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# TEACHER EDUCATION AND SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION IN POST APARTHEID NAMIBIA: THE LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF THE BASIC EDUCATION TEACHER DIPLOMA PROGRAM

BY

KAMWI JOHN NYAMBE ©

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

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## FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled TEACHER EDUCATION AND SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATION IN POST APARTHEID NAMIBIA: THE LIMITS AND POSSIBILITIES OF THE BASIC EDUCATION TEACHER DIPLOMA PROGRAM submitted by KAMWI JOHN NYAMBE in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in International/Intercultural Education.

Dr. S. H. Toh, Supervisor

Dr. F. Judson

Dr. M. Assheton-Smith

Date: Jan 29, 1996

TO

MY WIFE AND COLLEAGUE:
CLEMENTINA MASIYE NYAMBE

AND ALL THE BELOVED ONES:
NYAMBE NYAMBE, MARIA NYAMBE, INAMBAO NYAMBE
AND
MARIA LUTIBEZI NYAMBE

# ABSTRACT

As a crucial component of education and development in the newly independent South nations, teacher education plays a significant strategic role in societal transformation and development. The ultimate key to the success or failures of education in mediating for societal transformation partly lies both in the quality and quantity of teachers produced. However, whether or not the role of teacher education in societal transformation is realized depends largely on the underlying world view or paradigm which underpins the teacher education system and the entire education system in general. The post-independent or post-world War II efforts at social change based in the modernization paradigm have demonstrated that unless the world view or the paradigm is appropriate and people oriented in terms of producing teachers who are critical and transformative intellectuals, teacher education will actively exacerbate poverty and underdevelopment. Societal transformation geared to alleviate poverty therefore calls for an appropriate paradigm of teacher education, appropriate educational aims, approaches and implementation.

This study endeavored to explore and evaluate the paradigmatic orientations or the underlying world views of the Basic Education Teacher Reform for post-apartheid Namibia with a specific focus on the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) program. Data was sought from various sources including interviews, participant observation, primary documents and secondary documents. When analyzed within the conceptual framework of the study, as well as in the context of the history undergone by Namibia teacher education, and the current post-apartheid reforms, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program registered some significant changes and achievements which could be counted upon as potential spaces for charting a critical/transformative paradigm of teacher education. However, despite a few discernible achievements, the program nevertheless reflected tendencies characteristic of the mainstream technocratic/modernization paradigm of teacher education. Therefore, the major findings of this study, as discerned from the views, feelings and experiences of the program participants, indicated that despite acknowledgeable achievements the program is still tied to the views, assumptions and beliefs characteristic of the technocratic paradigm.

In particular, the study found that the program's curriculum and pedagogy is generally producing prospective teachers who lack a critical approach to the various aspects of the program and teacher education in general, as well as the role of education in national transformation. This lack of critical approach, which is influenced by the technocratic/modernization paradigm, was manifested by a widely shared tendency to approach issues in an unproblematized fashion, with no attempts made to question

underpinning assumptions, political orientation and curriculum ideology of the entire reform program. Not only does this stance contradict the new Namibia's aspiration for "teachers as transformative intellectuals" who are capable for change and able to make their own contributions to change, but it also stifles the program's potentials to empower and liberate prospective teachers

In sum, the study recommends a major reorientation of the program towards a critical/transformative paradigm of teacher education for post-apartheid Namibia, including the integration of a critical/transformative pedagogy, a move towards a genuine political agenda for liberation in the program, and a move towards re-defining teachers as transformative intellectuals who should become active and "resisting" vanguards of the currents basic education reforms. In keeping with the findings, the study argues that an approach to teacher education which anchors its roots in the critical paradigm will not only be appropriate for post-apartheid Namibia; but it will also serve to empower teachers to become critical citizens who will actively participate in social, political and economic debates and action to overcome the apartheid legacies of inequalities, structural violence and underdevelopment.

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| | |
|---|---|
| BETD | Basic Education Teacher Diploma |
| SWAPO | South West Africa People's Organization |
| MEC | Ministry of Education and Culture |
| MECYS | Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport |
| CCE | Caprivi College of Education |
| RCE | Rundu College of Education |
| OCE | Ongwediva College of Education |
| WCE | Windhoek College of Education |
| UNAM | University of Namibia |
| LPTC | Lower Primary Teachers' Certificate |
| PTC | Primary Teachers' Certificate |
| ECP | Education Certificate Primary |
| NEC | National Education Certificate |
| COST | College for Out of School Training |
| NIED | National Institute for Educational Development |
| TERP | Teacher Education Reform Project for Namibia |
| HED | Higher Education Diploma |
| SBS | School Based Studies |
| NANSO | Namibia National Student Organization |
| ITTP | Integrated Teacher Training Program |
| ETP | Educational Theory and Practice |
| CIED | Center for International Education and Development (Alberta) |
| SIDA | Swedish Internation Development Authority |
| CIDA | Canadian International Development Agency |
| PLAN | People's Liberation Army of Namibia |
| MBEC | Minstry of Basic Education and Culture |

# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Background: Historical and Political Context

The southwestern African state of Namibia (covering 824,290 sq. Km with a population of about 1,574,927, 1992 est.) bears a history of colonial occupation suffered over a period of more than a hundred years. In the first period of colonialism (1884-1915), the colonizers were the Germans. This was followed by the enslavement of Namibians by the occupationist South African apartheid regime (1915-1990). Prior to invasion by the two colonial regimes, Namibian communities were able to meet their basic needs from vast subsistence economic activities (Cooper, 1988; Gurrirab, 1988; Department of Information and Publicity, SWAPO of Namibia, 1988). As elsewhere in pre-colonial Africa, land distribution in pre-colonial Namibia was guided by egalitarian and democratic principles of communal living, thereby assuring all community members access to land as a means to life. This egalitarian distribution of land formed the heart-center of the economic self-sufficiency widely enjoyed by the pre-colonial communities and which was well supplemented by other viable economic pursuits including livestock rearing, mining and bartering. Other secondary economic activities such as iron ore smelting and a variety of other artifacts processing were not uncommon among the Northern communities of pre-colonial Namibia (Gurrirab, 1988).

In the wake of colonial invasion, these widely pursued economic activities were paralyzed and destroyed as the foreign system was being forcibly imposed. Most brutal was the forceful seizure of land and the mass eviction of the indigenous communities from their ancestral lands as these very same lands were being allocated to the white settler farmers. As many historians indicate, indigenous communities who attempted to resist and linger around their grazing lands became victims of savage acts of machine gunning and poisoning of water holes by the Germans. Through these repressive processes, the Hereroes were almost exterminated and reduced from 80,000 to 15,000 and the Namas from 20,000 to only 9,000 (Bridgman, 1981; Department of Information and Publicity; SWAPO of Namibia, 1981; Cohen, 1994; Werner, 1988). Despite all this bloodshed, the German colonial policy of land robbery was very unambiguous, as Dr. Paul Rohrbach of the German Colonial Department noted with brutal frankness:

> The decision to colonize in Southern Africa means nothing else than that the native tribes must withdraw from the lands on which they have pastured their cattle and so let the white man pasture his cattle on these self-same lands. If the moral rights of this standpoint are questioned, the answer is that for people of the cultural standard of the South African natives, the loss of their free natural barbarism and the development of a class of workers in the service of, and dependent on whites is above all a law of survival of the highest order (*Department of Information and Publicity; SWAPO of Namibia* ,1981, p.17).

Therefore, to the Germans, Namibians were regarded as potential slaves who did not deserve to have the land but rather to be dead or to work as slaves for the white masters.

In 1914, following the outbreak of the first World war, Namibia was invaded by South African troops operating on behalf of the allied forces. The defeated Germany ceded to the allied forces all its rights and titles to German South West Africa as a colony. In 1919, Namibia was designated by the newly formed League of Nations to his British majesty as a mandate (under the so-called "Sacred Trust of Civilization") to be administered on his behalf by the Union of South Africa. The essence of the principles embodied in this "Mandate System" (or the "Sacred Trust of Civilization") can be summed up as follows:

> 1. To those colonies and territories which, as a consequence of the late war, have ceased to be under the sovereignty of the States which formerly governed them, and which are inhabited by peoples not yet able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world, there should be applied *the principle that the well-being and development of such people form a sacred trust of civilization* ....
>
> 2. The best method of giving practical effect to this principle is that the tutelage of such people should be entrusted to advanced nations, which by reason of their resources, their experience, or their geographical position, can best undertake this responsibility... (emphasis, original) (NPP, 1988, p. 8).

Far from implementing the so-called "Sacred Trust of Civilization and Development", the South Africa regime seized the opportunity for political and economic annexation of Namibia (Steward, 1963). It was not until 1966 that the United Nations General Assembly revoked South Africa's mandate over Namibia. Subsequently, in 1978, the United Nations passed Resolution 435 which called for a general election in Namibia under the supervision of the UN and the withdrawal of South Africa from Namibia. On the contrary, South Africa refused to comply with the United Nation's resolutions and continued to occupy Namibia in contravention of both international law and the wishes of the Namibian people.

As the Germans were evicted, the South African invaders did not only encourage the few remaining German settlers to stay, but they also invited more white settlers from

South Africa on a comprehensive program of state settler subsidy. Hence from the outset, the South African government continued the tradition of land robbery initiated by the German colonial state. The consequences of this land expropriation are clearly outlined by Mbuende:

> The once economically self-sustaining Africans were reduced to the status of laborers who had to enter the service of settlers to meet their subsistence requirements. Indeed, the only condition on which the Africans were given the privilege to live was that they had to supply labor. The colonial state devised a system which made the provision of African labor compulsory. Africans who were not in the service of the settlers could be arrested for vagrancy. Thus, Africans could not advance beyond the status of laborers. The land which was confiscated from the Africans was surveyed and sold to settlers (Mbuende, 1986, p.64).

Land alone could not satisfy the insatiable greed of the colonialists. Driven by their voracious appetite, the South African colonial capitalists, together with their Western allies, could not leave any stone unturned but to ransack the country for profitable mineral deposits. Indigenous communities who survived the extinction saw a heightened plunder and looting of their natural resources siphoned to far off destinations. In order to facilitate these exploitative colonial activities, the apartheid regime established a social, political and physical infrastructure which served as a conveyor belt for the interests of South Africa's capitalist economy and its imperialist allies in the Western metropolis. The repressive infrastructure was instituted so that the white settlers and their Western transnational corporations accumulate great wealth or profit, while the black majorities have little chance to escape the poverty, degradation and misery into which they were institutionally bound.

As for social services such as health and education, the apartheid master plan offered nothing to be desired. In both cases, the extent and quality of services offered were severely decayed. Up to the 1960s, the apartheid regime left nearly all of native education and health services in the hands of the missionaries. As the colonial infrastructure increasingly demanded laborers who were at least numerate and lettered, Bantu Education innovations did not go beyond basic skills for blacks. Bantu Education had been designed to go no more than enable black workers to understand and implement the instructions and orders from their white bosses. Not only were schools poor in facilities, but also true is that Bantu Education sought to provide education for servitude in which case the syllabus content was nothing more than racist indoctrination. The primary goal was to produce junior government bureaucrats, lower military officers, errand boys, coffee girls and house boys, all of whom were required only to service the master-servant colonial status quo.

As a result of these and many other consequences of underdevelopment, together with the persistent refusal by South Africa to pull out of Namibia (despite illegal occupation of the country) an armed liberation struggle was launched in the 1960's. South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), under the leadership of president Sam Nujoma, launched a guerrilla armed struggle through its People's Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) from bases in Angola, Tanzania and Zambia. Because of the unswerving pressure exerted through the liberation movement South Africa had to bow to the immediate implementation of the 1978 United Nations Resolution 435. Consequently, on November 1, 1989 Namibians went to the polls to exercise for the first time, their long denied right to self-determination by electing their own government. Because of its revolutionary spirit, and the hope it offered for freedom from enslavement by fellow mankind, SWAPO won a landslide victory over more than ten other parties contesting the first post-colonial elections. Out of these elections emerged, on March 21, 1990, an independent Namibia under a government elected by the people of Namibia.

However, despite a long history of suffering, Namibians came to independence with a heightened consciousness of the colonial harm already inflicted on their education system by the colonialists. This heightened awareness was clearly summed in the 1989-1990 SWAPO Election Manifesto:

> One of the most glaring inequalities perpetuated in Namibia by the colonialists has been a gross neglect of the education of indigenous Namibian population as a deliberate policy designed to subjugate the masses of our people through the perpetuation of ignorance and illiteracy. The colonialist understood that knowledge is power, and they were not prepared to share power with the black majority. The objective of the system of Bantu Education imposed in Namibia was simply to provide an inferior education to produce barely literate Namibians who would then be useful tools for the colonial administration in carrying out its dictates. A sanitized curriculum which denied the scholars an open education emphasized their contrived racial inferiority. Scholars were imbued with the virtues of their colonial master's history at the expense of their own. They were also denied a proper foundation in the sciences, since they were to know only enough to service the colonial status quo (*SWAPO Election Manifesto,* 1989, p.15).

This historical overview provides the context within which efforts at reconstructing Namibia's teacher education, and the education system in general, within the broader goal of societal transformation need to be understood.

## 1.2. Education and Development in the Post-World War II era

Although abject poverty and its consequences are seriously affecting the lives of majorities in many present day South nations, "development efforts" date as far back as the end of the Second World War. The achievement of political independence by many South nations in the post-World War II era witnessed increased "efforts" to promote development as planned social change in order to achieve both industrialization and to alleviate the widespread colonial legacies of poverty and "underdevelopment" among the rural masses of these nations. These concerns to promote development and alleviate poverty were greeted with "support" by many North countries to whom the quest to alleviate poverty and underdevelopment in the South availed opportunities for maintaining or gaining both political and economic control over a number of newly independent South nations (Larraine, 1989; Bernstein, 1971; Eisenstadht, 1974; So, 1990). In powerful industrialized states, political and economic elites, together with institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF, promoted the "modernization" paradigm of development which was to be exported to the newly independent South nations for analyzing poverty and seeking development strategies (Webster, 1984; Larraine, 1989; So, 1990). In part, the modernization paradigm provided some useful vehicles for waging an anti-communist cold war ideology (Chomsky, 1991).

As advanced by its proponents such as Rostow, Talcott Parsons, Max Weber and McClelland, the modernization paradigm of development is based on three key assumptions. Widely identified, these assumptions are: firstly, the ethnocentric assumption that South nations or "traditional societies" are underdeveloped mainly because of their lack of, or their insufficient development of certain "internal characteristics" such as capital, technology, cultural attitudes, institutional arrangements or social organizations and entrepreneurial spirit. Thus, traditional values and cultures in these societies are not only "primitive", "savage" or "barbaric", but that they are inherently the obstacles to progress and change. Secondly, the unilinear and eurocentric assumption that underdeveloped South societies *ought to* and *must* follow the similar path taken by, and blazed for them by the now "developed" societies, with capitalism as the highest stage of development. Hence, a "developed" country only shows to the underdeveloped one the image of its own future. Thirdly, because they are way far ahead on the universal road of development, "developed" societies have a *positive role* to play in fostering "development" in the underdeveloped South societies through trade, investment and aid.

Thus, for the newly independent South nations, "development" came to be defined as "economic growth" measured statistically by increases in a nation's GNP (Coombs, 1985; Bacchus, 1981). Widely held in this GNP-centered development strategy has been the belief that the modern sector of all the economies in the South is not only the spearhead but also the conglomerate center of development from which benefits will later trickle-down, or spill over, and reach the poor, largely rural sector. As Coombs eloquently elaborates, this GNP-centered strategy of development:

> ...called for the initial concentration of development efforts on modernizing and industrializing the urban centers of developing countries, the theory being that, once the new modern sector in the cities began to grow, its dynamic impulses would spread across the vast countryside, where most of the population and labor force lived and worked. Here it would trigger a spontaneous, self-sustaining process of rural development (perceived mainly as increased commercial agricultural production for urban and export markets), thus steadily narrowing the rural-urban gap (Coombs, 1985, p.15).

At the core of the increased efforts to alleviate poverty and achieve economic growth was the discovery of formal education as a major engine of social and economic development (Bacchus, 1981; Harbison & Myers, 1964; Simmons, 1980). This faith in formal education was deeply rooted in the human capital assumption where economic development has been seen as a return on educational investment in human beings (Schultz, 1977; Coombs, 1985; Harbison & Myers, 1964). Consequently, the post-independence era came to witness the newly discovered role of formal education as the cornerstone for economic and social development (Simmons, 1980; Dore, 1976; Toh, 1987a).

Most South leaders, together with their economists and educationists, cherished optimistic beliefs that mass formal education was to become the engine power necessary for economic take-off into modernity. Thus, formal education and the expansion of the modern sector were to become the catalyzers of development and the residual alleviation of poverty. Over and above large infusions of physical capital and modern technologies, rapid expansion of the modern sector would require an increased supply of educated labor power well equipped with modern-sector skills to be supplied by formal education. Consequently, the modernization paradigm of education and development was, and still is, based on the assumption that by providing the "needed" modern sector skills, education would be a powerful instrument in the achievement of social and economic development in the newly independent South nations (Curle, 1973; Bacchus, 1981; Zaccharíah, 1985; Simmons, 1980). This rationale of education as a "high-yielding investment" has likewise been sounded by the Namibian government:

> To educate is to invest in our development.
> Numerous studies, reports, and recommendations by national and international agencies emphasize the importance of education in our future development.
>
> Without education, development will not occur. Only an educated people can command the skills necessary for sustainable economic growth and for a better quality of life.
>
> To achieve and sustain development, it is necessary to ensure the education and training ...of the people so that they can participate fully and effectively in the development process (*Toward Education For All, MEC* , 1993, p.19).

However, under the influence of the western oriented modernization paradigm of education and development, it has been widely believed that development and alleviation of poverty in these South nations will be achieved through massive importation of European and North American educational models, cultures, technology, capital and advice. Also under the modernization paradigm, by virtue of their advanced status on the universal road of development, educational models of the Industrialized North countries only show the South nations the image of their future.

Not only did the achievement of political independence bring along the view of education as the cornerstone for economic development but also the view that education is a basic human right for all, with the express view to allow formerly disadvantaged groups access to education on a massive scale. Deeply rooted in the 1948 United Nations International Declaration of Human Rights, education as a basic human right for all was expressed as follows:

> Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory...(UNESCO, 1949, p.279).

This UNESCO rationale on Education for all has not only been echoed in the constitutions of various South nations, but it has overwhelmingly reverberated in the agendas of international agencies such as the World Bank, IMF, UNDP and UNICEF. The rationale has also been sounded by many international conferences such as the recent 1990 Jomtien, Thailand, World Conference on Education For All (Samoff, 1992; Bray, 1986; World Conference on Education for All, 1990). It is believed within this modernization band-wagon that through quantitative expansion, as well as through a process of massively importing and emulating education models from the industrialized North countries, education would spread opportunities among the impoverished people of the South.

A Western-type educational system would not only provide the means to achieve modernization and promote economic development but it would also assist in the re-distribution of occupational skills, thus determining in a meritocratic and democratic way the allocation of economic benefits within the new nations. In this way, education would become an effective tool to exercise a "leveling" or "equalizing" effect, which will facilitate greater social mobility irrespective of class, traditional kinship, or ascribed status.

Within these attempts to expand and modernize education system for purposes of economic take-off and social development teacher education has been of great strategic significance. It has widely been believed that the ultimate key to the success or failure of education regarding its newly discovered role of economic take-off into modernity lies both in the quality and quantity of the teachers themselves (Sign, 1979; Yoo, 1979). The quality and effectiveness of schools in advancing their roles in economic development, it is believed, depend on the nature and quality of teacher education. Therefore, teacher education is in the main to be designed as a source for the supply of trained teachers equipped with the needed technical skills and the values of efficiency and effectiveness as the highest standards of professional practice. "Good" qualified teachers are therefore to provide the economy, and the modern-sector in particular, with skilled and high level labor power to command development.

### 1.3. Modernization paradigm and the Development of Underdevelopment

In recent years, however, mounting evidence indicates that instead of yielding the promised results of economic and social development, education under the western oriented modernization paradigm has brought about a new generation of social, political, economic and cultural problems serving to exacerbate and aggravate the already undesirable social and economic underdevelopment in the South (D'Souza, 1976; Cawagas & Toh, 1989; Coombs, 1985; Bacchus, 1981). The human capital assumption that an investment in education would increase labor's productivity by embodying in that labor increased modern-sector skills and knowledge has not necessarily advanced economic growth. Instead, it has created and exacerbated problems of unemployment, under-employment, economic stagnation, general mass poverty and underdevelopment (Gillespie & Collins, 1987; Illich, 1971; Bacchus, 1981; Carnoy, 1982; Dore, 1976; Dore & Oxenham, 1984). Faced with problems of unemployment and under-employment nations have persistently exerted pressure on their governments by demanding for higher levels of education in the chase for jobs. Yet, increased demands for more years of schooling have only further

crippled the already stagnant and dependent economies which apart from luring their victims have failed to provide adequate and relevant employment.

However, these problems have also been reinforced by the obsolete and irrelevant school curriculum which has persistently refused to respond to the development needs of most South nations. Clearly, the structural features of many South economies (e.g., wage distortions and limited modern sector) are root causes of educated unemployed and the diploma disease. Elsewhere, the quality of education has been debilitated by an examination oriented urban and modern sector type of learning (Dore, 1976; Dore & Oxenham, 1984; Coombs, 1968). The examination oriented and bookish type of learning has not only become the dominant passport for entry into a modern sector life-style. Instead, it has also consistently remained a permanent curse on rural life and manual labor type of work despite the fact that the majority of South citizens live in productive manual labor oriented rural areas. Consequently, education systems in these nations have remained irrelevant in that they have adamantly insisted on producing graduates who are unable to contribute productively to the development needs of their local communities. To further magnify the problem, these graduates have not only been irrelevant to rural life, but at the very same time they have also remained irrelevant even to the urban sector type of life promised to them by their education systems. The irrelevant school curricula, poor manpower planning by most South governments, and urban-biased dependent economies have all led to problems such as the frustrating limbo of the educated unemployed, the increased brain drain to North regions, and the ceaseless rural to urban influx (Watanabe, 1969; Godfrey, 1970; Adams, 1968; Toh, 1977; Dore, 1976; Dore & Oxenham, 1984).

Compulsory basic education has well been identified as a basic human right for all. Yet, despite the cries for human rights, the dominant belief in the modern sector as the spearhead for social and economic development has lured many South governments to exercise a discriminatory shift in emphasis from primary to secondary and tertiary levels of education. Possessed by prestige and status, local powerful groups, who are also the sources of political power for governments, have selfishly exercised considerable pressure on their leaders by demanding more of higher levels of education for their children. Therefore, driven by the need for the so-called modern sector expertise such as doctors, accountants, and bureaucrats, the resultant bias in the distribution of educational resources has only benefited the wealthy elites at the expense of the impoverished and marginalized rural and urban poor whose access to education is severely limited to the lower levels only. Thus, gaining the necessary credentials in the so-called democratic meritocracy, the wealthy elites monopolize not only the most economically rewarding jobs, but also dominate the

higher echelons of the state apparatus, including the technocratic elite (Carnoy, 1987; Yeakey, 1981; D'Souza, 1976).

The 1988 United Nations report on public expenditure per student (1988 U.S. dollars) unveils the most glaring inequalities behind the facade of fairness and pretense of education for all as a basic human right. In Sub-Saharan Africa for example, educational expenditure for 1980 as percentage of GNP reflects that while $64 was spent per student at the first level of schooling, $264 was spent per student at second level and $2,992 was spent per student at tertiary level (United Nations, 1988). This shift in emphasis from primary education to higher levels of education has not only been elitist by nature, but it has also been reproductive of social inequalities (Carnoy, 1987; D'Souza, 1976; Bacchus, 1981; Toh, 1987a; Simmons, 1980).

Apart from the glaring class-based manifestations of inequalities, modernization driven type of education has aggressively claimed its own share in other forms of social stratification based on geographical/spatial factors (Eliou, 1976; Foster, 1980), ethnic or tribal divisions (Watson, 1980; Troup, 1976; Collins, 1983; Bernstein, 1972; Nkomo, 1981) and gender discrimination (Brown, 1984; Preston, 1984; Ashby, 1985; Toh, 1987a; Simmons, 1980). Elsewhere, the educational glimmer of hope has catastrophically decayed into a crisis which includes high school drop-out rates, higher failure rates, widespread relapse into illiteracy, lower rates of school attendance and completion by girls, poorly trained teachers, badly constructed and inadequately equipped schools, and educational under participation and marginalization of disadvantaged groups (Coombs, 1968; Carnoy, 1982; Zacchariah, 1985; Yeakey, 1981). Therefore, despite the widely celebrated magical powers of education as a social equalizer and an upward vehicle on the social ladder, poverty has remained intact, the rural poor have remained poor, unemployment and poverty have expanded to urban centers (Carnoy, 1982; Toh, 1987a; Coombs, 1985).

Because of the potential conflicts resulting from the entrenched problems of poverty and underdevelopment, and also the need for "nation building", education in the South has assumed yet another function. Education has become a sophisticated mechanism of control which does not only transmit the dominant cultural values but also seeks to teach loyalty, patriotism, and allegiance to authorities in power (Freire, 1976; Yeakey, 1981). Schooling has become a powerful instrument in justifying and rationalizing government policies, achievements, and desirability of existing leaders, rulers, elites, socio-political and economic arrangements. Therefore, driven by the modernization paradigm, schooling has not only sought to produce a disciplined and politically acquiescent citizenry which upholds loyalty to the status quo but it has also contributed to the continued and safe existence of the present unjust status quo (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Apple & King, 1977; Hurn, 1977;

Apple, 1979). It can therefore be argued that education in the post-independence era has, apart from some minor achievements (e.g., quantitative expansion), perpetuated political oppression, human rights violation and structural violence.

The modernization strategy of massively importing and emulating educational models from the Industrialized North countries has led to increased re-colonization of the South and a systematic eurocentric imperialistic dominance and exploitation of the South (Altbach, 1971; Altbach & Kelly, 1978; Bray, 1984). Educational aid has largely remained one major vehicle of control and educational dependency by South nations on the North and directly or indirectly to the economic and strategic interests of donor countries (Arnove, 1980; Berman, 1979). While some countries have undertaken a degree of indigenization of curricula and pedagogy, education systems within the modernization paradigm have generally responded to the forces of cultural dependency, thus perpetuating cultural alienation and estrangement among its clients in the South (Mazrui, 1978; Altbach, 1971).

Transnational and wholesale transfer of Western educational models, use of foreign educational text-books, languages, and cultures still pervade education systems in many South nations. In sum, the western oriented modernization paradigm of education and development in the post-World War II era has also contributed to a "development of underdevelopment" in the South (Frank, 1969).

## 1.4. Towards an Alternative Critical Paradigm of Development

Unlike the modernization paradigm, the alternative critical paradigm argues that poverty and underdevelopment in the South is a direct consequence of the historic process of imperialistic plunder of natural resources, the looting of humans through the slave trade, political and cultural annexation of colonies, and the unequal international economic and political relationships between North and South regions (Frank, 1969; George, 1987; Baran, 1957). Therefore, while creating poverty and underdevelopment in the South, the very same process has all but led to the formation of vast fortunes in the hands of imperial powers.

From a critical/alternative paradigm, the crucial step is a radical transformation of the present global, national and local socio-political and economic relationships which entrench social injustice, structural violence and mass poverty (Carnoy, 1982; Toh, 1987a; Bacchus, 1981). Changes at the global level to achieve a just and humane global order will have to be accompanied at the national and local levels by an authentic radical transformation which will bring about egalitarian societal relationships based on the

principle of participatory democracy which is a prerequisite for alternative educational policy.

The alternative critical/paradigm will bring about participatory mass-based and grass-roots strategies which respond to the rights and needs of the rural poor, women, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups. This entails strategies for increased participation by rural communities and other disadvantaged groups in taking fundamental decisions about policy which has long been an exclusive monopoly of local political and technocratic elites together with foreign experts and representatives of international agents of "development" (e.g. transnational corporations). Alternative non-sexist policy strategies together with community education on non-sexist socialization will allow more participation by women in the broader social, political and economic spheres.

Central to the critical/transformative paradigm of education and development is the notion of equity which is expressed as a radical redistribution and reversal of emphasis from the modern-sector and over-expansion at elitist levels of education to the grass-roots people based levels. This will therefore imply a genuine redistribution of educational resources and opportunities to the rural masses with the urban middle and upper class children no longer privileged to learn in luxury and plenty while their rural and squatter counter parts suffer educational deprivation.

More crucially, the critical/transformative paradigm seeks to enhance appropriateness and relevance of education through indigenization and localization of curricula rather than the modernization tendency of uncritically emulating Western-type educational systems. Appropriate educational and curriculum reforms within the alternative paradigm not only emphasize relevance but also ensure maximum economic participation of all citizens by drawing on appropriate local knowledge and experiences as well as any useful ideas from other contexts (Wald, 1978; Nyerere, 1968).

In this transformative paradigm, the school ceases to be an effective instrument of control and domestication which leads to political oppression and structural violence. Instead, pedagogical discourse becomes constructed around explicit aims for political liberation through conscientization which allows the poor and oppressed to critically understand the root causes of inequalities and their poverty, and to transform those realities (Freire, 1976; Yeakey, 1981). Therefore, a critically conscientized citizenry will not only claim a revival of their lost cultures together with a more appropriate education system, but they will also ensure a sustainable development based on indigenous values.

## 1.5. Statement of the Problem

At independence Namibia inherited a teacher education system which was largely conditioned by the apartheid ideology and its Bantu Education policy. With the Afrikaner Nationalist Party coming to power in South Africa in the 1940s education became the medium through which the party's apartheid policy could be implemented. Education was to become the primary medium of inculcating the party's racial schemes into the minds of the young of all racial groups. The Afrikaner ideology was to be transmitted into the minds of the learners through the Bantu Education policy. As described elsewhere in this study, the Bantu Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) emanated from the 1949 Eiselen Commission appointed by the Nationalist Party regime to examine the formulation of a separate education for the "Bantus" (Africans). Not only was the Bantu education policy racialistic and segregationist but its main agenda was to inculcate the "values" of tribal consciousness (tribalism), separate communities and white superiority. Its curriculum was nothing more than mere preparation of the blacks for their inferior positions in the white dominated slave-master society. The aim of colonial education is eloquently summed as follows by a government policy document:

> Colonial education has been in Namibia for more than a hundred years. Its aim and purpose has been clear: to train for the maintenance of the colonial status quo. Apartheid policies reinforced colonial education with the aim of placing the African people "where they belong": to be hewers of wood and drawers of water for the white master (*Education Reform Directive: A Policy Statement Of The MECYS*, 1990, p.31).

Among the indigenous people, apartheid's Bantu education entrenched illiteracy, semi-illiteracy, unskilled and unemployed youth. In contrast, the children of the white population were well educated, fully employed and better remunerated. All in all, the Bantu education has been deeply rooted in a philosophy of education for elites with majorities of the population rejected by the system and condemned to the harsh margins of legalized racial discrimination in the social, political and economic spheres.

Nevertheless the Bantu education policy also commanded its own teacher education system to service the entire apartheid status quo. Already by 1923 the apartheid regime had started its mission to provide inferior education for the blacks. In collaboration with the Rhenish Mission the Augustineum teacher training institution was operated at Okahandja while two other mission training institutions for blacks included a Catholic center at Döbra and the Finish center at Oniipa in the north. Not only was the Afrikaans language enforced at these centers but the entry requirement was as low as standard II (grade 4) (Cohen,

1994). In the 1970s about seven training centers were in operation for black teachers: Ongwediva in Ovamboland, Cornelius Goreseb at Khorixas, Rundu in Kavango, Okakarara at Okakarara in Hereroland, Caprivi at Katima Mulilo, Döbra near Windhoek and Augustineum in Windhoek. However, all these training centers were virtually secondary schools with teacher training "wings" (Duggal, 1984; Cohen, 1994). Whereas only black teachers were trained at these "secondary school wings", white and colored teachers were trained on full government busaries at teacher training institutes in South Africa. Courses available at the training institutes within the country included a two year Lower Primary Teachers' Certificate (LPTC) and the Primary Teachers' Certificate (PTC). While these courses were phased out in South Africa by the early 70s because of their low professional standards, no signs of such phase out were discernible in Namibia.

By 1980 and up to 1992 the Academy (predecessor of the University of Namibia, UNAM), together with the five ethnic specific colleges, has been offering teacher training (Cohen, 1994; Dahlström, 1994). Training for black teachers continued at the three northern colleges; Ongwediva, Rundu, and Caprivi. Teacher training for coloreds was offered at Khomasdal Teacher Training College while whites were trained at the spacious college in Windhoek. Both Khomasdal and Windhoek college were heavily underutilized and were merged soon after independence. The spacious Windhoek College of Education, constructed in 1979 with a boarding capacity of 500 and an academic capacity over 2,000, remained a luxurious showpiece strictly reserved for whites (Cohen, 1994). Soon after independence (around 1994) Windhoek college was moved to the COST campus of the former Academy as its spacious and underutilized campus was taken over by the new University of Namibia. Subsequent to the LPTC and PTC, the three northern colleges have been offering courses such as the Education Certificate Primary (ECP) and the National Education Certificate (NEC); all of which have been further extensions of the apartheid policy of teacher training for "disqualification" (Dahlström, 1994).

The achievement of political independence was accompanied among the Namibians by a heightened awareness of the incompatibility of the bequeathed colonial teacher education with the new vision of education for all in independent Namibia. Due to widespread discontent with the old system the urgency for transformation soon took primacy in the post-colonial education system. In this regard, the need for a major philosophical reorientation was clearly outlined in a government policy document:

> But when education is for all, then that philosophy appropriate to educating elites is no longer relevant. Indeed, it is quite inappropriate. That is why education for all means more than increasing the number of children in school and older learners in adult and non-formal education programs. It also means replacing the philosophy and practices of education suitable for

> educating elites with a new philosophy and practices appropriate for providing education for all citizens (*Toward Education for All*, MEC, 1993, pp. 5-6).

Therefore, the demands to be met by the teaching profession in a new post-apartheid policy of Basic Education only meant that a restructuring of the colonial teacher education programs could not be adequate. A new situation to be met, a new approach to education, and a single national basic education teacher program for basic education, and practical feasibility were amongst the factors which led to the establishment of a new teacher education program for post-apartheid Namibia (*Broad Curriculum for the BETD*, MEC, 1994).

Consequently, a new program, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma (BETD) was implemented in February, 1993 at Namibia's four Colleges of Teacher Education (i.e., Caprivi, Ongwediva, Rundu and Windhoek College). As appendix A indicates, the BETD is a three year national Basic Education Teacher program consisting of a common core foundation for all students, and options related to different phases of Basic Education. The BETD is intended to prepare teachers for Basic Education, that is, teachers who will be able to teach from grade 1 up to 10. The general structure of Namibian educational system comprises of pre-and primary education, secondary education and tertiary education. Primary education levels further comprise of lower primary (grades 1-4) and upper primary (grades 5-7). Furthermore, the secondary level constitute junior secondary (grades 8-10) and senior secondary (grades 11 and 12). The grade 1 to 10 grade levels are generally referred as basic education levels. Whereas the Colleges of Teacher Education, through the BETD, are currently responsible for producing teachers to teach at these basic education levels (grades 1 to 10), the University of Namibia prepares teachers for the senior secondary levels (grades 11 and 12). However, while offered for both pre-service and in-service, the BETD is supposed to strike a balance between professional insight, skills and subject area knowledge.

The BETD is clearly a major official strategy for educational development in post-apartheid Namibia. To date, however, there has been no systematic research undertaken on the BETD as an innovative reform in Namibia education. Recently, however, both the Teacher Education Reform Project (TERP) and the Ministry of Education commissioned the Dahlström and Frykholm "National Evaluation Study of the BETD" (August, 1994) whose preliminary quantitative data was available for the current study. What distinguishes this study from the Dahlström and Frykholm study is its methodological orientation which enabled it to draw on a wide range of views and lived experiences of the program participants through interviews and participant observation. This methodological orientation

is significant for collection of quality data hence the actual feelings and views or lived experiences of program participants are presented. While the Dahlström and Frykholm study concentrated on data collected through survey or questionnaire methods, nevertheless a wide range of views and feelings collected by the present study through in-depth interview and observation help illuminate the complexities and realities faced by program participants in the BETD. These complexities and realities are not easily discernible following survey or questionnaire methods. Furthermore, the present study differs from the Dahlström and Frykholm study in terms of its orientation which draws on the critical/transformative paradigm as a theoretical framework to illuminate the BETD.

As a teacher educator in one of the Colleges of Education, I have a particular interest in issues of relevance and effectiveness of the BETD in improving the quality of basic education in Namibia. Compared to the traditional curriculum to which I had been oriented during my own formation and work as a teacher educator, what are the possibilities and limits of the BETD to promoting quality and relevant teacher education in Namibia for basic levels? It is against this historical and personal professional context, and also within the context of the current basic education reforms, that this study seeks to critically explore and evaluate the paradigmatic orientations of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma. To put it in question form: Seen within the historical context and the current basic education reforms; what paradigmatic orientations underlie the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program for Namibia, and what implications does the program have for post-apartheid transformation of Namibia?

## 1.6. Purpose of the Study

As indicated in the problem statement above, the main objective of the study was to critically explore and evaluate the paradigmatic orientations of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program for post-apartheid Namibia. In order to discern the paradigmatic orientations, attention was focused on the following program aspects: (i) aims and objectives of the program; (ii) curricula and pedagogical issues, and, (iii) forces which shaped the program.

Focusing on one of the participating teachers College in the BETD, Caprivi College, the study sought to illuminate the paradigmatic orientations of the program by pursuing the following questions:

1) What views, beliefs, and experiences are held by program participants regarding (i) program aims and objectives (ii) curricula and pedagogical issues (iii) forces which shaped the program?

2) What views and beliefs are advanced in policy documents and other background documents regarding (i) program aims and objectives (ii) curricula and pedagogical issues (iii) forces which shaped the program?

3) Seen from the views, beliefs and experiences advanced by both program participants and the program documents, what significant achievements (possibilities and limits) has the program made in the context of the history undergone and current basic education reforms?

4) What implications for transformation into a post-apartheid Namibia do the views, beliefs and experiences of program participants have?

## 1.7. Significance of the Study

One of the attributes which make this study significant is its precedence as one of the first research initiatives to systematically study and investigate Namibia's post-apartheid Basic Education Teacher Diploma program within the framework of development paradigms. More importantly, the study was conducted at a time when the program was preparing to release its first graduates. This meant that not only was the study very timely for it synchronized with the lapse of the first three year cycle of program implementation but also that it was conducted at a time when an evaluation of the program was imperative before launching into the first year (1996) of full implementation of the program. Also, by virtue of the wealth of experiences contributed by the program participants to the study, significant evaluation inputs are contributed to the planning of the next phase of implementation of the program.

The study is also significant in that it can be seen as a response to the calls for teacher education research initiatives by many government policy documents. The lack of research on Namibia teacher education was also observed by Andersson, et. al. (1992) in their report - *Teacher Education Reform for Namibia: Report Submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport* - which is one of the key documents on Namibian Basic Teacher Education. In terms of the findings and recommendations by the study, benefits accrue to various parties which include teacher educators, student teachers, policy makers, and community members whose contribution to education policy deliberations is of vital importance. The study also contributes to relevant theory and practice in Namibia teacher education and teaching. This is more so with the study's specific focus on issues

related to aims, curricula and pedagogical issues in teacher education and issues related to program design contextualized within the Namibian perspective.

## 1.8. Delimitation and Limitations

As already stated, there are both in-service and pre-service programs to the BETD. However, this study was delimited to the pre-service program of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma. Though the program is offered at Namibia's four colleges of teacher education (as appendix B indicates) only one college, Caprivi College, was closely pursued as the physical site to which the study was geographically delimited. As indicated elsewhere in this report, the main reason for choosing Caprivi College as the site for this study was mainly because of my personal involvement at Caprivi College as a teacher educator. Furthermore, Caprivi College was also chosen primarily because of its accessibility, taking into account the financial and geographical limitations of the study regarding traveling and accommodation expenses. However, data from other colleges was also referred to, mainly as secondary data in published debates or policy reports.

The study was further delimited to final year BETD (BETD III) students at Caprivi College, as well as teacher educators and administrators at the same college. Both the geographical and sample delimitation of the study were largely due to financial, geographical and time limitations of the study.

## 1.9. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis is organized into seven Chapters. The first Chapter, which also provides the introduction to the study, is a review of literature related to issues of education and development in underdeveloped South regions. Apart from reviewing the literature, this Chapter also outlines the problem statement of the study and provides a brief overview of the Basic Education Diploma Program. Whereas Chapter 1 is rather a general review of the related literature, Chapter 2 endeavors to present the conceptual framework which provided the study with conceptual lenses through which the program in question was viewed. The conceptual framework is provided as a critical exploration of some of the aspects of the two major paradigms in teacher education identified by the study as the technocratic/modernization paradigm and the critical/transformative paradigm.

Chapter 3 of the study describes the methodological procedures used in the data collection for the study. It also describes other related issues such as the locale of the study, the sampling procedures and methodological problems encountered during the study.

Chapter 4 presents and examines the views, feelings, beliefs and lived experiences of the program participants regarding the program's aims and objectives. Relevant documents are also mobilized not only to illuminate the data gathered through interviews and observation but also to provide contextualization, both historic and current, for the analysis of data.

In Chapter 5, the views, experiences and beliefs of the program participants regarding curricula and pedagogical issues in the program are presented. Here again, data was also obtained from document analysis in order to shed more light on the data gathered through interviews and observations. Chapter 6 provides a critical examination of both the internal/national and external forces shaping the program. Data is sought from both interviews and secondary sources. Finally, Chapter 7 provides a summary and conclusion as a synthesis of the entire study. Drawing from the findings of the study, recommendations or proposals are given in Chapter 7 regarding an alternative paradigm for teacher education in post-apartheid Namibian teacher education.

# CHAPTER 2

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

## 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter, an outline is given of the conceptual framework for studying the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program for Namibia. More specifically, the conceptual framework seeks to provide conceptual lenses constructed around paradigmatic issues obtaining within the technocratic/modernization paradigm and the critical/transformative paradigm identified by this study as the two major paradigms of teacher education and its role in social change in South context. The concept "Paradigm" is used in the study to refer to a set of world views or orientations and assumptions about the nature and purposes of schooling, teaching, teachers and their education that gives shape to specific forms of practice in teacher education (Popkewitz, et al, 1979).

The "technocratic/modernization paradigm" refers to world views or orientations which have enjoyed mainstream or dominant status within most official circles of teacher education including governmental bodies, donor agencies such as the World Bank, the IMF, USAID, ODA and other mainstream agencies involved in teacher education. This paradigm is deeply rooted in the traditional positivist rationality where teaching is seen as an applied science, the teacher is viewed as a technician, and mastery of a repertoire of technical skills is heavily emphasized without placing teaching in its social, political and economic context (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993; Giroux & McLaren, 1987). This paradigm is heavily based on an uncritical and unproblematic stance whereby prospective teachers are viewed primarily as passive recipients and conveyers of knowledge and skills, and play very little part in curriculum debates and formulation of policies.

