the teaching profession.	0.003	Sig	0.929	NS	0.067	Sig
74.	I may change to another career.	0.261	NS	0.861	NS	0.005	Sig
75.	I am confident that I will not consider other careers.	0.160	NS	0.845	NS	0.020	Sig
76.	I am sure that I will persist in a teaching career.	0.116	NS	0.539	NS	0.462	NS
77.	I will demonstrate my competence as a teacher satisfactorily.	0.618	NS	0.233	NS	0.285	NS
78.	I will exhibit professional behaviour.	0.091	Marginal	0.158	NS	0.977	NS
79.	I am sure I will maintain good professional relations with the teaching personnel.	0.023	Sig	0.601	NS	0.770	NS
80.	I will maintain academic integrity.	0.005	Sig	0.842	NS	0.375	NS

Analysis and interpretation of data

Table 4.27 represents the responses of the 222 male and female respondents who took part in this study. The statistics represented above show calculations on the significance or no significance of the respondents' responses in terms of gender, age group and location of school. The variables have three categories (gender, age group and location of school at which respondents would like to teach) and were used to perform an exact calculation of the p value. If the p value (number of the population) is less than the nominal level of 0.05 for statistical significance, a conclusion can be made that "there is evidence of a statistically significant

difference in the proportions” (Freeman & Julious, 2007:64). They further posit that Fisher’s exact test is simply a hypothesis test.

Cohen *et al.* (2007:515) describe two types of hypothesis. The first is the null hypothesis, which states that there is no relationship between two variables; the alternative hypothesis states that there is a relationship between the variables. The two hypotheses are written as follows:

Ho: the null hypothesis

H1: the alternative hypothesis

The table above shows that there is evidence of a statistically significant association of gender (0.003) and on the location of the schools at which respondents would like to teach (0.067). This implies that in the section on expectations of the teaching profession, only the items on *the confidence to stay in the profession, certainty that I will maintain good professional behaviour and ability to maintain academic integrity* were found to have significant association with the gender of respondents. Age group has no association with any of the items in the section.

Finally, only plans to change one’s career (item 74) and confidence that the respondent will not consider a change of job (75) were significantly associated with the location at which respondents would like to teach. The implication here is that the location of the school has a great influence on gender and that respondents might be willing to remain in the teaching profession only if the school at which they would like to teach is situated at their favourite location – in this case where they reside. Furthermore, this decision to remain in the teaching profession is influenced by the age of the respondents. For example, the older the respondents are and the closer the school is to home, the more likely they would like to teach.

Table 4.28 Demographic and individual factors associated with doubts in choice of the teaching profession

	SECTION E: FACTORS THAT MADE YOU DOUBT YOUR CHOICE FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION	GENDER		AGE GROUP		LOCATION OF SCHOOL AT WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO TEACH	
		Fisher's Test	Remark	Fisher's Test	Remark	Fisher's test	Remark
	QUESTIONS						
81.	Own ability to teach.	0.658	NS	0.750	NS	0.305	NS
82.	Perceived job demands.	0.394	NS	0.764	NS	0.159	NS
83.	Teacher salaries.	0.088	Marginal	0.963	NS	0.677	NS
84.	Low interest in teaching profession in the country.	1.000	NS	0.815	NS	0.289	NS
85.	Society's attitude towards teaching.	0.208	NS	0.152	NS	0.600	NS
86.	Violence in schools.	0.775	NS	0.298	NS	0.096	Marginal
87.	Unprofessional conduct of teachers.	0.264		0.894	NS	0.994	NS
88.	Low prestige (status) of the teaching profession compared to other professions.	0.051	Sig	0.319	NS	0.395	NS
89.	Working conditions.	1.000	NS	0.354	NS	0.984	NS
90.	Disciplinary problems in schools.	1.000	NS	0.094	Marginal	0.408	NS
91.	I am sure I will maintain good professional relations with the community.	0.099	Marginal	0.229	NS	0.128	NS

Table 4.28 indicates that among the list of questions listed in the table, only the response to the question on “low prestige (status) of the teaching profession compared to other professions” is influenced by the gender of the participant. None of the questions is associated with the age group of the respondents or the location of the school at which respondents would like to teach. There is very little significance in terms of the Fisher exact test.

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the data collected was statistically and theoretically analysed. A comparative overview of student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession was undertaken. The findings of the analysis are critical to the formulation of recommendations to be made by the researcher. Furthermore, the findings suggest areas for further research.

Interestingly, the study has found that more males than female respondents enrol for teaching. This is surprising because there is a general belief that only females are interested in teaching. The study has further revealed that most respondents are from rural areas. Tertiary loans have been revealed to be the source of financial help for most of the students.

Another interesting finding is the fact that most of the respondents enrolled in Further Education and Training, which allowed them to teach at high schools. The study has also found that most respondents indicated they had joined the teaching profession because they are interested in teaching and that they like teaching. Interestingly teacher salaries were rated low as the motivation for joining teaching.

Findings produced by box plots revealed that respondents' ability to teach was significantly high in age group, gender and geographical background alike.

Fisher's exact test found that there is a significant association with the location of school at which respondents would like to teach with a change to another career and consideration of their careers. There is not much difference from the findings of this study compared to what is reported in the literature review. For instance, this study has found that the reported ease of getting a teaching job and the influence of former teachers have greatly influenced their choice of becoming teachers.

In the next chapter an overview, research findings regarding the research aims, a conclusion regarding the hypothesis, recommendations for improvement of

practice and further research and concluding remarks on the study are provided. Analysis of data is continued in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

Overview, findings, conclusion, recommendations and concluding remarks

5.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa, like many other countries in the world, experiences teacher attrition and the intentions of those remaining in the profession are not always clearly stated. For a number of years, the number of students enrolling to be trained as teachers has increased despite challenges and anomalies facing the profession. A general overview of this study is provided in this final chapter. Furthermore, an indication is given whether the research aims as stated in section 1.10 of Chapter 1 had been addressed satisfactorily.

A deductive explanation of the findings of the study is provided after the analysis and interpretation of data, being the purpose of this chapter. In addition a conclusion regarding the hypothesis is provided. Two types of recommendations, i.e. recommendations for improvement of practice and for further research are made. Concluding remarks for the whole chapter constitute the final paragraph.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the reasons why student teachers join teaching. The rationale for this study is the reported decline in the status of the teaching profession due to various reasons. In addition, the contradictory reports on the shortage of teachers and reasons behind the choice of the teaching profession by student teachers also motivated the researcher to examine the identified problems.

The map for this study is delineated in Chapter 1, where the researcher presented the orientation, theoretical and contextual frameworks, and demarcation of the

study, problem statement, research questions, validity and reliability; and limitations and the significance of the study.

The research problem was identified as follows: Why are students still registering for teaching in South Africa today, despite of the fact that the teaching profession has been called an “unattractive career choice”? The following sub-questions were formulated to support the development of the research:

- What factors encouraged student teachers to enrol as education students?
- How do student teachers perceive the teaching profession?
- What are the student teachers’ expectations of teaching as a profession?
- What factors dissuaded student teachers from enrolling as education students?

A report on the relevant literature study was presented in Chapter 2. Significant areas in the teaching profession are discussed in this chapter. These comprise teaching as a career in South Africa and career motivations and perceptions of the teaching profession. The literature study covered expectations of student teachers regarding the teaching profession and factors that could have dissuaded them from enrolling as education students. Evidence from the literature indicated a decline in the status of the teaching profession and that, despite these disparities more students enrolled for teaching every year (Department of Educational, 2000).

Chapter 3 dealt with the research design and method and explained the reasons for choosing a particular research design. Sampling methods and the hypothesis of this study are outlined.

The analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings of the quantitative data feature in Chapter 4.

5.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

In Chapter 1 paragraph 1.5 the problem stated is: Why are students registering for teaching in South Africa today, despite the teaching profession being called an “unattractive career choice”? This study was conducted to answer the primary question of what South African student teachers’ perceptions and expectations of

the teaching profession are. Evidence from the literature indicates that those who chose to become teachers did so for their love of children, to contribute to the community and because of desirable working conditions. It has been found that teacher salaries are not a major reason for choosing teaching as a career. However, this notion was contradicted by further findings from the literature study that those who left the profession did so because of their desire for a higher income.

The empirical research findings indicate that a love for children and a desire to contribute to the community are altruistic reasons why respondents chose to become teachers. Prospective teachers, despite teacher salaries being very low choose to become teachers. A synopsis of the responses to the four research questions is provided below.

5.3.1 What factors encourage student teachers to enrol as education students?

The literature study has revealed that altruistic reasons motivate students to become teachers. These reasons include a love for children, a desire to contribute to the community and love of the teaching profession. Findings from the study indicated the same reasons motivated respondents to choose teaching as their career. However, the researcher has found that teaching hours and prospects of long holidays are also an encouragement to student teachers to enrol for the teaching profession. In addition, confidence about their ability to teach and acquire teaching skills have been found to be very important motivating factors to become teachers; prospective teachers are also influenced by their own teachers.

5.3.2 How do student teachers perceive the teaching profession?

The findings from the study indicate that a heavy workload within the teaching profession is evident. Despite literature reports on the negative publicity and representation of teachers' work, the researcher found that this is not regarded to be an obstacle in becoming a teacher. The study has also found that both females

and males of all age groups perceive teaching as a high status occupation and this greatly influences their choice in becoming teachers.

5.3.3 What are the student teachers' expectations of teaching as a profession?

The study has shown that student teachers expect to remain in the teaching profession and not change to another career. This is contrary to what literature studies indicate. It is reported in the literature review that teachers leave the profession within five years of becoming teachers.

The literature further reports the difficulty that education authorities face to retain teachers in the system. These challenges include a lack of teaching resources, teacher salaries, overcrowded classes, violence in schools, work overload, lack of teacher autonomy in decision-making, rapid changes in policies, etc. Despite all these challenges, student teachers are keen to join and remain in the teaching profession.

5.3.4 What factors would dissuade student teachers from enrolling as education students?

The literature review reported various factors that could dissuade prospective teachers from joining the teaching profession. Such factors include working conditions, a lack of discipline in schools, unprofessional conduct of teachers, and job demands. The researcher has found that student teachers do not perceive these challenges as a deterrent from joining the teaching profession.

5.4 ATTAINMENT OF AIMS

The aims of this study were reported in Chapter 1, in section 5.2. The researcher seemed to have been successful in attaining the aims in that various factors related to why student teachers enrol for the teaching profession have been identified. Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession have been identified, analysed and coordinated and recommendations

made. In addition to student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession, factors that encourage them to enrol for the profession have been identified together with factors that could discourage them from enrolling as prospective teachers.

Suggested measures to improve working conditions in the teaching profession to recruit prospective teachers and retain them were secondary outcomes of this study. Recommendations to restructure and improve the teaching profession were made. It is against this backdrop that the researcher believes that the research aims have been achieved.