The critical/transformative paradigm, on the other hand, designates world views on teacher education which question the validity of ideas and strategies within the technocratic/modernization paradigm. Rooted in radical social science, this paradigm views the teacher as a critical and transformative intellectual whose role is not only to cast some technical skills but also to actively participate in issues of policy and curriculum design, and in situating teaching within the broader societal context which impact on the lives of both teachers and students. Therefore within this paradigm, the purpose of teacher education is to critically conscientize prospective teachers not only to be able to situate the technical skills of teaching in their context (educational, social, political, economic and

cultural), but also to be able to engage in critical praxis so as to bring about change and the realization of a democratic and humane schooling and society (Giroux & McLaren, 1987; Giroux, 1982).

The identification of these alternative paradigms in teacher education does not ignore, however, the complex realities of the institutional and social practices of teacher education. In any context, both paradigms may be in evidence although it will be maintained that to date the dominant tendency in many systems of teacher education especially in South regions like Namibia, has been towards the technocratic/modernization paradigm. In order to shed more light on the paradigmatic orientations and elaborate the conceptual framework, key concepts such as teacher education within the transnational/global policy network, participation, critical/transformative pedagogy, reflective practice, and teachers as transformative intellectuals are discussed. However, other related concepts are also clarified and discussed within the context of these key concepts.

## 2.2. Teacher Education Within the Transnational Policy Network

Despite political independence, teacher education in most South nations has increasingly come to be an agenda dictated and prescribed by the transnational/global forces of policy formulation within the dominant capitalist "interdependence" of nations. Thus, with the globalization of nation states into a capitalist global village, both the design and reform of teacher education has increasingly disregarded national geographic boundaries in its operations. Instead, teacher education has become more an issue of powerful local/national forces collaborating as partners with the external/global forces to set up an agenda for teacher education in a particular South nation.

Within this context, it can be argued that a transnational policy network or a global system of teacher education policy formulation network exists. Equally true is also the fact that a transnational/global network of elites exists not only to service but also to dominate this global/transnational policy formulation network. For instance, every three years the Ministers of Education of the Commonwealth countries meet to exchange views, with teacher education as a dominant theme on this international education agenda. The 1990 meeting of these Ministers held in Barbados, concentrated on "initial teacher training" and strategies for "improving the quality of basic education" (Commonwealth Secretariat, 1991). Similarly, the 1973 Commonwealth Conference on Teacher Education held in Nairobi, Kenya, concentrated on the role of "teacher education in a changing society"

(Commonwealth Secretariat, 1974). At the 1973 Nairobi conference, a "Commonwealth Diploma in Educational Studies" was even suggested. Most apparent, this transnational network is constituted by global financial and political elites found in the North and South regions together with "intellectual experts" recruited to design and implement teacher education.

However, the operations of this policy formulation network are underpinned by a complicated process of political, economic and historical dimensions all of which seem to legitimate and make commonsensical the transnational/global network of teacher education policy formulation. From the perspective of the technocratic/modernization paradigm, one of the major reasons for legitimating the transnational policy network is the assumption that in order to reform and develop, the underdeveloped South nations only need to utilize and "benefit" from the current capitalist "interdependence" of nations. Within this framework of "interdependence", it is argued that South nations are privileged to have at their disposal ideas and technologies from European and North American societies so well endowed with the "right" values, attitudes, capital, knowledge and institutions catalytic of development. The South ought to develop following in the footsteps of these countries and also by wholesale importing and uncritically embracing heavy doses of foreign advice, foreign cultures, capital and technology.

Drawing on this logic, the transnational/global network of teacher education formulation is legitimated by projecting the benevolence and philanthropic generosity of industrialized North countries, including financial aid, technical aid, conducting research *on* South nations, giving advice to South leaders, and the training and hosting of students from the South (Arnove, 1977; Berman, 1979; Altbach, 1977; King, 1985; Salmi, 1985). Consequently, it is believed that in order to reform and design teacher education in South regions, North based aid agencies such as Rockefeller, Carnegie and other foundations, USAID, ODA, CIDA, and the World Bank, to mention only a few, are the agents of this philanthropic generosity which is intended to "help" the South nations in formulating policies for development. It should be stated that although the roles assumed by these North bilateral and multilateral donor agencies within the modernization paradigm need not imply a "conspiracy" against the South, such roles are premised on principles and relationships that reinforce the North-South status quo. This critical assessment does not also assume that all individuals or groups involved in North-South aid relationships are hence oriented towards the modernization paradigm. However, exemplars in the critical/transformative paradigm remain to date exceptional. The technocratic/modernization paradigm underpinning mainstream policy formulation has equally been complicated by the chronic epidemic of abject educational poverty which has besieged many South nations

such that some, if not all, of these nations today cannot even afford to buy pencils for their schools unless they receive outside donor funds. As Samoff (1992, p.62) has argued, it has come to be seen not only obvious but exceptional that new initiatives and reform programs in Africa require external support. Nearly all African countries rely heavily on foreign assistance for the education development (capital) budget while some also receive significant foreign support for recurring educational expenditures.

It is also important to note that the North constitutes the so-called intellectual power-house where most universities, research institutions, publishing houses and journals are based. As for the South, both the history undergone by their education systems, together with the poverty situation, and the "intellectual bankruptcy", make the presence of such intellectual capacities distant illusions. As Altbach (1977, pp. 188-9) succinctly observes:

> The world's leading universities, research institutions, publishing houses, journals, and all the elements that constitute a modern technological society are concentrated in the industrialized nations of Europe and North America. As a result the industrialized nations dominate the world's research production, mass media, information systems, and advanced training facilities. In fact, the Third World's dependency is perhaps increasing because of the impressive research and development activities in the West in recent years. This dependence means that the Third World relies on the old colonial centers of power for expatriates, licenses for technological innovations, books, and many other artifacts of modern culture.

Thus through this North-South networking, the transnational/global network of elites seek to bring about policies and change in teacher education in South contexts. Although it should strongly be acknowledged that no nation or culture is truly independent in terms of its intellectual life, and that all nations depend to a certain extent on an exchange of knowledge, the current transnational policy networking leaves much to be desired. Many studies have already amassed convincing evidence to indicate that the present day technocratic interdependence of nations, which underpin this policy network, has been a mechanism for pushing South nations into ever deepening poverty and dependency. Hence as Toh (1993) rightly contends, behind the liberal technocratic "interdependence" of nations lie hidden selfish interests whereby those nations already well off in the planetary hierarchy seek to pursue a one-sided management interpretation of global interdependence.

Donor agencies providing aid in the South have often caused more problems than they have solved. Far from promoting sustainable and equitable development in the recipient countries, these agencies have remained intimately committed to furthering the development of their own home countries by securing stable markets or gaining access to mineral resources in the South (Weissman, 1974; McNeil, 1981; Payer, 1982;

McCawley, 1993; Hayter, 1971; Toh, 1983). As many other studies have convincingly indicated, the only reason the "sacred cow of foreign aid" cannot be killed is because it is so essential to economic, political and strategic interests of donor countries (Arnove, 1977; Bray, 1984; Arnove, 1980; Berman, 1979). If foreign aid was helpful enough, from its inception up to now, the conditions of the poor in the South should have improved considerably. Instead, results have worked to the contrary, despite persistent continuation of foreign aid.

The "experts", involved in the transnational/global system of policy networking, have also often left much to be desired regarding their work styles. Once again, it should be acknowledged that these "experts" do not only come from the North but a substantial number also comes from the very South itself, although the latter group has had lesser influence compared to their North counterparts. In particular, numerous concerns have been raised about expatriates from the North. To cite one incidence:

> ...in Nepal, a country that has been described as "over-advised" and "under-nourished", there is a widely held view that experts and consultants are dishonest, lazy, unimaginative, insensitive to local priorities and, as a result of this, unable to come up with useful insights and suggestions. According to one Nepalese, foreign advisors "demonstrate lack of commitment ... Since most are employed by donors directly, they are always beholden to the wishes of their supervisors in capitals other than Kathmandu ... the busiest days of those expatriates are when their bosses visit Nepal (Hancock, 1989, p.116).

In other cases, some expatriates have been known for their arrogant resentment towards mixing with the poor whom they have come to "help" and for demanding privileges such as high salaries, free housing, and government vehicles. Furthermore, this "expert" and elite dominated network has been characterized by lack of participation by the masses, including teachers, in policy formulation. This denial of participation has mainly resulted from the dominant practice to deligitimate local and indigenous knowledge. As Hancock (1989) and other analysts such as Chambers (1983) have noted, development activities cast within the modernization paradigm have tended to dismiss the knowledge and wisdom of local communities and indigenous peoples. The undesirable nature of this non-participatory and top-down decision process making is succinctly described by Freire (1973, p. 6) as follows:

> ... the ordinary person is crushed, diminished, converted into a spectator, maneuvered by myths which powerful forces have created ... he is expelled from the orbit of decisions. Ordinary men do not perceive the tasks of the time; the latter are interpreted by an "elite" and presented in the form of recipes, of prescriptions.

Since local knowledge is de-legitimated and declared irrelevant, the ordinary and the poor can only participate in this transnational network as passive consumers or rather victims of "development goods" imposed on them by those possessing the "necessary" knowledge, cultural and attitudinal dispositions. However, to divert such criticisms, projects under the guise of grass-root orientations have also been launched within the modernization paradigm. But in practice, such "targets" of the poorest have still excluded the marginalized sectors from substantive participation in policy and decision making. In South regions, teachers are often referred to as the lynchpins of educational and societal change, yet because of the emphasis on "expert" or "specialized" knowledge teachers have, like other marginalized groups, been excluded from participating significantly in education progress and reform. Their roles within the transnational/global network have been reduced to consumers of decisions and policies decided upon by the global intellectual, political and economic elites.

Radically opposed to this Western oriented modernization logic of policy networking, the critical/transformative paradigm is fundamentally based on appropriate and participatory program formulation strategies where local resources are tapped and utilized to their fullest capacities in the attempts to achieve societal transformation and education for self-reliance (Toh, 1987a; Nyerere, 1968; Freire, 1973, Carnoy, 1982). This transformative paradigm is firstly rooted in people oriented radical transformation of the broader social, political and economic structures. Hence, as Freire (1976, p. 68) puts it; "a radical transformation of the educational system is contingent upon a radical transformation of the society". Nevertheless educational sites such as schools can also be sites of possible transformation.

In the critical/transformative paradigm "experts" cease to be the major providers of "global wisdom" to determine and prescribe issues affecting the lives of the excluded masses. As Payer (1982) has argued, foreign experts and consultants should be thoroughly and carefully vetted to ensure both their competence and the extent to which they are committed to the needs of and how much they respect the poor whom they are supposedly to be serving. They should also be critically awakened to acknowledge the possible "other" experts who can either be villagers or elders and whose knowledge should equally be valuable inputs in any development and teacher education programs. Interdependence within the critical/transformative paradigm is perceived in critical terms of authentic global justice, equity, democracy and global peace. Thus, crucial to the critical/transformative paradigm is what Toh (1983, p.13) refers to as a critical global literacy which keeps alive the vision of "a new but genuinely just world order in which

trading, financial and political relations are much more equitable". In this just and democratic global framework, appropriate intellectual goods may be critically adopted from the industrialized North countries, as much as the Industrialized countries should also make significant steps to adopt intellectual goods from the South. However, such intellectual goods critically adopted by the South do not become the sum total of reforms and programs in the South. The global relations are thus perceived in terms of harmonious and democratic reciprocity, and inclusive of the long excluded and marginalized masses. Grassroots strategies are sought to empower the masses to make their valuable contributions to programs which are supposedly designed for their benefit.

In the transformative paradigm, transnational curriculum transfer and advice so highly valued by the modernization paradigm as the key to development in the South will radically cease to be the only mode of operation. Instead, this paradigm puts special emphasis on relevant and appropriate local or indigenous knowledge and wisdom which can possibly be supplemented with any critically adopted external ideas. Thus participatory strategies will mean that local grassroots resources such as teachers and village people are no longer powerless and passive receptors of reforms and decisions dispensed from above by the elites and experts within the unjust and undemocratic top-down modernization-based global framework.

The Western type modern society, institutions, cultural values and attitudes cease to be the "ideal-typicals" to be emulated by the South. More importantly, diffussionist cultural and intellectual transnational corporations such as North universities and institutions of higher learning are brought to a critical reinvestigation in terms of their relevance to South contexts. Similarly, their task of international diffusion of Western cultural hegemonic dominance is challenged and aborted within the critical/transformative paradigm. In sum, it can be argued that to date teacher education programs in South regions have predominately been formulated or designed following the technocratic/modernization paradigm of teacher education. Though a few achievements cannot be discounted in this paradigm, the degree of negative outcomes have tended to overshadow these few positive achievements. Therefore, in order to achieve the desired change, teacher education formulation should be rooted in the principles of a critical/transformative paradigm as outlined above.

## 2.3. Critical/Transformative Pedagogy

Apart from the external/internal forces which shape teacher education programs in the underdeveloped South nations, the nature of pedagogy in teacher education is yet to be

subjected to a critical evaluation in terms of the role of teacher education in societal transformation. More specifically, this critical analysis helps to shed light on the nature of relationships and interactions in teacher education and whether or not such relationships are transformative. Also, critical analysis opens up conceptual lenses on issues related to the underlying meanings and purposes of teacher education in South contexts.

Within the technocratic/modernization paradigm the quest for excellence/quality in teacher education is intimately tied up to technical concerns for teacher competence or teacher performance which positively correlate with a high degree of student performance. The World Bank Staff Working paper titled *Teacher Training And Student Achievement In Less Developed Countries* explicitly demonstrate the modernization based ideology of technical competence where a high degree of correlation is sought between teacher characteristics, including the level of educational attainment and pedagogical training, and a high level student performance (World Bank, 1979). While the notion of technical competence is a legitimate concern for teacher education, it is also important to point out the fact that no explicit attempts are made within the technocratic paradigm to link technical teacher competence with broader societal-political-economic issues. Neither is the nature of quality of student performance perceived in terms other than measurable outcomes. The over-emphasis on this ideology of technical competence without taking express efforts to link up with the broader socio-political issues, which in itself is a political perspective, is not only non-transformative and dis-empowering but also oppressive because it does not broaden the horizons of student teachers to go beyond technical competence.

Because of this apolitical concept of teacher education, the teacher comes to be seen as a mechanical effector of effective teaching skills which in turn is assumed to help propel economic take-off into modernity. Consequently, technical concerns in terms of teacher efficiency and effectiveness and "good-quality-teaching" have come to dominate. Teachers are to provide the economy and the modern sector in particular, with skilled workers of high level expertise. In sum, teacher education programs based on modernization assumptions have largely reflected the "competence based" or "performance based" traditions (Richardson, 1990).

Following this obsession with technical competence, the highly valued model of the teacher has come to be that of a technician, a pedagogical clerk, or a technologist (McLaren & Giroux, 1987; Zeichner, 1993; Giroux, 1982). The role of the teacher is technicised and perceived merely in terms of an effector of technical skills (Beyer, 1988). This technical conceptualization of the teacher's role gravitates into the Freirean concept of banking education where:

> ... the form of education has the characteristic, which it never loses, of being a mere act of transferring knowledge. In fact, the educator - he who knows - transfers knowledge to the educatee - he who does not know. In this practice, knowledge is a mere given fact and not a permanent process which entails the praxis of men on the world. In this strange epistemology, there is no knowable object, but complete knowledge which the educator possesses. Thus it is incumbent on him to transfer, bring, extend, give and hand over to the ignorant educatee, the knowledge he possesses (Freire, 1972, p.177).

The task of teaching is perceived as a mechanical one where the teacher simply delivers some pre-existing knowledge to students. However, such knowledge is neither the creation of the teacher nor is it critically examined. But a hierarchical chain of hand-overs of knowledge exists from the top to the bottom. Consequently, the technocratic paradigm cherishes an overwhelming dominance of isolated technical competence, linear thinking, and instrumental rationality of a positivistic epistemology. Therefore, it can be argued that teacher education within the technocratic/modernization paradigm has tended to promote an apolitical pedagogy of technical competence which is consistent with what Freire terms the "banking mode" of education. It should also be stated that the tendency to uproot teacher education from its broader social and political context is inherently limiting in terms of empowering or transformative pedagogy. As Shor (1992) has argued, a "transformative pedagogy" is a critical-democratic pedagogy for self and social change. It is a student-centered pedagogy which approaches individual growth as an active, cooperative, and social process. Hence, self and society create each other as human beings do not invent themselves in a vacuum and society cannot be made unless people create it together. Therefore, the goal of a "transformative pedagogy" is to relate personal growth to public life by developing strong skills, academic knowledge, habits of inquiry, and critical curiosity about society, power, inequality, and change.

Transformative pedagogy is premised on a "critical pedagogy" which, apart from being critically alert about issues of social reproduction raised by correspondence theorists, draws on the subjectivities and lived experiences of students in educational settings (Willis, 1977, McLaren, 1989; Apple, 1982; Bowles & Gintis, 1976). Therefore, a critical/transformative pedagogy predisposes students to critical outlooks on the broader social reality by addressing questions pertaining to what forms of educational goals, experiences and activities lead towards forms of life which are mediated by concerns for justice, equity, democracy and human betterment. Similarly, concerns regarding whether current political, economic and social arrangements serve important human needs are critically debated. Central to a critical/transformative pedagogy for personal and social change is the issue of "reflective practice" in teacher education.

Teacher education programs within the modernization paradigm claim to "train students to become reflective practitioners" yet while at the same time heavily shying away from, and radically opposed to emancipatory notions of teacher reflective praxis which is a political and transformative exercise. Three levels of "reflective practice" are identified including reflective practice which is instrumental mediation of action, reflection as deliberating among competing views of teaching, and critical reflectivity (Grimmett et al, 1990; Beyer & Zeichner, 1987; Van Mannen, 1977; Schön, 1983). "Reflection" which is seen as "instrumental mediation of action" represents a view of reflection as a process that leads to thoughtful, mediated action. This instrumental type action usually involves putting into practice research findings and theoretical formulations of education. From this perspective, the purpose of reflection is "instrumental" in that the reflective process is used to help teachers replicate classroom practices that empirical research has found to be effective. The knowledge source in this type of reflection is usually that of external authority and the mode of knowing is technological. However, this technical application of educational knowledge in attaining given ends lack in critical questioning of received assumptions and truths. The second view, which is "reflection as deliberating among competing views of teaching", is based on a conception of practical action where the problem is one of clarifying the assumptions and predispositions underlying practical action and assessing the educational consequences to which action leads. While this second level allows possibilities of transcending purely instrumental concerns of technical rationality, the problem still lies in the fact that this form of reflective practice relies on external authority as the source of knowledge and ignores the broader societal context.

While the technocratic/modernization paradigm tends to emphasize technical rationality levels of reflective practice, the critical/transformative paradigm is more premised on "critical reflective practice" which is the third view of reflective practice. Critical reflective practice is an emancipatory project which incorporates considerations of moral and ethical criteria such as justice and equity into the discourse of educational thought about practical action. In this perspective, students begin to identify connections between classroom practice and the wider educational, social, economic, and political conditions that shape and influence classroom practice. Besides drawing on appropriate technical skills, teachers also address questions such as which educational goals, experiences and activities lead to forms of life that are mediated by concerns for justice, equality, and emancipation. Therefore, contrary to the technocratic/modernization paradigm, the critical/transformative paradigm perceives teacher education as an "emancipatory political project based on teaching for democracy, active citizenship", and a general liberation of mankind from the miseries entrenched in the social, political and economic structures

(Giroux, 1989; Giroux & Freire, 1987; Giroux & McLaren, 1987, p. 267; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993). Fundamentally, the challenge within this paradigm is therefore one of preparing student teachers to become "critical and transformative intellectuals" who can critically examine, challenge and sustain a peaceful society which is based on equity, democracy and human dignity.

## 2.4. Teachers as "Critical/Transformative Intellectuals"

The concept of teachers as "critical/transformative intellectuals" is also crucial in a critical/transformative pedagogy which seeks to link teacher education and social change. This concept of teachers as "transformative intellectuals" is clearly defined by Giroux and McLaren as follows:

> By the term "transformative intellectual" we refer to one who exercises forms of intellectual and pedagogical practice which attempts to insert teaching and learning directly into the political sphere by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. We are also referring to one whose intellectual practices are necessarily grounded in forms of moral and ethical discourses exhibiting a preferential concern for the suffering and struggles of the disadvantaged and oppressed. Here we extend to the traditional view of the intellectual as someone who is able to analyze various interests and contradictions within society to someone capable of articulating emancipatory possibilities and working towards their realization. Teachers who assume the role of transformative intellectuals treat students as critical agents, question how knowledge is produced and distributed, utilize dialogue, and make knowledge meaningful, critical, and ultimately emancipatory (Giroux & McLaren, 1986, p.215).

Therefore critical/transformative intellectuals can also be conceptualized as radical educators who do not only questions received assumptions and received institutions but are also capable of engaging a language of critique while articulating and taking action to realize possibilities (Giroux, 1993). Transformation goes beyond critique to articulate a language of human empowerment. "Empowerment" within the radical/critical tradition is conceptualized as the ability to think and act critically. The concept "intellectual" refers to "those people whose activity or function is primarily that of disseminating ideas" (Sarup 1983, p.117). It should also be noted that since the transformative paradigm does not de-legitimate indigenous wisdom or knowledge, the concepts of "teacher" and "transformative intellectual" are perceived in much broader terms to include groups such as elders who are

not necessarily credentialized but still possess valuable knowledge for enhancing the quality of life.

However, as Giroux and McLaren indicate above, unlike the teacher as a technician, the concept of teacher as transformative intellectual situates teaching and learning in the broader socio-political context, sees schooling as representing some form of struggle, sees it as the teacher's moral and ethical task to challenge and engage in transformative action to transform the socio-political arrangements which underpin the lives of the poor and other disadvantaged groups. Unlike the modernization paradigm where "reflection" is restricted to instrumental and technical levels, reflective praxis in the alternative paradigm does not only recognize the necessity for technical skills but also takes a deliberate goal of critical synthesis of reflection and action, and therefore enables student teachers to retain a critical stance towards society and schooling and teacher education while at the same time developing and refining strategies for action, for intervening in political, economic and ideological arenas. Therefore, the central thrust within the alternative paradigm is one of educating student teachers to achieve a deepened and critical awareness of the socio-political and economic structures which shape their lives as teachers and citizens, as well as the lives of their students. Within this paradigm, the teacher is seen as a human being with a value commitment which has serious implications both for teaching, and for the current political, social and economic status quo. Therefore, the process of preparing teachers within the critical/transformative paradigm is necessarily a political and ideological one, and ought to involve ethical and ideological questioning and debate. The underlying transformative nature of the critical paradigm of teacher education is clearly outlined by Freire and Giroux (1987, p. *ii* ) as follows:

> ..such a [paradigm] works to highlight the pedagogical nature of political claims made dependent upon social practices in which knowledge is constructed, dialogue is contextualized around emancipatory interests, learning is actively pursued as part of a radical project for new forms of ethical and political community, and the production of subjectvities is seen as central educational issue.

Thus, unlike the technocratic/modernization paradigm, the critical/transformative paradigm stresses the primacy of opportunities for student self-empowerment through critical dialogue, debate and social engagements to articulate their own sense of moral and political purpose as future teachers (Giroux, 1989; Giroux & McLaren, 1987). This paradigm upholds emancipatory ideals and strives to link the pedagogical with the socio-political. Within the frameworks of "teacher as transformative intellectual" issues of power, control and teacher autonomy are also crucial. Most significantly is the issue of

preparing prospective teachers to become "resisting intellectuals" who can be critically alert to sustain democratic relationships similar to those which must prevail in the broader society, and challenge manipulative interests. In this regard, the question of teacher professional autonomy puts much emphasis on preparing student teachers to become professionals who are not only charged with the distribution of curricula but also with the design and control of curricular. Whereas in the technocratic/modernization paradigm "professionalization" has tended to lead to teacher passivity, in the critical/transformative paradigm, it seeks to empower students to critically challenge tendencies in teaching which lead to professional erosion of teacher's work, proletarianization and intensification. In the mainstream technocratic paradigm the teacher's work has been proletarianized because of tendencies such as increased division of labor, separation of conception from the execution of tasks, routinization of high level tasks, increased control over each step of teacher's work and increased volume of work (Barrow, 1978; Apple, 1983; Densmore, 1987).

The critical/transformative paradigm is also based on democratic pedagogical processes which are transformative in the sense that such pedagogical processes center around authentic notions of student participation in the teaching-learning process. Students are not only seen as equal partners in the teaching-learning process, but they are also seen as active and critical architects in the construction of knowledge. As Freire argues, the teacher-student contradictions are transcended in that both teachers and students become students and teachers in a reciprocal manner based on mutual respect for each other's intellectual integrity (Freire, 1972). Participatory democracy forms the essence and spirit of the interactions within the teacher education institution. Consequently, both the teacher educator and the student are liberated from their enslavement by pre-packaged and pre-ordained forms of knowledge common in the banking mode of education.

Furthermore, whereas in the technocratic/modernization paradigm student teaching is mainly seen as a way for students to master a repertoire of routinized technical skills, the critical/transformative paradigm approaches student teaching in a transformative and emancipatory manner. Far from serving only as a model for accepted practice, the school itself becomes an object for analysis and possible alteration. Therefore the school is not seen as mainly a neutral and dis-interested site to which students can turn to acquire effective teaching skills, hence, as already indicated, schools are not free of vestiges of contestation, struggle and politics (Giroux & McLaren, 1987). Thus, over and above collecting a baggage of routinized technical skills, prospective teachers need to go through a process of problematizing the school by focusing on certain crucial issues. These would include the issues of cultural alienation embedded in most African schooling (Mazrui, 1978; Ngugi, 1986), issues of social stratification and educational inequalities based on gender,

class and ethnicity (D'Souza, 1976; Brown, 1984; Preston, 1984) and issues of curricula relevance regarding the pressing needs of development (Dore & Oxenham, 1984; Ellwood, 1983).

Therefore, a transformative teacher education program will speak to central problems of power, politics and deprivation as they are expressed in the day to day domination and subordination of people in society. Issues of gender balance, environmental degradation, economic and class disparities become central. Hence a transformative paradigm is committed to issues of empowerment and transformation, issues which combine knowledge and critique on the one hand with a call to transform social structures in the interests of democratic and just communities, on the other hand (Giroux & McLaren, 1987; Giroux, 1982). The school is presented and examined in its form as a vehicle either for human liberation, domestication or oppression.

Also central to a critical/transformative paradigm is an epistemological stance which departs by addressing questions similar to those asked by critical theorists and Sociology of Knowledge scholars. Such critical questions would include questions such as: What/whose knowledge is of most worth in school?; Why are other forms of knowledge, such as the local and indigenous knowledge, expelled and excluded from school while others are allowed to dominate the school domain?; What reading material are included or excluded from the reading lists, and why?; How does school knowledge reflect educational goals which are geared towards forms of life which are mediated with concerns for justice, equity, democracy and improvement of human condition? (Shor, 1992; Apple & Smith, 1991; Witty & Young, 1976; Young, 1971; Bourdieu, 1971). Thus the transformative paradigm empowers students to examine and act upon related critical questions which interrogate the authenticity of the underlying goals and purposes of education. While the modernization paradigm of teacher education call for knowledge which is socially constructed, it fails to address critical questions pertaining to what or whose knowledge qualifies as the social reality to be constructed and whose or what knowledge is disqualified.

Furthermore, within the critical alternative paradigm, the nature of content in a teacher education program must also be examined in terms of the extent to which it is tailored towards the improvement of the lives of the suffering masses of the South. Or in a negative sense, a critical examination assesses the extent to which this learning content is wedded to the dominance of the modern sector and its constellation of foreign and local elite agents that profit most from structural inequalities. However, despite the fact that the modern sector cannot absorb all the educated, the technocratic/modernization paradigm has persistently kept its course towards producing personnel for urban biased and white collar

work. Productive manual work oriented skills have systematically been pushed to the margins of educational terrain in the South. When it comes to attitudes, values and predispositions needed for rural community development, modernization based teacher education programs have left much to be desired. In contrast, the transformative paradigm seeks to draw possible lessons from exemplars such as those of the Cuban strategy of integrating academic work with productive manual work and dissolving rural-urban boundaries in educational development (Wald, 1978), the Nyererean experiment of "education for self-reliance" (Nyerere, 1968), or mass-based schooling in China prior to the current shift to modernization (Cleverley, 1991).

In sum, this chapter has clarified some of the major conceptual issues useful for investigating the directions and assumptions of a teacher education program such as the BETD of Namibia. These issues and concepts include the formulation of teacher education within the transnational/global network of policy formulation, participatory and grass-roots oriented strategies for policy formulation, critical and transformative pedagogy for teacher education which mediates for social change, reflective practice, and teachers as "transformative intellectuals". The conceptual framework argues that to date teacher education programs in South regions have been formulated within the transnational/global network of elites which draws heavily on the principles and assumptions of the technocratic/modernization paradigm. Pedagogy within this paradigm has tended to emphasize a technological approach which renders teachers politically passive.

# CHAPTER 3

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1. Introduction

Following the nature of the study, qualitative research methods were deemed the most appropriate to collect data by soliciting the views, beliefs and experiences of the program participants regarding (i) aims and objectives of the program; (ii) curricula and pedagogical issues in the program; (iii) forces which shaped the program. Qualitative research methodology was chosen primarily to allow the study to understand and interpret the program from the point of view of the insiders or program participants. Like other qualitative studies, this study observed many of the basic characteristics of conventional qualitative research methodology which can be outlined as follows:

> ... since qualitative researchers deal with multiple, socially constructed realities or "qualities" that are complex and indivisible into discrete variables, they regard their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them. To make their interpretations, the researcher must gain access to the multiple perspectives of the participants. Their study designs, therefore, generally focus on in-depth, long interaction with relevant people in one or several sites. The researcher becomes the main research instrument as he or she observes, asks questions, and interacts with research participants (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p.6).

In order to glean how the participants in the program "constructed the world around them", or, how they made sense out of the program, field-work research was conducted from May 1995 to August 1995. During these four months the main objective was to interact with the participants in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program at Caprivi College so as to gain access to how the program was perceived by its participants. Therefore, as is widely recommended by various qualitative researchers, this in-depth on site stay was mainly intended to gain understanding of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program "from the native point of view" or from "the point of view of the program insiders" (Spradley, 1980; Van Mannen, 1979; Burgess, 1984; Bogdan & Biklen, 1982).

### 3.2. Locale of the Study

Since February 1993 the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program has been offered at the four colleges of teacher education in Namibia. As appended in appendix B these colleges are: (i) Ongwediva College in northern Namibia, (ii) Rundu College in the northeast, (iii) Caprivi College in the far northeast, (iv) and Windhoek College in central Namibia. In comparative terms, Ongwediva College is the largest of the four in terms of physical capacities for student intake with Windhoek College larger than both Rundu and Caprivi. Currently, Rundu College is the smallest in terms of student intake capacity.

This study was conducted at Caprivi College of Education. At the time of the study Caprivi College was still operating at the temporary campus situated approximately 1,5 kms south east of the town center of Katima Mulilo, along the road to Mafuta. Both appendix C-1 and C-2 outline the location of the College and the physical layout respectively. In the foreword to the College's prospectus (1995), Caprivi College is described as still very young - about two years old and relatively small in size. The 1995 prospectus further indicates that the College had a capacity of three hundred (300) students, and was staffed by twenty one (21) members of staff at the time of the study. However, as the College was still operating on temporary premises at the time of study and awaiting to move to the new campus beginning of 1996, only two hundred and twenty six (226) students were accommodated. Of the 226 students, eighty-nine (89) were in their first, with eighty-eight (88) in their second year, and forty-nine (49) in the third year respectively.

Prior to January 1993, Caprivi College offered two other teacher education programs namely the National Higher Education Certificate (NHEC) and the National Education Certificate (NEC). Both programs were subsequently phased out with the phasing in of the BETD. The College also notes in its 1995 prospectus that the demand it faces from applicants far exceeds the number of places available in which case a careful screening of candidates is administered in order to select the required number of students. But once admitted, students are given the opportunity to perform to the best of their abilities.

As Appendix C-3 indicates, the College was organized into four departments at the time of the study with each department staffed by teacher educators, a senior teacher educator and a head of department. The four departments were: (i) the Department of Education Theory and Practice (dept. of professional studies); (ii) the Department of Science; (iii) the Humanities Department; and, (iv) the Skills Department. Overall, the College is headed by a Rector. Attached to the College through the Education Development

Unit (EDU) is a Reform facilitator whose task is to assist the college staff in implementing the reform program

Since this study could as well have been conducted at any of the three other centers or Colleges where the BETD is being offered other than Caprivi, it is necessary to state that Caprivi College was chosen as the site for the study mainly because of my personal involvement as a teacher educator at this particular College. Furthermore, it was also chosen primarily because of its accessibility, taking into account the financial and geographical limitations of the study regarding traveling and accommodation expenses. It is important to note that, though specific differences are discernible among the Colleges, the Caprivi College findings are most likely to be significantly similar to other Colleges. As will be shown later in the presentation of findings, some studies conducted on the program (e.g., the Marope/Noonan study) have also noted differences as well as significantly similar patterns regarding perceptions and practice in the implementation of certain pedagogical strategies. The applicability and relevance of Caprivi College findings to other Colleges should also be seen in the context that the BETD is a national program within a national policy seeking to address both local and specific issues as well as national issues of Namibia teacher education.

## 3.3. Gaining Access to Caprivi College

One of the first major problems in conducting research is that of getting permission or access to conduct the study. Following research ethics approval from the University of Alberta, permission was sought from the various relevant authorities in Namibia, including the teacher educators and student teachers themselves. In particular, letters seeking permission and expressing the intentions or purposes of the study were written both to Namibia's National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) and Caprivi College. Appended in (D1 - D5) together with the letters of support which were used to gain access to the site of study is the letter of permission to conduct the study from NIED. A well negotiated entry to Caprivi College was essential not only to build trust and good cooperation with the program participants but also to allow me to interact freely with these participants and to ensure an uninterrupted success of my study (Bogdan, 1972; Burgess, 1984).

### 3.4. Sampling Procedures

At a general level, the sample population for this study was drawn from the participants in the Namibian Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program located at one of the four Colleges of Education. However, specific target groups can be identified namely the third year or final year BETD student teachers, teacher educators, reform facilitators, and, administrators of Caprivi College. Towards the end of 1995, just before the first graduates were to be released, there were forty nine (49) students doing their final year in the program. Fifteen (15) of these students were females while thirty one (31) were male students. It should be mentioned at this point that the sampling of potential participants in the study from this final year student body of forty nine (49) students was guided by purposive sampling procedures. Purposive sampling is designed to select a sample which is most appropriate for providing information and insights most relevant to the study (Meriam, 1988, p.48). It was in this context that third year students were selected as a target group for the study mainly because of their valuable three year experience in the program and their intimate knowledge of the various aspects of the program.

However, since not all the forty nine (49) students could be involved as respondents for the study, attempts were made to further select a smaller group from the main group of third year students. Ultimately, a group of fifteen students (15); nine (9) males and six (6) females, were selected and invited to participate in the study. In terms of purposive sampling for this study, as described earlier, all BETD third year students were regarded as possessing equal and valuable experiences which could significantly illuminate the selected aspects of the program. Therefore, further selection of a smaller sample of fifteen (15) students from the forty-nine (49) was based on the criterion of random selection (i.e., every third student on the course list) which was also gender sensitive. From June 7 to June 9, individual consultations were conducted with the fifteen (15) students to explain the aims and purposes of the study to them and to seek their consent to participate in the study. As I will elaborate later in the section on the methodological problems faced by this study, because of the busy schedule at the time with the third year School Based Studies going on, only nine students (9) out of the fifteen; four (4) females and five (5) males, consented to participate in the study as a primary group of respondents.

Apart from the third year student teachers, the sample was also drawn from the teacher educators. As already indicated, there were twenty one (21) members of staff at the time of this study and all were asked to participate. Once again, as I will elaborate later in the methodological problems faced, most of the staff members had just joined the College

with less than one year or one and half years experience in the program. As a result some were a bit uncomfortable regarding their knowledge of the program to fully participate in the study.

However, twelve (12) members of staff out of the twenty one (21) consented to participate in the study. The twelve members of staff were further broken down as follows: one rector (college head), three heads of department, one reform facilitator (TERP official), one expatriate (teacher educator) and six other teacher educators. The sample for the study can be illustrated as follows:

**Table 1**
**Participants in the study**

| Position | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Rector | 1 | -- | 1 |
| Heads of Departments | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Reform Facilitator* | 1 | -- | 1 |
| Teacher Educators | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| Expatriate Teacher | -- | 1 | 1 |
| BETD III Students | 5 | 4 | 9 |
| **TOTAL** | **12** | **9** | **21** |

Key: * = Reform Facilitator (RF) is a College Based TERP official.

Among the staff members, the sampling procedure was also sensitive to issues of race or ethnicity as these can have impact on the findings of the study. Consequently, four white members of staff (one Namibian and three expatriates), and eight black members of staff (one expatriate and seven Namibians) were included in the study. In sum, twenty one respondents (21); twelve (12) teacher educators or members of staff and nine (9) final year students (BETD III), were available both for individual and group interviews as sources of data to the study. Like the student teachers, teacher educators were also selected by virtue of their intimate knowledge and experience regarding the selected aspects of the program.

### 3.5. Data Gathering

As already indicated, the data for this study was collect over a four month period of in-depth on-site stay at Caprivi College of Education. Available to the study during this

prolonged period were various methods of data collection including interviews, participant observation, and analysis of documents.

### 3.5.1. Interviews

In order to solicit and discern the views, beliefs, and experiences of participants in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program, both individual and group interviews, or "focus groups", as Kruger (1988) calls them, were used. As both Cohen and Manion (1989), and Spradley (1980) indicate, the interview makes it possible to elicit a person's knowledge, value orientation/preferences, attitudes and experiences. Because of their unstructured nature, the interview sessions yielded rich conversations whereby the program participants tried to narrate their views and experiences about various aspects of the program.

The decision whether to have a "focus group" discussion or an individual discussion mainly depended on the respondents. For the final year student teachers, who were also busy with their School Based Studies at the time, groups of two, one with four members and the other, five members respectively, were formed over and above the individual interviews. Such group sizes also made provision for the fact that some students might possibly not turn up. But in most cases most students tried to attend the group interviews. While several individual interviews were held with the student teachers in this primary group, about four group interview sessions were organized. Whereas the duration for individual interviews ranged from thirty minutes to one hour, group interviews ranged from one hour to about two hours.

The case with teacher educators and administrators was somewhat different in that the group interview was unpopular and did not seem to fit very well with their always conflicting time schedules. However, at least one focus group discussion was conducted with three teacher educators. It should be stated that all teacher educators who were sample members were very willing to schedule several individual interviews whenever they had time available.

### 3.5.2. Participant Observation

In order to illuminate further on the program, data gathered through interviews was supplemented or backed-up by personal observations through the participant observation technique. As defined by Bogdan (1972, p.3), participant observation:

> ...is used to refer to research characterized by a prolonged period of intense social interaction between the researcher and the subjects, in the milieu of the latter, during which time data, in the form of field notes, are unobtrusively and systematically collected.

Participant observation was used to collect data in various settings such as lesson observations during classes conducted by teacher educators at Caprivi College, lesson observations during classes conducted by the third year student teachers while on School Based Studies, in staff meetings, during field-trips, and many other settings. However, it should be stated that in most cases the use of both interviews and personal observations were over-lapping and complimentary. For instance, a lesson observation may be followed by an interview session. As is standard practice in participant observation, attempts were made to compile as descriptive and accurate field-notes as possible.

Three possible roles participant observers may play in a field were available. These are: complete participant - where the observer is fully involved in the activities of the group; participant-as-observer - where the researcher participates in the activities of the group, but also makes observations; complete observer - where the researcher observes the activities of the group without in any way becoming a participant in these activities (Bogdan & Biklein, 1982; Fraenkel & Wallen, 1980; Spradely, 1980).

As different situations and settings demanded, my role as a participant observer during this study kept on fluctuating between the three different levels of participation. In other settings such as staff meetings, group discussion or student counseling for School Based Studies I found myself assuming the role of complete participant. On field-trips and in some lesson observations I assumed the role of participant-as-observer, while in some lesson observations I remained a complete observer.

### 3.5.3. Document Analysis

Apart from the interviews and observations, data was also sought through document analysis. In this regard, a wide spectrum of documents were analyzed, which can be classified broadly as background documents (secondary documents) and program documents (primary documents). Back-ground documents or secondary documents refer to those documents which described the Namibia education system in general and were thus contextual data to the program. These included policy documents on other levels of education in the Namibian educational system other than the teacher education program. Therefore, any document which was not directly addressing the BETD Program but was dealing with the Namibian educational system or the political economic system and could

therefore provide contextual background to the study, was classified as a back-ground document.

Secondly, program documents or primary documents - included those documents which were directly addressing the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program. These included the various subject area curricula documents, the Broad Curriculum for the program, prescribed and recommended reading material and many other program policy documents.

### 3.6. Data Recording

Tape-recording and field-note taking were the two major data recording techniques used. Complete, accurate and detailed field-note taking was used to record data collected during observations, and sometimes during interviews. Audio-tape recording was mainly used in both group and individual discussions or interviews. Tape recording enabled me to concentrate on the discussions rather than having to keep on writing everything the respondents had to say. Tape-recorded data was transcribed immediately after each interview session and analyzed so as to provide sign posts for the next interview. However, in some cases, field-note taking and tape-recording were used as back-up and supplementing or complementing each other.

### 3.7. Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability of the data were secured in various ways. To enhance descriptive validity, attempts were made to maintain a high degree of accuracy and detail in taking field notes. Attempts were also made to record as accurately as possible the words of the participants in the study. Secondly, validity was also assured by using an audio-tape recording device. This ensured that the data collected was accurately recorded with a high degree of exactness. Thirdly, participants were encouraged to alter what they considered mis-represented through listening to the tape and clarify statements where necessary. However, this validation by respondents was only done in cases where the data warranted being cross-checked. Lastly, the use of different types of data collection methods, generally known as triangulation, provided a further measure of validity of the data collected. However, my own position as a researcher and insider in the program also provide significant implications regarding the validity and reliability of the data collected. For instance, not only were the respondents able to relate to me with trust, confidence and easiness but my own insider position also provided some degree of validation of the data

gathered. Therefore, while being aware of the need to avoid imposition of my own views and experiences, my own experiences and reflections as an insider (as a teacher educator) nevertheless provided a further measure of validity on the data collected.

### 3.8. Methodological Difficulties Encountered

As mentioned previously, one of the methodological difficulties faced by this study was the fact that the final year BETD students, who were the major target group for the study, were on School Based Studies (teaching practice) during the entire period of the research. This situation had some negative implications for the study particularly regarding the availability of student teachers for frequent interviews while at the same time trying to keep up with their teaching responsibilities at the schools where they were placed. To overcome the situation, interviews were mostly arranged in the afternoons, and all the student respondents preferred to spend their Friday afternoons discussing issues related to the research. In some cases students were followed up to the schools particularly when it came to individual interviews. However, the fact that students were on School Based Studies also provided positive opportunities for me as I could observe some of the lessons presented by the student teachers themselves. Since the final year students were out on School Based Studies I did not have the opportunity to observe lessons "offered" to them by their college teacher educators at the college. Instead, in order to gather data on pedagogical strategies, lesson observations were conducted in second year and first year classes which were running at the time.

The situation with teacher educators also presented another methodological problem in that data discerned from them through individual interviews could not be adequately backed-up with group interviews. This was mainly because teacher educators often had conflicting time schedules and could thus not easily be organized for group interviews. As mentioned earlier, one group interview was secured with a group of three teacher educators, one from the Science Department, the other from Humanities Department, and one from the Department of Education Theory and Practice. Another problem posed by some of the teacher educators was the fact that some felt that they had not been long enough in the program to provide adequate data for the study.

### 3.9. Data Analysis

Data analysis was an on-going process throughout the entire study. Each interview session or observation was followed by an immediate analysis of the data, though careful and thorough analysis followed later after the data collection period in Namibia was completed. In order to discern the underlying paradigmatic orientations of the program data was analyzed within the general framework of paradigmatic issues obtaining within the technocratic/modernization paradigm and the critical/transformative paradigm as outlined in the conceptual framework provided in Chapter 2. Therefore, while being acutely aware of the need to avoid theoretical imposition, data was analyzed within the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter 2. It is also important to state that the analysis of data was mainly situated within the historical context undergone by the Namibian teacher education as well as in the context of the current post-apartheid educational reforms. In order to provide a holistic framework, data analysis was also based on several themes relevant to teacher education issues and concepts in Namibia. Thematic analysis provided a framework for analyzing empirical data gathered on participants' views and policy documents. It should also be stated here again that while being aware of the need to avoid imposition, my own experiences and reflections as an insider could not be wholly distanced from analysis of data.

In the presentation and analysis section, interview data is italicized and cited respectively as ST = for student teachers, TE = for teacher educators, A = for the administrator, RF = for the reform facilitator. Date and number of interview are used to identify different interviews. For instance, direct interview would be italicized and cited as (Interview: ST., April 3, No.9). The citation could be interpreted as follows: ST = student teacher, interview was conducted on the third of April, and it was the nine$^{th}$ interview. Interviews are numbered according to the dates on which they were conducted.

### 3.1.0. Ethical Considerations

Like other qualitative studies, this study was very cautious of moral issues involved in research dealing with human subjects. To begin with, ethical approval was secured from the Department of Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta, before the actual research was commenced. As stated previously, approval to proceed with the research was also obtained from the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED) in Namibia, and from Caprivi College of Education.

As many qualitative researchers such as Woods (1986), Burgess (1989), Bogdan and Biklein (1982) have indicated, informed consent and protection of subjects are crucial issues in qualitative study. For this study, informed consent was assured by allowing respondents sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the purposes and intentions of the study. This was essential to enable them make an understanding and enlightened decision on whether or not to participate in the study. To this effect, the consenting respondents were requested to complete a consent form (see appendix E) which also outlined the purposes of the study and the terms on which the respondents were participating in the study.

Protection of the respondents was guaranteed through anonymity of participants in the study. Use of personal or individual names was totally avoided in order to ensure that data was not attached to any individual program participant in a way that might disadvantage the individual.

# CHAPTER 4

# VIEWS ON AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

## 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents and examines the views, feelings, beliefs and lived experiences of the program participants regarding the program's aims and objectives. In this regard, not only were interviews conducted with program participants in the study sample, but relevant documents were also examined to support the data gathered through interviews and observations, and to provide contextualization, both historical and current, for the analysis of data. Regarding the aims of the program, two main documents were closely examined. These are: the *Broad Curriculum for the BETD* (MEC, 1994) and the government policy document - *Toward Education For All: A Development Brief For Education, Culture And Training* (MEC, 1993). These two documents list the aims and objectives of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program. The program's aims, as outlined in these two documents are found in Appendix A. As noted under research methodology, several thematic issues provided a holistic framework for analysis of the empirical data gathered on participants' views as well as policy documents vis-a-vis program aims and objectives.

## 4.2. Professionalization In The Program

As clearly stated in the Broad Curriculum, one of the major aims of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma is "to meet the needs for the professionalization of the teacher". A professional teacher is defined as "a person whose commitment and sense of responsibility, knowledge and skills will raise the quality of education in the entire country" (MEC, 1994, p.2). This particular aim is clearly stated as follows:

> The main aim of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma is to develop the professional expertise and competencies which will enable the teacher to optimize the new Basic Education for the learners, and to be fully involved in promoting change in Educational Reform in Namibia (MEC, 1994, p.3).

To shed more light, interviews were geared to solicit the views, beliefs, and experiences of the program participants regarding "professionalization" of prospective teachers and the development of their professional competencies and expertise in the Basic Education Teacher program. In an interview, a program participant expressed herself as follows:

> *In my view, I think, firstly, professionalization includes the things that go along with the teacher in terms of being a role model for children. So I think of good qualities like a sense of responsibility. In other words, to put it in more practical terms, it means: being on time for lectures or lessons; preparing for them; and doing one's best in them. We will look to see if students are punctual for lectures, hand in work on time, and whether they have tried to do a good job in the assignment (Interview: TE ., June 21, No.6).*

This "sense of responsibility" and "doing a good job" also meant making the teaching profession *lovable* and *admirable*, as an administrator put it:

> *Professionalization is intended to mean that we are trying to make this person a teacher who will be prepared not only to teach, but also to make the teaching profession a lovable one. A profession whereby each and every person will look at and admire (Interview: A., June 6, No.2).*

The views held by the two program participants above were echoed by yet another program participant. Drawing on School Based Studies, this teacher educator elaborated as follows:

> *One could look at their performance [the student teachers] in schools while they are on School Based Studies. To see if they are always punctual to school. That they prepare well for their lessons (Interview: TE., June 6, No. 3).*

While also emphasizing "responsibility", "attitude", and "behavior", another program participant perceived "professionalization" as a life-long process of "growth" which continues into the teacher's work-life:

> *One can ask a question such as; Do you become a professional once you complete your years of study at the college? Many of the people would say; "no", it continues into life. Even if you are employed, or once you finish your teacher training, you are not even prepared, it is just the beginning. So you become a professional somebody as you go into the field as you continue learning again furthering your study. At the college professionalization starts and then continues in the life of this particular individual. We look at different things here which need to be fulfilled. I think at a college like this we look at how the student behaves; how responsible are these students; how do they grow. I think we talk about*

*growth in this case. There are certain attitudes in the line of growing or becoming a professional somebody (Interview: TE., June 9, No.4).*

The views held above by the teacher educators and the administrator were also shared by a majority of students interviewed. When narrating their professional development and the expertise acquired through their stay in the program a majority of student teachers expressed related views about professionalization. As one of them maintained:

*First year when I entered this BETD, anyway, I was aware of what a teacher is, but I couldn't understand his position, his tasks. But now, when I had gone through this course I came to learn some of these tasks of the teacher. I have to be a person who is committed to my work. That is commitment; punctuality. I have also learnt that if the school says: "please, the schools starts at seven-thirty", then I have to come to school at seven-thirty. This does not just die there when you finish your college education, it is a continuation into the work situation. When you are a teacher, you are expected to arrive in class earlier and to establish yourself as a host for the pupils. You see, these are some of the skills which I have acquired. Another thing is what I have already mentioned, that is, commitment. This is true, whenever I am given work I have to devote much of my time to finish that work. And this can also be carried along into my work when I become a teacher. Yes, I have to commit myself to prepare for my work (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

Another student teacher also emphasized "commitment" to his work as follows:

*I find that the BETD has cultivated me a great deal. In the first instance, it is commitment. I recall in 1991 when I was teaching as a temporary teacher that I was not committed to my work. I was not focusing on what the learners must achieve at the end of the lesson, but I was just focusing on myself as a teacher who must prosper. So the BETD changed me in the sense that now I am committed to my work, and I am interested in seeing learners get what they are supposed to get. Also it has developed in me the way I handle lessons, particularly the methodology. Before coming to the program I used to teach as if I am in the church, that is to preach. But this time I feel that learners are not just empty. But they have lots of knowledge only that we don't have ways of motivating them so that they can contribute and reveal it to us. Also understanding. I could not understand, really understand the learner's problems, make him sit down and find out the source of the problem. But this time I feel really even my understanding has developed in such a way that I can understand the problems of the learners (Interview: ST., July 7, No.7).*

As one of the program participants indicated above, "professionalization" meant the *"teacher being a role model for learners"*, it meant possessing *"good qualities"* expressed as a sense of responsibility manifested through punctuality, preparing for lessons, being

able to hand in work on time, and always doing a good job in work. From an administrator's point of view, "professionalization" meant producing teachers who would not only be prepared to teach, but also to make the teaching profession *lovable* and *admirable*. However, from the perspective of another program participant, "professionalization" was seen as a process of *"growing"* of certain attitudes, responsibility and behaviors by a student teacher. As the participant indicated, this process of "growth" starts at the time when the student still attends college and continues into life even when the student teacher is finally employed as a teacher. Similarly, from the perspective of student teachers, "professionalization" was also portrayed as "commitment to work", hard-work , devotion to finish work within set time and punctuality. As one of them put it;*"when the school says; school starts at seven thirty, then I have to be there at seven thirty"*. Apart from commitment and dedication, professionalization was also viewed in terms of personal transformation as a teacher. Hence, as one student teacher noted, through his stay in the program, he has undergone "personal transformation" from what he was when he was teaching as a temporary teacher in 1991. Not only does he now realizes that students or learners also have valuable knowledge, but also that his banking mode of teaching, which he terms, *"preaching like in a church"*, is inappropriate for conducting lessons.

Because of the recurrence of the concept "commitment" in the views of the program participants, and since the program also states that it aims "to produce teachers who are committed to their teaching profession" , views were further solicited to illuminate more on "commitment" as one of the dominant professional attributes in the program. Asked about "commitment" and what it entailed, an administrator elaborated:

> *Commitment is somebody who feels at any time of the day he is in the profession, he is always there to assist the learners, he is there to promote the profession, he is on duty 24 hours. He can be called in at any time. He is dedicated to work. He is committed. And we can interpret commitment in several ways, but here it means that kind of dedication. I am saying, one who is there any time (Interview: ST. July 18, No. 8).*

To this administrator, commitment as a professional attribute meant a *24 hour* devotion and dedication to work. It meant a teacher who is prepared and ready to work and "help learners" at any time of the day. The views of student teachers were also sought to shed more light on the issue of commitment. From the perspective of a student teacher, commitment meant doing a lot of work, and to have knowledge in various subject areas, instead of being limited to one specialty:

> *Commitment to the teaching profession, like in any profession, if you are called to be a professional you are a person who is expected to do a lot of*

*work. You cannot only be said to be a person who has knowledge in Agriculture alone, but when there is a problem in Mathematics I think you are expected to help there because you are a professional. Therefore, we really need to be committed very much to teaching. If we are not striving for commitment, the work will be left very much behind, then the products will be seen as an insult to the community otherwise (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

It should be noted that the views held by the student teacher above contradicts the view of "specialized knowledge" regarding professionals. However, in the Namibian basic education system, lower primary grade teachers (eg. grade one to four) are most often class teachers teaching all the courses for their classes. In upper primary levels (grades five, six and seven) subject teaching tends to predominate.

Nevetherless, another student teacher indicated that "commitment" meant preparedness to do various tasks such as; marking attendance registers, trapping late-comers either in the morning or afternoon studies (learners who come late to school), or being "told" or "assigned" by the principal to collect textbooks from the head-office:

*I find that a teacher is someone who is always committed to the job. For example, we are asked to mark registers [attendance registers], we are asked to trap late-comers, either during the morning or during afternoon studies. From there being a professional teacher you can be assigned, or you can either be told by the principal that Mr. "so" and "so", now go to the head-office and request for textbooks, we don't have textbooks at our school. These are some of the commitments and tasks which a teacher must carry (Interview: ST, July 18, No. 8).*

As the foregoing presentation of data indicates, a majority of the respondents conceptualized "professionalization" in terms of "professional attributes" generally identified as a sense of responsibility; a good sense of time (punctuality); the need to prepare thoroughly for work; ability to do one's best in work; diligence; commitment; devotion and dedication to work; good attitudes and behavior. The vivid dominance by these attributes in the views and beliefs of the program participants needs to be acknowledged for three significant reasons. First, in the context of the current post-apartheid reforms these attributes can provide significant spaces for "hope" and "possibility", spaces which can be counted upon as potentialities for Namibia to produce dedicated, hardworking, committed and devoted intellectuals. Nevertheless, whether or not these attributes of commitment extend to critical participation in the reforms in a transformative manner is not reflected in the respondents' views. Besides, this particular outcome also needs to be seen within the fact that some of the professional attributes such

as that of *"24 hour "* commitment to teaching are rather idealistic and raise doubts as to their applicability in the actual reform process.

Secondly, the professional attributes are also significant mainly because they seem to rhyme very well with the aspirations of the nation to produce "professional teachers", defined as "a person whose commitment and sense of responsibility, knowledge and skills will raise the quality of education in Namibia" (MEC, 1994, p.2). In a similar vein, these attributes also seem to echo what Andersson, et al, (1991), in their report titled - *Teacher Education Reform For Namibia* - describe as the need for societies in transition, such as Namibia, to produce teachers who are not only positive towards change but are themselves capable of contributing to change. Thirdly, the professional attributes are also important in the historical context of teacher education and teaching undergone by Namibia. To give an overall picture, a brief overview of the historical context is essential.

Within its general goal of servicing the apartheid status quo, colonial teacher education in Namibia radically excluded professionalization of teachers which could be conceptualized as emancipatory and transformative. Like the education system in general, teacher education in colonial Namibia was inextricably wedded to the Bantu Education policy which contained the colonial blue-print regarding education for blacks and its administration. Elsewhere in colonial Namibia, teacher education mirrored and reflected the Bantu Education policy. The Bantu Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) emanated from the 1949 Eiselen Commission on Native Education in South Africa, and Namibia then as a territorial colony. As Cohen (1994) rightly observes, the commission's mandate was to examine the formulation of black education. It recommended the confinement of blacks to the roles of subordinate workers. According to its colonial architects, Bantu Education was to stress the "values" of tribal life, religion, and separate communities while at the same time limiting blacks to the lowest grades with their ambitions restricted within tribal horizons. Therefore, as conditioned by the general policy of apartheid and Bantu Education, both of which endorsed and reinforced the inferior black education, teacher education in colonial Namibia was offered along racialistic and segregationist policies of divide and rule for the identified ethnic groups within the designated Bantustants or Homelands. Ethnic groupings within these so-called "homelands" were identified as: Caprivians, Damaras, Hereros, Kavangos, Namas, Ovambos, Coloreds, Tswanas, and the Rehoboth Basters.

This segregation according to ethnic groups in teacher education needs to be seen within its general context of the apartheid policy which was unambiguously summed with brutal frankness in the 1947 National Party (Afrikaner party) Election Manifesto, as cited in a UNESCO document:

> In general terms, our policy envisages segregating the most important ethnic groups and sub-groups in their own areas where every group will be able to develop into a self-sufficient unit. We endorse the general policy of territorial segregation of the Bantu and the Whites ... The Bantu in the Urban areas should be regarded as migratory citizens not entitled to political or social rights equal to those of the whites. The process of de-tribalization should be arrested (UNESCO, 1968, p.14).

Consequently, the provision of teacher education closely reflected the lines of segregation drawn by the apartheid regime. At independence, on March 21, 1990, Namibia inherited a teacher education system which was not only unequal in terms of distribution of resources and development, but also highly textbook oriented and rewarding rote memorization, particularly in the northern peripheral colleges where black teachers are trained. An authoritarian and autocratic teacher education system deeply entrenched memorization of poor quality textbooks, mainly in the form of study guides from the Academy which was imposed by the colonial regime in the 1980s as the University of Namibia despite its low quality education. At most of the northern campuses teacher education was reduced to rote memorization of these poorly written "study-guides" from the Academy. The status quo of teacher education at independence was eloquently described as follows:

> Much of the present teacher education and especially in the north [where the black majorities live, and where black teachers are being trained] is highly textbook oriented and rewarding rote learning. The text-books themselves, mostly study guides from the Academy [predecessor of University of Namibia] are poor. The system of teacher education accordingly to a large extent correspondents (or mirrors) the traditional system (Andersson, et al, 1991, p. 28).

To further aggravate matters, the colonial master-plan made no distinction between teacher education and high school education. This was more so in the case of training for black teachers. Unlike the whites and colored teachers who were sent to train at institutions of higher education in South Africa, black teachers in colonial Namibia were instead trained at high school campuses as an adjunct to high school teaching. As Duggal (1984, p.17) clearly documented:

> Prior to 1978, white and colored teachers were trained in the teacher training institutes in South Africa, and African teachers were trained in the "wings" of various schools within the country. These schools provided education in technical training and teacher education in addition to secondary education - all at the same campus - with many teachers doubling as teachers in regular school classes and in teacher training classes. Altogether, there were seven

schools with teacher training wings: Ongwediva Training Institute in Owambo, Cornellius Goreseb Training Institute at Khorixas, Rundu Training Institute in Kavango, Okakarara Training Institute at Okakarara, Caprivi Trades Training at Katima Mulilo, and Dobra High School and Augustineum High School - both in Windhoek. In 1976 these schools accommodated a total of 592 teacher trainees in three teacher training courses, viz., the Lower Primary Teachers' Course (LPTC); the Primary Teachers' Course (PTC); and the Junior Secondary Teachers' Course (JSTC). The entry qualifications for these courses were standard 5 [grade 7], Form 3 [grade 10], and Form 5 [grade 12] respectively.

Clearly evident is the lack of seriousness with which the training for black teachers was conducted. The fact that teacher training was handled as a secondary activity to high school education is in itself a clear indication that the professional development of black teachers was not considered important or essential. The pressure in terms of work-load put on teachers teaching both high school subjects and teacher training courses further aggravated the professional quality of teacher education since no time was left for the overburdened teachers to research appropriately regarding the teacher education courses they offered. It is important to note here that when I joined the now Caprivi College as a teacher educator in 1990, it was still an adjunct to Caprivi Secondary School (a high school offering grades 8-10) with teachers, including myself, running between high school classes and teacher training classes at the same time. Even worse, some of the same graduates from the attached teacher training were often appointed at the same school (Caprivi Secondary school) upon graduation and ended up teaching both in the training component and in the high school component. This had several consequences among which was the fact that these teachers were not respected by their learners at Caprivi Secondary school who saw them as their school mates and not appropriate to teach them. Similarly, they were also not respected by their student teachers who also saw them as unqualified teacher educators since they were graduates of the same programs. Caprivi College was separated from Caprivi Secondary School only in February, 1993.

Not only was professional development of black teachers attributed low status, but the curriculum used in these high school campuses where black teachers were trained was upheld by a rigorous control system, mainly based on an examination system which was further reinforced by texts and textbooks. These texts and textbooks were not only poor in quality but also allowed very little freedom for teachers and students in their pedagogical relationships (Callewaert & Kallos, 1992). Furthermore, the content of teaching or curriculum in teacher education constantly refused to adapt to the needs of the Namibian people. In general, teacher education was "unco-ordinated, fragmented, ill-organized, and non-uniform" (MECYS, 1990). The qualifications offered at the colleges such as the

Education Certificate Primary (ECP) and the Lower Primary Teacher Certificate (LPTC) were all but deeply entrenched in the apartheid policy of Bantu Education. More so were the teacher qualifications offered at the Academy, such as the Higher Education Diploma (HED), extensions of the same policy. This brief overview clearly indicates that "professionalization" of teachers in the apartheid regime was totally undesirable and as a result incompatible with the goals of an independent Namibia.

It is therefore in the context of this historical experience that the views and beliefs about professionalization in terms of commitment, dedication and devotion to work need to be acknowledged as positive achievements in contrast to the colonial regime of teacher education. However, much as the generally identified professional attributes should be acknowledged as positive achievements within the current educational reforms in post-apartheid Namibia, it should equally be noted that the professional attributes were still problematic in various ways. In particular, the views held by the program participants were overwhelmingly uncritical and dominated by an "unproblematized" conception of professionalization. All that was widely celebrated, in an uncritical fashion, was the need for commitment and good job performance. What mattered as professionalism was to be committed, dedicated, devoted and hardworking in delivering or doing a good job (teaching). Excluded in these attributes of professionalization was a critical questioning of what and whose interests do these attributes serve? what values and assumptions underlie these professional attributes? who designs the job and why? what is the nature of the job (teaching) and how does it addresses the apartheid legacy of poverty in Namibia?. The widely held uncritical and unproblematized celebration of the professional attributes identified above potentially diminish the capacity of prospective teachers to question and challenge their own locations within the Namibian educational system.

The vivid dominance by professional attributes such as a sense of responsibility, punctuality, the need to do "a good job", making the teaching profession "lovable" and "admirable" and a "24 hour" commitment to work are manifestations of the participants' strong identification with the goals of their work-place (i.e., teaching). Such identification is not necessarily to be dismissed as it might potentially serve positive purposes regarding teacher support and teacher participation in the current reforms. However, an uncritical loyalty to professional duties can stifle the abilities of the prospective teachers to critically interrogate the work situation in terms of its goals and outcomes, assumptions, processes, and approaches to the reconstruction of Namibia as a democratic society. Furthermore, both an uncritical strong identification with the job and an unreflective commitment, dedication and devotion to work are even contradictory to the aspirations of the nation in

terms of producing teachers who can critically participate in the reform by making their own contributions to the reform process, as Andersson, et., al., (1991, p. 4) maintain.

Insights can also be drawn from the works by scholars whose critical analyses have unveiled how the uncritical identification with the goals of the workplace is characteristic of "professionalization as an ideology of control" which, by and large, is a construct that obscures the realities of one's workplace and ensures internalization of the motivation and self-discipline to do the job without questioning of the political and economic assumptions of the wider societal context (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Giroux, 1992; Apple, 1979, 1986). Particularly, Densmore (1987) convincingly argues that effective control of professionals depends, first and foremost, upon their ideological identification with the goals of the workplace. While seeing it as a complicated process of contenstations rather than a simplistic conscious conspiracy of the dominant groups over the weaker ones, Apple (1988) and McLaren (1989) also argue that "ideological control" of the powerful over the powerless is achieved through a general "winning" of the consent of the subordinate groups who actively but unknowingly subscribe to many of the values and goals of the dominant groups.

Other scholars have also indicated that not only has teacher education become an ideological mechanism for legitimating occupational patterns of labor and the asymmetrical relationships of power and control in the teaching field, but that like other workers, teachers have become more and more proletarianized, and their work has become more intensified (Popkewitz, 1987; Larson, 1980). As a result of increased external control, conception (planning) of the teacher's work has increasingly been removed from its execution (teaching), leading to teachers becoming mere technicians and distributors of curricular decided upon by people far removed from the actual teaching scene (Barrow, 1984; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993). Also indicated by these scholars, the erosion of teacher professional autonomy, and the consequent deprofessionalization, has been further aggravated by the constant use of teacher-proofed lock-step curriculum material. In this regard, there is no evidence in the BETD policy documents or the interview data that the program is sensitive to these potential problems regarding deprofessionalization, proletarianization and intensification of the teacher's work. In sum, it can be argued that the BETD has not encouraged student teachers to address pertinent questions such as: how is professionalization defined? what values and assumptions shape their own construction of self-image as "professionals" and whose interests does this "image" serve? what implications does the definition of "professionalization" have for human relations both in the educational setting and in the broader society? does the definition of professionalization

empower prospective teachers to think and act critically as they assume their roles in the undergoing educational reforms?

Seen within the critical/transformative paradigm, pertinent questions such as the ones above open windows for prospective teachers to claim and maintain their positions as professionals who are charged with the crucial role of working collaboratively with others in transforming Namibia to a democratic society. Teacher participation in educational policy issues in independent Namibia is pertinent since teachers have long suffered exclusion from policy issues in colonial Namibia. Within the transformative paradigm, teacher participation and involvement in policy issues will not be sufficient unless this participation and involvement is subjected to critical scrutiny in terms of its nature (processes involved) and its outcomes (policies or goals).

### 4.3 Teacher Competence and Expertise: Roles and Functions of the Teacher

Within its broader aim of "professionalization" the program also strives to develop teacher competence and expertise by making prospective teachers aware of the roles and functions expected of them as future teachers (MEC, 1994). In an interview, an administrator outlined these "roles and functions" which prospective teachers in the program are supposed to know:

> *It involves many responsibilities; teaching is one of them. Making the environment conducive for effective learning is also one of them. How to handle learners, how to involve the community in the learning process of learners; all these are the roles and functions which a teacher is supposed to carry (Interview: A., June 6, No.2).*

To a teacher educator, the "roles and functions" were perceived as follows:

> *It involves basic teaching skills. But under basic teaching skills one immediately thinks of communication. So basically, we look at English language as most of them will be teaching in English. Certain other skills which go along with being a teacher such as using the chalkboard properly, using teaching aids when necessary and designing them when one needs them. Also handling children's questions and being able to know where children are in terms of understanding the subject matter (Interview: TE. June 21, No.6).*

However, unlike the administrator and the teacher educator above, student teachers emphasized roles and functions identified as the teacher as someone who acts as a facilitator or the teacher as someone who creates a conducive learning environment, motivates

learners and acts as a manager. For instance, one student teacher emphasized the role of the teacher as a facilitator in the following manner:

> *I think the role of the teacher is to act as a facilitator. He acts as a facilitator in that case. He makes sure that learners are actually doing the job. He also gives them assistance. He does not just leave them do things their own way (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

Unlike the colleague above, another student teacher emphasized "creating a conducive learning environment" as one of the "roles and functions" of the teacher:

> *A teacher should make sure that he or she creates a conducive learning environment so that learners feel free during the lesson to contribute to the discussion. They should be made to feel free to discuss and make their points and so on. So he should also make sure that his lesson is followed according to how he planned it. Even though flexibility should be there (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

Another student teacher elaborated on the roles and functions expected of him as a future teacher by emphasizing the "teacher's duty to motivate learners and keep them going in the right track":

> *It is the teacher's duty to motivate learners and keep them going in the right track otherwise. A teacher should not give learners work and then goes away. So it is for the teacher to give them [learners] the main objectives of what he intended to do and then keep them motivated to work hard (Interview: ST. July 7, No. 7)*

However, another student teacher perceived the roles and functions of the teacher in terms of the teacher as a "manager":

> *I think the main role of the teacher is to act as a manager. He or she should see to it that the students are doing the work given to them (Interview: ST. July 7, No.7).*

A teacher educator elaborated further on the management "function" of the teacher as follows:

> *Management is how a lesson is organized. It involves how the teacher manages a lesson or classroom. Poor management in the classroom will mean that no teaching will take place. Poor organization will also mean that no learning will take place. If there is poor management and poor organization, then the teaching-learning process will be affected. Because here is a teacher who doesn't know what to do, he doesn't know what is*

*expected in a lesson, he doesn't know how to end the lesson. He doesn't know which means the whole lesson is not properly organized. It is not properly managed and in that case that results into the learner not getting anything from the lesson presented (Interview: TE. June 7, No.7).*

The roles and functions of the teacher as expressed in the views of most of the respondents above were also congruent with the roles and functions of the teacher as advanced in the directive from the office of the minister which declared 1995 as *The Year for Improvement of the Quality of Learning Outcomes.*

> A teacher is a classroom manager. His or her role is to ensure that conditions for learning and teaching exist in his or her classroom. Every teacher must be fully aware of the requirements of the curriculum and syllabus. He or she should develop a weekly scheme of work showing what part of the syllabus will be covered during that week and what teaching aids will be required. He or she should develop a daily lesson plan showing clearly the expected learning outcome at the end of the lesson (lesson objective); learning activities to be carried out; teaching aids; assessment procedures, etc., (MEC, Directive No: 001/016/095).

Gleaned from the views and beliefs held by the program participants is a general recurrence of the "roles and functions" of the teacher such as making the environment conducive to learning, knowing basic teaching skills, communication skills, ability to use the chalkboard properly, and using the teaching aids and designing them when needed. Also clear in the views were roles and functions perceived in terms of the teacher as a facilitator, motivating learners, giving guidance, allowing freedom to participate in the lessons, and the teacher as a manager. These "roles and functions" of the teacher were taught as part of the professional development of the prospective teachers. For instance, in "Educational Theory and Practice" (which is one of the subject areas in the program), I observed a first year lesson where these roles and functions were discussed under the theme "qualities of a good teacher". Various functions of the teacher were discussed such as the teacher should lead and supervise, should give guidance, should be exemplary to learners, should be even-tempered, should have patience, should be enthusiastic, should be energetic, self-controlled, open-minded, and should be able to execute educational aims and objectives (Field-notes, July 20, 1995). It should be stated that the roles and functions identified by the program participants such as giving learners freedom to participate, teachers acting as facilitators, or as someone who gives guidance to learners and motivates them can be seen as positive achievements in contrast with the authoritarian banking mode of teaching which was the hall-mark of the apartheid education system.

It is also important to note that in *The National Evaluation Of The BETD Program* conducted on behalf of the Ministry of Education (and TERP) by Dahlström and Frykholm (August, 1994) similar views regarding roles and functions of the teacher were also identified. For instance, their findings indicate that most of the student teachers saw the teacher educator as a facilitator and only very few students saw the teacher as a deliverer of goods:

> Most students (65-70%) see the role of the teacher educator as a facilitator who assist (sic) the students and invites them to be involved in the planning and the teaching and learning process. Many (30-35%) see the teacher educator as an organizer who selects the content, plan and organize the studies for active students (Dahlström & Frykholm, 1994, p.9)

Regarding the views by teacher educators, the official evaluation of the program further reported:

> The majority of teacher educators believe that the teacher educators in the BETD should act as a facilitator. None believes that the teacher educator should act as a deliverer of the goods according to the traditional way of teaching (Dahlström & Frykholm, 1994, p.6).

Some of the respondents expressed awareness that the roles and functions of the teacher include involving the community in the child's learning. Community involvement is crucial, particularly for the reason that in colonial Namibia only parents who served the interests of the colonial regime were allowed "participation" in school matters. The essence of community involvement was outlined as follows by an administrator:

> *The teacher should develop some skills which will help him to involve the community into the programs of the school and activities of the school. So once we have such teachers, then parents will be involved, they will be able to know what the learners are doing, what their kids are getting from school. They will know the weaknesses of their kids, their strengths, and how they can help the teachers to educate the children. In this partnership, learning requires commitment from the learner himself or herself, from the teacher and from the parents. So these three are very essential in the learning process (Interview: A., July 7, No. 7).*

However, much as the awareness of the identified "roles and functions" of the teacher by the program participants should be acknowledged as significant outcomes in the reform process, and that these roles and functions can possibly enhance teaching-learning in post-apartheid Namibia a critical attitude is nonetheless necessary. It should equally be noted that some of the roles and functions of the teacher prevalent among the program

participants tended to be couched within the technocratic ideology which draws on the positivistic teacher "competence-efficiency" tradition revolving around the need for increased learning outcomes on some given ends. In particular, the role of the teacher as "a manager", as outlined both by the interviewees and the directive from the office of the minister, tended to reflect this teacher "competence-efficiency-technocratic" ideology which stresses a linear approach to teaching and learning whereby the teacher individually develops a lesson plan showing clearly the expected learning outcomes (lesson objective), learning activities to be carried out in order to attain the objectives, teaching aids to be used, and an evaluation to see if the prespecified objectives have been attained.

Whereas the critical/alternative paradigm is not necessarily dismissive of teacher competence and efficiency which enhance learning outcomes, the nature of the approaches, assumptions and outcomes need to be subject to a critical scrutiny in terms of student involvement and participation which is authentically emancipatory. A linear teaching-learning strategy oriented around prespecified objectives and outcomes will tend not to stimulate creative spaces for dialogue that enables learners to bring in their own realities and issues. Furthermore, the roles and functions of the teacher, as outlined by the respondents, tended to oscillate around delivery of lessons and the skills needed to administer an effective delivery of a lesson. What seems not to feature in the views of the program participants about their roles and functions as teachers are other issues such as those related to their involvement in the reform process itself in terms of policy formulation and shaping the general destiny of the education system at policy levels. For instance, in the "Educational Theory and Practice" (ETP) lesson observation cited above one of the "roles and functions" of the teacher discussed was that "a teacher should execute educational aims and objectives" (Fieldnotes, July 20, 1995). What dominated the discussion on this "role" of the teacher was mainly the instrumental responsibility of the teacher in implementing these aims. Missing in the discussion were views regarding possibilities for critical examination of the nature of these aims or the teacher's involvement in the formulation of the aims. All that mattered was the teacher's role to implement the aims and objectives of education. This approach manifested the dominant concern for technical efficiency.

As many scholars have already indicated, an over-emphasis on the ideology of technical competence without linking the technical skills to teacher participation and active involvement in major reform issues has led to the perception of teachers as technicians, pedagogical clerks, or technologists who are only charged with the implementation of decisions and policies handed down to them by higher authorities in the bureaucracy (McLaren & Giroux, 1987; Giroux, 1982). Within this technocratic paradigm the role of the teacher is perceived as an effector of technical skills and a deliverer of a handed down

curriculum. Therefore, within the context of the ongoing reforms in Namibia, student teachers do not only need to be made aware of their technical roles and functions, but also over and above that, a critical awareness is also needed of the roles and functions they can assume in shaping the Namibian education system towards the development of an active democracy. As stated previously, these teachers will have to critically consider both the nature of their participation as well as the nature of the goals and policies they set and how these address poverty and underdevelopment.

### 4.4. Knowledge Acquisition in the program

In order to meet the professional needs of the teacher the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program also seeks to provide student teachers "with sufficient breadth in curriculum content and depth in selected subject areas" (MEC, 1994). Acquisition of subject area knowledge will allow the prospective teachers to "identify and select basic knowledge content for learners, and to organize and sequence content and learning situations properly" (MEC, 1994, p.4). Experiences and views of program participants were sought regarding knowledge acquisition in the program. When asked about knowledge acquisition in the program, a program participant had the following to say:

> *If one looks at the aims, it is interesting to note that if one thinks of a teacher training program, the very first thing that comes to mind would be to give students sufficient knowledge to teach their subject areas. There are eighteen aims in the Broad Curriculum, and you will find that subject area knowledge is the third last aim, and not the first. It is like mentioned in passing. And I have a serious problem with these aims, especially the order. I feel we are definitely failing in the area of subject knowledge. I can honestly speak for my subject area which is Integrated Natural Science. They are really failing in my subject area knowledge. I feel that there is an overemphasis at present on approaches and attitudes. I think our main task here should be to build upon the knowledge which students bring to the college. I would just like to mention that it has been a common comment that many students are saying that "we are not learning enough in our subject area, we are going too slow". And this complaint is quickly written off by the manual which says that they don't realize that it takes time to change attitudes. But I feel we should look at the students who are saying that they are not learning enough. I think we should meet that need. We can't just write it off and say, "well, they need time to change attitudes" (Interview: TE, June 21, No.6).*

Likewise, a student teacher from the Integrated Science subject area (integration of physics, chemistry and biology) also expressed similar views about insufficiency of knowledge in the subject area:

*In the science department we specialize up to grade ten. But when we go into schools we will be teaching up to grade 12. So you will find that now we are learning the grade 1 to 10 content. You will find that the knowledge we have won't be sufficient for us because it is too low. The knowledge is not sufficient in the sense that even the Science syllabus does not specify how deep we must go into the subject area content. It treats the surface only (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

Another teacher educator, also from the Integrated Natural Science subject area elaborated the lack of sufficient subject area knowledge in science by linking it to the lack of student teachers' abilities at analytical and critical thinking as follows:

*In our science department we can't talk yet of this analytical and critical thinking. You still find some students still very uncritical, and this is a tremendous weakness. We don't feel that the present emphasis on attitude and de-emphasis on knowledge is actually promoting critical and analytical thinking. We feel it is actually moving students aware from this because they are not having sufficient knowledge to be critical and analytical of anything (Interview: ST., June 7, No.7).*

Likewise, another student teacher from the same subject area also expressed similar feelings:

*To be frank enough I have not had sufficient. I still need to get more. I have background knowledge but not sufficient knowledge. What I have I can call it better knowledge but not the best. I still need some more (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

However, a student teacher from the Agricultural subject area provided a different perspective and expressed satisfaction regarding the levels of knowledge acquired in his subject area:

*I think I have acquired sufficient knowledge. I will talk on behalf of my subject area specialization, that is agriculture. Last year when we went for the SBS [School Based Studies] I was teaching agriculture and the content which I was presenting was the same as the content which our lecturer taught us at the college. The knowledge which I gained helped me to present the lesson successfully and to understand the learners (Interview: ST. July 18, No.8).*

A majority of those interviewed from the Integrated Natural Science course expressed concerns regarding what they perceived to be "insufficient" knowledge (content) acquired in their subject area. According to one of the teacher educators from that subject

area, too much emphasis has been put on approaches and attitudes to the neglect of subject area knowledge. As another teacher educator from the same subject area also indicated, this insufficient knowledge has led to student teachers' lack of critical and analytical thinking abilities in the program. Also noted by the program participants was the fact that when considering the "low" levels of knowledge with which student teachers enter the program, the current status quo of emphasizing attitudes and de-emphasizing knowledge (content) was a tremendous weakness in the program. From the perspective of the Integrated Natural Science student teacher, not only was the syllabus too superficial in its approach to content but it was also not equipping student teachers sufficiently with knowledge, particularly when taking into account the scarcity of teachers in schools which might lead to the present prospective teachers teaching higher grades such as grade 12 which they were not actually trained for. On the contrary, a student teacher from Agricultural science provided a different perspective by expressing satisfaction regarding the knowledge or content levels acquired in his respective subject area which he perceived as sufficient.

It is important to locate the concerns expressed by the Integrated Natural Science respondents within the historical context whereby the colonial agenda was one of starving Namibia of significant scientific and technological knowledge. Particularly, the black majorities of Namibia were grossly excluded as science remained an exclusive monopoly of the white masters. Also to be stated, as was the case in other former colonies, the tendency to exclude black majorities from science in apartheid Namibia was one of the colonial strategies to underdevelop the colony. The colonial status quo regarding the acquisition of scientific knowledge in pre-independence Namibia was clearly summed in the 1989 SWAPO Election Manifesto (1989, pp. 13-14):

> The acquisition, adaptation and development of science and technology are crucial for any society that wishes to meet the basic needs of its people. Under colonialism, black Namibians have been excluded from the execution of technical tasks and duties. This practice has inhibited the evolution and development of a technological culture among our people. Under a SWAPO government, independent Namibia will emphasize a scientific-technological culture. It will follow a policy of acquiring, adapting and using science and technology to meet the people's basic human needs and to improve the quality of life of all Namibian citizens. ... Science and Mathematics will be a strong element in our school curricular; and the school syllabus will strive to ensure an organic link between scientific/technological theory and application.

Following the logic outlined above by the 1989 SWAPO Election Manifesto, the introduction to the subject area curriculum for Integrated Natural Science, the subject area

where concerns about insufficient knowledge were expressed, emphasizes the importance of scientific knowledge in post-Apartheid Namibia as follows:

> *It is of increasing importance to acquire sufficient knowledge, understanding, and skills within the Integrated Natural Science areas to become confident citizens in a technological world that brings applied science into every day's life but also confronts people with health and environmental problems.* Some of these problems are related to the way people live and do their work, others are related to the utilization of renewable resources (e.g. food production for a growing population) and non-renewable resources (e.g. many sources of energy). Many environmental problems do not respect boundaries between countries and call for the attention of all citizens on earth and should therefore be dealt with at the basic educational level (italics mine) (*Subject Area Curricula for Integrated Natural Science*, MEC, 1993, p.1).

Placed within the context of the history undergone by Namibia regarding science and technology, and also within the current reforms, the concerns expressed above for more knowledge in the science area can serve as potential spaces within which post-apartheid Namibia can pursue attempts to promote scientific knowledge, particularly in the teaching field. By building upon this available need for more scientific knowledge among the student teachers and teacher educators in the science department, Namibia can revive and develop a scientific and technological culture which can be directed at addressing people's basic needs and environment related problems.

However, although the participants in the science program complained about the insufficiency of knowledge in their subject area, it should be noted that the subject area curriculum document for science cited above does make provision for, and emphasizes the need for acquisition of sufficient knowledge in the Integrated Natural Science subject area. Therefore, this particular contradiction need to be closely investigated regarding "the program as planned" versus its implementation. Hence, it is expected that teachers should acquire sufficient knowledge and skills to increase their confidence in themselves (*Integrated Natural Science*, MEC, 1993, p. 2).

Although the expressed need for more scientific knowledge need to be acknowledged, particularly in the context of colonial underdevelopment and technology, it should also be noted that the lamentations in the narratives tended to uncritically yearn for more scientific knowledge as if it was something that can be acquired in its complete and objectified existence, and can also be amassed in larger quantities. Evident in the concerns expressed by program participants is the tendency to see themselves as mere consumers of scientific knowledge rather than critical architects of scientific knowledge. Nowhere in the narratives do the program participants view, even implicitly, scientific knowledge as

something that they could discover themselves through continuos investigation and search. Rather, their complaints suggest that knowledge is stored somewhere where it could be drawn out in large quantities and then be offered in "sufficient" amounts. It should be stated that this approach to knowledge is gravitating towards the positivistic epistemology characteristic of the technocratic/modernization paradigm.

Although the concerns for *"some more scientific knowledge"* may be legitimate, such concerns should nevertheless be rooted in an attitude of seeing oneself as a producer rather than a consumer of knowledge. Furthermore, prospective teachers will also need to critically examine why certain social and cultural meanings and not others are constructed and distributed through schools and what interests these forms of knowledge serve. Hence, the control of knowledge producing and knowledge preserving institutions such as schools may be linked to ideological dominance of powerful groups in a social collectivity (Apple, 1986). This critique is as applicable to the natural/physical sciences as much as social sciences, given the significant role scientists play in shaping the modern world. Therefore, in order to become transformative and promote the desired change from the colonial status quo to a more scientific and technological Namibia, the program needs to develop in its prospective teachers research oriented attitudes and skills through which relevant and appropriate scientific knowledge for post-colonial Namibia can be discovered and developed. Most importantly, prospective teachers need to be oriented towards developing among learners an active rather than passive disposition to scientific knowledge construction. The concerns expressed about lack of knowledge in subject areas like Integrated Sciences can also be understood in part in terms of the dominant tradition of teacher education. As one participant noted:

> *It is true that there is such resistance among other people. But to me I have just joined the program so I have never been exposed to other types of teacher training courses. In a way I came up with a positive attitude to this program. I did not have any other attitude. I did not have an old attitude. So it is like you are introduced to a new attitude and you get involved also and put into practice that particular attitude. Maybe one thing that I should mention is like an advice that people who hold such attitudes, these die hards, you see. Attitudes are very difficult to break away from. If someone feels comfortable with the old one he will stick to that. People should not be so negative to everything (Interview: TE., June 9, No. 4).*

Another factor may stem from the "resistance" that has arisen in some sectors of the educational system to the BETD. As the Dahlström and Frykholm study (1994, p.4) concluded:

> Most teacher educators consider the BETD as good or very good. *50% of the teacher educators at WCE are somewhat critical to the program,* but it is

worth noting that none of the teacher educators directly working with the BETD program think that it is bad or even worse (italics, mine).

An interviewee also ventured the following opinion on the nature of that "resistance".

> *I mean, talking very openly, the "white-brotherhood" is still in existence, though they were not expressing themselves that loudly at the beginning. But now that they have reinforced their forces again, I think there is going to be a critique on the BETD saying that perhaps that these people do not have sufficient knowledge in subject areas. They haven't got what they should. That sort of critique will be coming. You will probably find that from Windhoek college of Education. This sort of critique will also come from UNAM [University of Namibia] where the traditional way of looking at knowledge is still existing. There are islands of resistance everywhere (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

Clearly, this is an issue which will need detailed investigation in another study that includes the institutions referred to in the quotations above. From the data obtained for this study, it is not possible to say whether or not the "political resistance" motivation underlies the concerns that some respondents have about insufficient knowledge in the BETD. As the reform facilitator (RF) in the above quotation tended to suggest, the "resistance" is possibly motivated by ethnic or racial reasons, or the *"white-brotherhood"* as he put it. However, it is important to note that data available on this particular issue was drawn from a sample of a mixed racial/ethnic composition. The sample consisted of student teachers who were all blacks, one white reform facilitator, a white teacher expatriate, one white teacher educator and a black teacher educator. This racial/ethnic mixture significantly warrant the "resistance" to be further investigated and clarified in terms of underlying motivations.