5.5 SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

For a more comprehensive summary of the major findings, the following categories were developed: (a) career prospects and interest in teaching, (b) flexibility and working hours in the teaching profession, (c) teaching ability, (d) influences on the decision to join the teaching profession and (e) the status of the teaching profession. These aspects are discussed in detail below.

5.5.1 Career prospects and interest in the teaching profession

It has been found that teaching is believed to offer a steady career and a secure job. With regard to teachers' salary, it has been found that the profession is seen to provide a reliable income and is viewed as a fulfilling career. The love of working with children and the opportunity to make a positive contribution to society have been found to make education an ideal career prospect for the respondents. Contrary to the literature reports on teacher attrition or the exodus of teachers from the teaching profession having a chilling effect on students enrolling for education (Boe & Bobbit, 1997; Harrell *et al.*, 2004; Latham & Vogt, 2007); respondents in this study indicated to be keen to join and remain in the teaching profession despite the challenges. Furthermore, how much teachers are paid has not been found to be a negative factor. In general, respondents reported to have joined teaching mostly for altruistic reasons.

5.5.2 Flexibility and working hours in the teaching profession

In this study, it had been found that the flexibility and working hours of the teaching profession were considered to be an incentive to the teaching staff but not the sole motivation for joining the profession. The flexibility of the profession offers teachers enough time for self-development and further studies; it allows the teaching staff to spend more time with their families and go on holidays. A lifelong opportunity to learn has been found to be an encouragement for choosing to become a teacher.

5.5.3 Teaching ability

Students who participated in this study indicated that they believe they have the qualities of a good teacher and that teaching is suited to their abilities. Students also reported that they have good teaching skills.

5.5.4 Influences to join the teaching profession

Findings from this study indicated that the choice of becoming a teacher was influenced by various aspects. The reported ease of getting a teaching job was reported by respondents to be a great motivator for joining teaching. This notion could unfortunately imply that such prospective teachers would probably not stay in teaching and could contribute to the exodus of many teachers from the profession. This could also mean that teaching serves as a stepping stone to other careers. Parents, family members and experiences with previous teachers have also been found to be factors that encourage respondents to choose teaching as their career. Of course, whether these respondents become exemplary teachers or not, could possibly be linked to the behaviour of their previous teachers.

5.5.5 Status of the teaching profession within the community

Teacher professionalism and the status of teaching in South Africa leave much to be desired. The behaviour of teachers in schools and in public determines how the community perceive the teaching profession. Bad teacher behaviour has a

negative impact on learner performance and this could also lead to violence in schools – a major challenge in the education fraternity. This study has found that, despite negative reports by media and challenges faced by the profession, respondents are not dissuaded from joining teaching for these reasons. Respondents indicated that teachers are perceived as professionals who have a high morale and that teaching is a high status job. With regard to teacher attrition or the exodus from the teaching profession, this study has found that, despite these challenges, respondents are likely to remain in the profession and exhibit professional behaviour.

The findings of this study correlate well with the findings of the literature study with regard to the motivation for joining the teaching profession. The study has found that respondents joined teaching to be able to make a contribution to society, for the love of children and because they love teaching. It is also reported in the literature review that teacher salaries are not motivators to join teaching; this study echoes similar findings. However, the researcher expected respondents to be mostly women as it is an assumption that the teaching profession is mostly for women as compared to their male counterparts.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study indicated that students teachers chose to become teachers for various reasons, some of which are attested to by literature studies. Below are the recommendations based on what the researcher has found to be the most critical areas of the findings. Two types of recommendations are provided; i.e. recommendations for improvement of practice and recommendations for further study.

5.6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICE

Below are recommendations for improvement of practice.

5.6.1.1 Introduction of salary tax relief for teachers

Literature studies report that teacher salaries are rated the lowest compared to those of other professions, and that teachers find it difficult to support their families on the salary they earn (See section 4.2 on page 70); this leads to them leaving the profession for better paying jobs.

It is recommended that the national Government exempt teachers from paying tax on their salaries. This will assist in the retention of those teachers who are already in the system. In addition, this decision will lure skilled teachers into joining teaching. Although this argument is not based on participant responses, there is sufficient public debate on the issue to justify the articulation of the researcher's view in this regard.

Arguments can be raised to counter the recommendation for tax relief for teachers' salaries. For example, some could argue that tax relief, if granted, may not meet the criteria of equality in terms of the canons of taxation originally laid down by economist Smith (2003:1231), and enshrined in the South African Constitution because there are other civil servants working under similar circumstances and conditions as teachers and being paid meagre salaries. In terms of the principle or canon of equity, also called fairness of taxes, it is incumbent on every individual to pay tax depending upon his or her ability to pay. In particular, in terms of horizontal fairness there should be equal tax treatment of those in similar circumstances (Steyn, 2010:226-227). However, these valid concerns and contested recommendations could be addressed through tax relief or forms of exemption.

It may also be argued that the improvement of teacher salaries can simply be achieved through increasing the annual notch to reach a higher salary scale. But one must consider how personal income tax can affect a teacher's final take-home salary.

5.6.1.2 Intensified capacity building and skilling of educators

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education embark on capacity building and skills improvement and/or transference programmes that are integral to strengthening and uplifting the teaching profession. This, in the researcher's view, will support the recruitment and retention of the most effective educators and achieve the desired learning outcomes.

Professional educators are a critical component of transforming our education system. Also, educators' professional development is an important aspect of a transformative and comprehensive school system reform. This view has been buttressed by the view of the American Federation of Teachers (2002):

The nation can adopt rigorous standards, set forth a visionary scenario, compile the best research about how students learn, change textbooks and assessment, promote teaching strategies that have been successful with a wide range of students, and change all the other elements involved in systemic reform — but without professional development, school reform and improved achievement for all students will not happen.