### 4.5. Language Acquisition in the Program

As the policy documents show, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program seeks to produce teachers who "possess an adequate command of English and another language of Namibia" (MEC, 1994, p.4). Apart from serving as media of instruction, acquisition of language skills is also intended to enable prospective teachers to develop the creative and expressive abilities and skills of their learners (MEC, 1994). Like other African nations, Namibia is made up of various cultural and linguistic heritages. In the Broad Curriculum for Junior Secondary Levels (MECYS, 1991) the following home languages are recognized: Ndonga, Kwanyama, Lozi, Damara/Nama, Herero, Kwangali, Tswana, Mbukushu, and Gciriku. However, not all these languages are currently offered at

the Colleges. Some Colleges offer two to three such languages, while some, like Caprivi College, only offer one home language.

Like the German colonial occupation which sought to impose and promote German in Namibia, during the apartheid regime, Afrikaans, which was the language of the colonizer, was imposed not only as the medium of instruction in schools but also as the language to be used in office and industry. This coercive situation led to countless bloodshed arising from resistance by the Namibia people. It should also be noted that Afrikaans is not an internationally spoken language. Instead, like other Namibian languages, it is only spoken by an ethnic group who are descendants of the Dutch colonizers. Under the apartheid colonialism, Afrikaans was also imposed on Namibians so as to systematically seclude them from the English dominated international media which in the eyes of the colonial regime would expose Namibians to international issues and heighten their political consciousness. Whereas under normal circumstances mother tongue instruction at elementary levels of schooling is used for good purposes, in colonial Namibia the use of mother tongue instruction was instead bedeviled by the ghost of apartheid. Instead of using it for all the progressive purposes, mother tongue instruction was an extension of apartheid used to inculcate tribal consciousness, perpetuating tribal divisions and reinforcing the gulf between white and black.

However, at independence, Namibians realized that none of the locally spoken languages, Afrikaans included, was a medium of international communication, and that in this age of increased "interdependence" among nations, a parochial outlook cannot serve the interests of any nation. Consequently to improve Namibian people's quality of life it required that the country adopts, as a practical sovereign right, a language that will help the Namibian people acquire vital scientific knowledge and technological know-how (SWAPO Election Manifesto, 1989). English was seen as one such language. In this context, Namibia's post-apartheid language policy was expressed as follows in the government policy document - *Change With Continuity: Education Reform Directive* (MEC, 1990, pp. 10-11):

> 2.5.1. English shall be the medium of communication in official correspondence, reports and communications. School reports to parents may be written in the language which the particular parent understands best.
>
> 2.5.2. At the lower primary level, the home language should be the medium of instruction and as a subject, and English should be a subject. Where parents so choose, English may be a medium of instruction and a subject, while the home language or any other language may be a subject.

2.5.3. At the Junior and Senior Secondary Levels, English will be the medium of instruction and a subject. The home language or any other language may be a subject. A language or any other subject than the official language may be taken as part of the pre-vocational skills component requirement.

Apart from being reiterated in various other policy documents such as *Education In Transition*, July, 1990, and, *Toward Education For All*, 1993, the language policy for independent Namibia is also clearly expressed in the nation's constitution. As Article 3 of the Namibia Constitution maintains; "The official language of Namibia shall be English". In order to shed light on the goal of language acquisition in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program, interviews were geared to obtain the views, experiences and beliefs of program participants. Specifically referring to Silozi, which was the only local language offered at Caprivi College, one of the program participants described the language status in the program by comparing English to local or Namibian languages as follows:

> *To begin with, in the first year, English has more periods than Silozi, eighteen in total. Whereas Silozi has very few. And then in the second year we don't even have Silozi. We only have it in the humanities option. So you have Silozi taught to students only at first year level. After that to learn Silozi and to learn about Silozi you have to specialize in the humanities. If you specialize in Science you don't do Silozi. But you will be doing English communication skills. English communication skills is done by all students, irrespective of their area of specialization. So now because these are both languages you start to think why aren't they accorded the same status. But then I suppose you have to look at the status of English in the whole Education System. I mean, no matter what the constitution says about the equality of languages, definitely English is superior to other languages. Just the way things are organized indicates that English is superior to other languages. It is obvious to me, as the situation is not necessarily desirable (Interview: TE, June 6, No. 3).*

From the perspective of another program participant, local languages in the program were underdeveloped when compared to English and that the subject area curricula for these local languages had to be translated from that of English language. Using the example of Otjiherero at Windhoek College this program participant stated:

> *Some areas do not have proper subject area curricula. For example, Namibian languages. We talked to a lecturer in Otjiherero at Windhoek college of Education. They haven't got a subject area curriculum for Otjiherero there at Windhoek College. What they have got is a translation from the curriculum for English. It is not possible because it cannot be translated. It is an African language. And you can't just translate it because it doesn't make sense (Interview: RF., May 20., No.1).*

The program participant provided another perspective by citing a similar problem of a poorly developed and translated subject area curricula in the case of Oshiwambo, a local language offered at Ongwediva college of Education:

> *The Oshiwambo lecturer at Ongwediva has the same sort of ideas. Something needs to be started off with the Namibian languages. I mean, they must be taken from their own roots, not just translated (Interview : R.F., May 20, No. 1).*

Probed further on how the English curriculum compared to those of local languages in terms of its development, the program participant expressed critical feelings towards the language practice in the program and indicated, using "Swedish" as an example, how he would not translate a curriculum from English:

> *I think it is better developed [ curriculum for English]. I think it is the only one which was developed at all. And then others, having nothing, have taken part of that. But I mean, I couldn't use the curriculum for English in Swedish for example. It would be impossible for me. I would reject it. I prefer "Swee-nglish" than a totally correct English because Swee-nglish is the way to express myself. I can use my Swedish language and try to make people understand what I am talking about. It is not a question of me talking correct English. It can be a sort of imperialism. I can feel it as a Swede. No I would stick to my own! I will allow myself to make mistakes in English. American people speak their own English. The Namibian English should be "Nam-lish" (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

Also raised in the interviews was that a negative attitude towards Silozi (the Namibian language offered at Caprivi College) was developing among the student teachers. A teacher educator described how this negative attitude even made it difficult for the program to work on student placements into the various options areas:

> *In the second year, when they specialize in humanities, they have to take English as a school subject, Social Studies and then Silozi. Then in the third year they have to split between languages, that is Silozi and English, or Social Studies. Now the problem which we encountered last year in tutoring students and counseling them on the options was that none of them wanted to take the language option simply because Silozi was there. They wanted an option of, say; English, Social Studies, and Silozi. So obviously, if that had been the option, everybody would take English and Social Studies, and avoid the Silozi option. And talk to the students, they give you reasons that "we cannot speak Silozi very well, we are not fluent in Silozi", but they claim to be fluent in English. But the truth is that the reasons they give you for Silozi are equally true for English, in fact , even worse (Interview: TE, July 30, No. 9).*

When probed further regarding the source of these negative attitudes held towards Silozi by student teachers, the teacher educator continued:

> *Again here you have this problem of what is African as opposed to what is European. And English being a European language is accorded much higher status among our students. In their heads, they think English is a better language to learn than Silozi. Everywhere, everybody wants to speak English, and you will hear people saying if you speak English then you are educated. Which is not true (Interview: TE., July 30, No. 9).*

In this study, as noted earlier, the timing of the School Based Studies made it impossible to interview the few student teachers in the Silozi option. However, as the data in the above presentation clearly indicates, all those interviewed on this particular aspect were critical of the language status in the program and indicated that English enjoyed a much higher status compared to local languages such as Otjiherero, Silozi, Oshiwambo, and others. As one interviewee indicated, English had more periods in the program, particularly in the first year where it takes "eighteen in total", while Silozi is allotted only very few periods. Also indicated in the data, while English is compulsory in the program, and taken by all students for three years irrespective of their areas of specialization, local languages are only compulsory in the first year while optional in the second and third year. Therefore, whereas Silozi could only be taken in the humanities option, English communication skills would still be taken even in the Science option, in which case Silozi is not even offered. The implications of this language status need to be closely investigated regarding its impact on those students taking the early childhood option, i.e. grades 1 to 4, where, as the language policy maintains, mother tongue instruction should be used.

An examination of the Broad Curriculum (see Appendix A) confirmed the concerns expressed above by program participants regarding the dominance of English over local languages in the program. For instance, in year I (Broad Curriculum, 1994, p. 8), English takes 15% of the teaching time while local languages only take 12.5%. In year two, also known as the level specialization, local languages do not even appear on the list of courses to be taken by the grade 1-7 option, yet English Communication Skills is allocated 5% of the teaching time (Broad Curriculum, p.10). In this same year, year two, for the grades 5-10 level specialization a Namibian language is only inescapable by those students who might opt for the Humanities option which also includes English. Also in the same year, students opting for Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science, or the Pre-vocational option do not have a Namibia language in their option. English is included in all options. This pattern persists to the third year as well where only those students opting for the Humanities option may face a Namibian language while all other options include English

and exclude Namibian languages (Broad Curriculum, pp. 12-13). The Andersson et al., report, which can also be said to be the blue-print for the program explicitly states that "within the language domain English should be dominant among the choices allowed" (Andersson, et. al., 1991, p.60). Despite the curriculum stipulations which seem to emphasize English over local languages, it was observed that English was also privileged by funding from donor agencies such as the Center For British Teachers (CFBT) who provided technical aid for the further development of English and also placed an English language advisor at Caprivi College. Besides, English is the medium of instruction in the program.

Not only were differential statuses accorded to the languages in the program, but as one of the respondents also put it, there were no proper subject area curricula for local languages. More specifically, this applied to the case of Otjiherero at Windhoek College and Oshiwambo at Ongwediva College. What they had in Otjiherero at Windhoek College was a translation from the English curriculum, and as the respondent critically argued, this situation was unacceptable because Otjiherero is an African language and that it does not make sense to simply translate it from the English curriculum. As can be seen in the data presented above, this respondent critically charged that he would not translate from English in the case of a Swedish language for instance. Instead, he would prefer what he termed *"Swee-nglish"*, to a totally perfect English, because *"Swee-nglish"* was the way of expressing himself better. The respondent also felt that in the case of Namibia, *"Nam-lish"* should be promoted, instead of trying to pursue "perfect" English.

It should be stated that whereas the current practice to promote English can be said to be a positive move in the adoption of English as a the vehicle for "international connections" and "scientific knowledge", or as a vehicle for integrating Namibia into the international community from which it was isolated by the colonial regime, the prevailing status quo of languages in the program is nevertheless retrogressive and detrimental to local languages. It is very important to note that not only did the colonizer isolate Namibians from the "international English speaking community" but even more crucial, local languages were aggressively underdeveloped. This underdevelopment of local languages and the need to resuscitate them was strongly emphasized in the 1989 SWAPO Election Manifesto:

> The new policy [language policy] will redress the present injustice whereby the German and Afrikaans colonial states have placed emphasis on the teaching, development and use of German and Afrikaans at the expense of all other local languages such as, Damara/Nama, Kuangari, Otjiherero, Oshiwambo, Silozi, etc., (SWAPO Election Manifesto, 1989, p.6).

It can therefore be clearly seen that the current practice in the program to promote English and down-grade local languages is but a glaring contradiction which can only serve to diminish Namibia's capacity to strengthen indigenous language maintenance and development. It should be noted that the move from Afrikaans to English at the expense of local languages is a move from one problem to another rather than a solution to cultural underdevelopment inherited from colonialism. Critical scholars from the African continent have provided significant insights by unearthing not only the imperialistic agendas of foreign languages besieging the continent but also the instrumental role of these languages in the control of the minds of Africans by the colonizers (neo-colonizers). For instance, Ngugi Wa Thiongo in his - *Decolonising the Mind* - convincingly argues:

> Colonialism imposed its control of the social production of wealth through military conquest and subsequent political dictatorship. But its most important area of domination was the mental universe of the colonized, the control, through culture, of how people perceived themselves and their relationships to the world. Economic and political control can never be complete or effective without mental control. To control a people's culture is to control their tools of self-definition in relationship to others. For colonialism this involved two aspects of the same process: the destruction or the deliberate undervaluing of a people's culture, their arts, dances, religions, history, geography, education, orature and literature, and the conscious elevation of the language of the colonizer. The domination of a people's language by the languages of the colonizing nations was crucial to the domination of the mental universe of the colonized (Ngugi, 1986, p.16).

Therefore, as indicated by other scholars such as Fanon (1963) and Mazrui (1978), this cultural domination and the annihilations of local languages and cultures on the African continent is not only a colonial incidence but that it has been extended and reinforced in the neocolonial Africa by the "euro-African" elites.

Also discernible from the data presented above was that some of the student teachers held negative attitudes towards Silozi. As one respondent indicated, the magnitude of these negative attitudes was felt particularly during the time of counseling student teachers for the specialization options. As the teacher educator maintained, because of their low feelings about Silozi, most of the student teachers preferred an option which would completely exclude Silozi. In this regard, the student teachers claimed that they were not that fluent in Silozi as they were in English. Yet Silozi was their mother tongue and the language spoken at their homes and English was only introduced to them at school. These negative attitudes cherished by the student teachers towards their own languages (in preference for English) are characteristic of what both Fanon (1963) and Ngugi (1986) term as "self-hate" or "running aware from oneself" common in neo-colonial Africa.

However, the teacher educator interpreted the problem in terms of *"what is African as opposed to what is European"*, in which case anything European is accorded much higher status and that *"Everywhere, everybody wants to speak English, and you hear people saying that if you speak English then you are educated."* The interpretations by this teacher educator are also congruent with the widely documented status enjoyed by English speaking in South countries. In this regard Ngugi is again worthy citing:

> The attitude to English was the exact opposite: any achievement in spoken or written English was highly rewarded; prizes, prestige, applause; the ticket to higher realms. English became the measure of intelligence and ability in the arts, the sciences, and all the other branches of learning. English became the main determinant of a child's progress up the ladder of formal education... Thus the most coveted place in the pyramid and in the system was only available to the holder of an English language credit card. English was the official vehicle and the magic formula to colonial elitedom (Ngugi, 1986, p.12).

Therefore, whereas the colonial language in Namibia was not English but Afrikaans, people are nevertheless aware of the rewards given to English as the language carrying "modern" cultural capital in most South neo-colonial government systems. As one of the respondents indicated, in some cases, English has been equated to "education", and to speak English has been seen as being "educated". Knowledge of local languages has been seen as being "less educated". Whereas the negative attitudes prevailing among some student teachers towards Silozi might be motivated by the status and prestige commonly attributed to English speaking in South countries, this particular attitude towards Silozi can also be seen as possibly resulting from the "hidden curriculum" conveyed to student teachers through the language practice in the program. For instance, the allocation of many teaching hours to English compared to local languages, and also the fact that English is compulsory while local languages are optional and can be done for one year only - all these convey some hidden messages to student teachers regarding the status and value of English when compared to local languages. It is also important to note that in some parts of Namibia, like the Caprivi, where English was used even in the colonial Afrikaner period, corporal punishment was used as the instrument to enhance quicker English learning. The situation was not any different from what Ngugi describes of the punishment awarded to children in the Kenyan context for speaking Gikuyu on school premises:

> In Kenya, English became the language: it was *the* language, and all the others had to bow before it in deference. Thus one of the most humiliating experiences was to be caught speaking Gikuyu in the vicinity of the school.

> The culprit was given corporal punishment - three to five strokes of the cane on bare buttocks - or was made to carry a metal plate around the neck with inscriptions such as I AM STUPID or I AM A DONKEY (emphasis, original) (Ngugi, 1986, 10).

Therefore, although the current emphasis on English might be a positive aspect regarding the promotion of English in post-apartheid Namibia and also in line with the language policy, it is important to note that this particular practice of elevating English above local languages can also be negative in that it works contrary to the policy of promoting local languages. Whereas in colonial Namibia local languages were used so as to promote tribal consciousness and hatred towards people coming from outside one's own tribe, in independent Namibia the use of local languages need to be redefined and promoted to serve good and progressive purposes of cultural pride and cultural identity.

It is also important to note that the critical attitudes manifested by the teacher educators towards the language status in the program can be seen as some form of potential resistance towards tendencies of over-promoting English and lowering local languages. These critical attitudes can therefore be counted upon as hope for maintaining a balanced and healthy relationship between English and local languages. However, equally true is the fact that this "hope" cannot be guaranteed in the face of the organizational structures which seem to promote English and which teacher educators might not successfully resist.

The elevation of English over local languages in the program was further compounded by the practice of English teaching which did not only seek to produce language technicians but was also bent on presenting the language (English) as though it were neutral. This technological or skills and neutral approach was evident in the views of program participants:

> *We in English methods, ELT [English Language Teaching], we are applied linguists, which differs from pure linguistics. So our primary concern is to apply. This is why we are talking about this "how", "how" thing. So our primary concern here is to get a practitioner who has broad knowledge of "how" people learn language, particularly in second language. The mental processes, the cognitive processes of learning a language. But more importantly, how to help people in a non-first language context like ours and where exposure to English is so limited. And how to teach them the skills needed to learn that second language. That is our primary aim (Interview: TE., July 30, No. 9).*

The technical approach to English was further emphasized as follows:

> *Here we start to teach the student teachers the methods involved in teaching a second language like English and how to do that practically. So again, it is*

> *very much another skills sort of thing; how to teach vocabulary; how to teach listening comprehension; how to teach reading comprehension: how to teach writing. So it is a very "how" sort of thing and students are expected to adopt this methodology and implement it (Interview: TE., July 30, No.9).*

As seen from the two citations above, this emphasis on producing language technicians in the program did not provide opportunities for students to critically encounter English as a foreign language which carries with it the possibilities for cultural and political imperialism. With the emphasis on skills acquisition, no attempts were made to critically conscientize student teachers about the political dimensions of any language acquisition, and in particular the powerful role English plays in the global economy and cultural homogenization at the expense of indigenous cultural marginalization. This perspective on English teaching need to be taken also keeping in mind the point that in some cases English might be used by the oppressed to express their concerns and achieve their ends. The issue at stake is that English can never be reduced to a neutral language for *"scientific knowledge"* and *"international connections"* only. Like any other language, English, whatever form it takes, brings with it its own cultural and political baggage which are inextricable from it. The point to be emphasized is that in order to produce transformative intellectuals who would promote the reform and the new language policy these intellectuals need to be exposed to both the negative and positive aspects of using English as a foreign culture. The tendency to present English as though it was a neutral language of simply conveying "scientific knowledge" and "international connections" was also legitimated in a government policy document:

> It is important to note that here we regard English as an evolving language in two senses. Like all active languages, it changes as people use it. Beyond that, regionally specific variants of English have emerged. People in Australia, Canada, and the United States are all proud of their national language which they continue to call English even though it has diverged in important ways from what is heard in England. Over time we expect there to be one or more African versions of English. *For us, English is a language of international connections, not foreign cultural domination* (italics, mine) (*Toward Education For All*, MEC, 1993, p.65).

Although the policy document presents English as if it is a neutral language of "international connections" only, it should be noted that English cannot be detached from its potential or actual cultural imperialistic role. From a critical/transformative perspective, what needs to be done for Namibia is a language policy mediated by a healthy and harmonious relationship between English and local languages; a policy which is based on

genuine equality of languages. In this transformative paradigm mythologies such as that of English as the language with the capacity to unite African people against divisive tendencies inherent in the multiplicity of their languages are demystified. Equally significant is to diffuse the myth that African languages are incapable of "science" and that English is the language of "science".

### 4.6. Citizenship Education

Also discernible from the Broad Curriculum was that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program strives to produce "teachers who will respect and foster the values of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, contribute to nation building, and respond positively to the changing needs of the Namibian society" (MEC, 1994, p.4). Here again, interviews were geared to canvass the views, experiences and beliefs of the program participants. Asked why it was necessary for the program to produce teachers who will respect and foster the values of the constitution, an administrator in the program expressed himself as follows:

> *The constitution is the supreme law that governs. It is the supreme law which governs each country and every citizen of the country should or must respect the constitution of that country. Anyone who works contrary to, or works outside the frames of the constitution is actually not being loyal to the country. Because if one is not loyal then he is bound to do things which will destroy and bring chaos. And that chaos, once inculcated into the learners, problems will be experienced because here we have a teacher who is out there to go and teach the values of the country, the political situation of the country, the economic aspects of the country to the learners. And this is where the issue of nation building comes in. Because this person [the teacher] is the center, he is developing them [the learners], bringing them up. Bringing these kids to light to know what is expected of them as citizens of the country. Now if you find a teacher teaching them something else, then we are destroying the country. We are going to produce people who will not by all means respect the traditions, the values of our society (Interview: A., July 7, No.7).*

Probed whether or not it was democratic enough for the program to develop teachers who should respect and foster the values of the constitution, a teacher educator maintained:

> *If one looks at the constitution as being one party's ideas, then it might seem undemocratic. But if one looks at the values such as freedom of speech, or respect for one another, I think these values do not belong to one party. I think it does correspond to a democratic system of education (Interview: TE., June 21, No.6).*

To a student teacher, respecting and fostering the values of the constitution as his future task was perceived as follows:

> *I feel that the BETD should develop teachers who will respect and foster the values of the constitution of the republic. As we are considered to be the mirrors within society, as we move around the society regards us as people who are very important. So they also believe that what we show them is what we are teaching the kids in school. So when we are at school I believe the BETD is almost leading teachers to avoid dictatorship type of life that prevailed in the classrooms whereby the teacher ended up applying corporal punishment. All this is against the constitution of the government. So teachers should try by all means to follow the constitution. We should not criticize what we have decided upon. The constitution is ours. So teachers should not, let me say, involve themselves in politics. They should not end up misleading learners. And I also believe that the BETD teaches us to adapt to change. Teachers should not be involved in misbehaving in the public (Interview: ST., July 18, No. 8).*

Likewise, another student teacher emphasized the teacher's role in respecting and fostering the values of the constitution as follows:

> *It is the duty of the teacher to make it a point that before you teach a learner anything you have to know the constitution itself. Because without knowing the constitution you will end up violating. Violating in the sense that we are told by the constitution not to cane the kids. But instead, you will be caning them, and when you are asked, you see, it is something which you should have known by reading the constitution. Therefore, the community will identify you among others as someone who is against, you are not striving towards fostering the values of the constitution. You contribute to problems. Really it is our duty as teachers to know the constitution and then teach the learners because at school is where we get them in large numbers. Many of them will hear and know what the constitution requires of them. In that way the teacher will be respected for promoting the constitution (Interview: ST., June 9, No. 5).*

Regarding the constitution, all those interviewed expressed support for, and indicated that it was the teacher's role to promote and foster the values of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia. As one of the respondents indicated, *"the Constitution is the supreme law that governs"*, and that to avoid causing *"chaos"* and *"destroying the nation"*, every citizen of the country *"should"* or *"must"* respect the Constitution of that country. Therefore, as the administrator maintained, the teacher is the *"central person"* who should bring up the kids according to the Constitution by teaching them the political and the economic situation of the country. The teacher should not inculcate chaos in the learners as by so doing the nation would be destroyed. To the teacher educator, the particular aim of producing teachers who respect and foster the values of the Constitution was seen as

democratic enough as the Constitution should not be seen as containing one party's ideas, but that values such as *"freedom of speech"*, or *"respect for one another"* do not belong to one political party in Namibia. Instead, the teacher educator believed citizenship education corresponded to a democratic system of education.

According to one of the student teachers above, not only are teachers seen as respected *"mirrors of the constitution in society"* but that they should refrain from engaging in politics and that they should not criticize the Constitution. For some student teachers the approach to the Constitution was more practical than rhetorical. To them, knowledge of the Constitution was essential to enable teachers to refrain from engaging in human rights violations such as *"caning learners"* as one of them put it, or *"corporal punishment"*, as the other student teacher put it. These views by student teachers are crucial particularly when seen with reference to colonial Namibia where human rights violation was the hallmark of government and classroom interaction.

As already indicated, the current practice of citizenship education in the program needs to be placed in the context of the political culture of a post-apartheid Namibia as compared to that of Apartheid Namibia. In apartheid Namibia, gross injustice, oppression, and lack of freedom widely constituted the philosophy of colonial rule. To the contrary, the political culture for independent Namibia, as advocated in various government policy documents is supposed to be based on democracy, freedom and justice. The roots for the advocated new political culture can be traced back to the 1989 SWAPO Election Manifesto (1989, p.2):

> A SWAPO-led government will ensure that in independent Namibia social justice and equality for all is the fundamental principle governing the decision making process. In order to bring about social justice, and to heal the wounds of colonial oppression, a SWAPO-led government will not only restore the Namibian people's lost political and legal rights, but will also affect a fundamental social, industrial and economic change. In short, the ideals of solidarity, freedom and justice are the beacon light which guides our Movement towards the future. They constitute SWAPO's philosophy of government. They are the principles that must underlie the actions and behavior of people in control of state power.

Borrowing from the SWAPO philosophy of government, the Constitution of post-apartheid Namibia adopted the values and ideals of solidarity, freedom, and justice as the cornerstones of the new political culture in Namibia. In contrast to the apartheid regime, it can be said that the general awareness regarding the teacher's role in citizenship education is a significant achievement. As already alluded to, what matters much is the nature of these values and whether they genuinely serve to liberate Namibians from the colonial

legacy of oppressed and silenced people. Besides, the concept of "democracy" also needs to be analyzed in terms of whether or not student teachers in the program can opt to question or "disrespect" some of the values advanced by the Constitution or whether it is "compulsory" for every teacher to respect and foster the values. It is also important to note that whether or not the general awareness of the role of the teacher in advancing the values of the Constitution is a positive achievement will depend on the degree to which these teachers can transcend the level of rhetoric to the actual concrete implementation of these values.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the views held by the program participants regarding the constitution reflect an uncritical and taken for granted approach to some of the aspects of the Constitution and citizenship education. This uncritical identification with the Constitution was manifested in various views and beliefs such as those of seeing teachers as *"mirrors of the constitution to which society should look"*, or, that of the *"constitution as the supreme law which governs and every citizen should or must respect it*, or, as the student teacher indicated, *teachers should not involve themselves in politics* or *criticize the constitution*. The values contained in the Constitution were taken for granted, and the teacher had to simply respect and foster them without critically interrogating their nature and whether they were genuine and whether they addressed essential needs of Namibian people who find themselves in difficult social and economic plight or whether these values legitimated and fostered economic and political interests of the few. No significant attempts were made to critically question whose interests these values served, and whether they were emancipatory or not. As already indicated, analysis of the beliefs and views held by the program participants concerning the Constitution need to be read within the context of possible idealistic rhetoric.

However, among all those interviewed, only one teacher educator demonstrated an awareness of the possible manipulation of the people by the values contained in the constitution. This teacher educator stated:

> *It sounds quite political in a way because one thinks of the party in power and they want to stay there. But I think in the new constitution there are values expressed such as equal opportunities for all, respect for other people, and I think in the light of our history and in the light of the independence message of reconciliation between all people I think it is a good thing. Many of the values in the constitution are worthwhile ideas, and I think it is important to get them across to the students (Interview: TE., June 21, N0. 6).*

Although the teacher educator demonstrated awareness of the link between political interest and the Constitution, she still felt that the values expressed in the Namibian

Constitution were still worthwhile getting across to student teachers. It can reasonably be argued that values such as *"equal opportunities for all"*, *"respect for one another"*, and *"national reconciliation"* are worthwhile getting across to the learners. However, in order to advance a critical citizenship education rooted in the critical/transformative paradigm, the awareness concerning promoting these worthwhile values need to be deeply rooted in a critical stance which guards against attempts to manipulate the masses and skew the values to the benefit of the few. It also needs a critical examination as to whether equal opportunities for all, respect for one another, or national reconciliation indeed do exist as the Constitution advocates.

Available studies regarding the issue of citizenship education convincingly indicated that the dominant paradigm of citizenship education in much of the world has been underpinned by some manipulative tendencies which legitimate injustices, inequalities and human rights violations instead of advancing equity, justice and democracy for all as promised. For instance, Donald Macedo, in his *Literacy for Stupidification: The Pedagogy of Big Lies*, describes the case of a Boston Latin School where a twelve year old boy was able to tell and read the world critically and see the difference between myth and reality and refused to cite the US pledge of allegiance:

> However, not all Americans suffer from the inability to separate myth from reality, to read the world critically. For example, David Spritzler, a 12-year-old at Boston Latin School, faced disciplinary action for his refusal to recite the pledge of allegiance, which he considers "a hypocritical exhortation to patriotism" in that there is not "liberty and justice for all" (Macedo, 1993, p.184).

Therefore, as Macedo indicates, this twelve year old boy could see through the obvious hypocrisy contained in the pledge of allegiance and thus refused to recite the pledge. Jonathan Kozol also provides valuable insights on the nature of contemporary mainstream citizenship education as an ideology of control and perpetuation of the status quo:

> Children ask us: "Why do I have to go to school?"
>
> We act as if it were a foolish question and answer: "It is for your own good."
>
> It isn't a foolish question, though; and the answer that we give is far from being honest. Children do not go to school "for their own good". They go to school for something that is called "their nation's good. They go to school to learn how not to interrupt the evil patterns that they see before them, how not to question and how not to doubt: to learn to vote with reasonable regularity, to kill on orders and sleep eight hours without grief.

> They go to school to be proficient at mechanical procedures, docile in the presence of all processes they do not understand, acquiescent in the presence of a seeming barbarism (Kozol, 1990, p.34).

In their critical analysis both Macedo and Kozol have convincingly indicated that a general tendency of citizenship education is developing in most countries which, while far from liberating the disadvantaged and while far from being genuine in the exhortations of equality for all, has sought to domesticate the poor and disadvantaged and ensure the continued existence of inequalities and privileges for the few. Macedo refers to this process of citizenship education which seeks to hide the realities of inequalities as a process of "stipudification" or a "pedagogy of the big lies" while Kozol calls it "straightforward lies" (Macedo, 1983; Kozol, 1990).

Therefore, seen in the light of these insights from critical scholars, and also in light of the views and beliefs presented above, it becomes very crucial for the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program to adopt a perspective on citizenship education which situates democracy as a contested ideological site for power and politics. Whereas the feelings for patriotism and promoting the Constitution should be counted upon as valuable spaces for doing critical citizenship, these spaces can effectively be utilized in the program by re-defining the role of teachers as critical and active agents in the questioning, defining, and shaping human relationships in post-apartheid Namibia. In this regard critical citizenship education will have to draw on insights from scholars in the radical tradition such as Giroux who provide alternative practice to the current dominant mainstream paradigm on citizenship education:

> On the contrary, citizenship education in this case becomes a process of dialogue and commitment rooted in a fundamental belief in the possibility of public life and the development of forms of solidarity that allow people to reflect and organize in order to criticize and constrain the power of the state and to overthrow relations which inhibit and prevent the realization of humanity (Giroux, 1989, p.6).

Therefore, such teachers, imbibed with the skills for critical citizenship, will facilitate and actively participate in the debates and reforms in the broader socio-political spheres which seek to advance equality and democracy in post-apartheid Namibia.

### 4.7. Environmental Awareness in the Program

Another indication from the policy documents was that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program endeavors to produce teachers who would "promote environmental

awareness and sustainable management of natural resources in school and community" (MEC, 1994). Asked why this was an essential aim in the program and what it implied for the prospective teachers one of the teacher educators commented by providing the context as follows:

> *In the first foundation year which all students go through, both in a number of subject areas, this topic of man's impact on the natural environment is studied. So, for example, it is studied in Integrated Natural Science, and in Social Studies. In Integrated Natural Sciences we look at man's impact on the environment in terms of pollution, his part in the food web, also the sustainable use of natural resources of renewable and non-renewable resources. So I think that what the BETD is trying to achieve is to give all student teachers a foundation in environmental studies so that they can promote environmental awareness. And to have sufficient background knowledge to teach children that resources will not be sufficient no matter how they are used. I think this is important because so many of these issues are affecting us, especially if we think of local fish in the Zambezi. It is a critical part of our society here. Namibia is very dependent on revenue from the fish industry. And this is also very much in the news and a very big issue in Namibia today. So I think Namibia is a country where it is very important to promote these ideas among our students (Interview: TE., June 21, No. 6).*

To a student teacher, environmental awareness for teachers is necessary since:

> *the environment is very important as one of the contributing factors to the better development of the country. It is the backbone of the wealth of the country. Now there must be somebody to teach people the importance of the environment. The issue of burning firewood, how good or how bad is it. They must really understand. The teacher must try to explain to them the consequences of chopping down trees. Because, now, when the country is beautiful, so many vegetations, it can call tourists. They come because the country has got green vegetation. It has got many animals. Now when we burn the bush, animals will find problems with food. They might even decide to run away to other countries. It is very important for the teacher to educate the people on how to use the environment. When they do the burning, when they do the chopping, they must feel guilt conscious. They must really understand, they learnt it and it is in their minds. These resources must not be exploited to the point, but otherwise, they must be used wisely (Interview: ST., July 18, No. 8).*

Another student teacher also elaborated as follows:

> *Our wealth depends on natural resources like water. Unless our people are taught, water will not be used wisely. Our children are taught at school what water is, unless they are taught about the functions of grass, all our natural resources will be misused. So it is important that teachers should not just look at the children and let them do what they want to. We are second parents and kids come to us without knowing all these things. So we should*

*teach them that we should take care of these things, the air we breath comes from trees. Everything that we use is provided to us by nature. So we must take care of it (Interview: St., July 18, No. 8).*

Emphasizing both the contribution of the environment to "national economy" and to "the health of the people", another student teacher elaborated:

*Natural resources are a contributing factor to the economy of the nation. The teacher must teach people to protect the environment because it is through the environment that we can keep good health. That is if we keep our environment clean then we will be healthy enough (Interview: ST., June 9, No. 5).*

Another student teacher felt that, as part of the syllabus, the teacher should promote environmental awareness:

*I think it is our duty as teachers to promote environmental awareness because this is part of the syllabus. So when you are on the theme of environment you should make it a point that your learners understand you. There is no way we can escape from that as teachers. It is our job to promote environmental awareness in the community, not only to limit it to the classroom. Even when we are at home it is our duty to make it a point that we teach people about the environment (Interview: ST., June 9, No.5).*

From the interviews, almost all the program participants expressed a heightened awareness of and the need for protecting the environment through environmental awareness promotion, both in the classroom, at home and in the community. Recurrent in the views of these program participants was the endorsement of the environment as a major generator of state revenue through tourism and mining. As the data indicates, environmental awareness was also seen as significant not only because the environment promotes the development of the country but also because it is the backbone of the country's national wealth. Also indicated by the respondents, promotion of environmental protection, both in school and community, is a primary task of the Namibian teacher because the environment is a source of life and because of human dependency on trees, water and grass. Therefore, to keep the animals, to protect human life and to ensure state revenue, it was seen as important for the teacher to promote environmental protection both in the school and the community.

The views held by the program participants were also congruent with the aspirations expressed by the curriculum documents for both the Integrated Natural Science course and the Social Studies course. Both these two subject areas treat the subject of

environment in detail. Regarding environmental studies, the Integrated Natural Science course should:

> develop a holistic understanding of the environment and the human relationship with the environment, so as to enable teachers to facilitate among learners an environmental awareness and a basic understanding of sustainable management of natural resources (*Subject Area Curriculum for Integrated Natural Science*, MEC, 1993, p.2).

Similarly, the Social Studies subject area curriculum also aims:

> to sensitize students to their environment and to heighten their sense of responsibility in the wise utilization and conservation of Namibian natural heritage (*Subject Area Curriculum for Social Studies*, MEC, 1993, p.6).

As widely documented, the environment is one of the areas in which the apartheid regime has comfortably exercised its brutal destruction (Department of Information and Publicity, SWAPO of Namibia, 1981; SWAPO Election Manifesto, 1989; IDAF, 1980; CANU, 1986; Cooper, 1988). Since environmental well-being was not in the interests of the colonial system together with its western allies, Namibia's vegetation, wildlife, water resources, mineral reserves, and grasslands were severely depleted in the interests of short term profit gains. Seen in this context, the heightened concern for environmental awareness and protection in the program can potentially lay the foundation upon which the Namibia government can build its programs for environmental protection.

Apart from the discernible positive aspects, particularly in contrast to the colonial past, the views and beliefs held regarding environmental awareness are nevertheless still insufficient in various other ways. Here again, a taken-for-granted approach tended to prevail among the program participants. Though the environment was seen as a source of revenue, and national income, hardly did the respondents attempt to search questions such as: whose revenue did the environment generate? who benefited from state revenue? Also absent in their views was a critical examination of the nature of development generated by the environment. The point is that in order to produce teachers who can promote and uphold environmental protection to the benefit of all in Namibia, the program needs to go beyond inculcating attitudes of environmental protection. Over and above these attitudes, student teachers need to develop a critical awareness of distributive social justice so that as citizens they can also keep a check on the government's commitment to its people, particularly the marginalized. Also, this would ensure that the benefits accruing from the environment reach all sectors of the nation.

The emphasis on generation of state revenue and national income in the views of program participants can also contradict the goal of environmental protection. There is a danger that anything else could be justified as long as it generates revenue and development even though it might be environmentally destructive. This is more so particularly from the point that sustainable management did not feature very much in the views presented above. What dominated the views was protection of the environment for purposes of generating development, state revenue, and for the security of human life.

As already alluded to, the issue of environmental protection need to be situated within the broader context of structural conditions which tend to concentrate wealth in the hands of the few while at the same time concentrating poverty among the masses. As many scholars have rightly indicated, conditions of structural inequalities have further driven the poor to unsuitably exploit their already fragile environment. The process of environmental depredation is accelerated as a consequence (Redclift, 1984; Timberlake, 1985; George, 1976). This issue has been well articulated by Redclift:

> Without denying the importance of contingent factors, such as soil quality, in the acceleration of environmental distress, it is suggested that environmental poverty should not be disassociated from underlying structural conditions. The distribution of resources, especially land, is critical in determining the scale and incidence of poverty which, by pressing further on resource endowments, threatens to upset the ecological process on which the societies of the South depend (Redclift, 1984, p. 59).

As was seen in most of the views expressed by the respondents, the village communities were perceived as the target group for the environmental awareness campaigns because the practices by these communities such as "chopping down trees", or "burning fires" were seen as environmentally destructive. Whereas this local action type approach to environmental protection should be acknowledged as significant, it is nevertheless insufficient. This type of local action approach needs to be situated within the broader context of the current modernization paradigm of development in the South which as many scholars have already indicated has caused alarming depletion of the environment in the South. Both Redclift (1984) and Timberlake (1985) have convincingly indicated that the present rapid depletion of environmental resources and the consequent devouring droughts and famines are largely attributed to modernization development models that are wasteful and at the same time inequitable. These studies have indicated that the capitalist driven modernization paradigm of development does not only place short-term commercial gains before rural development and conservation of natural environment, but that it also

increases national and international inequalities which put more pressure on the environment (Toh & Cawagas, 1990; Redclift, 1984; Timberlake, 1985).

Agribusiness corporations, for instance, have tended to overemphasize their short-term commercial gains with no sense of environmental conservation. Agribusiness corporations do not only erode soil quality but depletion of water resources is also not uncommon in their practices (George, 1976). Heavy applications of pesticides increasingly pollute water while irrigation itself directly affects water quality by adding salt to the water returning to streams and rivers. Logging companies, on the other hand, driven by North based interests, seriously deplete forest resources in the South and "help" push rural people on to marginal lands where they are unable to break out of the cycle of environmental poverty. In the fishing industry, on which coastal countries like Namibia are economically dependent, the power of local and external fishery elites and corporations has also aggravated marine depletion and further disadvantage for small fishing communities. The inequalities set by the modernization paradigm deplete the environment in the sense that bigger portions of the resources are monopolized by the powerful few, both of local and international origin. Efforts to stay alive by the rural poor have consequently led to rapidly growing rural populations, overcultivation, overgrazing, deforestation and soil erosion. As the quality of soil and water erodes, so do the lives of the poor in the South who are pushed into smaller but poor and barren lands.

Therefore, the fact that environmental awareness is currently dealt with in the program is in itself a positive aspect. However, in addition to making prospective teachers aware of the role of the environment in generating national revenue or national development, the prospective teachers should also be made to be able to critically challenge and question the way this national revenue is distributed and who benefits from it. Equally important such teachers should also be able to analyze the nature of development model pursued and how this impacts on the environment and the lives of the poor.

## 4.8. Gender Awareness in the program

Apart from environmental awareness, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program also sets out to produce teachers who will "promote gender awareness and equity to enable all Namibians to participate fully in all spheres of society" (MEC, 1994, p.3). One of the teacher educators described the gender dimension in the program as follows:

> *Basically, we, from the rector down, are very aware of the need to try and promote women because at present the number of women in the college is*

*outnumbered by men. If we take the intake of students into the college, in a way gender balance is being promoted because we are continuously counting the number of women against men, lowering standards to allow women into the college, and when things like the SRC [Student Representative Council] are chosen, there is always a striving to make sure that women are represented on these committees. But we kind of make sure that they are there. So there is a tremendous gender awareness (Interview: TE., June 21, No.6).*

To a student teacher in the program, the issue of gender awareness was put in the historical context as follows:

*Before independence, there was this general belief that women cannot do anything else. You see, there was that belief. So now after independence, we are trying to sweep away this hangover which was left from pre-independence. We must now expect fifty-fifty. Equality, the type of work given, both boys and girls must be treated equally. Try to motivate them and see how far they can go (Interview: ST., June 9, No. 5).*

Like the student teacher above, an administrator also emphasized the gender issue by locating it in the Namibian historical context as follows:

*Firstly we can go back to the old system where the workforce was predominately male. Especially in very senior positions. We never had the involvement of females. It was only males. Also in teaching, one could see that teaching in senior secondary schools was solely for men. Even today, when we look at what is happening in schools, especially here in Katima Mulilo region, principals of schools about ninety-percent are males, heads of departments, both primary and secondary schools, are predominantly males. So we are looking at the education system, saying; how can we change the status quo? How can we improve this gender imbalance. Also in the intake, we look at trying to balance the intake at least fifty-fifty, if at all possible. If it is not possible, at least sixty to forty percent ratio. So that at least the female sector should have its contribution in the development of the Namibian nation. Equity also means that women must participate fully in all spheres of society. It has become government policy to try and balance this male-female imbalance (Interview: A., July 7, No.7).*

As the foregoing data indicates, a heightened awareness existed in the program regarding the need to produce teachers who would promote gender awareness and gender balance. From the perspective of the student teacher, one of the strong beliefs in colonial Namibia was that women were incapable of certain tasks which man could do. As the student teacher argued, what is needed is to *"sweep away this hangover from pre-independence"*, by taking practical actions such as promoting equality in lessons, giving the

same type of school work to boys and girls, and always motivating girls *"to see how far they can go"*.

However, from the perspective of the administrator, women were largely excluded from and made invisible when it came to *"senior positions"* which were male dominated. As the administrator put it, *"ninety percent"* of the principals, both elementary schools and in senior schools, are males, and that even positions such as heads of department in these schools are dominated by males. It is interesting to note here that even in other countries where gender equity policies have been implemented, evidence amount to the fact that despite the overwhelming majority of school teachers (especially at elementary levels) being women, many more men are heads or principals of primary and elementary schools (Apple, 1986). However, as the administrator indicated, the aim in this context is to try to reach a *"fifty-fifty ratio"* or if that fails, a *"sixty-to-forty ratio"* so that women can equally contribute in the various spheres of society.