For their part, the educator training institutions must prepare professional educators through appropriate professional growth programmes. A word of caution is that the Department must avoid fragmented one size fits all professional development programmes (Redding & Kamm, 1999; Dunn & Dunn, 1998). The professional development of educators must be aligned with curriculum design. However, it must be admitted that the constant changing of South Africa's curriculum design may render achieving this goal difficult.

5.6.1.3 Re-imagining educator's professional identity through improved professional virtue

It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education embark on a holistic drive to re-imagine educator's professional identity through improved professional virtue. The Department can be assisted by teacher unions in achieving the objectives of this recommendation.

The nobility of the status of the teaching profession was indicated as one of the issues that influence entry into the teaching profession. Unfortunately, the profession has experienced a decline in status. Educational International, a global affiliation of teachers' unions and federations constituted in 1993 by a merger between the International Federation of Free Trade Unions and World Federation of Teaching Professionals, has been at the forefront of improving professional virtues through, among others, a Professional Code of Ethics that seeks to revive and maintain core beliefs about education profession (Education International, 2002; Education International, 2004; Education International, 2007). According to Sockett (1993), the concept of professional virtue is central to the development of the profession. It is a multi-faceted virtue with many variables including, but not limited to, demand of accountability, valuing education, servant leadership and servant discharge of professional duties in the service of humanity, and ethical dealing with all stakeholders.

Recommendations for further study follow below.

5.6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In light of the limitations experienced in this study, further research including the following should be conducted:

- 5.6.2.1 Further research on the topic should be undertaken in more than one university to allow for diverse representation of races and to include diverse geographical backgrounds and more training programme endorsements.
- 5.6.2.2 Qualitative methodology that includes conducting individual and group interviews on the respondents' opinions will help in the investigation of their perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession. This method should be employed to augment the quantitative method. Enough and proper time should be arranged in time for the completion of questionnaires and conducting interviews.

5.6.2.3 Further research should also be conducted on student teachers who are in their final year of study to investigate if they feel the same about their career choice as they did when they first enrolled for education.

5.6.2.4 It is reported in the literature that violence in schools is a matter with which education systems are struggling and fighting a losing battle (Ncube *et al.*, 2013). Some schools can afford to employ security personnel in their schools paid by the school's governing body. However, this effort is not addressing the root of the problem. It is an obligation of the Government to ensure safety and security in schools. Learners' rights to a safe and secure schooling environment are protected by law. In particular, section 28 (1) of the South African Constitution states that "every child has the right to be protected from, among others, neglect, abuse or degradation". South Africa as a signatory to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child is obligated to pass laws and enforce measures to protect the child from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation. Equally important is securing the safety of teachers at schools, which find expression in section 10 of the Constitution stating that everyone, including the teacher, has the right to have his/her dignity respected and protected.

It is recommended that the influence of anticipated security or lack thereof influences prospective teachers' career choices.

5.6.2.5 A lack of resources such as skilled teachers and teaching materials is behind the removal of children from school to school in urban areas (previously known as Model C schools) because that is where parents believe there are skilled teachers and that these schools are well equipped. Infrastructure is a critical component of transforming the South African education system, and therefore it is critical to strengthen and elevate the importance of infrastructure development and improvement as a priority area. The Department of Basic Education needs to maintain the necessary infrastructure and resources if the

country is to succeed in attracting and retaining the most effective educators and achieve the learning outcomes we seek. Part of this process will be to build or refurbish schools to ease classroom overcrowding, and to ensure that schools in rural areas are equipped with the necessary infrastructure.

It is notable that the Government has a programme called the Accelerated Schools Infrastructure Development Initiative (ASIDI) to eradicate inappropriate infrastructure such as mud schools and addressing backlogs in basic services, for example water and sanitation. However, ASIDI at times has missed its target dates and experienced challenges of lack of proper planning.

It is recommended that a study be undertaken to explore the possible link between infrastructure, and the development or lack of development thereof, and the attractiveness of teaching as a career.

5.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research was designed to be deductive, descriptive and empirical, premised on theories and quantitative evidence. The study has some limitations that do not suggest that this study is not relevant or necessary. Furthermore, this study does not suggest that responses from respondents are a direct indication of the reality in the teaching profession. Limitations of this study include the following:

- 5.7.1 The study was undertaken at one university with respondents being almost exclusively black, which could render the findings based only on one race biased.
- 5.7.2 A questionnaire was used as the only method of data collection and therefore additional information to augment the data collected through the questionnaires could not be elicited from respondents. No interviews were conducted with respondents.
- 5.7.3 The time allocated for the completion of the questionnaire was rushed due to the fact that respondents realised during the completion that

they needed to attend and write a semester test. This could have resulted in respondents rushing through the questions and answering without proper reflection and understanding.

- 5.7.4 Although the researcher explained the rationale of the questions included in the questionnaire prior to respondents answering, more respondents joined in after the explanation and it is possible that they might have not understood some of the questions.

Despite all these limitations, the researcher believes that the findings of this study contribute to our understanding of how students perceive the teaching profession and what they expect from the profession under present conditions.

5.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The South African teaching profession continues to attract high enrolment numbers compared to other professions (Educational Statistics South Africa, 2000). However, findings in this study have revealed some critical areas that need to be addressed for the betterment of the expectations and perceptions of student teachers of the teaching profession. On a positive note, some of the respondents in this study have voiced their trust and belief in the teaching profession in particular and the education environment in South Africa in general. However, there are those who expressed discouragement and demotivation owing to several factors linked to the environment and a sense of apathy, indifference and disconnectedness to the value of the teaching profession.