As the respondents also clearly indicated, not only is the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program supposed to produce teachers who would promote gender awareness in their teaching, but also that the program itself is intended to be gender balanced when it comes to student recruitment and intake. In the section reporting on the findings from Teacher Educators regarding the gender issue at the colleges, *The National Evaluation Of The BETD Program*, Dahlström and Frykholm (August, 1994, pp. 14-15) maintain that

> one aspect of a democratic institution is present at the colleges, namely the gender issue of that women and men are treated equally. More than 70% believe so.

The findings from students on the same issue continue to report that

> the majority of students, female as well as male, think that women and men are treated in the same way at the colleges (Dahlström & Frykholm, 1994, p.17)

Although it was indicated that attempts are made regarding student intake to maintain a "fifty-fifty" ratio, it should be noted that at Caprivi College there were only seventeen (17) female student teachers doing their third year compared to thirty-eight (38) males. However, when the overall intake of all final year BETD student at the four colleges was considered it turned out that there were more female final year students in the whole program than male final year students. That is, of the 410 students who started the program in 1993 and were supposed to be finishing the program at the end of 1995, 228 were

females and only 182 were males. Basing on the 1993 BETD intake, gender distribution for BETD III at the four colleges can be illustrated as follows:

**TABLE 2**

**Number of BETD III Students by Gender Distribution**

| | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Caprivi CE | 38 | 17 | 55 |
| Rundu CE | 17 | 11 | 28 |
| Ongwediva CE | 67 | 144 | 211 |
| Windhoek CE | 60 | 56 | 116 |
| Total | 182 | 228 | 410 |

*(Source: Dahlström, 1994, p.18).*

The fact that there were more BETD III female student teachers than males should not be seen as a result of a consciously planned act per se, but it is rather a complicated process involving many factors such as the availability of more male grade 12 graduates than females in some regions and vice-versa. The gender issue in the Namibian Education system is also emphasized as follows in one government policy documents:

> A particular challenge for our country today is to make sure that like their brothers, Namibia's girls are able to develop their individual potential and use their abilities to contribute equally to our national development. Ensuring that girls are not disadvantaged in and by our system is important to us...First, gender equality is fundamental right in our society. Our commitment to equality and education for all requires us to address and redress not only the racial and ethnic discrimination that we inherited from our past but also the visible and not so visible patterns of differentiation based on gender (*Toward Education For All*, MEC, 1993, p.134).

As women were the most hard-hit by race/ethnic, gender and class-based discrimination under apartheid, the Namibian gender policy seeks to ensure access, equal opportunity, and equity for girls in Namibian education. The education system takes as its social responsibility to address gender imbalance by increasing teacher awareness about the stereotypes and attitudes which steer girls towards certain subjects and away from others. The education system also seeks to help teachers and other educators produce a gender conscious curriculum and teaching materials, and teaching boys about non-violent relationships and the unacceptability of male superiority.

Whereas the current gender policy is without doubt a major improvement compared to the colonial policy, it should also be stated that in order to make the policy effective, efforts should be made to make internal conditions in the program gender sensitive so that female students can equally benefit from the "fifty-fifty" ratio which most of the respondents tend to indicate. This entails concrete actions in terms of removing all the gender biases both in the college and in the employment sector. Also to be critically considered are issues such as the extent to which women's difficulties in schooling as teachers and students relate to their household and family roles, and to what extent these difficulties also relate to gender and sexual harassment in the work/study place and how the situation can be corrected. As indicated earlier, the government of Namibia acknowledges through the gender equity policy (MEC, 1993) that eradication of gender biases is fundamental to the type of society envisaged for post-colonial Namibia. In evaluating its progress in improving girl's education in Namibia, the government gives consideration to access, persistence, achievement, subject choice, and overall development of competencies.

# CHAPTER 5

# VIEWS ON CURRICULA AND PEDAGOGICAL ISSUES

## 5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, the views, beliefs and experiences of program participants regarding pedagogical strategies in the program are presented and analyzed. As the program documents clearly stipulate, curricula and pedagogical issues in the program are supposed to be organized around four "guiding principles". These "guiding principles" are identified as: (i) The principle of Learner-Centredness and Democracy; (ii) The principle of Reflective Teaching and Learning; (iii) The principle of Subject Integration; and, (iv) The principle of Learning through Production (Callewaert & Kallós, 1992, pp. 16-22; Andersson, et al, 1991, pp. 63-64; The Frontline Teacher, 1990, pp. 8-9; Subject Area Curriculum for ETP, MEC, 1992, pp. 19-20).

In order to gain a clear picture, a brief outline of the pedagogical strategies used in the apartheid education system is essential. As many writers on the Namibian colonial education system have clearly documented, the apartheid education system was mainly based on what is generally termed the "traditional teacher-centered approach" to teaching and learning. The nature of this approach is described as follows:

> In most schools the teacher usually stands up front, while the students sit passively at their desks. The student's role is to listen to and to memorize what the teacher says. The students are not active - they simply "receive" the knowledge which the teacher deposits in their minds (Christie, 1985, p.154).

Therefore, under the dictates of the apartheid regime and its Bantu education policy, pedagogical strategies were not only teacher-centered and regime-centered but also tailored to silence and oppress learners by denying them active participation and involvement in deciding what was to be learnt and how it was to be learnt. This socialization into silence was sought only to perpetuate the colonial regime. Once socialized, student teachers would become less troublesome citizens and in turn transmit values of obedience among their future students, as was believed by the colonizers. Thus, the dominant pedagogical strategies drew heavily on what Freire (1972) terms the "banking mode of education."

This mode of education was characterized by repressive and oppressive strategies where teachers "deposited" or "transferred" knowledge into the "empty minds" of their learners. In order to stifle the critical thinking abilities of the learners, knowledge in the apartheid system was treated as an object - a commodity that was already prepared and could be handed over to learners, instead of something which people (including learners) could actively create. Students were not given the opportunity to create or discover for themselves. Moreover, a critical awareness of the world was discouraged in an apartheid setting as this was seen as a threat to the status quo. Instead, rote memorization of poor quality textbooks reinforced by a rigid examination system was used to indoctrinate learners about white superiority and the legitimacy of black inferiority. For instance, as Ellis (1988) rightly documents, where Social Studies and History were taught learners were made to memorize irrelevant and false mythologies such as the myth of the "war-like blacks" and the "peaceful-whites", or that of "white initiative and black labor". Memorization of these myths was further compounded by a situation whereby a one-way communication model dominated and was reinforced by corporal punishment. However, while seeking to inculcate passivity, obedience and acceptance of the apartheid system and its Bantu Education policy, the colonial pedagogical strategies nevertheless faced political challenges and resistance from both learners and other Namibian citizens, to the surprise of the architects of apartheid.

This resistance saw yet another "innovation" in the apartheid system. In order to suppress the resistance the colonial regime sought to introduce a system generally known in Namibian colonial history as "lessons offered through the barrel of the gun". Because Bantu education could not be accepted by its intended "beneficiaries", and since simple corporal punishment could not do enough to make some of the learners accept Bantu education, the colonial government resorted to "military invasions" of classrooms so as to force learners not only to memorize the indoctrinating textbooks but to accept the policy of Bantu education in general. This strategy of "military intimidation" in the "learning process" is eloquently summed by Ndilula (1988, p.393):

> Many white teachers in Namibia are soldiers, especially in the north, north east, north west and central part of Namibia. *It is very difficult to imagine someone being taught by a teacher with a pistol on his hip and a machine gun in the corner of the classroom.* These "teachers" may teach for only one week before being replaced. They are not trained and are not appropriate for teaching. This has forced many children to leave school before completing their education. All boarding schools are surrounded by army units that generally attempt to recruit school children as their informers or for active service in the army. In contrast, white children are being trained in weapon handling and self-defense in all secondary boarding schools (italics, mine).

It should be noted that these soldiers were very far from being teachers as most of them knew nothing about schooling except for their being an extension of the apartheid repressive mechanism imposed on schools. These soldiers, disguised as teachers, were placed in schools not for educational purposes as it was claimed. On the contrary, they were meant to subdue student political activities and to "dog" the schools so as to ensure that no student fled into exile to join the liberation movement and that no political activities were conducted both on the school premises and in the neighboring community. In some schools, some individual students were allocated a soldier who monitored very closely the student's school time-table and made sure that the student omitted no class, as any such absence from class was regarded as indicating that the student had been involved in some guerrilla activities.

Not only were these "soldier teachers" used to identify the so-called "troublesome students" who politically "incited" others, but quite often the very same "soldier teachers" launched several military raids on the same schools they "taught", raped and killed their own students, while at the same time claiming to be teachers of the same schools. It is also interesting to note that no black soldier could become a "soldier-teacher". However, as many writers on the Namibian colonial education have ably documented, no clear distinction could be made in colonial Namibia between army camps and schools grounds or battle grounds (Ndilula, 1988; IDAF, 1980; Cohen, 1994; SWAPO Women's Solidarity Campaign, 1988). All in all, the military presence in schools was indicative of the repressive pedagogical strategies characterized by brutal terror and lack of freedom in learning. Already stated, these apartheid repressive strategies only escalated resistance from individual Namibians and organizations such as SWAPO liberation movement, Namibia National Student Organization (NANSO) and SWAPO Youth League.

Teachers were no exception to the apartheid repressive mechanism. The apartheid regime also instituted mechanisms which sought not only to render them politically passive but also to ensure that they serviced the colonial status quo "properly". Like their students, teachers under the apartheid regime were subjected to brutal political and civil rights repressions. Once again, it is important to cite Ndilula whose accurate documentation of sections 104, and 62 of the official gazzet of South West Africa (24/10/75, No. 3499) is very insightful:

Section 104 maintained:

No person shall without the approval of the executive committee:

(a) exhibit, circulate or distribute any placard or notice or other document or paper at or on the premises of any government educational institution or anything on such premises or any fence of such premises or at or during any function of that government educational institution, either during or after schools hours.

Section 62 stated:

(2) A teacher shall not make use of his position as a teacher to promote or to prejudice the interests of any political party.

(3) A teacher shall not comment on party political matters in the public press or at any public meeting (Ndilula, 1988, p. 392).

At independence, Namibian schools were still haunted by a repressive system which fostered memorization and rote repetition of disconnected bits of information. Too often, learning in this system was concerned with describing, labeling, and categorizing; students spend a lot of their time memorizing what things are called and how their textbooks and teachers organized those names (*Toward Education For All*, MEC, 1993). Because of the undesirable nature of the pedagogical strategies in colonial Namibia, a new vision for pedagogical strategies in post-colonial Namibia was formulated as follows:

> Teaching methods in our schools tend to foster memorization and rote learning. In this way independent thinking and problem solving strategies are stifled. In a democratic Namibia, teaching should aim towards:
>
> (a) an emphasis on the democratic pedagogy which inculcates the democratic and enlightened outlook of man; his culture, history and traditions.
>
> (b) a methodology which promotes learning through understanding and practice directed at autonomous mastering of living conditions (*Education In Transition*, MEC, 1990, p.8).

Therefore, in post-apartheid Namibia, changes concerning pedagogical strategies imply on the one hand, a radical break with the traditional system which is said to "foster memorization and rote learning", and on the other hand, instituting new pedagogical strategies aiming at developing "independent thinking and problem solving strategies" (Callewaert & Kallós, 1992, p.17). Pedagogical strategies in independent Namibia are supposed to enable students to learn to analyze and synthesize, to imagine and explore, to criticize and create, to understand and use. Regarding teacher education, these new pedagogical strategies imply: (1) emphasis on production and reflection rather than reproduction and rote learning; (2) teaching should be discussion oriented and critical, and

student participation should accordingly be maximized; (3) subject knowledge and subject skills should be integrated throughout (Andersson, et., al., 1991).

These pedagogical strategies are supposed to guide the teaching and learning process in teacher education while at the same time prospective teachers are expected to adopt these strategies and use them in their own teaching as future school teachers. It should also be noted that these approaches or strategies originated with SWAPO's program for Primary school teachers, the ITTP (Integrated Teacher Training Program), offered jointly with the University of Umeá, Sweden. While the ITTP was offered by SWAPO in exile, it is supposed to form the basis upon which the current Basic Education Teacher program is to be modeled (Cohen, 1994; Mbuende, 1987; The Frontline Teacher, 1990).

## 5.2. The Principle of "Learner-Centredness" and Democracy

As clearly outlined in the reform documents, teaching and learning in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program is supposed to radically move away from the "traditional teacher-centered approach" to a more "democratic and learner-centered approach". The colonial teacher-centered approach was not only inefficient but also frustrating to most learners and thus incompatible with the current changes for a post-colonial Namibia. This shift towards a learner-centered approach is outlined in the policy document - *Toward Education For All*:

> As we make the transition from an elite education to education for all we are also making another shift, from teacher-centered to learner-centered education. That change, too, will seem troubling at first and will take time to accomplish successfully. We are accustomed to classrooms where attention and activities are focused on the teacher. Indeed, we have probably all encountered teachers so set in their ways that they pay little attention to the backgrounds, interests, and orientations of their students. They continue as they have in the past regardless of who is in their class. Few people learn easily or well in that setting. Much of the significant learning that does take place is accomplished despite, not because of, the teacher (MEC, 1993, p.10).

Whereas the colonial teacher-centered system fostered autocracy, rote learning and memorization, the leaner-centered approach in independent Namibia is supposed to foster independent thinking, problem solving strategies, and democratic pedagogy. In the context of these newly adopted pedagogical strategies the program's general aim is described as follows:

> The program [the BETD] is aiming at a total reorientation of teacher education based on a vision of a participatory, democratic, and empowering teacher education for Namibian teachers in Basic Education (*Reform Forum*, March, 1995, p.1).

Therefore, stated clearly, the program is supposed to be "emancipatory", "democratic and empowering". In the post-apartheid educational reforms, two views or approaches to learner-centered pedagogy are identified. The first approach is defined as follows:

> The first view of a learner-centered pedagogy regards the child as active and curious, striving to acquire knowledge and skills to master its surrounding world and able to do so under certain circumstances. The ensuing pedagogy is accordingly adapted to the experiences of each learner and uses these experiences and the knowledge already acquired by the learner as a starting point for the teaching process. The necessary pedagogy is flexible and highly individualized in terms of content, methods of instruction and pacing (Callewaert & Kallós, 1992, p.17).

In contrast to the first view, the second view is described as follows:

> The second view of a learner-centered pedagogy is anchored in a different theory of knowledge and knowledge acquisition. This second view focuses on the presumed capability of each child to learn predefined skills and regards knowledge as definable as such and accordingly does not regard knowledge as contextually dependent. Its emphasis is on a behavioristic view of learning and the ensuing pedagogy is accordingly dependent on the instructional media used. The pedagogy is individualized principally in terms of pacing but not necessarily in terms of contents or methods of instruction. It regards knowledge acquisition as a cumulative process which is to be closely monitored in a step by step instructional process via the use of instructional media that allow the learners to work in their own pace supervised by the teacher. Essentially, this pedagogy epistemologically regards the child as an object (Callewaert & Kallós, 1992, p.18).

While rejecting the second view, the post-apartheid educational reforms adopt the first view as the type of "learner-centered approach" to be pursued in independent Namibia. This first view of "learner-centered approach" takes the child as active, curious and striving for knowledge. In this first view, knowledge acquisition is supposed to start with what the learner has already acquired, i.e., the learner's own experiences. Pedagogy is highly individualized in terms of content, methods of instruction and pacing. On the contrary, the second view, which is rejected by the current reforms, emphasizes learning of some predefined skills and regards knowledge not as contextually dependent, and also sees the learner as an object.

In order to shed more light, interviews were geared to obtain the views, experiences and beliefs of the program participants regarding learner-centered pedagogical strategies in the program. As will soon be demonstrated, three dominant conceptualizations of "learner-centered pedagogy" were teased out of the views, beliefs and experiences of the program participants. These are: (i) learner-centered pedagogy conceptualized as "democratic participation and increased involvement" by student teachers in the teaching-learning process; (ii) learner-centered pedagogy perceived as a challenge for transforming the authoritarian teacher-centered system, frequently referred to as "the old system", to a more learner-centered democratic system, also referred to as "the new system"; lastly, (iii) learner-centered pedagogy conceptualized as collaborative work through the use of group-exercises in conducting lessons.

### 5.2.1. Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Increased Participation

As already stated, one of the conceptualizations dominant in the views, beliefs and experiences of the program participants was a learner-centered pedagogy perceived in terms of increased student participation and involvement in the teaching-learning process. This perception of a learner-centered pedagogy was evident in the views of a female student teacher:

> *The learning process itself is democratic. This is mainly because of the reason that once everybody is in class, he or she must feel free to participate. The situation is very democratic. Everybody and everyone is involved in the process. Learning does not come to an end. Therefore the teacher also learns from the students. It can happen that the learner is very familiar with a particular situation. In that way the teacher can be fed with proper information (Interview: ST., June 9, No. 5).*

Another student teacher in the program reiterated similar views about "learner-centredness" and "democratic pedagogy" by emphasizing student participation and involvement in the designing of the curriculum:

> *I think the BETD is a democratic program. Because you will find that students are involved in the designing of the curriculum and even extracting some of the ideas which the syllabus reflect and adding some of the things they feel are of most importance to the nation. I also feel that even in the classroom you will find that learning is free because the lecturers are not using some methods which were used in the past where verbal punishment was used on the students. But now you can talk to the lecturer and explain what caused the problem or what led you to abscond a class, for instance (Interview: St., July 18, No.8).*

Like the student teachers above, a teacher educator also emphasized "student involvement and participation" in his perception of learner-centered pedagogy:

> *I think in that case the students are also expected to be active in the subject matter. To be active means giving comments, asking questions. Students have the right to disagree with some of the things or to agree with what they feel is correct, relevant or realistic. But also at the same time they must be involved in mini-projects. In this case, the role of the teacher is that of guiding students, counseling or showing students things they might want to know. Or showing which direction to take. But basically it is the student who should get involved. They must use the guidelines which are given to them by the teacher to find out what is required of them. Basically it involves participation in the classroom and outside the classroom. I think by doing that the learning process is student centered (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3)*

Another teacher educator elaborated the concept by emphasizing the need to "decentralize" teaching and to have more "communication" or "dialogue" between teachers and students:

> *I think democratic pedagogy refers to things such as communication, that is, where you allow students to get involved in the teaching learning process. It means a strong communication between students and teacher educators. Basically this refers to dialogue. Teaching-learning is not a one-man show. The teacher educator, as we do here at the college, should decentralize his or her teaching, so to speak. That is very important. To allow students to get the opportunity to give their comments and suggestions on the problem or solution. They should also be given opportunity in decision making when it comes to the subject matter (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3).*

Another teacher educator illuminated the concept by drawing from the revisions of the Broad-Curriculum and Subject Area Curricula documents in which students were involved through various committees:

> *I think that this is what is going to happen now with the appraisal of the Broad-Curriculum. The students are going to have their own input now that we have run the program for three years. I am aware that we are involving students already in our department. And I know when other departments review their subject area curricula there will be a part for students to make some input also. They will be given the opportunity to add or delete anything from the subject area curricula. So I think it goes a long way into actually making students part of the teaching process; making them take part in deciding what is to be taught. Not just bringing in a document from somewhere (Interview: TE. July 7, No. 7).*

Although he acknowledged that student involvement and participation were taking place, one teacher educator indicated that there was still little involvement of student teachers in the area of "assessment and evaluation":

> *Yes, in a lot of areas you can see that students are involved. Maybe there is one or two areas where we haven't ironed out how that involvement is going to be implemented. And that is the area of assessment and evaluation. It is not very clear as to how the input of the students is going to count in the area of assessment. I know in ETP they do peer-assessment. But generally we haven't done a lot on student involvement in assessment. But from the teaching point of view, in the real classroom, I think democratic pedagogy is being taken care of. The students are involved in the classroom (Interview: TE., June 21, No. 6).*

From an administrator's point of view, learner-centredness and democratic pedagogy was perceived as follows:

> *Here we are talking of interactive and shared learning. Many educationists have found this to be true that a learner comes into class not only as a mere vessel but he or she has got something to share. So there must be that interaction between the teacher and the learners. The teacher can learn from the learner as much as the learner learns from the teacher. So it becomes a shared responsibility. The teacher is not the one who knows everything . But the teacher also has got to learn something from the learners (Interview: A., July 7, No.7).*

As the data clearly shows, a majority of the program participants conceptualized or perceived learner-centered pedagogy in terms of increased student participation or involvement in the teaching-learning process. As one student teacher described it; the learning process in the program is *"democratic"* , and that there is *"freedom to participate"* and *involvement by everybody in the teaching-learning process"*. Also emphasized by the student teacher, teaching-learning in the program is *"a mutual process"* as both the teacher and the student learn from each other. As other student teachers also reiterated similar views, emphasis was put on their perceived participation and involvement in the designing of the curriculum. As one of them maintained; *"students are free to add or extract from the syllabus"* what they feel should be there or shouldn't be there and is of importance to the nation. To some student teachers, emphasis was put on participation in lessons, and freedom to learn as compared to the old regime where students were subjected to *"verbal punishment"* by teachers. Also emphasized was that the relationship between teachers and students had become positive in that a teacher educator could now understand an explanation as to why a particular student omitted a lesson, for instance.

Among the teacher educators, student involvement and participation in curricula "reappraisals" or curricula "reviews" was reiterated as an indication of giving student teachers "the *opportunity to add or delete*", which the teacher educator also saw as something that goes beyond *"making students part of the teaching process and making them part in deciding what is to be taught; not just bringing a document from somewhere"*. To other teacher educators, learner-centered pedagogy entailed student active participation in the lesson by *"giving comments"*, *"asking questions"*, and being *"involved in mini-projects"*. Like some of the student teachers, some teacher educators also felt that in a learner-centered approach students were given the opportunity *"to agree or to disagree"* where they felt necessary. The role of the teacher in this process, as described by the teacher educator, involve *"guiding"*, *"counseling"*, and *"showing learners what they might want to know"*.

It can therefore be seen that in contrast to the oppressive and repressive banking type pedagogical strategies cherished in the apartheid regime, the generally expressed perception of learner-centered pedagogy in terms of increased student involvement and participation in the teaching learning process needs to be acknowledged as a positive achievement which can possibly enable Namibia to transform and move away from the overwhelmingly enslaving Bantu education. Therefore, not only does the perceived "participation" and "involvement" present potential spaces for hope regarding the current reforms, but should also be seen as emancipatory to student teachers and teacher educators, both of whom have long been subjected to a repressive system of education where passivity, obedience, and respect for colonial authority were the sum-total of school curricula.

Also to be acknowledged is the general awareness expressed in the views of the program participants that learning is a "mutual" and "shared process", and that students also have something to contribute to the lesson and that the teacher can learn from the students. This should be seen as a significant achievement in comparison to the old regime where knowledge was not only seen as an exclusive monopoly of some people but also that a student was incapable of it unless deposited into him or her by someone else. Critical scholars such as Giroux have also consented to the issue that students posses valuable experiences:

> You can't deny that students have experiences and you can't deny that these experiences are relevant to the learning process even though you might say that these experiences are limited, raw, unfruitful, or whatever. Students have memories, families, religion, feelings, languages, and cultures that give them a distinctive voice. We can critically engage that experience and we can move beyond it. But we can't deny it (Giroux, 1992, p. 17).

It should be mentioned that this particular perspective regarding recognition of the experiences brought by students to the teaching-learning process is also consistent with the first view of a "learner-centered pedagogy" adopted by the reform process. In the typology of views on learner-centered pedagogy presented earlier in the chapter, the first view, which is adopted by the current reform, maintains that "pedagogy should be adapted to the experiences and the knowledge already acquired by each learner as a starting point for the teaching process".

Although significant in various ways, the widely held conceptualizations of leaner-centered pedagogy in terms of increased student "participation" and "involvement" is, in my view, still insufficient in many respects. Here again, a tendency to take an unproblematized and uncritical stance was discernible. As some of the respondents indicated, the learning process in the program was *"democratic"* and that there was *"freedom to participate"* and *"involvement by everybody in the teaching-learning process"*. Yet, despite the laudatory feelings, no attempts were made by the program participants to go beyond the mere involvement and participation in the learning process and critically interrogate the substance (learning content) in which they were so involved. All that seemed to matter was to be more involved by asking more questions, giving comments and gaining comprehension, but the learning content in which they were involved remained a given reality which needed not to be doubted and critically analyzed.

Although the participants indicated that in their learner-centered pedagogy students were allowed to "agree" or "disagree" with the teacher, or to "add" and "delete" what they wanted or did not want from the curriculum, it is important to note that these activities were, by and large, underpinned by the dominant approach where the main purpose is to gain clear comprehension of the already predefined learning content. Students "agree" or "disagree" and all this is done only to make them comprehend better what is already set for them. This type of participation and involvement does not move very far from the Freirean banking mode of teaching in that it is but another strategy for banking an already existing agenda into the minds of the learners albeit the participation and involvement. While contrary to the passive form of banking, student teachers can actively participate and be involved in their own banking. In all forms of banking (passive and active) the bottom line still remains that students' critical and creative abilities are stifled. In the transformative paradigm, participation and involvement would critically interrogate the deep-seated structure of learning content by address questions such as the following:

> What are the underlying meanings that are negotiated and transmitted in schools behind the actual formal "stuff" of curriculum content? What

> happens when knowledge is filtered through teachers? Through what categories of normality and deviance is it filtered? What is the basic and organizing framework of the normative and conceptual knowledge that students do actually get? It is only by seeing this deep structure that we can begin pointing out how social norms, institutions, and ideological rules are ongoingly sustained by the day to day interaction of common sense actors as they go about their normal practices (Apple & King, 1976, p. 415).

It is important to note that whereas students might be actively involved by asking questions, giving comments, and, indeed themselves convinced that the learning process is democratic, the actual learning content itself might still be dis-empowering and still couched within the technocratic/modernization paradigm. Seen in this light, emancipatory and empowering participation conceptualized within the critical/transformative paradigm will mean that over and above having student teachers actively involved, the actual nature of the learning content itself and the processes involved in arriving at this content are subjected to a critical scrutiny in terms of their emancipatory possibilities.

The taken-for-grantedness of the learning content was further compounded by the fact that neither were the processes and assumptions underpinning participation and involvement (or the nature of participation and involvement) critically investigated. The widely celebrated form of "participation" and "involvement" tended to be simplistic, mechanical and superficial conceptions of student involvement, participation and activeness in the lesson. Excluded were emancipatory forms of participation based on genuine redistribution of power. For instance, many respondents; students and teacher educators alike, referred to the 1995 "curricula reappraisals" which were conducted at the colleges as an example of how students are being involved in "deleting" or "adding" what they want or what they do not want in the curriculum. For these curriculum reappraisals various subject area committees, including student based committees, were established to discuss and review the various subject area curricula documents in the program. While this is indeed a good innovation when compared to the apartheid system, the underlying assumptions, processes and outcomes of such forms of participation and whether these are liberative or not need to be critically analyzed. The curriculum reappraisal process tended to be underpinned by an ideology of "participation as control" in that parameters within which both the teacher educators and student teachers could deliberate over related curricula issues were centrally pre-designed by NIED (National Institute for Educational Development). This form of conditioned participation was clearly manifested in NIED's instruction to both teacher educators and student teachers:

> The following broad areas of the Broad Curriculum for the BETD should be discussed by representatives of the student body in each subject group.

> Examples of questions are presented for each area of discussion. The questions are intended *as guides*, the discussion in the subject groups should *not be limited* only to them (emphasis, original) (Appraisal of the Broad Curriculum: Guidelines for students in Subject Groups, MEC, 1995, p.1)

Although it appears that both student teachers and their teacher educators were allowed freedom "not to be limited" to the "guiding questions" in their discussions the fact still remains that NIED expected the "answers" or discussions to reflect the questions as pre-set. Even more crucial, the fact that the so-called "guiding questions" which were supposed to guide the "curriculum reappraisals" were centrally designed at NIED only to be brought down to the colleges to guide the discussions can help to shed more light on the assumptions, processes and outcomes of the widely celebrated involvement and participation. Drawing upon my own experiences as an insider in the program, there is no doubt that the current centralization of major professional decisions at NIED regarding the BETD will be a stumbling block in the achievement of genuine participation which is transformative. Most often participation comes to the Colleges within circumscribed frameworks or "guidelines". However, possible contestation between NIED and the Colleges regarding policy areas cannot be ruled out. For instance, one of the interviewees noted the contest over grading for School Based Studies:

> *What we are trying to argue at Caprivi College is that School Based Studies in year two should not be graded. We do not have the same opinion as the NIED people. The NIED people want us to stick to the Broad Curriculum which says that School Based Studies in year two should be graded. They want to stick to the broad curriculum. But we are not of that opinion. What we are saying is that School Based Studies in year two should not be graded but it should be a question of support and guidance along the whole line and that grading will be done in year three (Interview: R. F., May 20, No.1).*

Scholars in the critical tradition have long indicated that while far from re-distribution of power, participation within the dominant ideology has largely been used as an effective instrument of power and control (Arnstein, 1969; Rahnema, 1992; Wengert, 1985). This form of "participation" is a strategy to "silence" or manipulate people, despite their channels for "involvement" and "participation". Whereas the subordinates might feel that democracy prevails and that involvement and participation are promoted, the reality still remains that such forms of participation conditioned by interests power and control are nevertheless insignificant and only serve as mere tokenism. Therefore, in order to promote the current reforms and the transformation towards a democratic Namibia, participation and

involvement need to be critically examined in terms of the underpinning processes, values, assumptions and goals.

### 5.2.2. Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Transformation

As already alluded to, another dominant perception among the program participants was that of a learner-centered pedagogy conceptualized in terms of "transformation" of the inherited authoritarian teacher-centered apartheid education system. For instance, in her perception of learner-centered pedagogy, a female student teacher compared pedagogical strategies used at the College to those used in the schools and argued that when all graduates of the program are released into the system, schools will be transformed:

> *I think if we compare the teaching-learning process in the college to that of the schools in which we are currently working for SBS [School Based Studies] one finds that the teacher in the school is still the producer of everything. But here at the college we are allowed to be more creative. When most of the products [students] of the BETD are in the field in some three years to come you will find that schools will be transformed. Learners will find it easy to participate in the learning process (Interview: ST., July 18, No. 8).*

Another student teacher also reiterated this "transformative" perception of learner-centered pedagogy by arguing that there was "still a hangover" in the schools which he believed was "going to wear off" through the activities of the prospective teachers:

> *The policy itself is okay. But it is only that there is a tendency that new ideas take time to filter through. Otherwise the BETD policy is okay only that we are still finding some difficulties especially when it comes to learners in the secondary schools because they are still hooked to the old system where the teacher is seen as a pastor. The teacher just comes to the class and does the teaching. The students are not involved at all. They are regarded as some empty vessels. So now that we are changing we still face some problems. Because students still expect the teacher to do the whole talking. And now when we try to involve them they go out and say that teacher he or she just depends on the pupils (Interview: ST., June 9, No. 2)*

While referring to the resistance by the old system in the schools, another student teacher emphasized the role of the prospective teachers in conquering and transforming the old system:

> *I think we won't be swallowed. For instance, last year we started with School Based Studies but we were never swallowed by the old system. We tried to teach as we are taught here at the college. I think like in our case, we*

*the third year students, if we happen to complete next year and get into the field I think the BETD philosophy is already impressed on us. So I don't think we will find problems. We won't find problems. But we will get problems from the learners themselves. Because they are not used to the system we are learning here in the college. They are still used to the old system which is based on teacher-centered approach. You will find that most of the learners are geared in the direction of the teacher-centered approach. When you use learner-centered approach you will face problems with the learners themselves. Students will come up with the complaints like; we are dependent on them, that we are seeking knowledge from them. Instead of "we" as teachers impart knowledge to them (Interview: ST., July 18, No. 8).*

Some student teachers perceived the transformation from the teacher-centered to a more learner-centered system as a challenge to them:

*There is a challenge to us the BETD students who are finishing this year. To convince learners that learning is to their benefit. So they should be involved in their learning. We should not fall into the old system. We need to convince learners to get involved in the learning process rather than depending on knowledge imparted from somewhere (Interview: ST., July 18, No. 8).*

To an administrator, learner-centredness was also elaborated by comparing the "old system to the new system", and also emphasizing transformation into the desired direction:

*I must say that old programs were sort of exam oriented, they were sort of focusing on the teacher in the classroom but not on the learner to some extent. But in the BETD we are looking at the learner in class; the participation, involvement of learners in the learning process; that is what is important. It is a kind of open ended-system. It gives enough room to learners to participate actively in learning. Teachers are there to guide. They are there just to assist. But the learning process itself is done by the learners themselves. They should make their own observations, and do research. So I think the BETD will equip teachers to teach in a way different from what Freire calls the "banking concept of teaching". In the banking concept the teacher simply stands in front as the master of knowledge and wants to simply give and pump the knowledge into the child. In the BETD the teacher must act as a mere facilitator of learning. This is what we are looking at in the BETD (Interview: A., July 7, No.7).*

Another program participant elaborated learner-centredness in the program also by contrasting what he termed "traditional teacher training" with "teacher education":

*I would say if someone compares the traditional teacher training with teacher education, as it is in the BETD, the traditional teacher training is more of a fixed knowledge where you put a standard for teachers and then try to reach that standard. And within the standard there are certain ways to*

*examine, test and measure if the student has reached a certain capacity of knowledge and some skills (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

About the BETD and its purported learner-centered pedagogy, the program participant continued to elaborate:

*The BETD is more focused on something else. It has a long term perspective. We don't know exactly how the future is going to look like. We always believe in a society with a lot of change and the teacher we are educating just now in 1995 will be active in the year 2000 and he will then be teaching in Namibia. With this type of perspective we don't know exactly what sort of knowledge in subject areas will be necessary for those young Namibians in the year 2000. The teacher must have some sort of knowledge; he must be prepared for change; he must posses skills to acquire new knowledge; and, he must have knowledge on how to do classroom research. This is basically the quality of teacher we are looking for rather than just having some basic knowledge in certain subject areas, knowledge which we are not even sure if it will be relevant in future or not. But we know that we need people who are open to listen to new ideas, who are critical, who can discuss, who can gather new knowledge, who are reflective enough and can work as reflective practitioners and responsible people (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

A teacher educator also conceptualized "learner-centered pedagogy" as transformation by elaborating on how the College activities differed from the "reality" outside and how the College should act as a site for transformation:

*The reality outside is quite different from what is happening at the college. I think the college is doing what is supposed to be done in that area [learner-centredness], but definitely outside [the schools] is completely a different situation. And I think that is why it is becoming a problem for our students on teaching practice, particularly, they have problems fitting into the system. This is because the principles they come with from the college are not the same with what is in the schools. I was just at Ngweze Secondary this morning. The report I got from all the five students at Ngweze is that there is no communication, the students are worried, they don't know where to go for their complaints. Most of the classrooms prefer our students to their own teachers. This is because of the approach to teaching which these students come up with. I know that this is because of how they have been brought up here at the college (Interview: TE., June 6, No. 3).*

Some teacher educators also cited the potential transformative role to be played by "associate teachers", i.e. School Based Teachers who work closely with student teachers when they come out for School Based Studies, in some identified "associate schools", i.e. identified schools which are used for School Based Studies. For instance, one teacher educator elaborated:

*We already have associate teachers in some schools within our reach. We have had a lot of workshops with these teachers. One of the things which have come up in the workshops is the issue of democratic pedagogy. I remember one time we had a workshop on "The role of the associate teachers in schools" democratic pedagogy was one of the things brought up by the teachers. We discussed what democratic pedagogy really means in the classroom situation and its implications and the like. So in groups we discussed the point of democratic pedagogy in terms of decision making and its implications in teaching and how we are handling it in the college (Interview: TE., July 30, No. 9).*

Another teacher educator also expressed similar views regarding the role of "associate teachers" in promoting "learner-centered pedagogy" in the school system:

*I think we are not isolated here in the college. We are not an island here in the college. I think associate teachers in schools are, to a large extent, informed on what democratic pedagogy means. We have had several workshops with associate teachers. After each workshop we encourage these associate teachers to go back to their headmasters, and colleagues., and we encourage them also to have their own workshops in schools where they could assist by informing their colleagues on what transpires in the college workshops (Interview: TE., July 30, No. 9).*

Most evident from the views presented above was a tendency among a majority of the program participants to perceive learner-centered pedagogy in terms of transformation from the "old to the new system" or from the way teaching-learning is currently conducted in schools, which are described as still tied to the old system, to the way it is done at the college. Dominant in the views was also the tendency by program participants to see themselves as the change agents who will bring about the new learner-centered pedagogical strategies to schools. As the narrations indicated, the student teachers did not only compare the teaching-learning approaches in the schools to those in the College. They also felt that when most of the BETD graduates are released into schools in some three years to come, the situation in these schools will be transformed as teachers there are still viewed as the producer of everything while in the college students are allowed to be creative.

As one student teacher indicated, not only do *"ideas take time to filter through"*, but that there was still *"a hangover"* from the colonial past which was to *"wear off"* as learners in schools were *"still hooked to the old system of the teacher as a pastor"*. Also pointed out by the student teacher, because of the belief that a learner is an *"empty vessel"*, where learner-centered methods were used, learners complained that "teacher *so and so depends on the pupils"* for knowledge. Like the other student teachers this student teacher also believed that learner-centredness meant a transformation of such beliefs.

This tendency to see themselves as responsible for transformation was also reflected in the views held by another student teacher who emphasized that the current students graduating from the program will not *"be swallowed by the old system"*. Instead, they will transform it to a more learner-centered system because the BETD philosophy was already impressed on them. However, the student teacher also noted the resistance towards learner centered pedagogical strategies where learners in schools still used to the old system complained that teachers were dependent on their students, and that they sought knowledge from students, instead of them (teachers) imparting knowledge to students.

The administrator compared the old system which was *"exam oriented and focused on the teacher"* , to the new system, which is more focused on the learner and emphasizes learner active participation in the learning process. As the administrator noted, in this new system, teachers act as *"guides"*, and that the program will produce teachers who will teach in a different way from what Freire calls the *"banking concept of teaching"*. The program participant in the last two citations also compares the "two systems" and sees learner-centered pedagogical strategies as transformation from the old to the new. This program participant contrasted "the old system to the new system" as *"the traditional teacher training"* versus *"teacher education"*. The traditional teacher training was based on more fixed knowledge which was measurable, examinable and based on pre-set standards. In the BETD, a long term perspective was the basis. In this case, teachers produced in 1995 would be able to teach in the year 2000.

Still in the context of the post-apartheid reforms, the views held by the program participants regarding their roles as agents who should transform the traditional teacher centered system bequeathed by the apartheid regime to a more leaner-centered system need to be acknowledged as significantly transformative. The beliefs by program participants regarding transformation as a challenge in their hands should also be seen as a positive achievement as this can ensure teacher participation in furthering the goals of the reform process. It is also important to note that these views held by program participants regarding their roles as "transformative agents" seem to rhyme very well with the assertion by Andersson, et al, in their report on - *Teacher Education Reform In Namibia* - that:

> In countries which are changing - as is the case also of Namibia - the system of teacher education has to be flexible and produce teachers capable of change and development and with a favorable attitude towards development and change and themselves capable of promoting and making own contributions towards such change and development (Andersson, et al, 1991, p. 4).

Therefore, the widely perceived involvement in transformation from the old system to the new one echoes the general aspiration of producing teachers capable of change and prepared to make their own contributions to change. However, although the widely held self-perception among program participants as agents for change is significantly positive in various ways, it is also important to note that the views of the program participants lacked a critical examination of the "learner-centredness" into which they were to transform schools. The crucial point is that "learner-centered pedagogy" is indeed what post-apartheid Namibia needs. Nevertheless, a critical examination of the nature of such "learner-centredness" is equally essential. Learner-centered pedagogy needs to be examined in terms of its assumptions, values and goals and whether or not it is emancipatory. This is more so in the context that even technocratic/modernization paradigm programs have claimed learner-centered pedagogical strategies, yet the assumptions underpinning such strategies are quite different from the emancipatory and transformative assumptions informed by a critical paradigm. For instance, in the technocratic paradigm, "learner-centredness" is adopted in order to increase learning outcomes on some unexamined and measurable behavioral goals and nothing beyond that. On the contrary, learner-centredness in the critical/transformative paradigm entails both increased learning outcomes on goals set together with the learners over and above which emancipation and empowerment of the learner are also crucial.

It is important to note that both the interview and observation data, as will soon be shown in the section on collaborative teaching-learning, support the view that respondents may not be critical in their "transformation" views. The widely held perception of "learner-centered pedagogy" into which schools are said to be transformed does not go very far from the traditional banking modes of teaching-learning. For instance, instead of empowering participation, learner-centered pedagogy is perceived in terms of conditioned and mechanical forms of participation. Nevertheless, the issue of whether or not student teachers were themselves practicing "learner-centered approaches" into which they believed to transform schools is crucial. As students were on School Based Studies during the research period I was able to visit their schools and observe how they conducted lessons. A total of six such lesson observations was made. While it should be said that significant achievements and innovations have been made by these students in trying to use learner-centered strategies in their teaching, they were, by and large, still operating in the traditional approach. As will be shown in the next section, all their lessons tended to be delivered via "group-work" activities which were a reduction of "learner-centredness" to technical arrangements devoid of the philosophical underpinnings of group-work. Implementation of learner-centered strategies by these students was also impeded by

structural constraints obtaining in schools such as class size, nature of furniture, expectations of their pupils, and time-tabling. However, the point is that in order to be truly transformative, prospective teachers need to have a clear vision of what learner-centredness entails.

Furthermore, in order to carry out their generally perceived role in the transformation prospective teachers need to engage in a process of critical examination of the nature of the advocated learner-centered pedagogy and whether this form of pedagogy liberates the Namibian learner from the soul destroying memories of terror based pedagogical strategies of the colonial regime. In this regard, prospective teachers will also need to be critically aware of the fact that "learner-centerdness" can be adopted even in the technocratic/modernization paradigm to pursue interests which are not mediated by justice and democracy.

### 5.2.3. Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Collaborative Learning

Also discernible from the data was a dominant perception of "learner-centredness" in terms of "collaborative learning", mainly expressed as "group-work" technique. Asked what methods were used most in the program, a program participant maintained (I = Interviewer; TE= Teacher Educator):

> *I= What teaching methods are used most in the program?*
> *TE= Group-Work.*
> *I= Why do you think group-work is used that most?*
> *TE= I think because it is one of the learner-centered methods (Interview: TE., August 5, No. 10).*

The pattern in the responses by the respondent above was echoed by several other participants in the program. Most of the respondents who were interviewed on this particular issue indicated that "group-work" was used very often by teacher educators in their lessons. Not only was "group-work" frequently mentioned in the interviews, but in a majority of lessons observed "group-work" tended to be the dominant method used. From June to August 1995, a total of twelve lesson observations were conducted. Of the twelve, six observations were conducted in lessons offered by teacher educators to their student teachers at the College, and the other six observations were conducted in lessons offered by the student teachers themselves while on School Based Studies. Of these lessons by the teacher educators, three observations were conducted in Educational Theory and Practice (with a group of first years); two were in Social Studies (with a group of second year

student teachers); and, one was in English Communication Skills (also with second year student teachers).

The six lesson observations conducted in lessons by student teachers on School Based Studies were as follows: one was a grade four English lesson at Ngweze Primary School; two lessons in grade ten Agricultural Science at Ngweze Secondary School; one was a grade eight Science lesson at Mavuluma Secondary School; one grade eight English lesson at Mafuta Secondary School; and, a grade eight Maths lesson at Mafuta Secondary School. In all the twelve lessons observed, nine of them were offered through group-work discussions and only three lessons by the two Agricultural science students at Ngweze Secondary school, and the grade four English student teacher at Ngweze primary school deviated from the mainstream group-work practice. Apparently, the reasons for this deviation could be sought in factors such as the overcrowded classrooms (between 35-40 learners) which these three students handled and also the fact that desks (furniture) in these classes seemed to stretched from corner to corner leaving only small space for the teacher near the chalkboard area and thus making it difficult for any group-work to be organized. Nevertheless, as the observations clearly indicate, the use of group-work method dominated the program.

However, during the interviews some program participants indicated that this particular methodology of group-work was often wrongly used in the program. For instance, one of them argued:

> *I have seen some schools that are taught in a new way, in a very interesting way. But sometimes it will be frightening maybe. But I really think they try, though not in a good way. I mean, sometimes it can just be group-work and not in-depth implementation of the philosophy. Some of the organization patterns look like those of group-work but the values are not implemented (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

In other words, in some lessons, organizational patterns looked like those of group-work but the values and philosophy underpinning group-work were not being appropriately implemented. These anomalies were perceived by yet another program participant:

> *These people, most of them are taking a very superficial and literal approach because to them if a teacher stands in front and gives a short talk, he is obviously labeled teacher-centered without looking into what transpired and what the teacher intended. I also suspect that maybe sufficient preparation was not done. Especially taking into account the fact that most of the lecturers were trained in the so-called teacher-centered system. To make an overnight shift from that which we already know is a very difficult move (Interview: TE., July 30, No.9).*

From the perspective of this teacher educator, not only was the frequent use of group-work in the program wrongly attributed as synonymous to "learner-centredness", but also that most of the teacher educators took a "superficial and literary approach" to what learner-centered pedagogical strategies entailed. Contrary to the mainstream practice in the program, "learner-centredness" to this teacher educator meant the following:

> *I do not see learner-centered as synonymous to group work. I see learner-centredness in terms of learner-independence, learner-empowerment, you know. That which makes the student to acquire knowledge independent of the teacher. It is not just group-work. It is not just standing in front lecturing. It is a whole range of methodologies involved to empower the learner. So I fear that we have gone overboard and maybe it is because when people were introduced to learner-centered methodologies, and of course when teachers go to workshops, you know, the first thing which a facilitator will do is to throw them into groups and ask them to do all sorts of things. So of course naturally that will translate into the schools and I feel that if we continue like that you start to use something as useful as group-work inappropriately. We have observed classes with our students where learners are drawn into groups doing something totally meaningless (Interview: TE., July 30, No.9).*

Gleaned from the views of the program participants was the fact that "learner-centredness" was being reduced, equated or confused with simple mechanical arrangements such as "group-work", which as one of them put it, *"look like group-work but not in-depth implementation of the values and philosophy"* underpinning group-work. However, from the perspective of this teacher educator, the reasons for the tendency to equate "group-work" to "learner-centered pedagogy" were attributed to the lack of sufficient preparation of teacher educators regarding leaner-centered pedagogical strategies, particularly with the fact that most of the teachers were trained in the traditional system. According to the teacher educator, "learner-centredness" involves more than the use of simple group-work technique. It involved *"learner-independence"* and *"learner-empowerment"*, or that *"which makes the learner acquire knowledge independent of the teacher"*.

The observations held by these program participants regarding the reduction of learner-centered pedagogy to simple group-work and the obtaining lack of clear understanding regarding learner-centered pedagogy were widely echoed by other observers on the program. For instance, the dominant tendency to reduce learner-centered pedagogical strategies to simple "group-work" activities was also observed by Dahlström in his paper presented at the *International Council on Education for Teaching and Teacher Education* (41st World Assembly, 18-22 July 1994, Istanbul, Turkey):

> Learner-centered education has become a significant concept in the public perception of the new philosophy of education. Even though educational practitioners and administrators perceive learner-centered education as an integrated part of the current philosophy, uncertainty and disparate ideas about the practical implications of learner-centered education are flourishing. E.g. the practice to create prescribed learning situations through behavioristic programmed learning are used as one basis for learner-centered education parallel to contradictory educational practices building on notions of empowering, participatory, and liberating education. *There is also a tendency to reduce learner-centered education to classroom techniques such as group-work, and by that eliminating the troublesome considerations about the general approach to the teaching and learning situation related to more fundamental ideas about education* (italics, mine) (Dahlström, 1994, p.4).

Therefore, like the program participants cited earlier, Dahlström also notes the fact that not only has group-work come to be seen as synonymous to learner-centered pedagogy, but the general practice in the program has also gone contradictory to a learner-centered pedagogy perceived in terms of fundamental educational ideals such as empowerment, participatory and liberating education.

Similarly, in their report on the *Evaluation of Teacher Education Reform Project* (TERP), Marope (University of Bostwana, Gaborone) and Noonan (InterScience Research Corporation, Stockholm), (April 12, 1995) - also note that not only do substantial misunderstandings of what constitute the concept of "learner-centredness" dominate the program but also that a general tendency to reduce learner-centredness to group-work is observable:

> In-depth discussions with the lecturers revealed varying degrees of understanding of learner-centered teaching and learning. Some lecturers, especially those based at WCE and CCE and those who have been on the Academic B-Level course showed a fairly comprehensive understanding of learner-centered pedagogy. Across the colleges, however, there were substantial misunderstandings of what constitutes learner-centredness. *Lecturers often reduced a learner-centered approach to very specific examples of patterns of instructional organization structures like grouping, and classroom activity segments like discussions, collaborative project research and preparation, presentation, board work, etc.* (italics, mine) (Marope & Noonan, 1995, pp. 25-26).

Apart from lack of clear understanding of what learner-centered pedagogy entailed incidence of abuse of learner-centered pedagogy were not uncommon. For instance, one of the teacher educators described in an interview how a student teacher had a class organized into groups for an English lesson on listening skills:

*I mean, to give you a very interesting example, in English we observed this lesson, and it was a listening lesson. Now do you listen in groups? That is funny, you know. Do you listen in a group? Honestly, this student divided the pupils into groups and then said; "listen to..." And that is the extent to which this specific methodology of group-work has been misused. So you need a situation where you can explain that learner-centredness involves several methodologies which put the learner at the center. I mean, even you as a teacher standing in front of the class teaching does not necessarily mean that you are teacher-centered. It depends on how you are delivering that content and how you want the students to go about acquiring new content (Interview: TE., August 5, No.10).*

Therefore, for the prospective teachers, they too have adopted and assimilated the notion of "learner-centredness" where simple "group-work" techniques have become the sum-total of learner-centered pedagogy. As can be seen from the student teacher described above, learner-centredness has been utilized inappropriately in several ways. For instance, the student teacher divided the learners into groups to "listen" in an effort to frame the lesson as being learner-centered. Yet, though the groups were arranged, learners were never made to talk to each other since the conversation following the listening exercise was more of individual feedback by each learner to the student teacher. However, among the teacher educators, this "abuse" of the learner-centered pedagogical strategies was not uncommon. For example, the Marope/Noonan report cited earlier goes on to observe:

> Some lecturers also noted the potential "abuse" of learner-centered approach to teacher education. They charged that some lecturers have come to use this approach as "time-out" technique where the lecturers can sit and relax while students struggle with learning tasks which they hardly understand. Notice that the on-going formative evaluation of the BETD has also noted the confusion over the role that teacher educators should play in learner-centered settings (Marope & Noonan, 1995, p.26).

Therefore, not only have teacher educators come to find learner-centered approaches as "time-out technique" where they can sit and relax, but they were largely unaware of what role the teacher should play in learner-centered settings. As was indicated earlier by the teacher educator in one of the data presentations given above, the theory-practice gap regarding learner-centredness can be attributed to factors such as the general tendency among teacher educators and student teachers to take a simplistic, superficial and literary approach to learner-centredness; the fact that no sufficient preparations were done to make teacher educators and student teachers conversant with the practical implications of the new pedagogical strategies, particularly since most of the teacher educators are products of the old system. The theory-practice gap could also be attributed to resistance by some tendencies of the old system towards change.

It should be stated that both the misunderstandings and the general practice to reduce learner-centredness to simple and mechanical activities such as group-work is a negative outcome in terms of collaborative work and the spirit of solidarity in work as a social activity which fosters empowerment, emancipation and liberation. It should equally be noted that the current use of "group-work" in the program is a significant innovation especially when compared to the apartheid system where pedagogical strategies emphasized individualism and discouraged group identity and collaborative work. However, the current practice of collaborative work in the program need to go beyond mere mechanical arrangements to implement the underlying values of collaborative work, solidarity, democratic participation and critical sharing.

Therefore, to move from the confines of the dis-empowering technocratic paradigm characteristic of the colonial system, the program needs to conceptualize "learner-centredness as collaborative work" within the critical/transformative paradigm. Collaborative work then can become genuinely empowering by applying authentic values of critical sharing through dialogue which can be translated into concrete group activities which are transformative. For instance, available for collaborative work which is based on critical sharing are themes such as *Life Conditions of Children In Namibia* as discussed in the subject area of Educational Theory and Practice (MEC, 1992. p. 4). In this regard, student teachers are expected to learn about forms of life affecting children's learning in Namibia such as living in rural areas, and living in urban squatters. Forms of life which are also discussed include rainy season - during which most children drop-out of school in the rural areas because of failure to cross flooded pans to school; longer distances between village and school which rural children walk; dry season - during which time boys drop-out of school as they move with parents to new cattle posts in search for better grazing lands; and, overcrowded and dilapidated schools in rural areas.

However, instead of engaging student teachers in critical reflection and sharing on strategies which link education or teaching to transformation of life conditions of learners, the program tended to emphasize teaching prospective teachers how they can "reflect" and prepare lessons to teach each group of learners effectively. What mattered was to equip student teachers with the technical skills to *"adjust"* their lessons to suit the life conditions of rural children and to teach them effectively. The life conditions of children are approached as *natural occurrences, and as givens* to which the teacher has but to adjust the lesson and abide by the status quo of the "natural" life conditions. No attempts were made regarding critical sharing of strategies for possible transformation of such life conditions of learners. Therefore, in a critical/transformative paradigm, collaborative group-work implies that prospective teachers are given opportunities to dialogue and critically reflect on

strategies for transforming and improving the life conditions of learners instead of simply adjusting to such conditions. In this paradigm, the life conditions of rural, urban and squatter children are situated within the broader social, political and economic arrangements as prospective teachers dialogue about the root causes of such life conditions and share strategies for transformative action.

Still in the subject area of Education Theory and Practice, another available theme for critical sharing and collaborative work is that of *Child Development Studies* (MEC, 1992, p.7). Instead of the dominant pedagogical strategy which tends to present child development as a "natural and biological process" irrespective of the obtaining social, political, and economic conditions of the child, the critical/transformative paradigm gives prospective teachers opportunities to engage in dialogue regarding underlying local, national and global issues which underpin child development. For instance, instead of emphasizing the natural aspect only, transformative activities within the critical paradigm would address issues of local, national and global inequalities in food distribution and consumption which are significant for understanding child development in South regions such Namibia. In this paradigm, insights are drawn from studies on the political economy of hunger which address local, national and global inequalities of food consumption (George, 1990; Lappé & Collins, 1977; New Internationalist, 1978; Hopkins & Puchala, 1978).

However, it is also important to note that the use of group-work activities does not necessarily guarantee a transformative paradigm. Hence, the group-work activities can still be couched within the traditional pedagogical strategies which are typical of the technocratic paradigm. Like any other "delivery" and "banking" type technique, group-work can still be used to "deliver" and "bank" knowledge into students who are systematically excluded from deciding upon the scope, content, pace, and experiences to be learnt. Despite the use of group-work, the scope, content, pace, and choice of experiences to be learnt can still remain the prerogatives of teacher educators and those who design curricular but not the student teachers. Although group-work is used, content can still flow in the unilinear trend from the textbook through the teacher educator to the student teachers.

Therefore, in post-apartheid Namibia efforts are needed both to construct a clear conception of what learner-centered pedagogy means as well as to move beyond mechanical forms and implement the underlying values of empowerment, emancipation and liberation which are supposed to be the basis of a learner-centered pedagogy for independent Namibia.

## 5.3. The Principle of Reflective Teaching and Learning

As already indicated above, one of the "guiding principles" around which teaching and learning in the program is supposed to be organized is that of "reflective teaching and learning". The views, beliefs and experiences of program participants were sought in order to illuminate what the concept entailed in the program. Using an example drawn from School Based Studies, a program participant elaborated the concept as follows:

> *When students are out for School Based Studies it is not a question of getting marks for a certain lesson presentation, or lesson plan but that they have a capacity to reflect on what went wrong or what went well and some ideas on how should they do it next time. That is the sort of reflective practitioner we would like to train during School Based Studies. That is perhaps the best example, but also during College Based Studies when they try to reflect upon something which has happened and try to draw conclusions for actions in the future that are critical (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

Therefore, from the perspective of this program participant reflective practice entailed the "capacity to reflect on what went wrong and what went well and some ideas on how should they do it next time". This perception of "reflective practice" was also shared by teacher educators, as seen in the views of the following teacher educator:

> *In my view, reflection is another word for thinking about what one has done. So it is seen not as a worthless occupation where one just thinks about what he or she has done, but it is an occupation where one actually learns. To look back at what has happened, trying to construct meanings out of what happened, trying to change or react to some of the things that one learns during reflection. Not to just make a list of what has happened but also to think about how it could have affected their teaching. In SBS [School Based Studies], they are supposed to do a self-evaluation and that in itself is a reflection; to think about your lesson, think about how students responded to certain aspects of your lesson (Interview: TE., June 21, No.6).*

According to this teacher educator, "reflective teaching and learning" was seen as a process of re-examining the lesson, "a process of thinking about what one has done", and that it is a "worthwhile occupation" of learning and trying to make meanings out of what has happened. Another teacher educator also reiterated similar views by maintaining that "reflective practice" applies to teacher educators to reflect on what they have taught and from there make a better follow-up:

*I think reflective practice applies much to we teacher educators to reflect on what we have taught and from there make a better follow-up. If that is the case, then I think we are doing it. I don't know how it goes to students now. Do we teach them how to be reflective or what? (Interview: TE., June 6, No. 3).*

Another teacher educator briefly elaborated the concept by relating it to "failure" and "what has failed":

*It looks to me that reflective practice is related to failure in a way. What has failed. What can you do. So if nothing fails, then you don't reflect (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3).*

To a student teacher, "reflective teaching and learning" also meant evaluating the success and failures of the lesson and how to improve it:

*When it comes to reflective attitude at this point where I am in the program I have come to believe that a teacher is fallible to mistakes, meaning he is subject to mistakes. So being in the workforce, each time you come to class you must be someone who normally has time to sit down and think about the past events. I am talking specifically about teaching here. How did my lesson go? Were there some mistakes in the lesson? If yes, how can I attend to them? How can I rectify these mistakes in the next lesson? You see, this is all what it means to reflect. Particularly in this regard you must look more especially to the negative and to the positive side. But look more especially to the negative part of your lesson because it is too harmful. So you need to put more attention on the negative side to find a solution (Interview: ST. June 9, No. 5).*

To another student teacher "reflective teaching and learning" meant to be very curious about teaching and learning, and to be able to be flexible and creative by using alternative ways instead of sticking to what is planned:

*I think to we, the BETD students, it means to be very curious with the teaching and learning situation, especially what takes place in the classroom. A reflective practitioner must be a person who thinks that he could have done better by teaching in another way rather than just what is planned even if it is proving to be failing (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

An administrator also emphasized self-evaluation and evaluating lesson success as the meaning of reflective teaching and learning:

*First one can interpret it [reflective teaching and learning] by referring to the teacher himself or herself. Because to be an effective teacher you have to be*

> *critical, you need to analyze. You need to analyze your own situation, your own environment. How does it relate to the teaching-learning process? You have to be critical. How am I going to handle learners, how will they learn? That goes for the learners also. It is expected of them to reflect on what they have been taught. To think critically about what has been done so far and what is the way forward (Interview: A., July 7, No.7).*

The views expressed by the interviewees above were echoed in a publication in the *Reform Forum* (an official publication of debates on reform issues in Namibia) by a teacher educator from Rundu College:

> Reflection on your teaching is a way of making aware of how to teach. It is a method of self-assessment. If we don't reflect, we are teaching "in the dark" without knowing if we are effective and if we should modify our teaching. Reflection requires us to answer a number of questions such as: How do I interact with students? How do I respond when they ask questions? What kind of classroom atmosphere do I create? Is my teaching spontaneous or is it predictable? Are my students involved? Why didn't a lesson go well? Why didn't a lesson work? All lecturers ask themselves questions like these from time to time. But *reflective practitioners* not only ask questions routinely and deliberately, they use the answers to these questions to guide and change their instructional practices so they can be more effective (Botes, 1994, p.23).

As the data clearly indicates, all those who were involved in the interviews conceptualized "reflective teaching and learning" in ameliorative terms of what went well, or what went wrong regarding the lesson, and how the situation could possibly be improved next time. As some of the respondents indicated, reflective practice was *"connected to failure or to what has failed"*. From the views of the program participants the concept also entailed *"teachers reflecting on what they have taught and making a better follow-up"*. In the perspective of a student teacher, it entailed addressing questions such as: *"How did my lesson go? Were there some mistakes in the lesson? If Yes, how I can I attend to the mistake?* Reflective practice also entailed paying special attention to the *"negative part of the lesson"*, as it was seen as *"too harmful"*. Another student teacher conceptualized reflective practice in terms of teacher curiosity, flexibility and creativity in using different approaches to attain lesson success.

From the data, the dominant perception and practice of "reflective teaching and learning" in the program tended to oscillate around concerns for improvement of lesson success and increased learning outcomes. With the endemic failure which overwhelmingly plagued the apartheid education system, it can be stated that the dominant concerns in the program regarding improvement of lesson success and increasing learning outcomes through "reflective teaching-learning" should be seen as a positive achievement for the

undergoing Basic Education Teacher reforms. As many writers on the Namibian colonial education system have ably documented, high student failure, particularly among the black Namibians, predominantly characterized the system. Students expected to fail, teachers expected them to fail, examiners also set examination papers so that a big number of students fail and the examination itself was used to check on what students did not know (MEC, 1993). Besides, reflective teaching and learning should also be seen as a positive innovation when compared to rote memorization and the banking mode characteristic of the apartheid education system.

However, it should also be stated that the generally held perception of "reflective teaching and learning" was overwhelmingly lesson-centered and was, by and large, heavily underpinned by the technocratic ideology of effectiveness and efficiency in lesson delivery on some given ends. Apart from the views held by the program participants, as presented above, the *"Handbook For School Based Studies"* prepared by the college as a guide for students regarding school based studies also emphasized the type of approach to "reflective practice" which centered around effectiveness and efficiency in lesson delivery without examining the nature of the aims or the context in which teaching is done. For instance, the handbook lists the following questions which students should address during "reflection":

> a) What were your aims and objectives? Did you achieve them? How do you know?
> b) How did the learners react to your lesson? What were your successes? Did you encounter any problems?
> c) How was your timing?
> d) Were your teaching materials appropriate?
> e) Did the methods you used work, and did you use a variety?
> f) Are there any alternative methods that you could use in future lessons?
> g) How will you continue? (*Handbook For SBS*, CCE, 1995, p. 12).

Whereas these "reflective questions" can be said to be important for lesson success, it should also be pointed out that they tend to reduce reflective practice to the realms of lesson success only. These questions, together with the views expressed by program participants regarding "what went well" or "what went wrong" with the lesson, and how the lesson could be improved seem to be too unduly concerned with "good delivery" of the lesson. What seems to matter is to maximize good teacher performance and maximize learning outcomes. The nature of content or the goals and aims are not addressed as crucial issues. This approach to "reflective practice" has widely been identified as the "technical rationality" approach where the dominant concern is the technical application of educational knowledge for the purposes of attaining given ends (Giroux & McLaren, 1987; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1993; Beyer & Zeichner, 1987). The problem with this approach is that the

ends themselves are not questioned but are taken for granted by these "reflective practitioners" as worthy of pursuance. Not only is the curricula context into which the skills are to be employed ignored, but also the ends towards which these technical skills are to be directed are seen not as an issue of critical interrogation. It should be stated that both the curricula context and the goals of education are highly contested terrains for ideological and power interests and can therefore not be ignored and treated as neutral givens.

Therefore, in the context of the current post-Apartheid reforms, it is essential not only for prospective teachers to be able to employ technical skills in instrumental ways to increase teaching success or learning outcomes. There is also need for teachers to situate their technical skills within the practice of "critique" and "possibility" where they constantly analyze teacher education programs and teaching in terms of ethical and political justifiability rather than exclusively in terms of technical efficiency or utility. This approach would be in line with the critical/transformative paradigm where reflective practice would incorporate considerations of moral and ethical criteria such as justice and equity into the discourse of educational thought about practical action. As active participants in the reform process, insights could also be drawn from the Freirean notion of "praxis", which is a synthesis of thought and action. In the critical/transformative paradigm, "reflective practice" refers to a critical synthesis of reflection and action (praxis) in which case the central goal is both that of reflecting on lesson success but also taking actions to determine which education goals, educational experiences, and institutional arrangements lead towards forms of life which are mediated by justice, equality and democracy (Giroux, 1989; Freire, 1973; Giroux & McLaren, 1987). This approach to reflective practice is congruent with the view of the teacher as a transformative intellectual in that by employing instrumental and technical skills, the prospective teacher also examines both the socio-political context of teaching and the aims or goals of teaching (education) as a result of which the teacher joins other transformative groups in challenging and sustaining a society based on equity, democracy and human dignity. This view of the teacher reflects the aim of SWAPO's programs for teacher education which is well documented by Mbuende:

> To provide him/her [the prospective teacher] with aspects of political education, with emphasis on development of political consciousness and correct attitudes at all levels in the process of national reconstruction (Mbuende, 1987, p. 66)

Therefore, apart from employing technical skills to attain lesson success, the central thrust of reflective practice within the transformative paradigm is to enable the prospective teacher achieve a deepened awareness of the socio-political and economic structures which shape

their lives as teachers and citizens, as well as the lives of their students and other citizens such as the oppressed masses. In sum, the BETD needs to look closely at its theory and practice of "reflective teaching and learning".

### 5.4. The Principle of Subject Integration

Here again, in order to illuminate what the principle entailed, the views, beliefs and experiences of program participants were sought. Asked about "integration" and what it entailed in the program, one of the student teachers commented:

> *I am very happy with the BETD because it really is striving for some changes because in the past we were in darkness, pure darkness. Teachers never sensed that education is a collaborative effort or joint kind of activity. There was no room for consultations; "how can we do this", "how do you understand it". But otherwise they just presented things from their own perspective regardless of whether it has been approached from a wrong angle. Currently we have learnt that education is a joint effort or a collaborative effort. No teacher is a custodian or master of knowledge. But otherwise we need to come together and share knowledge. Before I go to class I must come to you and say how do you understand this? Or what do you suggest to me as the right way of handling this? You see we are trying to share some ideas. What will come next is a productive thing. We are even now conducting group work in class to allow students to share. So this is a very good type of education (Interview: ST. June 9, No.5).*

Another student teacher also held a similar perspective and elaborated the concept by emphasizing collaborative work:

> *To me integration is a joint effort. Bringing heads together. This one will come with that idea and the other one brings another idea. Therefore, it will lead us to share. By coming together we will agree and disagree on a number of points. (Interview: ST., June 9, No.5).*

The views and beliefs held by these two student teachers were shared by yet another student teacher:

> *Integration means two or more bodies coming together. As teachers we must not be egocentric. We must come together and share methodologies to use in class. Through group-work you find that you come to know a lot of things. You really discuss things in great detail (Interview: ST. June 9, No.5).*

When probed whether they (the student teachers) were employing integration strategies in their teaching activities as they were on School Based Studies, a majority of the student

teachers responded positively although they expressed concerns that teachers in the schools where School Based Studies was conducted were still working in isolation. As one of them stated:

> *Let me say that when they are planning lessons, it just depends. If a teacher has grade eight of about three classes, we have to plan lessons as a group of teachers and then we have to share ideas on how you can formulate your objectives, how you can do the presentation, and so forth. But when it is you alone, you have to do it alone and you can't seek ideas from others. For us as student teachers we do that because we want to help each other, but the teachers don't normally do that. They plan individually (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

However, the experience with teacher educators, as compared to student teachers, was somewhat different. Unlike the student teachers, a majority of teacher educators was rather critical and indicated that instead of integration, the program was working to the contrary. This lack of, or the absence of integration in the program was clearly expressed in the views of the teacher educators:

> *I think we have tried to integrate. Maybe we haven't done a lot. But personally I haven't seen it work as it should. We haven't done enough in my subject area, particularly. We keep on talking about integration, but we haven't done anything about it yet. I understand this year, the Science department was trying to integrate with the social studies department. I don't know how far that has gone. But for the past two years, I don't think anything has been done in regard to the area of integration (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3).*

While sharing similar views, another teacher educator also charged that integration was not happening in the program mainly because of the lack of proper "planning" and "guidance":

> *I think integration, like so many of the concepts we have got, is another buzz word. And everybody has tried to jump on the band-wagon without even knowing what to do. Are you supposed to be on the band-wagon even. Or shouldn't you be on it. So it is just like a concept which is thrust at you; do what you want to do with it, untested, at least in this context. It seems to me that the only time we discuss integration is at the National seminars when the colleges are competing to show how much integration they have done, even if it has not happened. Actually most of the things we hear at the National seminars are things which people have got in their heads. But which they have not really done. Last year when we came back from the National seminar in August, in a management meeting, I suggested that integration cannot just happen. That it must systematically be planned. You must have a clear idea of what you want to integrate. You cannot just integrate anything. Some things are not "integrationable" (laughter). I still firmly believe that the best way to go about this is to actually talk about it in the staff development meeting where we actually sit and plan that this year*

*we are going to take this theme or themes and we want to approach this theme from this perspective. Department per department, what is your contribution? So I cannot believe that you can just through a buzz-word in an institution and say do it! I think that is our problem. We don't know what to integrate because we have not worked on it in a systematic fashion (Interview: TE., July 30, No.9).*

Similar views were echoed by yet another teacher educator:

*The concept is new, nobody has ever tried it. It has not been tried in this context. I know it has been tried elsewhere. We have these staff meetings where we talk absolutely nothing. Why can't we take something like integration which really concerns the program, sit down and say this is what this college wants to do. And we will all get involved in it. And the minute we start saying let us split into departments then again it becomes fragmented. So there goes your integration out of the window, from integration to disintegration (Interview: TE., June 9, No.4).*

Most of the teacher educators also indicated that not only was integration not practiced in the program, but also that the absence of integration led to the non practice of collaborative work activities such as "team-planning", "peer-planning", and "team-teaching". As one of them argued:

*Team-planning and team-teaching are not there because integration has not happened. I don't think they have been implemented. Very minimally, maybe some funny consultations with a colleague (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3) .*

Another teacher educator sounded similar views and attributed "time-tabling" in the program as the constraining factor regarding both "integration", "team-planning", and "team-teaching":

*Talking about team-planning and team-teaching one is faced with time here. You are talking about the time table where you have so and so teaching that subject and this subject. You know, it is very difficult to come together, sit together and plan. We had a schedule last time, that was 1993, pasted somewhere in the staff-room. It didn't work! It is so difficult. But as long as there is no college based group responsible for this integration, if you just leave it for all of us to decide it is not going to work. I can plan anything, I don't need to consult (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3).*

The "time-table" and the "over-loading" of teachers were again reiterated by another teacher educator as impediments to "integration" and other collaborative related activities:

*As for team-teaching, this assumes that people have a lot of time on their hands. You cannot tell me if I have twenty-seven periods to go and team-plan, with "whom"? "when"? I also need my own time to do my own things. If I have twenty seven-periods I cannot very well make that time. You are asking too much (Interview: TE., June 21, No.6).*

As the data speaks for itself, whereas student teachers expressed positive feelings regarding "integration" in the program, teacher educators were somewhat critical of the prevailing arrangements and organizational factors in the program which they located as the constraints to "integration" and collaborative work related activities such as "team-planning", "team-teaching" or "peer-teaching". Whereas in theory "integration" is one of the purported "guiding principles" of the program, in their expressions teacher educators strongly charged that integration was not being practiced in the program as advocated. Seen from the views held by teacher educators, it can therefore be safely concluded that instead of working on "integration" and "collaborative" pedagogical strategies, the program rather worked to the contrary and resulted in the continuance of the fragmented and insulated approach characteristic of the colonial regime.

This lack of integration suggest what Macedo (1993) argues that fragmentation or, "specialization", as is generally known, does not only disempower teachers but also denies them the opportunity to get a holistic picture of what teaching is, and the world that informs teaching. Consequently, knowledge is often disarticulated and dislodged from the broader world perspective which informs it. Therefore, because of fragmentation and emphasis on specialization teachers may be less able to elucidate matters pertaining to teaching, political power, economic power, and other related issues of poverty. The isolation and insulation restricts and limits the horizons of teachers to know only the small corner of the knowledge domain, and to make them even proclaim that small corner as a virtue and seek to take no cognizance or curiosity of what lies outside the narrow territory of the small corner (Macedo, 1993; Gasset, 1932). Similarly, Kozol (1990) also speaks of teaching as a new form of "skilled surgery" where even the ordinary language of the teacher's daily use such as "division", "period", "section", "unity", "topic", "term", and "semester" reveal the underlying process of surgery or fragmentation.

Regarding the failure to implement "integration", teacher educators identified several forces at work which impede the intended integration. The negative factors include lack of serious effort on the part of the college to set off the process of integration. As one teacher educator indicated; *"we keep on talking about integration, but we haven't done anything about it yet."* To other teacher educators, the constraining factor was that integration is a *"buzz-word"*, *"a concept just thrust upon you"*, and *"do whatever you want*

*to do with it.*" Also clear in the views of teacher educators was that another major impediment to integration was lack of systematic planning and guidance in the program. As one pointed out; *"integration cannot just happen", it "must systematically be planned", "you must have a clear idea of what you want to integrate".* The obstacles were also attributed to the fact that "integration" was a new concept in Namibian teacher education. Other program participants maintained that since teacher educators had heavy workloads there was just not enough time left for them to plan collaborative activities with their colleagues. As one indicated; *"you cannot tell me if I have twenty seven periods to go and team-plan; with whom, and when? I also need my own time, ... you are asking too much".* The "time-table" was singled out as one of the obstacles regarding integration and "team-teaching". As one teacher educator put it; *"you are talking about the time-table where you have so and so teaching that subject and this subject ...it is very difficult to come together, to sit together and plan."* It is important to note that *The National Evaluation Of The BETD Program* also observed this lack of integration in the program:

> In addition to a learner-centered approach the BETD program advocates cooperative learning and group work (CL), theme studies and subject integration (TS), reflective teaching and learning (RTL), learning through production (LTP), and cooperative teaching including team teaching....*On the question if these approaches have been put in practice teacher educators indicated that the most problematic approach to implement is cooperative teaching amongst the teacher educators!* (italics, mine) (Dahlström & Frykholm, 1994, p.11).

It is also important to note here that the concerns expressed by teacher educators concerning the "time-table" were contrary to the Ministry guidelines as outlined in the broad-curriculum for the program:

> *The division into subjects and suggested time allocations as follows does not presuppose that the program must be organized into rigid subject compartments and time-tabling.* As and when feasible, it will be an advantage for colleges to try out and evaluate different ways of organizing the study, in part or as a whole, under controlled circumstances. The various options will be brought together for integrated studies, projects, seminars, etc. whenever necessary. In term 9, time will be set aside for options to share experiences and insights from their own areas of study and practice to see their place and function within the perspective of the teaching of Basic Education as a whole, and to sum up and reflect over the study program itself (italics, mine) (*Broad Curriculum for the Basic Education Teacher Diploma, MEC, 1994, pp. 9-10*)

Therefore, the actual implementation of the program as reflected in the views of the teacher educators contradicted sharply with the Ministry's stipulation which endorsed and

recommended the use of "integration" strategies and not organizing the program into "rigid compartmentalization and time-tabling". However, apart from the factors impeding "integration", several solutions were also discernible in the expressions given above by teacher educators. As most of them indicated, the situation might be corrected by employing systematic planning, guidance, discussing integration in "staff-development meetings" and "staff-meetings", electing a "college based group" to coordinate integration, diminishing teacher overloads and increased time-table flexibility.

However, as the views above clearly indicated, instead of "integration" and collaborative work as the program guidelines stipulate, the obtaining organizational and planning factors led the program to work to the contrary. Instead of integrating, teacher educators were rather working in isolation, insulation, and compartmentalization. As stated earlier in this chapter, whereas group-work (collaborative work) was used very frequent with student teachers, the teacher educators themselves worked in a more fragmented manner and lacked any significant consultations with colleagues regarding teaching-learning activities. It should be stated that this approach is rather retrogressive within the context of the current reforms and more consistent with the technocratic paradigm.

A tendency was also discernible in the views of both teacher educators and student teachers to take integration for granted. Integration was seen as "the solution" and the actual learning content was taken for granted and not examined in terms of assumptions and underlying interests. Yet even when integration takes place, the integrated content can still be couched within the technocratic/modernization paradigm. Therefore, seen within the transformative paradigm, both the content itself and the underlying assumptions, purposes and outcomes need to be critically analyzed regarding potentials for empowering student teachers. Among both teacher educators and student teachers a tendency was discernible to perceive integration in technical terms such as "organization" and "coordination". However, whereas integration may not happen without these technical arrangements, they should not be seen as the sum-total of integration. Over and above the technical arrangements, the values and assumptions such as those of collaborativeness, group-solidarity, critical sharing, ability to contribute, among others, need to be emphasized.

It is also important to note that when compared to the colonial teacher education system, both the positive expressions by student teachers and the concerns raised by teacher educators regarding factors impeding "integration" and collaborative work should be acknowledged as significant potentials within which the current reforms can be charted to bring about genuine integration of content. As was indicated earlier, like other sectors of colonial Namibia, teacher education was no exception to the apartheid policy of "divide and rule". Since group solidarity was seen as a threat to the colonial regime, water-tight

compartmentalization, fragmentation and insulation were sought as the principles for organizing teaching-learning in teacher education and education in general. Where "integration" occurred, it only served the interests of the colonial regime. While far from embarking upon genuine integration the apartheid regime sought to produce teachers who are "fragmented and incoherent intellectuals" who have no holistic view of either their work, or the issues pertaining in the broader social, political, and economic spheres. This lack of integration in the colonial system was also underpinned by interests of power and control. Knowledge was compartmentalized as separate entities, pre-packaged, and delivered separately. It is therefore in this context that the current move towards integration needs to be acknowledged as a positive innovation.

Whereas the introduction of "integration" in Namibian teacher education is significantly transformative particularly in comparison to the "divide and rule" practice in the apartheid system, it is also important to note that "integration" as advocated in the program is conceptualized in mainly elitist intellectual approaches of integrating content. This subject content confined type of integration dominated not only the views of program participants cited earlier but it also dominated the stipulations in curriculum documents. This approach to integration is more evident in the Subject Area Curriculum for ETP:

> Integration is important. Reality is not divided into disconnected bits, and understanding of reality should for that reason not be fragmented. Integration between theory and practice, between different subject areas, should be adopted as a general principle (MEC, 1992, p.20).

Whereas the subject area curriculum document rightly recognizes that integration is important and that reality cannot be understood in fragmented bits, it nevertheless remains in the orbit of intellectual arenas and integration of subject content. Whereas this is important in itself, for changing societies such as Namibia it is equally important to combine integration at an intellectual or subject area level with integration at the broader level of integrating school and community, rich and poor, and countryside and town. It should also be noted that the current perception of integration in the program which tends to over-emphasize subject area content integration at the expense of other broader conceptualization is a deviation from integration as advocated in the Integrated Teacher Training Program for Namibian teachers (ITTP) upon which the current Basic Education teacher program is supposed to be modeled. For instance, in the ITTP integration was perceived as follows:

> [Integration means to] combine different aspects of education and life. Apply integration at different levels, e.g. between the concrete and the

> abstract, practice and theory, school subjects, school and community, education and work. Communicate something meaningful and with real function. Produce "items" with a real purpose inside and outside school (*The Frontline Teacher*, 1990, p.8).

Therefore, a changed perspective between the ITTP and the BETD is clearly noticeable. Whereas in the ITTP integration was more holistic and broader to include broader aspects of education and work, school and community, and producing meaningful and useful concrete items, the BETD tends to be more narrowly focused on the integration of "learning content" only. As already stated, though important in itself, restriction to content levels only is gravitating towards the technocratic/modernization paradigm.

The perspective held in the ITTP program was also congruent with what Wald (1976) documents in the Cuban case as a broadly conceived notion of integration. As Wald rightly documents, integration in the Cuban case has significantly provided exemplars of how mass poverty can possibly be alleviated by dissolving the bridge between countryside and town, elites and the masses, the rich and the poor, men and women, intellectual (school) and work. In this case integration is not only an academic exercise but also an emancipatory political concept which is intended for the betterment of human conditions within the obtaining human squalor characteristic of many South countries. Integration as a political exercise involves, over and above technical and instrumental integration of content, the integration of the poor and the rich, elite and masses, rural and urban, the powerful and the powerless, teacher and taught, tribes, races. A similar perspective on integrating school and productive labor has been emphasized by other critical scholars such as Gillespie and Collins (1987). In sum, integration conceptualized within the critical/alternative paradigm seeks to dissolve the boundaries not only between school subjects but also in the broader society.

### 5.4. The Principle of Learning Through Production of Materials

The current emphasis on "the principle of production" in post-apartheid Namibian teacher education arises out of a colonial legacy whereby most Namibian schools, particularly schools for the oppressed, are severely lacking in terms of availability of good quality teaching and learning material. In the apartheid colonial system, both the quality and the quantity of teaching-learning material offered nothing to be desired. As rightly described:

> The current situation in the schools is characterized by lack of resources (textbooks, audio-visual equipment, etc.). There are large differences

> between and within regions in this respect. The changes proposed will in the long run remedy the situation. However, for a considerable transition period the schools in many cases will have to continue to function with limited resources. The gradual introduction of a new school curriculum, the emphasis on Namibian content in textbooks, etc. will therefore have to be carried without the full support of new textbooks and materials (Andersson, et. al., 1991, p.27).

The status quo regarding textbooks in colonial Namibia was a complex one. On the one hand, many pupils in some parts of Namibia, or belonging to certain ethnic groups, had too much written but inadequate materials, mostly written in Afrikaans and of South African origin. In other parts of the country, even those inadequate materials were lacking. Besides, these materials were scarce in languages other than Afrikaans. However, the availability in large quantities of these materials in some parts of the country should not be wrongly viewed as a solution to the problem for the materials were inadequate and inappropriate such that having them was as good as not having them at all. For instance, Ellis (1988) ably documents the inadequacy and irrelevance of these apartheid materials such as the Social Studies textbooks where learners were made to memorize false mythologies of "the warlike blacks and peaceful whites", or that of "white initiator and black laborer". The implications in teacher education both for the immediate overhauling of such racist indoctrination, and of remedying the scarcity of appropriate resources were clearly identified by Andersson, et al (1992, p. 28):

> Its implications for teacher education is that the teacher candidate must be prepared to handle such a situation [scarcity of material]. Teacher education should accordingly not over-emphasize the use of textbooks and audio-visual equipment in school teaching. It should instead prepare the teacher to produce own materials, to use non-printed materials, to utilize the experiences of the pupils and the teacher in the classroom, and to take advantage of whatever everyday material that is available.

Therefore, in the quest to remedy the situation, the BETD emphasizes "production of own material" in teacher preparation and de-emphasize reliance on textbooks and other readily made materials as these are not available in good numbers. The introduction of "learning through production" should be seen as one way to move away from the practice in the colonial system of rote memorization of poor quality textbooks as much as it is also a strategy to remedy the scarcity of resources obtaining in the schools as a colonial legacy.

In order to gain a comprehensive picture, the views, experiences and beliefs of program participants were sought. Asked what "learning through production" entailed in the program, one of the teacher educators had the following to say:

*I have come to experience it as production of materials. And in that aspect I think a lot has been done. It is one of the success of the BETD. In the learner-centered approach there has been a lot of production of materials by students. Much more than what has been the case before. We do this in the college because we know the situation in the schools. When students finally go into the field to teach there will be a big lack of materials in the schools. We are always encouraging them to think of alternatives. If you look around you will see a lot of pictures on the walls, photographs, material productions. We are taking part in a lot of competitions in Windhoek, and even as far as Lesotho to represent Namibia on such kinds of competitions. Definitely, I think this is something we have been doing a lot about. Some of our students are told to research, as part of their action research, on the availability of Science equipment in schools, and where not available to produce material from locally available resources. From trash generally (Interview: TE., June 6, No.2).*

The views held by this teacher educator were shared by yet another teacher educator:

*I think in our department [dept. Education Theory and Practice] much has been done. If you take the case of those who are dealing with early-childhood education, much has been done. So I think the students are doing the actual things. We are simulating situations from the schools. You do things related to artifacts - the teaching media and something like that. They are being done right here. Today if you go to some schools, some teachers will tell you that we don't have teaching aids. We want to discourage them [student teachers] from that idea. They need to improvise, to go out, pick a few things such as bottles, tins, cans and use them either for Arithmetic or in English and so forth. This is what is being done right in the college (Interview: TE., June 6, No.2).*

Another teacher educator analyzed "learning through production" by referring to what she termed as a "two-pronged concept", that is, the "physical prong" as in subject areas such as arts, and the "mental or intellectual prong, where you play around with ideas" like in ETP:

*I look at production as a two pronged concept. I mean, you have the physical prong where you actually do things with your hands and projecting them towards your teaching and what you will do with them. I also look at it from the point of view of the college. When I ask you to go and do research on a certain topic and what have you, then you got to produce an assignment consisting of ideas which are dominant at any particular time. That is also production. So I think both of them are happening. Maybe depending on the nature of your subject you may lay emphasis on one. In a practical subject like arts or science, obviously, the physical prong takes precedence. Whereas in ETP the emphasis will more or less be on the mental or intellectual where you play around with ideas (Interview: TE. July 30, No.9).*

However, in their views, some program participants perceived "production" in relation to student teachers engaging in practical "projects" where they collect data from the local community and produce reports or assignments. As one of them maintained:

> *We conduct a lot of practical exercises. I remember that our students have been going to a lot of areas like Swakopmund and others, getting information, coming back and telling us that this is what we saw there can we do something similar to that. I was very skeptical at the beginning when we had this approach coming up. I had a feeling that we won't be able to do enough if we wait for the learners to be involved. But slowly it has been taken up by teacher educators, and I believe all our students have also taken it up. As you will see when you go to see them in schools during their teaching practice (Interview: TE., June 6, No. 3).*

Another teacher educator also perceived production in terms of "project work" and production of concrete results:

> *Let me just give you an example. In the first term we went on a trip to Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe. Lecturers had a workshop there. And what we did for the two days that we were away was to prepare some tasks for students. So these tasks are sorts of projects or assignments where students had to go out and find information from society. One of the things I did with my students was to go and find out about "The Views of Adults in Katima Mulilo on Formal Education". So they were asked to go and find out how elderly people in the region view formal education. Has it progressed after independence, or has it declined. And what has caused that. They interviewed laymen, people on the street. They also interviewed people in the offices; people like school inspectors, the regional director of education, subject advisors and other education officers. People from other ministries were also interviewed. When they came back we sat down, analyzed the data, reported back and we had discussions on what their findings were (Interview: TE., June 6, No.3).*

When probed as to what purpose the findings were put to, and whether anything was done to change the conditions in the communities where these "projects" were done, a teacher educator elaborated:

> *I think at the beginning, the idea is to just get the information and do nothing about it. But right now with the third year research, which is called action research, one of the key things to be done apart from identifying the problem, collecting data and analyzing data is that the students must give recommendations or resolutions to that particular problem and see how it works. And if it doesn't work it will be in their reports; how far it has worked or failed, and someone who comes again can start from there. One of the students is doing action research on "discipline" at Mavuluma Secondary School (Interview: TE., June 21, No.6).*

Like the colleague above, another teacher educator also elaborated the use to which the findings are put as follows:

> *You pick a problem which exists in that community and then you go out and find out what the problem is all about. The other aim is; if it is a problem in this school or that community - what can they do about it? What can we do to assist these people so that the problem does not persist. I did the same last year on the problem of absenteeism in junior secondary schools here in Katima Mulilo. This was because of the outcry which has come about from each of our schools here saying that schools have now become places where students don't respect teachers, and teacher-student relationship has become deteriorated because of the abolition of corporal punishment (Interview, TE., June 21, No.6).*

As seen in the views above, a majority of the program participants expressed satisfaction and indicated that significant changes have taken place in the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program regarding teacher produced materials. Discernible from the views was a heightened awareness of the legacy of scarcity beholden in the schools and the need to equip and prepare student teachers to work in schools with insufficient resources. As one of them put it; *"when students finally go into the field to teach there will be a big lack of teaching materials in the schools"*. In this case it is very imperative for the program to *"encourage students to think of alternatives; produce teaching material from locally available material, from trash generally"*. However, from the perspective of another teacher educator, in order to produce teaching material, *students need to improvise; they need to go out, pick a few things such as tins, cans, and bottles, and use them as teaching aids either for arithmetic or English"*.