It is hoped that the recommended interventions will go some way toward alleviating the negative perceptions about the teaching profession in South Africa. Finally it can be concluded that the future of the teaching profession in South Africa is not as bleak as some studies may argue or have presented. The continued high enrolment of student teachers bears testimony that a career in teaching remains one of the important careers in South Africa, notwithstanding the challenges that the profession is experiencing. Taking into account the findings and recommendations above, there is hope for a progressive realisation of all the necessary interventions for a positive outlook of expectations and perceptions of

student teachers of the teaching profession; also for the re-imagining of the teaching profession.

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Tshwane University
of Technology

We empower people

10 Years
2004-2014

Senate Committee for Research Ethics

The TUT Research Ethics Committee is a registered Institutional Review Board (IRB 00005968) with the US Office for Human Research Protections (IORG# 0004997) (Expires 9 Jan 2017). Also, it has Federal Wide Assurance for the Protection of Human Subjects for International Institutions (FWA 00011501) (Expires 22 Jan 2019). In South Africa it is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-160509-21).

October 7, 2014

Ref #: REC2014/01/016
Name: Sibanda GM
Student #: Univ of Pretoria

Ms GM Sibanda

Dept of Education Management, Policy and Law

Faculty of Education

University of Pretoria

Dear Ms Sibanda,

Confirmation: Final Approval & Title Change

Name: Sibanda GM

Old Proposal Title: *University student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in South Africa*

New Proposal Title: *Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university*

Qualification: M Ed (Education, Management, Law and Policy), University of Pretoria

Supervisor: Prof JL Beckmann

- **Letter, Title Change**

- The Senate Committee for Research Ethics (SCRE), Tshwane University of Technology (TUT) took due note of the Letter from the University of Pretoria, Faculty of Education (dated May 21, 2014).



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The Chairperson of the Senate Committee for Research Ethics (SCRE), Tshwane University of Technology, perused the submitted UP Letter on October 7, 2014. The **final ethics approval and title change is confirmed**. The confirmation letter will be tabled at the next SCRE meeting on November 3, 2014 for notification.

Yours sincerely,



WA HOFFMANN (Dr)
Chairperson: Senate Committee for Research Ethics
[Ref#2014=01=016=SibandaGM]



We empower people





GM SIBANDA

11322030

Ethics Ref: EM 13/08/01

Dear Professor Elsabe Coetzee

I am a student through the University of Pretoria. I am currently enrolled for a MEd (Research Masters) in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies in the Faculty of Education. I have to complete a research module and one of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work. I would like to ask you whether you will be willing to allow me to conduct part of this research in your Faculty (Faculty of Humanities).

The topic of my research is: **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university**. The teaching profession has been referred to as an "unattractive career choice" by many researchers worldwide. It is almost impossible to comprehend why student teachers still choose teaching profession as their prospective career. The purpose of this study is to investigate why students are registering for teaching in South Africa today.

If you agree to allow me to conduct research in your Faculty, first year students enrolled in education will be requested to complete a questionnaire. The instrument will seek to collect:

- Biographical and demographic data about the students (gender, age, home language, race (for statistical purposes only), course specification, geographical background, language of learning, highest qualification and who pays for their studies).
- Students' motives for choosing teaching.
- Students' perceptions on the teaching profession.
- Students' expectations of the profession.

The questionnaire will comprise two sections; section A dealing with demographic and biographic details and section B which will include questions/items regarding student teachers' motives for choosing teaching as a career, their perceptions of the teaching profession, their expectations of the profession and lastly what factors could have dissuaded them from choosing teaching. In section B participants will be requested to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the provided statements on a Likert scale ranging from A = strongly disagree; B = disagree; C = neutral; D = agree; E = strongly agree.

The completion of the questionnaire will take place at a venue and time that will suit the students, but it will not interfere with their teaching and learning activities and time; and will not take longer than an hour.

The information students provide on the questionnaire will only be accessed by myself and my supervisor and will be regarded as confidential and anonymous. Students will receive a letter to inform them about the research that will be conducted. Student participation is voluntary and can be withdrawn at any time. The identity of the university and all the participants will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know which university was used in this research and the information will be treated as confidential. A pseudonym will be used for your university during data collection and analysis. The information will only be used for academic purposes. Collected data will be in my possession and my supervisor's and will be stored safely for 15 years at the university's Education Management and Policy Studies Department in accordance with the university's policy requirements.

If you agree to allow me to conduct this research in your university, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below, or via E-mail.



Name of student : Gladys Mankoana Sibanda
Contact number for student : 079 019 7585/012 382 9623
E-mail address of student : sibandag@tut.ac.za



Name of Supervisor : Professor Johan Beckmann
Contact number for supervisor : 082 570 1825/012 420 2571
E-mail address of supervisor : johan.beckmann21@gmail.com
: johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

Consent form

I, Professor Elsabe Coetzee, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities agree to allow Gladys Mankoana Sibanda to conduct research in this university. The topic of the research being: **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African University**. I understand that first year students enrolled in education will be requested to complete a questionnaire about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that will suit them (students), but that will not interfere with teaching and learning activities and time.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____ Date: 14 February 2014



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Consent form

I, **Professor Elsabe Coetzee**, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Humanities agree to allow Gladys Mankoana Sibanda to conduct research in this university. The topic of the research being: **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university**. I understand that first year students enrolled in education will be requested to complete a questionnaire about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that will suit them (students), but that will not interfere with teaching and learning activities and time.

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- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E. Coetzee', written over a horizontal line.

Date: 14 February 2014



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA
Faculty of Education

21 May 2014

STUDENT NO: 11322030

Mrs GM Sibanda
655 Umtoma Avenue
Doornpoort
0186

Dear Mrs Sibanda

APPROVAL OF TITLE: DISSERTATION

DEGREE: MEd: Education Management, Law and Policy

I have pleasure in informing you that the following has been approved:

TITLE: Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university

SUPERVISOR: Prof JL Beckman

CO-SUPERVISOR:

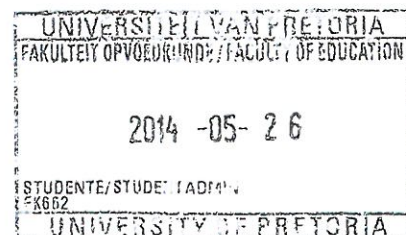
The requirements for dissertations are listed in the General Information and Regulations of the University. Consult Regulations G.30 to G.61 which are related to mini-dissertations and the assessment thereof.

Summarised guidelines for the submission and technical details of dissertations, a checklist as well as a "Notice of Submission" are attached. Kindly note that, in accordance with Regulation G.60 1(a), your written "Notice of Submission" should reach the Student Administration three months prior to submission.

Your registration as a student must be renewed annually before 28 February until you have complied with all the requirements for the degree. You will only be entitled to the guidance of your supervisor if annual proof of registration is submitted.

Yours sincerely

for DEAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION





Dear student teacher

I am currently enrolled for my Med (Masters) in the Faculty of Education. One of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a research report about my work.

I would like to ask you whether you will be willing to participate in this research.

The topic of my research is: **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university**. The teaching profession has been referred to as an "unattractive career choice" by many researchers worldwide. It is almost impossible to comprehend why student teachers still choose teaching profession as their prospective career. The purpose of this study is to investigate why students are registering for teaching in South Africa today.

If you agree to participate, you will be requested to complete a questionnaire. The instrument will seek to collect:

- Biographical and demographic data about your gender, age, home language, race (for statistical purposes only), course specification, geographical background, language of learning, highest qualification and who pays for your studies.
- Your motives for choosing teaching.
- Your perceptions on the teaching profession.
- Your expectations on the profession.

The questionnaire will comprise two sections; section A dealing with demographic and biographic details and section B which will include questions/items regarding your motives for choosing teaching as a career, your perceptions of the teaching profession, your expectations of the profession and lastly what factors could have dissuaded you from choosing teaching. In section B you will be requested to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the provided statement on a Likert scale ranging from A = strongly disagree; B = disagree; C = neutral; D = agree; E = strongly.

The completion of the questionnaire will take place at a venue and time that will suit you, but it may not interfere with your teaching and learning activities and time; and will not take longer than an hour.

The information you provide on the questionnaire will only be accessed by myself and my supervisor and will be regarded as confidential and anonymous.

Your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw from participating at any time. Your identity and that of the university will be protected. Only my supervisor and I will know which university was used in this research and the information will be treated as confidential. A pseudonym will be used for the university. The information given will only be used for academic purposes. Collected data will be in my possession and my supervisor's and will be locked up for safety and confidentiality purposes. After completion of the study, the material 15 years at the university's Education Management and Policy Studies Department in accordance with the university's policy requirements will be stored for.

If you agree to take part in this research, please fill in the consent form provided below. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact my supervisor or me at the numbers given below, or via E-mail.



Name of student : Gladys Mankoana Sibanda
Contact number for students : 079 019 7585/012 382 9623
E-mail address of student : sibandag@tut.ac.za



Name of Supervisor : Professor Johan Beckmann
Contact number for supervisor : 082 570 1825/012 420 2571
E-mail address of supervisor : johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

Consent form

I, _____ (your name), agree / do not agree (delete what is not applicable) to take part in the research project titled: **Student teachers' perceptions and expectations of the teaching profession in a South African university**. I understand that I will be requested to complete a questionnaire about this topic for approximately one hour at a venue and time that will suit me, but that will not interfere with teaching and learning activities and time.

I understand that the researcher subscribes to the principles of:

- *Voluntary participation* in research, implying that the participants might withdraw from the research at any time.
- *Informed consent*, meaning that research participants must at all times be fully informed about the research process and purposes, and must give consent to their participation in the research.
- *Safety in participation*; put differently, that the human respondents should not be placed at risk or harm of any kind e.g., research with young children.
- *Privacy*, meaning that the *confidentiality* and *anonymity* of human respondents should be protected at all times.
- *Trust*, which implies that human respondents will not be respondent to any acts of deception or betrayal in the research process or its published outcomes.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THE MOTIVES FOR CHOOSING TEACHING QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a Masters student in the Faculty of Education. One of the requirements is that I conduct research and write a report about my work. You are therefore humbly requested to take time and answer the questions below. The questionnaire has 5 sections and 91 questions all in all. The completion of the questionnaire will not take longer than an hour. Kindly note that participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw from taking part any time without penalty. Note also that you may not write your names on the questionnaire. The information you provide will be treated as confidential. A report on my research will be available for you upon request.