Production was also perceived as a "two-*pronged*" concept. As one respondent elaborated, it consisted of a *"physical prong"* where concrete things are produced such as in arts, and a *"mental or intellectual prong, where you play around with ideas"*. Also apparent in the views of the program participants was a tendency to conceptualize "production" as emanating from some form of "project-work" conducted by student teachers in the local community or in the local schools. As indicated, in this case, the student teacher is expected to identify a problem, and come up with "solutions" or "suggestions" to the community or the school. The respondents also indicated that attempts are also made to get a solution for the problem in order to benefit the community or the school.

The necessity to have student teachers equipped with skills for "production" is obviously one of "self-reliance" in a country so badly stricken by a colonial legacy of scarcity and inappropriate teaching-learning materials. Producing resources from recycled

material is also consistent with principles of environmental education that is promoted by the BETD. Hence the views and beliefs by the program participants regarding production of teaching-learning materials need to be acknowledged as potentially transformative and promoting change from the colonial system to a post-apartheid establishment which seeks to pursue intellectual independence and to produce appropriate local intellectual goods.

However, it should also be pointed out that the generally held perception in the program seem to take "production" too much for granted as the solution in itself. What needs to be pointed out is that "production" can take place, but the processes involved as well as the content produced, or the outcomes, and underlying assumptions can still be within the confines of the technocratic underpinnings and thus non-transformative. Therefore, in order to turn out critical and transformative intellectuals, the program needs to inculcate in the student teachers attitudes which will encourage them to always question the "given" or "received" assumptions and principles underlying production of learning content. For instance, as will be elaborated later, production of resources can be transformative by situating it within the socio-political and economic context instead of merely approaching it as a technical exercise. As student teachers are prepared to become self-reliant, it is also important to make them aware of the political factors which may possibly underpin policies of equitable distribution of educational resources. This is consistent with the view that teachers should not be seen as disinterested technicians who are only charged with the role of producing teaching-learning material.

What also seemed to be lacking in the program were attempts to problematize and critically approach the issue of production and situate it within the broader social, political and economic power. For instance, a critically informed approach to "production" would address questions such as: how does production of teaching materials reflect the distribution of educational resources among schools? which schools and which teachers are told to produce their own teaching materials, and which ones are provided with such materials and why? what is the relationship between the government and business institutions which manufacture teaching aids? While it should not be wrongly assumed that the critical/transformative paradigm is dismissive of teachers producing their own teaching materials, what is to be emphasized is to turn out critical and transformative intellectuals who do not only produce their own teaching material but can also deliberate over policy related matters and ensure the authentic implementation of policies of equity. In the Namibian context, this would mean that apart from being able to produce their own teaching material, teachers are also able to critically interrogate the nature of the implementation of policies of educational equity. For instance, the government policy maintains:

> Equality and equity are of special importance in Namibia. Our country is emerging from a sad history of racial discrimination and inequality. Continued privilege based on race or ethnicity is not acceptable. Unfortunately, it persists. The government's second commitment, therefore, is to provide equitable access to schooling and to its benefits. To achieve that we must overcome the legacy of discrimination and segregation that was built into the school system itself (*Toward Education For All*, MEC, 1993, p.34).

Over and above producing their own teaching material, prospective teachers should also be equipped with skills to critically interrogate the implementation of policies such as the ones outlined above and ensure that the implementation of such policies is mediated by authentic justice and equality. Therefore, while it should be acknowledged as a good idea to have prospective teachers become resourceful and self-reliant, it is equally significant in the process to conscientize them about the politics of teaching material in schools since the issue of teaching material is never a neutral one. Whereas the program tends to approach "production of teaching material" as though it was solely a technical exercise it should also be pointed out that the policy on "production of teaching material" is quite often closely linked to the distribution of economic and political power. In most cases, schools for children who are socially, geographically or economically disadvantaged (such as rural children) tend to be ill-resourced compared to schools for children who come from advantaged geographical, social and economic backgrounds. The presence of these inequalities in the Namibian Education system are acknowledged by the government itself:

> The ministry is however, acutely aware of the following limitations:
>
> (2.1) overcrowding in primary school classrooms
> (2.2) inadequate physical structures, e.g., teaching under trees, grass thatched classrooms, corrugated iron shacks, etc.
> (2.3) primary age children stranded on commercial farms, cattle posts, etc.
> (2.4) marginal groups of children, e.g., the san communities; the handicapped, etc. (*Pedagogy In Transition*, MEC, 1991, p.13).

Therefore, to guard against reproducing these social and educational inequalities, skills for producing teaching-learning materials should be deeply grounded in a critical awareness about policies of equity and justice in the distribution of educational resources. Within the critical/transformative paradigm it is crucial for teachers to situate their instrumental and technical activities such as producing their teaching-learning materials within the moral, ethical and political contexts in which such activities of production are embedded.

Also evident in the data was that apart from the unproblematic and uncritical approach taken towards production of teaching material, the views by the program participants were also dominated by elitist notions of production which went no further than production of intellectual materials like papers (assignment) and reports, while radically excluding manual labor-type of production. What seemed to dominate the program was the *"intellectual prong"* of production, as one respondent termed it, *"where you play around with ideas"*. It should be noted that this emphasis on the "intellectual" type of production, and the de-emphasis of the manual labor oriented type of production, is what has partly led to the present day situation in many South nations whereby food and other agricultural products have failed to keep pace with the population growth despite the availability of much arable land and the presence of numerous educated unemployed.

Although the production of "intellectual material" need to be acknowledged as one of the necessary changes in post-apartheid Namibia, particularly from a historical point of view, it is also important to note that, here again, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program tends to deviate from the ITTP on which it is supposed to be modeled and with which the concept of production originated. As indicated earlier, the ITTP was a program for Namibian primary school teachers offered by SWAPO in exile. In the ITTP, "production" was conceptualized in much broader terms to include not only the production of "intellectual products" but also the "actual production of utilities in the community" and life:

> Education with production implies that schooling should be involved in the actual production of utilities in the community and through that production develop job-creating skills and knowledge, cover some of the costs for schooling and bring school closer to the world of work and production (*The Frontline Teacher*, 1990, p.8).

Therefore, unlike the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program, the ITTP conceptualized "production" in much broader terms to include not only production of intellectual goods but also bringing "school closer to the world of work". It was also indicated in the data that most of the program participants perceived "production" in relation to mini-research "project-works" such as data gathering and writing reports by student teachers. However, the views on data gathering tended to incline towards the technocratic based "expert" model where the student teachers research *on* some schools or communities. It should be emphasized that whereas "research" and generation of knowledge is essential in post-colonial Namibia, the approaches, assumptions and processes involved nevertheless need to be critically scrutinized in terms of their liberative potentials to the participants in those research projects. What is needed is an alternative

action research paradigm where the researcher together with the oppressed (researched) and disadvantaged become active researchers themselves. In this case, they both identify the problem together, and collectively seek for a solution; a process which empowers the researched.

# CHAPTER 6

# FORCES WHICH SHAPED THE PROGRAM

## 6.1. Introduction

Available evidence from both document studies and interview data indicated that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program has been shaped by both internal/national and external forces. As will soon be elaborated, two main internal forces influencing the program were identified. These are: (1) the official political Agenda for National Liberation which is mainly reflected by many of the ideals and philosophical orientations of the program, and, (2) the move from an elite-centered education (which was characteristic of colonial Namibia) to "education for all" in post-apartheid Namibia. These internal/national forces shaping or influencing the program need to be read within the context that Namibia has lately gained independence (1990) and a process of rehabilitating and liberating the nation is underway by the new government.

Apart from the internal/national forces, the program is nevertheless influenced by external forces mainly through international organizations, foreign universities and external donor agencies. Various international organizations, donor agencies and foreign universities have been involved with the program. Some of these include: UNICEF, UNESCO, Florida State University, Canadian International Development agency (CIDA) through Alberta University, Center for International Education and Development (CIED) and the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) through Umeá university and the Teacher Education Reform Project for Namibia (TERP). Whereas most of the organizations have engaged in short term activities, the TERP project seem to have held an upper hand in the program on a long-term basis. It is for this reason that only TERP activities will be discussed regarding the external forces shaping the program.

## 6.2. The Official Political Agenda for National Liberation

As already stated, one of the internal/national forces shaping the Basic Education Teacher program is the official political agenda for national liberation. The national reform process, which is the official political agenda for national liberation, following independence constitute the context within which the Basic Education Teacher Diploma

Program has been designed and implemented. As one of the program participants clearly contextualized the program:

> *The BETD as I see it would never have been implemented during the time of apartheid. This is because all the ideas, the implementation, and the changes of the whole society into a free society gives the context where these concepts fit into the picture: learner-centered approach; democracy; close relation between the student teachers and teacher educators. I mean, the whole philosophy behind the BETD. When I look back at the BETD and what we have been doing here in Katima Mulilo, I think that the BETD is part of the transformation of the people in the teaching occupation and school system and the whole society (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

According to another program participant, the Basic Education teacher program was not only seen as mirroring the new Namibia, but also that it was a kind of socialization into the new society:

> *I think the way the program is run, the decision making process, for example; information channels, and all these things which are sort of the hidden curriculum, the culture within the college is in itself important for the education of students. Not just what is said following the subject area curriculum but the whole atmosphere at the college. And this is a political question. The culture itself is political because the college is a kind of society which we together feel could be a good practical society for Namibia. Therefore, I look at the BETD as a kind of socialization into the new society (Interview: TE., June 9, No.4).*

However, another program participant indicated that the Basic Education teacher program originated with the 1989 Lusaka conference which was the climax time in SWAPO's plans for the new Namibia:

> *I should say that the implementation of the BETD program follows on from a conference which was held in Lusaka in 1989 on teacher education; the Lusaka Conference. The conference looked at teacher education in Namibia at the time, the type of teaching program which were in place. Some resolutions were taken. One of them was the reform of teacher education. This decision of reforming teacher education was later translated into the BETD program. The program did not actually start in 1992. But it goes back to 1989 (Interview: A., June 7, No.7).*

Therefore, as most of the respondent indicated, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program was largely shaped or influenced by the broader socio-political changes taking place as part of the liberation of the Namibian people with SWAPO coming to power in 1990. As one of the program participants indicated, as he saw it, *"the program would never have been implemented during the time of apartheid"*. Furthermore, the pedagogical

strategies in the program such as; *"learner-centered pedagogy", "democracy", "close relation between student teachers and teacher educators"*, and *"the whole philosophy of the program"* are part and parcel of the whole context of transformation from a colonial Namibia to a free Namibia. From the perspective of another program participant, the *"hidden curriculum"* of the program; the decision making process, information channels, the *political culture* and *the whole atmosphere* in the college were not only seen as a reflection of the new society, but also as a kind of socialization of the people into the new society. Another program participant also contextualized the program by referring to the *"1989 Lusaka Conference"* on teacher education which was also part of SWAPO's plans for the new Namibia. Therefore, the program need to be seen within the context of the fact that Namibia has achieved independence and is abolishing the effects of apartheid. However, like the program participants above, Andersson et al also put the program into the context of Namibia's independence and liberation as follows:

> The need to reform is to a large extent due to the failures of the earlier system to meet even its own standards. No strong political interest was demonstrated, nor any far-reaching initiatives taken during the South African rule to deal with the problems of schooling and teacher education. *It might be stated that Namibia's independence was a pre-requisite to make changes possible to implement* (italics, mine) (Andersson et al, 1991, p.5).

Like the interview data presented above, Andersson et al, also concur that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program was largely influenced or shaped by the context of independence, attempts at abolishing the effects of the apartheid system, and the fact that Namibia has adopted a "democratic constitution". Various features of the program such as democratic learner-centredness (Broad Curriculum, MEC, 1994); student participation and involvement in decision making processes, and the general aim of the program expressed as "participatory, democratic and empowering teacher education for Basic Education teachers" (Reform Forum, 1995, p.1) do not only reflect but are also entrenched in the nation's newly adopted political culture underpinned by ideals of "solidarity, democracy, freedom and justice" (*Constitution Of The Republic Of Namibia*, March 21, 1990). As was clearly indicated by the program participants, the philosophical underpinnings of the program are supposed to be rooted in these political ideals of independent Namibia.

It is also important to locate the liberation agenda of the Basic Education teacher program within the fact that the program was modeled on the Integrated Teacher Program (ITTP) for Namibia. The ITTP was a three year program for primary school teachers organized by SWAPO in 1986 at a Namibian Education Center in Kwanza-Sul, Angola. The program, offered in exile at a refugee center, was offered by SWAPO under the

support from the Department of Education, Umeá University and financed by SIDA (*The Frontline Teacher*, 1990; Dahlström, 1994; Cohen, 1994). One of the program participant (also a TERP official) who had been involved with the ITTP (in exile) and later with the BETD elaborated the relationship between the two as follows:

> *The ITTP program, which was started in Kwanza-Sul, was a kind of a base for the BETD. It gave Nahas [former secretary of Education, SWAPO, now Minister for Higher Education] and other people to look at what these ideals meant in reality. The ITTP was already developed and implemented, and it was possible to see at least in one way how learner-centered approach, how learning through production, and how all these and many other concepts were put in practice (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

Regarding the relationship between the BETD and the ITTP, Cohen also maintains that

> since the program [the ITTP] focused on improving the quality of a small number of teachers from Kwanza-Sul, its contribution to the overall teacher output was not great. *Nevertheless, it provided a model for an alternative form of teacher training in independent Namibia* (italics, mine) (Cohen, 1994, p.243).

Similarly, other sources such Mbuende (1987, p.68) and *The Frontline Teacher* (September, 1990, p.11) also indicate that the ITTP was intended to serve as a model for the future Basic Education Teacher Diploma program. An examination of curricula documents for the BETD (e.g. the Broad Curriculum document) largely reflect the pedagogical and philosophical orientations of the ITTP such as those of democratic learner-centredness, learning through production, reflective teaching-learning, collaborative teaching and learning. However, what is very crucial in this ITTP and BETD relationship is the political agenda for liberation which underpinned the ITTP as a program offered by a liberation movement in exile. The Basic Education Teacher Diploma program draws its political agenda for liberation not only from the official SWAPO government policies but also from its predecessor, the ITTP.

Whether or not the official political agenda for liberation underpinning the program is indeed liberative needs to be evaluated within the context of findings presented in the preceding sections on the views and experiences of program participants regarding the program's aims and pedagogical strategies in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. The analysis of the nature of this political agenda also need to be seen within the context of perspectives from the critical/transformative paradigm suggested throughout the discussions on data in the whole study. Also, whether or not the political agenda of the program is significantly liberative is an issue that needs to be analyzed within the context of what was in place

before. Whereas the entire presentation throughout the report might attribute weaknesses and strengths to the political agenda for national liberation as reflected in the program, particular positive cases can be cited. For instance, in Chapter 5, a majority of the respondents indicated that the program promoted "democratic" participation and involvement by student teachers in various aspects ranging from the teaching-learning situation to the revision or designing of the curriculum.

One of the program participants illuminated the effect of the political agenda as follows:

> *Involvement and participation in the program are reasonably high, especially when compared to what there was. I mean, we have had now a system where have had staff-meetings for a long time. People are now used to making their voices heard and to be listened to. Even compared to other colleges the management group at Caprivi college has now been established for a very long time. It is not just the rector [college head]; it is the rector within the management team where the most important decisions are made. And the staff is always involved in policy making at workshops. For example, when we went to Victoria Falls for three days to have a workshop to hammer our policy within different areas. At least most of the lecturers are involved (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

The political agenda of the program also needs to be analyzed within the general consensus among student teachers regarding the "democratic" nature of the program. For instance, the following comments were largely shared among the student body:

> *The learning process itself is democratic. This is mainly because of the reason that once everybody is in class, he or she must feel free to participate. The situation is very democratic. Everybody, everyone is involved in the process .... (Interview: ST., June 9, No.5).*

> *I think the BETD is a very democratic program, because you will find that students are involved in the designing of the curriculum and extracting some of the ideas which the syllabus reflect and adding some of the things which they feel are of most importance to the nation .....(Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

> *The BETD is a democratic kind of a course in the sense that we as the learners are totally in the lesson. We have got the right to agree or to disagree where necessary. But we do so in a constructive manner. When the teacher is teaching we can't just agree with what the teacher is telling us. We can go to the chalkboard and the teacher stands aside and we can do some elaborations on the point to explain why we say no ... (Interview: ST., July 18, No.8).*

> *I think the learning process itself is democratic since everyone in class is made to feel free. The situation is democratic and it therefore allows everybody to be involved in the process...(Interview: June 9, No.5).*

*I think the BETD is a democratic program because it gives chance to students to disagree where necessary with the teacher. So if we compare with the past we find that it was only the teacher who would come up with some things which are said to be hints....(Interview: ST., June 6, No.2).*

However, on the issue of whether the colleges were democratic or not, *The National Evaluation of the BETD* cited earlier also indicated that among the student teachers, the situation at the colleges were apprehended differently. Some students believed that the colleges are democratic institutions while others believed they were not (Dahlström & Frykholm, 1994, p.17). However, for this study no significant deviations were observed as most of the student teachers tended to express satisfaction and indicated that the program was democratic. What remains to be analyzed is the nature of the generally perceived "democracy" regarding its authenticity and emancipatory aspects.

### 6.3. The Move from Elite Education to Education For All

Another internal/national force shaping or influencing the Basic Education Teacher program was the move from Elite Education (characteristic of the colonial system) to free and compulsory Basic Education For All in independent Namibia. As will soon be shown, the impact by this move or "shift" on the program was mainly felt in terms of the increased "teacher-demand" following the adoption of a policy of free and compulsory Basic Education For All. As widely documented, schooling in Namibia was once a privilege of the few (Toward Education For All, MEC, 1993; Cohen, 1994). The achievement of political independence on March 21, 1990 made it possible for Namibia to move from "elite" type of education system which has long excluded majorities of Namibian populations to a system of "education for all" with the express intention to provide education on a massive scale to the long disadvantaged people of Namibia.

Immediately after independence, a policy of "Compulsory Basic Education For All" was adopted and enshrined in the nation's constitution. This new policy of "Education For All" is clearly summed in Article 20 of the country's constitution as follows:

> (1) All persons shall have the right to education.
>
> (2) Primary education shall be compulsory and the state shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining state schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.

> (3) Children shall not be allowed to leave school until they have completed their primary education or have attained the age of sixteen (16) years, whichever is the sooner, save in so far as this may be authorized by act of parliament on grounds of health or other considerations pertaining to public interests (*The Constitution Of The Republic Of Namibia, Government Gazzet*, 21 March 1990, pp. 12-13).

As both the constitution cited above and the government policy document *Toward Education For All* (MEC, 1993) indicate, not only would Basic Education be "compulsory and free" but that this target be attained by the year 2000. In order to realize the goal of "Education For All", several changes were effected in the education system. One of these major changes was the immediate elimination of the examination system based on a repeating system which characterized the colonial system. Widely documented, the examination system in the colonial establishment was mainly a selective and exclusive type with too many recall tests and examinations designed to check on what students did not know. For example, Bethel (1990, p.8) notes:

> This emphasis on failure is endemic throughout the education system with students expecting to fail, teachers expecting them to fail, and Examiners setting papers to ensure that large numbers do fail.

Similarly, Andersson, et al, also observe:

> In the present system, approximately 1/3 of all pupils are repeaters. At each grade level at an average some 5-6% of children present at the beginning of each school year are absent at the end of the year (Andersson, et al, 1991, p.8).

Therefore, the examination system was the most powerful selection device used to perpetuate the colonial elite type education system. As there was no need in post-apartheid Namibia to use an examination selective device in order to determine who moves from one grade to the next, a policy of "automatic promotion" together with a comprehensive continuos assessment system was adopted to facilitate the move towards education for all. Thus these policy changes which entailed a quantitative swelling of the school system nevertheless commanded a corresponding swelling of teacher education (Basic Education) to service the new need for more teachers. The impacts of these changes were clearly summed up as follows:

> It is obvious that decisions taken concerning eventual abolition of the repeating system, measures taken to reduce drop-out rates, and eventual introduction of a common school system for 7-10 years for all children in

> Namibia will influence the number of teachers needed (Andersson, et. al., 1991, p.8).

Therefore, as a result of these policy changes the designing of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program was, by and large, confronted by both quantitative (demand and supply) and qualitative questions. An examination of program documents, such as the Andersson et al, (1991), report prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Education, reveals concerns by designers of the BETD regarding questions such as how many teachers are produced currently, how many teachers are needed in the future, what is the quality of teachers produced currently, and how can teacher quality be improved?.

Therefore, before launching the reforms into a new BETD program that would address the needs of the new policy of "education for all", a quantitative assessment of the status quo of teacher production at independence was an essential prerequisite. Because teacher education, particularly for the black majorities, was not a priority of the apartheid regime, the status quo of teacher education at independence was found to be undesirable. Teacher education for an elitist system was radically incompatible with that of a system of education for all. According to the 1990 statistics, a great discrepancy was noted between the 13.300 teacher positions available in Namibia with only a yearly net increase of trained teachers at approximately 3-500 teachers. Drawing on various official documents, figures from institutions concerned, and figures from consultancy reports the status quo of pre-independence teacher production between 1986-1990 is illustrated in Table 3 on page 146.

As already stated, the colonial status quo of teacher production illustrated in Table 3 above was only compatible with the elitist educational system of the apartheid regime and was thus incompatible with the teacher needs as required by education for all in independent Namibia. Consequently, in order to meet the new demands at basic education levels, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program for Namibia was planned to produce 900-1.130 new teachers from 1996 onwards, if six colleges are used and if the enrollment figures shown in Table 4 (page 147) were kept.

**Table 3**
**Number of teacher candidates passing final examinations at different institutions of teacher education in Namibia between 1986-1989.**

| Institution | Exam | 1986 | 1987 | 1988 | 1989 | 1990 | Sum |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ongwediva | ECP | 292 | 178 | 108 | 27 | 47 | 652 |
| Rundu | ECP | 38 | 56 | 34 | 7 | 1 | 136 |
| Katima Mulilo | ECP | 41 | 47 | 44 | 38 | 44 | 214 |
| Khomasdal | Ed/HED | 45 | 29 | 26 | 14 | --- | 114 |
| Windhoek | DIPL. | 51 | 44 | 45 | 37 | 27 | 204 |
| Academy | HED Sec. | 13 | 10 | 26 | 51 | 25 | 125 |
| | BEd. | 0 | 13 | 14 | 22 | 24 | 73 |
| | B.Prim Ed. | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 10 |
| | HED Prim. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 9 |
| | ED Prim. | 6 | 12 | 10 | 19 | 6 | 53 |
| | HED Post. Gr. | 2 | 12 | 17 | 32 | 29 | 92 |
| | HED Tech. | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 5 |
| | HPE Cert. | 0 | 0 | 12 | 19 | 2 | 33 |
| | Sec. Cert. | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| | HED Post. DIPL. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| | C.O.S.T. ECP | --- | 42 | 17 | 1 | -- | 60 |
| | Distance ECP | --- | 8 | 71 | 22 | 43 | 144 |
| | HPE Cert. | --- | --- | --- | --- | 19 | 19 |
| **Subtotal LP + UP appr.** | | **[illegible]5** | **418** | **371** | **193** | **196** | **1,653** |
| **SUM TOTAL** | | **490** | **453** | **429** | **301** | **280** | **1,953** |

*Source: Andersson, et. al. (Feb. 1991) Teacher Education Reform For Namibia: Report Submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport.*

**Table 4**
**Number of new teacher candidates enrolled (1993-1996) and number of teachers to be produced by the BETD program (1995-1998) if six colleges are used**

| College | Number of new students enrolled at the beginning of year | | | | Number of students certified at the end of year | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 | 1998 |
| **Katima** | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| **Keetmans*** | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 |
| **Ongwediva** | 700 | 800 | 800 | 800 | 500 | 575 | 575 | 575 |
| **Ovambo region*** | --- | 300 | 300 | 300 | --- | 215 | 215 | 215 |
| **Rundu** | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 |
| **Windhoek** | 400 | 400 | 400 | 400 | 280 | 280 | 280 | 280 |
| **Sum Total** | 1,490 | 1,790 | 1,790 | 1,790 | 980 | 1,270 | 1,270 | 1,270 |

*Source: Andersson, et. al. (Feb., 1991). Teacher Education Reform for Namibia: Report Submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth, and Sport.*

*Key: * Proposed Colleges*

It is therefore most evident that a quantitative expansion of schooling also meant a quantitative expansion of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program. Which in turn also implied a consideration by the policy makers of the physical and professional capacities to make the goal realizable. Consequently, the entrance requirement to the program was formulated in terms of maturity and suitability of the teacher candidate, and a grade 12 education with IGCSE passes, or the equivalent. In terms of physical capacities to accommodate more teacher candidates, two more colleges were even proposed in addition to the existing four, i.e., one in the Keetmans area, and another one in the Ovamboland area.

Also, in order to allow most of the candidates to survive through the program, and to satisfy the needs of compulsory Basic Education for All, a system of positive continuos assessment and counseling was infused in the program. Thus the estimated production of teachers presented in table 4, above, should be seen within the context envisaged, where:

> The program should be monitored and carried out in such a way that approximately 85% of the students enrolled in a given year continue to second year, and that 85% of the students that begin the second year studies remain and complete their education in the third year and receive certificates. This sets the ambition of a total survival and pass rate (or rate of productivity) of the program at approximately 70%. Such a figure is somewhat lower than many teacher education system institutions in general but higher than in present day Namibia (Andersson, et al., 1991, p.51).

However, according to the first intake into the program (the 1993 intake) there were 3365 applicants for the 420 places available at the four colleges of teacher education. After the screening and interviews, the number of students beginning the program at the four Colleges in February of 1993 was 410. The 1993 intake was illustrated as follows:

**Table 5**
**Number of BETD students beginning the program in February of 1993**

| College | Total intake/College |
|---|---|
| Caprivi CE | 55 |
| Rundu CE | 28 |
| Ongwediva CE | 211 |
| Windhoek CE | 116 |
| **Total** | **410** |

*Source: adapted from Dahlström, L. The First BETD Students In Namibia. Reform Forum, April 1994, p.18.*

Along with the quantitative expansion were qualitative considerations of teachers produced in order to achieve "quality education for all". As Gerwel (1995) observes, the introduction of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program is one indication that the Ministry of Education was committed to the improvement of quality of education, and specifically with the education of teachers themselves. The move to improve teacher quality was also contingent upon the fact that the quality of teachers produced in the pre-independence era was undesirable. Therefore, in order to improve teacher quality for the delivery of quality basic education for All, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program aims to:

> ..meet the needs for professionalization of the teacher - a person whose commitment and sense of responsibility, knowledge and skills will raise the quality of education in the entire country. The program will be a unified

> study for all teachers in Basic Education, combining a common core foundation for all, with opportunities for specialization in relation to phases of schooling and subject areas. It will strike a balance between professional insight and skills, and subject knowledge. There will be consistence between the aims and objectives and the structure and implementation of the program. Various types of exposure to the classroom will be a closely integrated aspect of the study. The student's actual achievement and competencies will be assessed in a variety of ways, giving an all-round picture of their development (*Broad Curriculum for the Basic Education Teacher Diploma* 1994, p.2).

Whereas this move from "elite" education which sought to eliminate majorities of Namibians to a majority inclusive "education for all" must be acknowledged as a positive move taken by the new government, I would like to argue that the prospective basic education teachers need to be empowered to critically analyze the policy in terms of its underlying assumptions, processes, goals and outcomes in order to make the policy beneficial to all Namibians. As can be seen from Chapter 1 of this study, the policy of "Compulsory Basic Education For All" has long been adopted by many South countries. However, a review of literature emanating from research done in these countries tend to indicate that while far from producing the intended outcomes, the model of education for all, as implemented within the mainstream modernization paradigm, has yielded disappointing results. In particular, because of the wrong assumptions together with elite selfish-interests in some cases, education as a basic human right for all has turned out to the contrary. Instead, it has favored children of the rich over those of the poor (Ellwood, 1993; Simmons, 1980). Equally true, despite exhortations of education as a newly discovered social equalizer, reality has tended to prove to the contrary. Instead, education has been actively instrumental in the creation and perpetuation of social inequalities (Simmons, 1980; Toh, 1978a; Bacchus, 1981).

As was indicated in Chapter 1, the emphasis by the modernization paradigm on the modern sector "expertise" as the spear-head for economic take-off into modernity has often proved to erode the human-rights justification of compulsory basic education for all by skewing and concentrating the scarce resources to post-basic and higher levels of education which benefit the rich and are largely inaccessible to the poor majorities. Seen in this context, it has even become proper to argue that the moves by these countries towards education for all, following independence, have been short lived as they have subsequently relapsed into the usual colonial trend of elite education again. It was also mentioned in Chapter 1 that the tendency to emphasize the modern sector oriented type of development has also rendered the model of education for all unproductive as its massive graduates have been rendered irrelevant not only to the modern sector life they have been promised but also

the rural life from where they have been uprooted. It is important to note that the "Education for All" campaign promoted by the World Bank, UNESCO and governments do stress "basic education levels" but the problem lies in the discrepancy between education and society. Most governments do not pay attention to the insightful question posed by Mark Bray (1986) that *If Universal Primary Education Is The Answer, What is The Question?* Consequently, where this question has not been carefully treated, formerly marginalized groups have been allowed access to massive education at basic levels, yet this education has remained irrelevant to their local settings and needs. It is therefore apparent that issues related to relevance of basic education levels need to be given careful consideration.

Therefore whereas these findings by various scholars on the model of education for all may not necessarily be applicable to Namibia their implications cannot be discounted since the model has tended to be universally applied by most South governments, including Namibia. This universal model has also been the preference of donor agencies funding these governments. Therefore, in order for the teacher to "maximize the new basic education for the learner", as the Broad Curriculum (MEC, p.3) for the program maintains, the Namibian basic education teacher will have to actively participate by questioning, defining and shaping the model of "education for all" in a Namibian context. The basic education teacher will have to critically examine the genuineness of the government's commitment, as outlined in the constitution, "to provide reasonable facilities to render effective basic education for every resident within Namibia". In this regard, teachers need to engage in critical policy debates, take action in collaboration with other groups and mediate for "education for all" within the broader goals of access, equity, quality, and democracy. It should be noted that the BETD is directly linked to the policy of "basic education for all" as it is the only program in Namibia which currently produces teachers targeted for basic education levels and implementation of the policy.

Therefore, conditions in Namibian Basic Education schools such as overcrowding in primary classrooms, inadequate physical structures such as teaching under trees, grass thatched classrooms, corrugated iron shacks, and marginalization of the San children, (MEC, 1991, p.13), most of which are colonial legacies, will serve as some of the concrete conditions which teachers can use to see a policy of education for all based on access, equity, quality and democracy designed for Namibia.

## 6.4. External Influence In the Program

As stated already, apart from internal/national forces, the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program is also shaped by external forces. Although various agencies and organizations have been involved with the program the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) through the University of Umeá and the Teacher Education Reform Project for Namibia (TERP) seem to have had an upper hand. Data on this section was drawn mainly from document sources, and one reform facilitator (TERP official) who participated in the study. It is important to note that since TERP is centralized at NIED most of its officials are found there and for Colleges such as Caprivi College there is only one college based official. However, among the external agencies involved, attention was focused on TERP not only for its upper hand in the program but also for the reason that the current BETD program is a product of a research study conducted in Namibia by Swedish expatriates on behalf of TERP and the Ministry of education. In the 1992 Annual SIDA Sector Review Swedish involvement in the Namibia basic teacher education is described as follows:

> Swedish support to teacher education in Namibia continues to be channeled through the University of Umeá. The Teacher Education Reform Program (TERP) is the successor of ITTP. TERP is the major foreign implementation agency, though other agencies such as Florida State University (FSU), the Alberta University, UNICEF and UNESCO are also involved. TERP project is involved in assisting the Ministry in both pre-service and in-service teacher education. The support includes: (1) advisory to the National Institute of Educational Development (NIED); (2) temporary support by short term consultants in the development of curricula and syllabi for a new pre-service teacher education program; (3) a development program for college staff, and (4) financial support to seminars and workshops at local, regional and national level (*Annual SIDA Sector Review*, 9-20 November, 1992, p.18).

Therefore, as the Sector Review clearly indicates, activities of the TERP project, which is the major foreign implementation agency, include advisory services to NIED; temporary consultancy in curricula and syllabi development; professional development of College staff; and financial support for seminars and workshops at local and national levels. It is also important to note that TERP is closely linked to NIED. NIED is the national central nerve for curriculum development in Namibia and its relation to Teacher Education Colleges is mainly one of monitoring and supervising (facilitating) the implementation of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma Program. While not a recent

arrangement, SIDA involvement in Namibian Teacher Education is traced back to the activities of the liberation movement which led Namibia to independence:

> The co-operation between Sweden and the Namibian people through the liberation movement, SWAPO, goes back to the 60's. It was in 1984 that this cooperation was extended into the field of teacher training, including Swedish teacher trainers working together with SWAPO teachers at Namibian Education Center, Kwanza-Sul in Angola (*The Frontline Teacher*, 1990, p.7)

As was mentioned earlier in the chapter, SIDA was involved with the Integrated Teacher Training Program (ITTP) which was offered by SWAPO in exile (Kwanza-Sul, Angola) for exiled Namibian primary school teachers. Not only has the ITTP formed the basis for the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program now offered at Namibia's teacher education Colleges, but some of the Swedish teacher trainers and project workers who worked with SWAPO in exile have continued their activities into TERP and the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program in post-apartheid Namibia. As already alluded to, the extent of this Swedish involvement in the program needs to be seen in the context that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma program is an outcome of a research conducted by Swedish expatriates on behalf of TERP and the Ministry of Education. As one Ministry policy document maintains:

> An in-depth investigation of the pre-service teacher training programs is called for. Assistance has been sought from the Swedish government for this purpose. A team of teacher education specialists [Swedish teacher education specialists] are in the country to study the teacher pre-service programs. Their findings will form a basis for the reform of pre-service teacher training programs (*Change With Continuity*, MECYS, 1990, p.28).

The Andersson, et al, (1991) report - *Teacher Education Reform In Namibia: Report Submitted to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport* - was not only the outcome of the research on Namibian teacher education but also outlined proposals upon which the new Basic Education Teacher Diploma program was formulated.

At the College level, TERP involvement is extended not only through workshops and short stay visits but also through a system of Reform Facilitators (RF) based at the colleges. These reform facilitators are attached to the Colleges through Education Development Units (EDU) found at every College. Reform Facilitators, most of whom are recruited internationally and responsible to TERP, are mainly appointed in advisory capacities to perform duties and functions such as: (1) participate in national and regional activities as agreed by the chief: Education (Teacher Education) at NIED; (2) give advice

and support to the Colleges in the implementation of the BETD, and participate in the continuos development of curricula, syllabi and course material; (3) co-ordinate the implementation process of the BETD by assisting the Colleges as a team, drawing on the expertise of individual team members; (4) assist in the organization of the School Based part of the training program; (5) assist in the development and implementation of a training program for "associate teachers"; (6) assist the Colleges in staff development program; (7) carry duties in close cooperation with the College staff and the regional offices; (8) develop an individual program for and together with the counterparts (Terms and Reference for Advisors, MEC, 1992). As already indicated, Reform Facilitators attached to Colleges operate through Education Development Units. The EDU's are mainly charged with facilitating the implementation of the program and the professional development of the staff members.

However, in analyzing the paradigmatic underpinnings of the SIDA (TERP) involvement in the program it is important to first and foremost consider the fact that unlike some of the agencies or organizations involved with the program, SIDA involvement dates back to the liberation struggle for Namibia with SWAPO in exile. This particular aspect could be read as indicative of SIDA's interests in the liberation of Namibia both from colonial occupation and the legacy of poverty. However, as this research did not specifically go in to study the TERP project available data cannot illuminate whether or not like other mainstream aid programs TERP is underpinned by SIDA or Swedish hidden political and economic agenda. Future research can help shed more light on the issue. Nevertheless, it can possibly be argued that by virtue of their advisory capacities and their financial power, TERP exerts enormous control regarding policy and direction of the BETD program.

Also, unlike other development projects within the mainstream modernization paradigm where "specialists" or "experts" are confined to the capital cities of the "beneficiary countries" and only take cursory tours to the actual poverty sites or locale of the program, it is quite clear that on the contrary, an extensive net-work of expatriates is built into TERP activities through Reform Facilitators and EDUs operating at grass-roots level. Whereas this "grass-roots" network may be seen as potentially liberative and promoting grass-roots involvement in TERP activities, at the same time such an extension may serve to further strengthen foreign influence which perpetuates College dependence on external advisors and facilitators. The position of TERP in this regard also needs to be seen within the context of the findings by the Marope/Noonan study cited earlier:

> The project shows a high density of expatriates. This leads to question in many quarters about the extent to which Namibia is in charge of its own

> educational reform. It has a negative influence on the sense of *ownership* of the reform and *motivation* to support change. The perception of high density expatriates is magnified by the absence of systematic use of *counterparts* (emphasis, original) (Marope & Noonan, 1995, p.vii).

Therefore, as already stated, much as the current use of expatriates in the program permeates to the ground level through a system of College based Reform Facilitators or "advisory experts" and can be seen as a positive deviation from the mainstream centralization of "experts" in capital cities of South countries. Nevertheless, the arrangement still needs to be critically examined in terms of the assumptions, processes and outcomes and whether or not "counterparts" are systematically utilized and empowered in the process to assume responsibility and possibly take over from the foreign expatriates. As shown in observation data on the processes of interaction between reform facilitators and College counter-parts, there appears to be a problem regarding having permanent counterparts. For example, as from 1993 when the program was started, it appears that Caprivi College has changed counterparts at least three times. During the course of this research, the reform facilitator based at Caprivi College returned to his home country. However, that reform facilitator was replaced by an internationally recruited expert despite the presence of an experienced local counter-part. It is also necessary in studies on TERP activities to focus on an examination of the extent to which the project promotes Namibian "independence" or foreign "dependence" regarding teacher education. However, the observations by the Marope/Noonan study should also be seen within what Samoff describes as high density expatriate in the Namibian education system:

> Surely, no other country marched toward its independence equipped (or perhaps encumbered ?) with a brief case bulging with expert studies of its education system!... In addition to Namibia's own searching reflections on the purposes, problems, and prospects of education, by March of 1990 its schools, teachers, and education administration had attracted the attention of nearly every national and international agency involved in African Education (Samoff, 1992, p.1).

Whether or not the TERP project, as the major foreign implementation body, promotes educational independence through a liberative systematic use of "counterparts" also needs to be placed within the situation described by some program participants regarding the processes involved in program design. For instance, one program participant saw the involvement by ordinary people (such as College staff) as mere confirmation of what had already been designed by the experts:

*I must say that it was a kind of confirming what has already been designed. A program was already designed by experts. This program was then developed and brought down to the people to come and look at it; make contributions and perhaps get to know whether people are interested in the program or not (Interview: A., June 6, No.2).*

Therefore, the TERP project needs to be critically located within this possible "top-down" approach as opposed to the "bottom-up" approach in order to examine its underlying assumptions in relation to Namibian teacher education. This is more so particularly when taking into account some program participants whose views might justify this "top-down" approach":

*I think it is natural when it comes to policy decisions that it must be done by the politicians, and that was what happened in the BETD that politicians took active role in forming the program. They also got further ideas when they were looking into teacher education in the neighboring countries who have been free longer than Namibia. They traveled to neighboring countries such as Zimbabwe and Botswana (Interview: RF., May 20, No.1).*

Though the program participant just cited above perceived it as *"natural when it comes to policy decision that it must be done by politicians"* , another program participant alluded the issue to technical geographical problems of distance and location:

*You can always see that the central area of the country close to the capital; close to the ministry will be more involved in curriculum work than the periphery, and Caprivi is a periphery. I mean, it is not easy to join the group in Windhoek when they need to meet regularly (Interview: TE., June 9, No.4).*

When asked about the involvement of village people (ordinary people) in the designing of the program, another program participant also alluded to this "top-down approach":

*No I did not see such people. I think we will be fortunate if we happen to have retired teachers. These are people we could rely upon rather than someone from the village who has never been to school, or who has never been a teacher. So I believe the people who are retiring now need to be involved somehow. These are the people I would recommend to be involved in these activities (Interview: TE., June 9, No. 4).*

While discounting ordinary villagers, this program participants rather recommended retired teachers, the assumption being that only "educated" people can make contribution to teacher education program design or formulation. When probed further whether these villagers

could not be used as resources regarding their experiences with the teachers in their schools, the respondent admitted, though with reservations:

> *I would say they are a good resource. But the problem is in identifying them. How do you know them. Maybe if we extend invitations to regional offices and regional offices could come up with the names of such people then it could be okay. But identification is important in this case. How do you know that this person will have the sort of information (Interview: TE., June 9, No.4).*

Therefore, TERP activities need to be critically examined in the context of the issues raised and discerned in the quotations above. Particularly, the project needs to be examined in terms of the extent to which it might possibly be inclined towards the "expert-based" model, in which case program design tends to be *"a kind of confirming what has already been designed"* and brought down to the Colleges for confirmation. While the top-down approach may not be standard practice for TERP, a closer look is also needed into the view reflected by one program participant that *"it is natural when it comes to policy decisions that it must be done by politicians"* . Other views in the above quotations tend to justify the position by resorting to geographical locations and distance in which case Caprivi is a periphery and cannot participate in policy activities at the center (Windhoek). However, this geographical explanation for lack of participation in policy formulation at central level (Windhoek) by those who live in the periphery (Caprivi College) cannot be accepted as the view contradicts the policy outlined in the Ministry's "Education Reform Directive". For instance, in this policy document it is maintained that in order to arrive at rational policy statement every effort should be made to collect necessary data and information as well as to solicit public participation in policy formulation (*Change With Continuity: Education Reform Directive*, MECYS, 1990, p.2). It would also be important to examine whether this policy is being implemented or not.