This study would also contribute to future research on aspects that are relevant and inherent to this study but were not researched or reported on. Policy makers may also establish long term mechanisms of how to make the teaching profession attractive and develop a career path for aspirant student teachers from the findings and recommendations of this study. Below are the contact details of my supervisor and I Should you wish to make request of the report, you can contact me on sibandag@tut.ac.za:



Name of student	: Gladys Mankoana Sibanda
Contact number for student	: 079 019 7585/012 382 9623
E-mail address of student	: sibandag@tut.ac.za



Name of Supervisor	: Professor Johan Beckmann
Contact number for supervisor	: 082 570 1825/012 420 2571
E-mail address of supervisor	: johan.beckmann21@gmail.com : johan.beckmann@up.ac.za

PLEASE ANSWER THE QUESTIONS STARTING ON THE NEXT PAGE.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL AND DEMOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Please tick the appropriate block with an X or write in the space provided to provide answers to the following questions:

For official use only

Questionnaire number

A0

1. Gender

Female		
Male		

A1

2. Age _____ years

A2

3. Home language (please tick one you speak the most at home)

Sesotho		
IsiXhosa		
English		
Sepedi		
Afrikaans		
IsiZulu		
IsiNdebele		
Setswana		
SiSwati		
Tshivenda		
Xitsonga		
Other (please specify):		

A3

4. Race (Please note that this is for statistical purposes only)

Black		
Coloured		
Indian		
White		
Other (please specify):		

A4

5. Course specification

Further Education and Training (FET – High schools)		
General Education and Training (GET – Primary schools)		

A5

6. Geographical background (This section requires information on your home town)

Rural		A6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Township			
Urban			
Other (please specify)			

7. Highest qualification level

Matric		A7	<input type="checkbox"/>
National Diploma/Certificate			
Bachelor's Degree/Equivalent			
B.Ed./ Honours Degree			
Masters Degree			
Doctorate			

8. Result of Matriculation examination

School leaving certificate (diploma)		A8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Admission to bachelor's degree studies			
Other (please specify)			

9. Who pays for your studies? (Mark all applicable)

Father		A9.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mother		A9.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family member (siblings e.g. sisters or brothers)		A9.3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Relative (e.g. uncle, aunt, nephew, etc.)		A9.4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scholarship		A9.5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bursary		A9.6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tertiary loans (Eduloan, NFSAS, etc.)		A9.7	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community organisation/church		A9.8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)		A9.9	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Language in which you believe you will teach (Mark all applicable)

isiNdebele		A10.1	<input type="checkbox"/>
isiXhosa		A10.2	<input type="checkbox"/>
isiZulu		A10.3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sesotho sa Leboa		A10.4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sesotho		A10.5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Setswana		A10.6	<input type="checkbox"/>

Question 10 (Continued) Language in which you believe you will teach		For official use only
English		A10.7 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
siSwati		A10.8 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Afrikaans		A10.9 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Tshivenda		A10.10 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Xitsonga		A10.11 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)		A10.12 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>

11. Location of school at which you would like to teach.

Rural		A11 <input style="width: 20px; height: 20px;" type="checkbox"/>
Township		
Urban		
No preference		
Other (please specify)		

SECTION B: FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGED YOU TO ENROL AS EDUCATION STUDENT.

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- Mark with (X) EACH item. You may **NOT** mark one item more than once.

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
1.	I am interested in teaching.	1	2	3	4	B1	
2.	Teaching offers a reasonable assurance of an adequate income.	1	2	3	4	B2	
3.	The nature of teaching could allow more family time.	1	2	3	4	B3	
4.	I like the possibilities for advancement within the profession.	1	2	3	4	B4	
5.	My friends think I should become a teacher.	1	2	3	4	B5	
6.	The enthusiasm of some former teacher for his work has influenced me.	1	2	3	4	B6	
7.	As a teacher I will have lengthy holidays.	1	2	3	4	B7	
8.	My parents wanted me to be a teacher.	1	2	3	4	B8	
9.	I have the qualities of a good teacher.	1	2	3	4	B9	
10.	It was a natural choice, since many of the members of my family are teachers.	1	2	3	4	B10	

SECTION B continued: FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGES YOU TO ENROL AS EDUCATION STUDENT

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
11.	Teaching allows me to provide a service to society.	1	2	3	4	B11	
12.	The reported ease of getting a teaching position has greatly influenced my choice	1	2	3	4	B12	
13.	I have always wanted to be a teacher.	1	2	3	4	B13	
14.	Long holidays are available for purposes of study, travel and relaxation.	1	2	3	4	B14	
15.	Teaching will allow me to shape child/adolescent values.	1	2	3	4	B15	
16.	The retirement system provides social and economic security.	1	2	3	4	B16	
17.	Because of my special interest in dealing with children and/or young people.	1	2	3	4	B17	
18.	I was unsure of what career I wanted.	1	2	3	4	B18	
19.	The opportunity for service to mankind.	1	2	3	4	B19	
20.	I like teaching.	1	2	3	4	B20	
21.	The profession offers a lifelong opportunity to learn.	1	2	3	4	B21	
22.	The ethics of the profession has been a deciding factor.	1	2	3	4	B22	
23.	I want to help children/adolescents learn.	1	2	3	4	B23	
24.	Majoring in a special field, I can either teach or engage in an occupation related to my field of specialisation.	1	2	3	4	B24	
25.	I want a job that involves working with children/adolescents.	1	2	3	4	B25	
26.	Teaching gives me an opportunity for exercising individual initiative.	1	2	3	4	B26	
27.	It was my only available career choice because I could not enrol for any other qualification.	1	2	3	4	B27	
28.	Teaching will offer a steady career path.	1	2	3	4	B28	
29.	Teaching hours will fit with the responsibility of having a family.	1	2	3	4	B29	
30.	I did not qualify for enrolment in any other university programme.	1	2	3	4	B30	
31.	Teaching is a career suited to my abilities.	1	2	3	4	B31	
32.	I have had inspirational teachers.	1	2	3	4	B32	
33.	As a teacher I will have a short working day.	1	2	3	4	B33	
34.	I have good teaching skills.	1	2	3	4	B34	
35.	There is no other university programme in which I would like to enrol.	1	2	3	4	B35	
36.	Teachers make a worthwhile social contribution.	1	2	3	4	B36	
37.	A teaching qualification is recognised everywhere.	1	2	3	4	B37	
38.	Teaching will be a secure job.	1	2	3	4	B38	
39.	Teaching will allow me to have an impact on children.	1	2	3	4	B39	
40.	Teaching will allow me to influence the next generation.	1	2	3	4	B40	
41.	My family think I should become a teacher.	1	2	3	4	B41	

SECTION B continued: FACTORS THAT ENCOURAGES YOU TO ENROL AS EDUCATION STUDENT

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
42.	Teaching will allow me to work against social disadvantage.	1	2	3	4	B42	<input type="checkbox"/>
43.	I want to work in a child/adolescent-centred environment.	1	2	3	4	B43	<input type="checkbox"/>
44.	Teaching will provide a reliable income.	1	2	3	4	B44	<input type="checkbox"/>
45.	School holidays will fit in family commitments.	1	2	3	4	B45	<input type="checkbox"/>
46.	I have had good teachers as role models.	1	2	3	4	B46	<input type="checkbox"/>
47.	Teaching enables me to 'give back' to society.	1	2	3	4	B47	<input type="checkbox"/>
48.	I was not accepted into my first choice career.	1	2	3	4	B48	<input type="checkbox"/>
49.	Teaching will allow me to raise the ambitions of underprivileged youth.	1	2	3	4	B49	<input type="checkbox"/>
50.	Teaching will be a secure job.	1	2	3	4	B50	<input type="checkbox"/>
51.	I have had positive learning experiences.	1	2	3	4	B51	<input type="checkbox"/>
52.	People I have worked with think I should become a teacher.	1	2	3	4	B52	<input type="checkbox"/>
53.	A teaching job will allow me to choose where I wish to live.	1	2	3	4	B53	<input type="checkbox"/>
54.	Teaching was a last-resort career.	1	2	3	4	B54	<input type="checkbox"/>
55.	Teaching will allow me to benefit the socially disadvantaged.	1	2	3	4	B55	<input type="checkbox"/>
56.	Teaching is a fulfilling career.	1	2	3	4	B56	<input type="checkbox"/>
57.	My previous vocational plans were too unsure.	1	2	3	4	B57	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION C: YOUR PERCEPTIONS ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- Mark with (X) EACH item. You may **NOT** mark one item more than once.

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree		
58.	I think teaching is well paid.	1	2	3	4	C58	<input type="checkbox"/>
59.	I think teachers have a heavy workload.	1	2	3	4	C59	<input type="checkbox"/>
60.	I think teachers earn a good salary.	1	2	3	4	C60	<input type="checkbox"/>
61.	I think teachers are perceived as professionals.	1	2	3	4	C61	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION C continued: YOUR PERCEPRION ON THE TEACHING PROFESSION						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
62.	I think teachers have high morale.	1	2	3	4	C62
63.	I think teaching is a highly skilled occupation.	1	2	3	4	C63
64.	I think teaching is emotionally demanding.	1	2	3	4	C64
65.	I believe teaching is perceived as a high-status occupation.	1	2	3	4	C65
66.	I think teachers feel valued by society.	1	2	3	4	C66
67.	I think teaching requires high level of expert knowledge.	1	2	3	4	C67
68.	I think teaching is hard work.	1	2	3	4	C68
69.	I believe teaching is a well-respected career.	1	2	3	4	C69
70.	I think teachers feel their occupation had high social status.	1	2	3	4	C70
71.	I think teachers need high level of technical knowledge.	1	2	3	4	C71
72.	I think teachers need highly specialised knowledge.	1	2	3	4	C72

SECTION D: YOUR EXPECTATIONS OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- Mark with (X) EACH item. You may **NOT** mark one item more than once.

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
73.	I am very sure that I will stay in the teaching profession.	1	2	3	4	D73
74.	I may change to another career.	1	2	3	4	D74
75.	I am confident that I will not consider other careers.	1	2	3	4	D75
76.	I am sure that I will persist in a teaching career.	1	2	3	4	D76
77.	I will demonstrate my competence as a teacher satisfactorily.	1	2	3	4	D77
78.	I will exhibit professional behaviour.	1	2	3	4	D78
79.	I am sure I will maintain good professional relations with the teaching personnel	1	2	3	4	D79
80.	I will maintain academic integrity.	1	2	3	4	D80

SECTION E: FACTORS THAT MADE ME DOUBT MY CHOICE FOR THE TEACHING PROFESSION.

- Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.
- Mark with (X) EACH item. You may **NOT** mark one item more than once.

1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
81.	Own ability to teach.	1	2	3	4	E81
82.	Perceived job demands.	1	2	3	4	E82
83.	Teacher salaries.	1	2	3	4	E83
84.	Low interest in teaching profession in the country.	1	2	3	4	E84
85.	Society's attitude towards teaching.	1	2	3	4	E85
86.	Violence in schools.	1	2	3	4	E86
87.	Unprofessional conduct of teachers.	1	2	3	4	E87
88.	Low prestige (status) of the teaching profession compared to other professions.	1	2	3	4	E88
89.	Working conditions.	1	2	3	4	E89
90.	Disciplinary problems in schools	1	2	3	4	E90
91	I am sure I will maintain good professional relations with the community.					

I would like to thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. Much appreciated.