However, to some program participants the potential justification and legitimation of the "expert-model" is manifested by views such as discounting the possible contributions which villagers (or the ordinary community members) may contribute to teacher education. Also, the belief that only retired teachers in such communities may be used tend to legitimate the expert approach with the assumption that the "uneducated" community members do not have valuable knowledge. Therefore, as the implementation body with the upper hand in the program, TERP needs to be critically examined in terms of its underlying assumptions, processes in program design and implementation and whether these are emancipatory and liberative or not.

# CHAPTER 7

# SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1. Summary of Major Findings

As a Namibian teacher educator in one of the Colleges of Education I was prompted to conduct this study by my own interest in issues of relevance and effectiveness of the BETD in improving the quality of basic education in Namibia within the broader framework of post-apartheid societal transformation. Drawing on my experiences in the traditional curriculum to which I had been oriented during my professional education and work as a teacher educator, I endeavored to investigate possibilities and limits of the BETD in promoting quality and relevant teacher education in Namibia for basic levels. In this context, the major objective of my study was to critically explore and evaluate the paradigmatic orientation of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma for post-apartheid Namibia. In order to pursue the objective, the study focused on (i) aims and objectives in the program, (ii) curricula and pedagogical issues in the program, and (iii) forces which shaped the program. Qualitative research methodology was used to investigate these aspects of the BETD program. Major findings drawn from the data are as follows:

### 7.1.1. Views on the Aims and Objectives of the program

#### Professionalization in the program

Data on the views, beliefs and experiences of program participants indicated that a majority of the respondents conceptualized "professionalization" in terms of "professional attributes" generally identified as a sense of responsibility, a good sense of time (punctuality), the need to prepare thoroughly for work; ability to do one's best in work; diligence, commitment, devotion and dedication to work, good attitude and behavior. It was also indicated that although these "professional attributes" should be regarded as positive achievements by the program in terms of the history undergone by Namibia teacher education, and in terms of the current reforms and aspirations of the nation as expressed in various reform documents, the professional attributes are nevertheless still insufficient in various aspects.

Particularly, the widely manifested uncritical and unproblematized adoption of these professional attributes together with the strong identification by the program participants with the goals of the workplace is typical of the technocratic/modernization paradigm. Hence both the modernization paradigm and the socio-political and economic structures into which the paradigm is deeply rooted thrive on reproduction of an uncritical and politically acquiescent citizenry. As was indicated in the foregoing discussion, not only is the uncritical adoption of the identified professional attributes contradictory to national aspirations for producing transformative teachers. Such an adoption may possibly stifle the prospective teachers' critical abilities to challenge and question their own positions and locations in the post-apartheid educational system.

Data also evidently indicated that the BETD program is insensitive to potential problems related to professionalization such de-professionalization, proletarianization, external control and intensification of the teacher's work. The failure to promote critical abilities among the prospective teachers may also render them incapable of challenging and questioning the moral and ethical underpinnings of the goals of teaching and education in the present context of post-apartheid development efforts.

### Teacher Competence and Expertise: Roles and Functions of the Teacher

In this regard, available data indicated a general recurrence of the "roles and functions" of the teacher such as making the environment conducive for learning, knowing basic teaching skills, communication skills, ability to use the chalkboard properly, and using teaching aids and designing them when one needs them; and involving the community in the child's learning. Also clear in the views and beliefs of the program participants were "roles and functions" of the teacher perceived in terms of the teacher as a facilitator, as someone who motivates learners, gives guidance, allows freedom to participates in lessons, and acts as a manager.

It was also noted that the "roles and functions" of the teacher held by the program participants such as community involvement in the child's learning, giving learners freedom to participate in lessons, or acting as a facilitator, and giving guidance to learners and motivating learners should be seen as positive achievements especially when contrasted with the authoritarian "banking mode of teaching" which was the hall-mark of the apartheid education system. The observable awareness and adoption of these "roles and functions" can possibly enhance teaching and learning in post-apartheid Namibia.

However, some of the roles and functions of the teacher such as that of the teacher as a manager tended to be couched within the dominant technocratic ideology which largely draws on the positivist teacher "competence-efficiency" tradition. While good teaching entails some sense of "competency" and "efficiency", the technocratic paradigm tends to restrict "competency" and "efficiency" to instrumental levels of increased learning outcomes related to some given ends or objectives. Emphasis on this apolitical "technical efficiency" has led to the view of teachers as technicians. In the Namibian context a view of the teacher as a technician would be contrary to the national vision of teachers as facilitators and advocates of post-apartheid societal transformation.

**Knowledge Acquisition in the program**

Available data indicated that a majority of those interviewed from the Integrated Natural Science course expressed concerns regarding what they perceived as "insufficient" knowledge (content level) acquired in their subject area. On the contrary, respondents from other subject areas, such as Agriculture, expressed satisfaction regarding knowledge acquired in their respective subject area. When placed within the historical context which is characterized by scientific and technological underdevelopment, particularly among the black majorities of Namibia, these concerns by the Integrated Science program participants may be regarded as significantly transformative towards developing a scientific and technological culture in post-apartheid Namibia.

However, data indicated that the lamentations in the narratives tended to uncritically yearn for scientific knowledge as if it was something that can be acquired in its complete and objectified existence, and can also be amassed in larger quantities. Not only did the program participant tended to see themselves as mere consumers of this knowledge, but also a critical examination of the nature, the values and assumptions underpinning that knowledge, and how that knowledge is constructed was excluded in their views. This positivist epistemological perspective regarding knowledge acquisition which tends to be emphasized in the technocratic/modernization paradigm will not facilitate a creative and critical orientation towards the production of scientific knowledge.

As the data also suggested, the concerns expressed about lack of knowledge in subject areas like Integrated Sciences can be understood in part in terms of the dominant tradition of teacher education. Another factor may stem from the resistance that has arisen in some sectors of the educational system to the BETD.

**Language Acquisition in the program**

Regarding language acquisition, all those interviewed strongly criticized the language status in the program and indicated that English was being elevated to a much higher status compared to local languages such as Silozi, Otjiherero (WCE) and Oshiwambo (OCE). As the evidence clearly indicated, differential treatment was being practiced whereby English (English communication skills) was not only accorded more teaching time (time-tabling) than Silozi, but it was also compulsory and taken by all students irrespective of their area of specialization. On the contrary, local languages such as Silozi were only compulsory in the first year (foundation year) and thereafter only required of those who choose the humanities option as their specialization. Regarding language status, data collected through interviews was cross-checked and confirmed by an examination of the time allocation and structuring of the program as outlined in the program's Broad curriculum (MEC, 1994, pp. 8-13). Also evident in the data was that the subject area curricula for some local languages (Otjiherero, for instance) were not only literal translations from the English subject area curriculum but that they were also underdeveloped compared to English. Negative attitudes and resentments towards local languages among student teachers were cited by some of the respondents.

While colonialism imposed and promoted German and Afrikaans at the expense of English, that should not justify the practice to emphasize English at the expense of local languages. Hence under colonialism, local languages were aggressively underdeveloped. In this context, it can be concluded that the current practice in the program to promote English and down-grade local languages is a glaring contradiction which can only serve to diminish Namibia's capacity to strengthen indigenous language maintenance and development. While far from being transformative the current language policy is heavily underpinned by views and assumptions of the technocratic/modernization paradigm where English is seen as *the* language which conveys values predisposed to development and should therefore be massively offered and promoted in South regions. The data also manifested a technocratic orientation which persistently sought to turn out prospective teachers who are "language technicians". This approach tended to reduce English into a neutral language of "international connections", "international communication" or "scientific knowledge" and deny the role of English in fostering cultural imperialism in the South. Furthermore, student teachers were denied a perspective of the political dimension of any language acquisition, and in particular the powerful role English plays in the global economy and cultural homogenization at the expense of indigenous cultural languages.

## Citizenship Education

Regarding citizenship education, all those interviewed expressed support for the teacher's role in promoting the values of the constitution of the Republic of Namibia. Various reasons, as outlined in Chapter 4, were advanced by the program participants indicating why they believed it to be the teacher's role to respect and foster the values of the constitution of the Republic of Namibia. More specifically, some program participants noted that the values contained in the constitution such as those of "respect for one another", "equal opportunities for all", "democracy", and "national reconciliation" were worthwhile getting across to learners. Some respondents strongly argued that teachers are supposed to be the "mirrors" of these values and that society should look to them to know what is expected by the constitution. Seen within the political culture of the new government which is said to be based on equity, democracy, freedom and justice, and also in contrast to the apartheid government where gross injustice, oppression, and lack of freedom constituted the philosophy of colonial rule, the current support for citizenship education as the teacher's task can be acknowledged as potential spaces for charting a critical citizenship education.

However, the views held by the program participants overwhelmingly manifested an uncritical approach and a taken-for-grantedness of some of the aspects of the constitution. Values such as "democracy", "equal opportunity", "national reconciliation", and "respect for one another" were taken for granted as good and unproblematic without examining whether or not they were being implemented at all. Furthermore, views such as that of teachers being "mirrors of the constitution to whom society must look", or that of "the constitution as the supreme law which governs and every citizen should or must respect it" only indicated the uncritical identification of the respondents with the Constitution. Such a perspective on citizenship education is typical of the modernization paradigm and is heavily underpinned by an ideology of control through which the political, social and economic status quo tends to perpetuate and reproduce itself. In the Namibian context, passive citizenship education would be contradictory to the current needs for post-apartheid societal transformation.

## Environmental Awareness in the program

From the interviews, most of the program participants expressed a heightened awareness of and the need for protecting the environment through environmental awareness

in the classroom, at home and in the community. Program participants widely endorsed the environment as the major generator of state revenue and national development through tourism and mining. Seen within the historical context of environmental degradation and destruction, this generally expressed need for environmental awareness is a positive aspect in the program.

However, these views still subscribed to the dominant technocratic/modernization paradigm in various ways. For instance, as is general practice in the technocratic paradigm, the environment was only seen as a source of revenue, national wealth and development and that it should primarily be protected for this purpose. The nature of this national development which is believed to be achieved through the environment was not assessed in terms of whether or not it promoted environmental sustainability. Also, the views lacked a critical examination of the "national revenue", "national wealth" or "development" in terms of distributive social justice related questions such as whom did the environment benefit and to what extent were the benefits addressing problems of poverty and underdevelopment. Not only was the general approach to environmental action narrowly focused on the immediate locality such as "villages" but attempts to situate environmental action into a global context were missing. No moves were made to address related issues of global inequalities in a North dominated system where the environment is continuously depleted in the name of short-term profit gains which benefit a small clientele of local, national and global elites.

### Gender Awareness in the program

Here again, available evidence indicated a heightened awareness in the program regarding the need to produce teachers who would promote gender awareness and gender balance. As the data indicates, women were the most hard-hit by the apartheid race, class and gender based inequalities. Therefore the expressed need to overhaul this colonial legacy through various strategies such as those of maintaining a balanced ratio in student intake should be acknowledged as positive aspects of the program. However, in order to make the policy beneficial, concrete actions should be built into the program to enhance the participation of female students while at the same time to sensitize male students in gender equity and women's rights issues.

### 7.1.2. Views on Curricula and Pedagogical Issues

As both program documents and interview data indicated, curricula and pedagogy are supposed to be organized around four "guiding principles" identified as (i) The Principle of Learner-Centredness and Democracy; (ii) The Principle of Reflective Teaching and Learning; (iii) The Principle of Subject Integration; and, (iv) The Principle of Learning through Production.

#### The Principle of "Learner-Centredness" and Democracy

Regarding the principle of learner-centered pedagogy and democracy, three dominant conceptualizations or perceptions prevailed among program participants identified as (a) learner-centered pedagogy conceptualized as "democratic participation and increased involvement" by student teachers in the teaching-learning process, (b) learner-centered pedagogy perceived as a challenge for transforming the authoritarian teacher-centered system to a more learner-centered system, and (c) learner-centered pedagogy conceptualized as collaborative work through the use of group-work exercises in conducting lessons.

(a) Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Increased Participation

A majority of the program participants conceptualized or perceived learner-centered pedagogy in terms of increased student "participation" or "involvement" in the teaching-learning process. In contrast to the oppressive and repressive pedagogical strategies in the apartheid regime, this particular aspect of the program can be acknowledged as positive. Nevertheless, the technocratic/modernization paradigm was manifested by the general tendency among the program participants to stop at the level of mechanical and superficial participation and involvement in lessons without critically examining neither the learning content nor the processes and assumptions underlying participation and whether these were liberative or not. Not only did the forms of participation and involvement resemble a kind of "active banking education". They were also conditioned by interests of power and control. Though most of the respondents referred to the NIED controlled "curricula reappraisals" in the program as an example of how participation was being promoted, the

mechanisms underpinning these reappraisals only indicated that a conditioned type of participation was being practiced. This is also true since significant curricula decisions in the BETD are highly centralized at NIED and TERP. These forms of participation will not facilitate a critical transformation of Namibian education.

(b) Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Transformation

Learner-centered pedagogy was also perceived in terms of "transformation" from the traditional teacher-centered system to a learner-centered one. Dominant in the views was also the tendency by program participants to see themselves as the change agents who will bring about the new learner-centered pedagogical strategies to schools. Though this is a positive aspect the problem still remain that the nature of "learner-centered pedagogy" into which schools were to be transformed was taken for granted. No attempts were taken to examine the assumptions, values and goals of the advocated learner-centered pedagogy in terms of emancipatory and liberative potentials. Though the program participants rightly perceived themselves as the change agents, they nevertheless lacked a critical examination of whose agenda it was that they were to advance in this transformation. Their role as agents for transformation was restricted at implementation levels only while excluding the levels of decision making. In the context of post-apartheid transformation there is a need for teachers to participate in both decision making and implementation levels.

(c) Learner-Centered Pedagogy as Collaborative Learning

From the views of the program participants and document analysis, "learner-centerdness" was being reduced, equated, or confused with simple mechanical arrangements such as "group-work" activities. Although the use of group-work in the program can be regarded as a significant innovation, its technocratic underpinnings largely undermined the possibilities for empowerment and other dimensions of participatory and liberating education. Lacking in the program was a systematic implementation of collaborative work as critical sharing where student teachers are given opportunities to critically discuss issues such as "child development studies" or "life conditions of children in Namibia" in the context of underlying social, political and economic forces and structures in Namibian society.

## The Principle of Reflective Teaching and Learning

All those interviewed conceptualized "reflective teaching and learning" in instrumental rationality terms or ameliorative terms of "what went well", or "what went wrong" regarding the lesson and how the situation can best be improved next time. Given the context of failure of the apartheid education system to promote learning for most black Namibians, this dominant concern for improving lesson success and increased learning outcomes through "reflective teaching and learning" can help to enhance learning outcomes in post-apartheid Namibia.

Nevertheless, the generally held perception of "reflective teaching and learning" was overwhelmingly lesson centered and was heavily underpinned by the technocratic ideology of effectiveness and efficiency in lesson delivery which is related to some unexamined and given ends. This practice of pursuing "good" lesson delivery without an examination of the nature of the goals and whether or not these address issues of poverty and underdevelopment is typical of the technocratic/modernization paradigm. The problem with this approach is that the ends themselves are not questioned but are taken for granted as worthy of pursuance. The technical skills of teaching are detached from their social, political and economic contexts.

## The Principle of Subject Integration

Whereas student teachers expressed positive feelings regarding "integration" in the program, all the teacher educators interviewed strongly criticized this particular aspect of the program and clearly indicated that due to obtaining structural constraints such as time tabling and other factors related to planning and proper staff development, integration was nonexistent in the program. Where integration does not exist it remains to be said that the program worked on compartmentalization, insulation and isolation of teacher educators. Far from liberating the prospective teachers and teacher educators this insulation and compartmentalization only serves to perpetuate a retrogressive status quo.

Furthermore, the form of integration remained within the realm of elitist intellectual levels where it does not go beyond integrating learning content. Absent were progressive forms such as those of integrating school and work, and broader conceptions such as dissolving the boundaries between town and countryside and rich and poor, among

others. As the colonial regime promoted a fragmented approach to teaching and learning, integration in a holistic sense is vital to the current post-apartheid transformation.

### The Principle of Learning Through Production of Materials

A majority of program participants expressed satisfaction and indicated that significant changes have taken place in the program regarding teacher produced materials. As the data indicated, this move towards production was necessitated by the colonial legacy of scarcity of teaching-learning material in the schools.

Though positive aspects are clearly discernible, absent in the program were attempts to problematize and critically approach the issue of production and situate it within the broader social, political and economic structures. No efforts were made to conceptualize production of such material in terms of how it was linked to the distribution of educational resources among schools, which schools and which teachers are told to produce their own teaching materials and which ones are provided such materials by the government, and why. These issues are valid for the reason that production of teaching-learning material by teachers is never a neutral exercise.

Instead, it is closely linked to other factors such as the distribution of social, economic and political power. Hence schools for children of the powerful groups in society may have access to government funded teaching and learning material while rural schools, for instance, may comparatively be deprived. Like the principle of integration, the principle of production also tended to stop at elitist intellectual levels of production. What dominated the program was the production of intellectual products such as reports and assignments and no attempts were made to engage in producing concrete economic utilities in the community or bringing school closer to the world of work and production as was the case in the ITTP.

## 7.1.3. Forces which Shaped the Program

Available evidence from both document studies and interview data indicated that the Basic Education Teacher program has been shaped by both internal/national and external forces. The findings regarding these factors were as follows:

**Internal/National Forces Shaping the Program**

In this regard, two major forces were identified. These are (a) the official political agenda for national liberation, and (b) the post-independence move from elite-centered education to education for all.

(a) The Official Political Agenda for National Liberation

Data showed that the Basic Education Teacher Diploma was largely shaped by or influenced by the broader socio-political changes taking place as part of the liberation of the Namibian people with SWAPO coming to power in 1990. In particular, various features of the program such as democratic learner-centredness, student participation and involvement in decision making process, and the general aim expressed as participatory, democratic and empowering teacher education do not only reflect but are also entrenched in the nation's newly adopted political culture underpinned by ideals of "solidarity, democracy, freedom and justice".

The Basic Education Teacher Diploma program also borrows its political agenda from SWAPO's ITTP program on which the current BETD is supposed to be modeled. When placed in the context of the findings presented in the entire study, the underlying political agenda for liberation seemed to have made significant achievements. Though the views of the program participants frequently referred to the program as a "democratic" and "free", they however lacked a critical examination of the nature of this "democracy" and "freedom".

(b) The Move from Elite Education to Education for All.

The study found that the post-independence move from apartheid "elite-centered education" to "education for all" was one of the internal/national forces shaping the program. The link between the BETD and this move towards "basic education for all" is to be found in the fact that currently, the BETD is the only program developed for producing teachers to teach at basic levels. Consequently, the quantitative expansion of schooling at basic levels, following the move towards basic education for all, commanded a corresponding expansion of basic teacher education. The designing and planning of the program was heavily dominated by questions pertaining to both qualitative and quantitative

aspects of the program. Whereas the move from elite education which sought to eliminate majorities of Namibians to a majority inclusive "education for all" must be acknowledged as a positive move taken by the new government, it still remains to the prospective basic education teacher to critically analyze the policy in terms of its underlying assumptions, processes, goals and outcomes in order to make the policy beneficial to all Namibians.

### External Influence In the Program

Although various international agencies and organizations have been involved with the program, the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) through the University of Umeá and the Teacher Education Reform Project (TERP) has played the major role. Not only is the current BETD program a product of a research comissioned by SIDA through TERP and the Ministry of Education, but SIDA activities also date far back (1960's) into the liberation struggle when SWAPO was in exile.

No doubt positive aspects are discernible in the activities of TERP. For instance, the fact that it was involved with SWAPO in the liberation struggle is possibly indicative of its interest in the liberation of Namibian people. The decentralization of "experts" to grassroots levels through "reform facilitators" may also be seen as a positive aspect albeit some gaps between theory and practice were noted by respondents. However, as this study did not go specifically into a detailed study on TERP it would be beneficial in future to have a more focused research on TERP activities and the detailed role of SIDA.

## 7.2. Discussion

In sum, the foregoing presentation of data in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 indicated that the BETD has been a major official strategy for educational development in post-apartheid Namibia. When contrasted to the colonial regime of teacher education and when seen in the context of the current educational reforms, the program significantly registers some positive achievements which can provide spaces for charting a transformative teacher education system. Nevertheless, the BETD reflected tendencies towards the technocratic paradigm. Therefore the major findings of this study, as discerned from program documents and interview data, indicated that despite some acknowledgeable achievements, the program was still tied to views, approaches, assumptions and beliefs characteristic of the dominant paradigm in education and development including teacher education and the role of North influences.

## 7.3. Policy Implications

In keeping with the findings of this study it is possible to draw some policy implications which are more consistent with the critical/transformative paradigm appropriate for societal transformation into a post-apartheid Namibia.

(a) Reorient the program towards the critical/transformative paradigm

This reorientation can be achieved by changing perspectives and views underpinning the aims and objectives of the program and their implementation. In this regard, the aim of "professionalization" will entail adopting a policy of empowering prospective teachers by enabling them to become professionals who are not only committed and dedicated to the current reforms or to their work as teachers, but also "transformative" and "resisting" intellectuals who are able to challenge given assumptions, critically approach and transform manipulative realities embedded both in their workplace as teachers as well as in the broader society. Such intellectuals will be able to address pertinent questions such as how is professionalization defined, what values and assumptions shape their own construction of self-image as professionals and whose interests does this "professional image" serve, or, what implications does the definition of professionalization hold for human relations both in the educational setting and in the broader society?. The abilities to raise these crucial questions will be developed in the student teachers by using progressive pedagogical strategies related to the Freirean principles and strategy of "critical conscientization" which is an explicit emancipatory process of enabling prospective teachers to see the hidden contradictions and realities in their job as teachers as well as in the broader society. Participatory and dialogical pedagogical strategies are also essential for the attainment of this re-orientation.

A re-orientation towards a critical/transformative paradigm will also mean that technical competence of teachers is not narrowly defined and does not stop at the levels of increased learning outcomes and achievement of some given ends. Over and above increased learning outcomes, the aims and goals, and the social context in which these goals are to be applied all become issues to be critically scrutinized and directions for transformation articulated. For instance, the aims and goals in basic education for Namibia

would be seen within the broader context of the new policy of "education for all" and how the aims and the policy address the current problem of mass exclusion of the poor from education. Therefore, within the alternative policy, technical skills for teachers will have to be situated within the broader social, political and economic contexts rather than restricting them to achievement of some given and unexamined ends. Student teachers in the BETD, particularly in subject areas such as ETP and Social Studies should be given opportunities to discuss and share ideas regarding the moral and ethical underpinnings of "basic education for all" and its implementation and what role they can play in this implementation as future basic education teachers.

Reorientation would also mean imbibing student teachers with attitudes of seeing themselves as active producers rather than passive consumers of "given" and pre-existing scientific knowledge. This attitude of seeing themselves as producers of knowledge should be deeply rooted in a critical awareness of what alternative teacher educators have clearly mapped out as the close relationship between power and control and the knowledge that is distributed by educational institutions. In this regard, the critical abilities of prospective teachers can be developed by giving them opportunities to reflect upon and examine issues such as which reading materials are included and which ones are excluded from the reading lists and why, what forms of knowledge dominate school grounds and why, why are other forms of knowledge excluded and banished from school grounds, and how does school knowledge in post-apartheid Namibia reflect educational goals which are mediated by concerns for justice, equity, democracy and improvement of human condition? This type of critical questioning can be implemented in all subject areas in the program.

On the issue of language, a reorientation will begin by taking cognizance of the fact that not only did the colonizers exclude Namibians from English language which is a medium of international communication but also that indigenous languages were even aggressively underdeveloped. Therefore, instead of giving English preference over indigenous languages, an alternative policy should seek a harmonious and balanced language policy in the program. While emphasizing awareness of its imperialistic nature, English should be critically adopted only for the good purposes it can serve the Namibian people. Equally, such a policy should also empower prospective teachers and develop positive attitudes towards their own cultures and languages instead of resenting them. This can happen by organizing seminar discussions where prospective teachers can debate the status of indigenous cultures and languages in Namibia, how Namibia has been penetrated and dominated by foreign cultures and what "good" or "bad" can be learnt from these foreign cultures, and what role they can play as teachers to preserve local languages and cultures.

While not necessarily dismissive of "citizenship education", reorientation will mean citizenship education rooted in what is identified in the alternative paradigm as "critical citizenship education". This form of citizenship education situates democracy as a contested ideological site for power and politics. Feelings of patriotism and promoting the values of the constitution will entail a re-definition of the role of teachers as critical and active agents in questioning, defining, and shaping human relationships in post-apartheid Namibia. Such teachers should be able to actively participate in the debates and reforms in the broader socio-political sphere and seek to advance equality and democracy in post-apartheid Namibia. These views can also be implemented in all subject areas in the program.

Regarding environmental awareness, reorientation will mean developing appropriate environmental attitudes which will enable prospective teachers to actively intervene for environmental issues within the context of distributive social justice both at the local, national and global level. Without being dismissive of the possible positive contribution of environmental protection to the long term national economy, such teachers should be able to intervene for environmental protection, speak against, and challenge profit motivated short-term gains which are detrimental to the environment. As part of the course work, concrete activities by students in the local community regarding environmental intervention are required.

For gender related issues, practical actions related to setting appropriate internal conditions which are gender neutral and thus beneficial to both men and women are necessary. This will entail a move from general policy levels to more concrete and practical actions such as examining the gender orientation of the language used in school textbooks, sensitizing teachers to gender related issues, and motivating both male and female students to overcome gender biases in their choice of courses.

(b) Move Towards a Critical/Transformative Pedagogy

In line with a transformative paradigm, a move towards a critical/transformative pedagogy is essential and consistent with post-apartheid societal transformation. Specifically, "the principle of learner-centered pedagogy as increased student participation and involvement" should be rooted in a critical pedagogy which empowers prospective teachers to critically examine both the nature of assumptions underlying learning content as well as those assumptions underlying a policy of student participation and involvement and whether these are liberative or not. Participation should be deeply rooted within genuine

forms of democracy and redistribution of power. This entails liberating power holders and teacher educators from practicing forms of "democracy" and "participation" which are underpinned by selfish interests of power and therefore seeks to manipulate students. Democratic pedagogical strategies will entail authentic involvement and participation by student teachers in decision making and policy related issues.

In keeping with a transformative paradigm, not only will prospective teachers see themselves as change agents but they will also subject the dominant vision or direction of the change to a critical examination in terms of the nature of such a change and how it can possibly liberate the people. Within the transformative paradigm a move is crucial from superficial and mechanical conceptualization of "collaborative learning" to implementing fundamental educational ideals such as empowerment, participatory and liberating education.

A critical/transformative pedagogy will also entail that "reflective teaching and learning" goes beyond ameliorative conceptions and attainment of given ends to an examination of the nature of the goals and whether or not they address issues of poverty and underdevelopment. Reflective practice will entail a process of praxis, which as critical teacher educators have clearly indicated, is a synthesis of thought and action which does not only seek to transform pertinent issues in the classroom but also in the broader social, political and economic sphere.

Regarding "integration", concrete strategies are needed such as college based staff development, proper planning, relaxed time-tabling and instituting college based integration committees. To avoid being solely a technical exercise, integration within the alternative paradigm entails empowerment of program participants by dissolving boundaries between subject areas, teacher educators and students and college and community. Within this alternative paradigm, integration does not stop at elitist academic subject levels only. It also entails broader and progressive forms of integration such as integrating school and community, rich and poor, power holders and the powerless, and town and countryside.

Within this alternative policy, "learning through production" will also have to go beyond producing "intellectual products" such as academic papers to producing concrete utilities in the community or bringing school closer to the world of work and production. The production of teaching-learning material will also be consistently situated within the broader distribution of social, political and economic powers, since these are the forces which condition the way resources are distributed among schools. Hence quite often schools for the wealthy and powerful tend to be well equipped with resources while teachers in schools for the poor have to produce their own material.

Sessions should be worked into the program to give student teachers opportunities to debate and discuss the nature of pedagogical strategies in the program and how these strategies are kept in line with the vision of transformation in post-apartheid Namibia. Such discussion sessions can help to develop capacities for "critical/transformative" intellectuals.

(c) Establish mechanisms for implementing a political agenda of liberation

In keeping with the current political, social and economic changes within the broader framework of post-independence restructuring, there is need to work out strategies for implementing political ideals such as critical democracy, freedom and justice which are supposed to underpin the program. These political ideals should be actively implemented as the philosophical underpinnings of the BETD. Concrete strategies such as authentic participation and involvement of students in decision making at College level is one way of achieving this political liberation.

## 7.4. Implications for Future Research

Based on findings for the study the following implications for future research on the BETD can be drawn.

1) It will be useful to conduct an action research study which will help shed more light in the search for a new theoretical orientation for teacher education in post-apartheid Namibia. With the achievement of political independence there is a need for a new but clearly articulated theoretical orientation or paradigm in teacher education which is appropriate for Namibia. Further studies in the critical/transformative paradigm for teacher education are recommended and action research methodology is especially relevant so that teachers are actively involved in examining their work and professional realities and conceptually transformative policies and strategies.

2) It would be helpful to examine how strategies can be devised for promoting local languages and a healthy language policy that would promote both English and indigenous languages.

3) There is a need for a detailed study which would closely investigate the concerns expressed regarding insufficient knowledge levels (content) in the program. This study will help shed light by making a comparative study among the Colleges including UNAM

regarding attitudes towards the BETD. Political and racial/ethnic factors which seem to be motivating "resistance" will possibly be clarified in that study.

4) There is also need either for focused studies which would study the newly adopted pedagogical strategies such as "learner-centered pedagogy" or "integration" individually, or a study that would focus on all pedagogical strategies only. This study may help illuminate problems and constraints involved in the implementation of these newly adopted pedagogical strategies.

5) There is also need for a focused study which would help shed light on TERP activities, including the role of reform facilitators at the colleges, and how intellectual independence is promoted or constrained at the Colleges and the dynamics of Swedish educational aid for Namibian development.

## 7.4. Conclusion

In sum, it can be concluded that despite a few limitations, the BETD provides some possibilities for promoting the quality of education at basic levels in Namibia. An appropriate teacher education program is universally acclaimed as a prerequisite for development or as a necessary condition for solving problems of underdevelopment in South regions. Compared to the colonial regime, the BETD constitute significant improvements over the oppressive and stagnant features of apartheid-centered education. The data in the study gives the hope that the BETD may possibly develop attitudes and dispositions in the prospective teachers which are essential for educational progress and reform. Aspects of the program reflected both in the aims, curricula and pedagogical strategies tend to support that view.

Nevertheless, the study has shown that the BETD program embodies significant limitations in terms of assumptions, goals, purposes and strategies of implementation. A clear and open recognition of these limitations and appropriate reorientations, revisions, and innovations will, in my view, enable the BETD to contribute more authentically to the critical transformation needed for post-apartheid education and development in Namibia.

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# Appendix A

## THE BETD PROGRAM

*(Adapted from the Broad Curriculum for the BETD, MEC, 1994).*

### A. Aims of the BETD Program

The goal is to create a national and common teacher education for Basic Education related to the needs of the nation, the local community, the school, the learner and the teacher.

The main aim of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma is to develop the professional expertise and competencies of which will enable the teacher to optimize the new Basic Education for the learners, and to be fully involved in educational reform in Namibia.

Basic Teacher Education will strive to:

1) develop a teacher who will respect and foster the values of the Constitution of the Republic of Namibia, contribute to nation building, and respond positively to the changing needs of Namibian society.

2) develop understanding and respect for cultural values and beliefs, especially those of the Namibian people.

3) enhance respect for human dignity, and sensitivity and commitment to the needs of learners.

4) develop a reflective attitude and creative, analytical and critical thinking.

5) develop the ability to actively participate in collaborative decision making.

6) develop social responsibility towards learners, colleagues, the community and the nation as a whole.

7) promote gender awareness and equity to enable all Namibians to participate fully in all spheres of society.

8) enable the teacher to promote environmental awareness and sustainable management of natural resources in the school and community.

9) develop awareness of the varying roles and functions of the teacher and commitment to the teaching profession.

10) develop an understanding of learning as an interactive, shared and productive process.

11) enable the teacher to meet the needs and abilities of the individual learner through organization, management and assessment of teaching and learning process.

12) prepare the teacher to strengthen the partnership between school and community.

13) develop adequate command of English and another language of Namibia to be able to use them as media of instruction.

14) prepare the teacher to be able to develop and use the creative and expressive abilities and skills of the learners.

15) develop the ability to create learning opportunities which will enable learners to explore different ways of knowing, and develop the whole range of their thinking abilities.

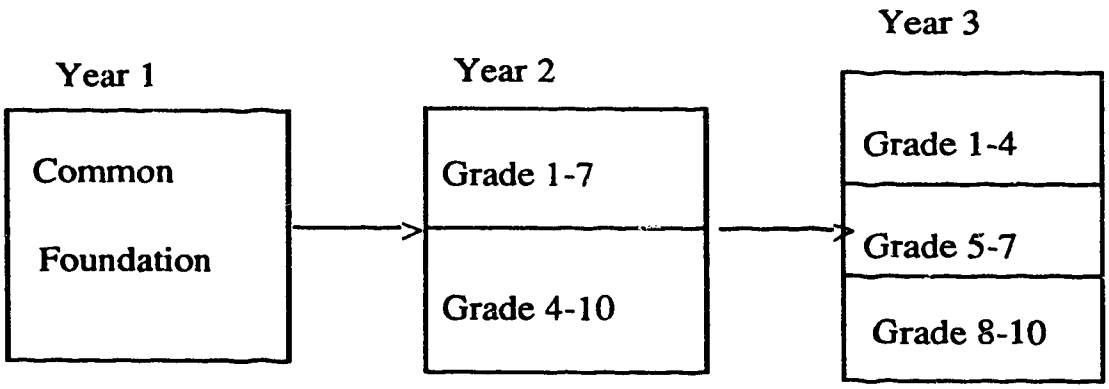
16) provide the student with sufficient breadth in curriculum content and depth in selected subject areas, to be able to identify and select basic knowledge content for learners, and to organize and sequence content and learning situations appropriately.

17) enable the teacher to understand and utilize current knowledge of children's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, aesthetic, moral and spiritual development.

18) develop a positive attitude towards individual differences and enable teachers to utilize them to meet social and individual needs.

**B. Structure of the BETD Program**

The Basic Education Teacher Diploma is a three-year Basic Education teacher program consisting of a common foundation core for all students, and options related to different phases of Basic Education. The distribution of the program over the three year period can be illustrated as follows:



The entry requirement to the Basic Education Teacher program is a grade 12 education with IGCSE passes or the equivalent, and an acceptable level of maturity and suitability for the study.

### Year 1 - Common Foundation Studies

In the Common Foundation year, which is taught to all students during their first year, teaching and learning will focus on the following:

| Subject area | Periods/week | % of total study time |
|---|---|---|
| Educational theory and practice | 8 | 20% |
| English Communication Skills | 6 | 15% |
| Another language of Namibia | 5 | 12,5% |
| Mathematics | 5 | 12,5% |
| Integrated Natural Science | 5 | 12,5% |
| Social Studies | 5 | 12,5% |
| Arts in Culture | 2 | 5% |
| Human Movement Education | 2 | 5% |
| Handwork and Technology | 2 | 5% |

### Year 2 - Level Specialization

Work in year two, also known as the level specialization year, is organized to reflect the needs of teachers targeted at different phases of Namibian schools. Students will opt for the following levels in their second year of studies:

Level Specialization for Grades 1-7
OR
Level Specialization for Grades 5-10

Level Specialization 1-7

The grade 1-7 level specialization will include:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Educational theory and practice | 10 | 25% |
| Early childhood education | 10 | 25% |
| Broad Curriculum Studies for grades 1-7 | 18 | 45% |
| English communication skills | 2 | 5% |

Level Specialization 5-10

The course of study will include five core subjects and one of the three options:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CORE | | |
| Education theory and practice | 10 | 25% |
| Arts in Culture | 2 | 5% |
| Human Movement Education | 2 | 5% |
| Handwork and Technology | 2 | 5% |
| Curriculum Orientation | 4 | 10% |
| OPTIONS | | |
| Humanities (English and another language of Namibia, and Social Studies or Arts) | 20 | 50% |
| OR | | |
| Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science | 18 | 45% |
| English Communication Skills | 2 | 5% |
| OR | | |
| One Pre-vocational subject (Agriculture, Arts, Commerce, Home Ecology or Technical Studies) | 18 | 45% |
| English Communication Skills | 2 | 5% |

## Year 3 - Subject Area Specialization

Year three, also known as the subject area specialization year, course and organization will reflect the need for in-depth knowledge of the subject area together with methodology of teaching for specific subjects and age-phases. Students will opt for the following in their final year of studies:

Weighting towards Grades 1 - 4
OR
Weighting towards Grades 5 - 7
OR
Weighting towards Grades 8-10

Weighting towards Grades 1 - 4

The course will include:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Educational theory and Practice | 10 | 25% |
| Early childhood Education | 10 | 25% |
| Broad Curriculum Studies for grades 1-7 | 10 | 25% |
| Curriculum Orientation for grades 5-7 | 8 | 20% |
| English Communication Skills | 2 | 5% |

Weighting towards Grades 5 - 7

This course will include five core subjects and one of the two options:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CORE | | |
| Educational theory and practice | 10 | 25% |
| Arts in Culture | 2 | 5% |
| Human Movement Education | 2 | 5% |
| Handwork and Technology | 2 | 5% |
| Curriculum Orientation | 4 | 10% |
| OPTIONS | | |
| Humanities (English and another language of Namibia and Social Studies or Arts) | 20 | 50% |
| OR | | |
| Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science | 18 | 45% |
| English Communication Skills | 2 | 5% |

Weighting towards Grades 8 - 10

This course will include five core subjects and one of the four options:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| CORE | | |
| Educational Theory and Practice (related to later childhood education and adolescent education) | 10 | 25% |
| Arts in Culture | 2 | 5% |
| Human Movement Education | 2 | 5% |
| Curriculum Orientation | 4 | 10% |
| English Communication Skills/English across the curriculum | 2 | 5% |
| OPTIONS | | |
| Languages (English and another Nam. lang.) | 20 | 50% |
| OR | | |
| Social Studies (History, Geography, Civics, Religious and Moral Education) | 20 | 50% |
| OR | | |
| Mathematics and Integrated Natural Science | 20 | 50% |
| OR | | |
| One Pre-Vocational Subject (Agriculture, Arts, Commerce, Home Ecology or Technical studies) | 20 | 50% |

## C. School Based Studies

The minimum time for School Based Studies will be organized in a progress of a three week period of project work and field studies in Year 1 (Term 3), six weeks group practice in year 2 (Term 6), and individual practice in Year 3 for the whole of Term 8 (13 weeks). The School Based Studies during year 2 and 3 take place at Associate Schools.

## D. Assessment and promotion

At the end of each year, summative assessment will be done in all subject areas. The summative assessment will be based on continuos assessment, which should be described in a progress report, showing what has been completed during the year, the quality of the work and the strong and weak sides of each student at the end of each term.

The result of the summative assessment (which might include examination results) will be awarded as a promotion grade in each subject area. The promotion grade should be awarded in one of the following grades:

A = Complete with Distinction: achievements well above basic requirements.

B = Complete with Credit: achievements extended beyond basic requirements

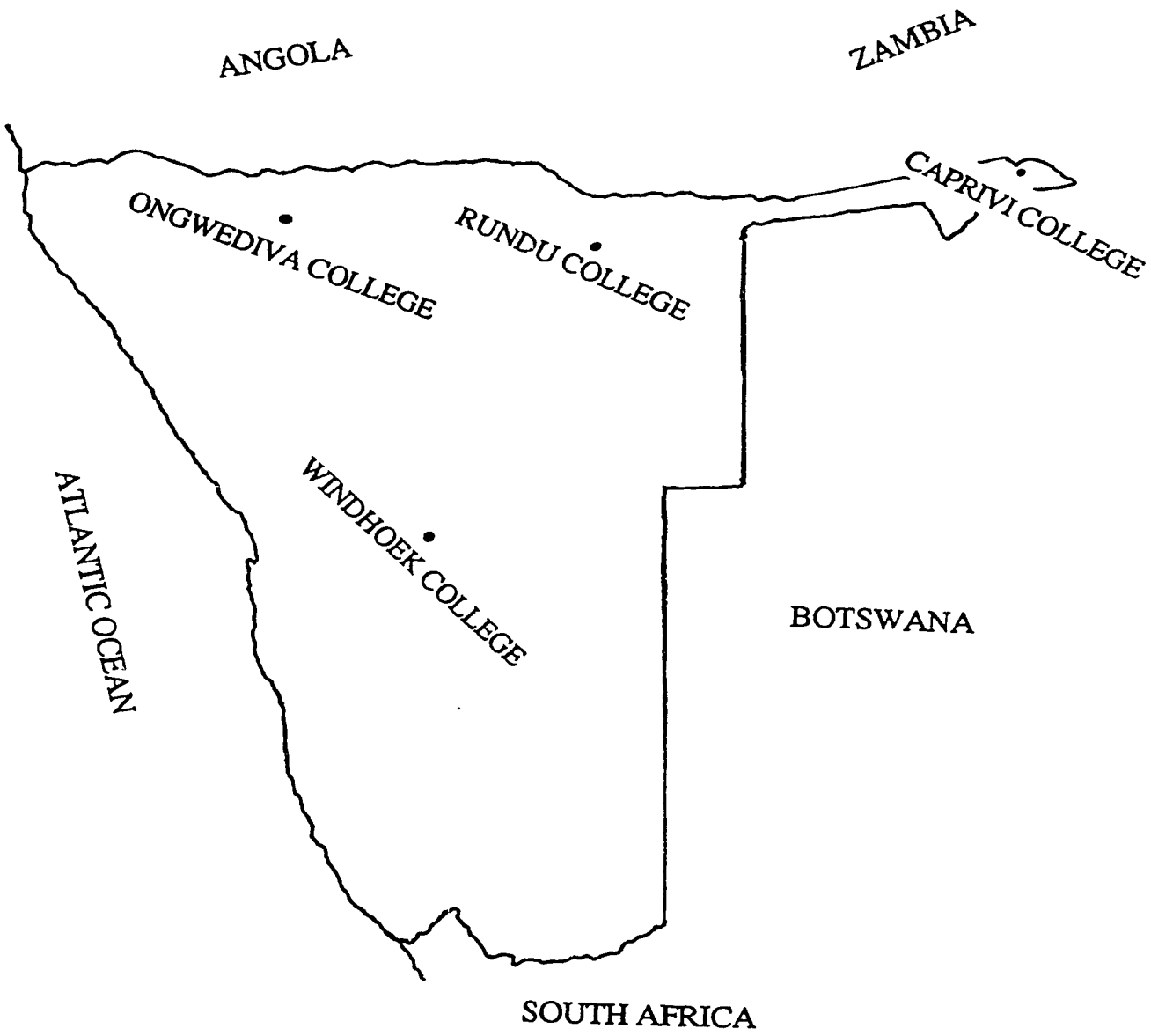
C = Complete: achievements fulfill basic requirements

D = Incomplete: achievements do not fulfill all basic requirements

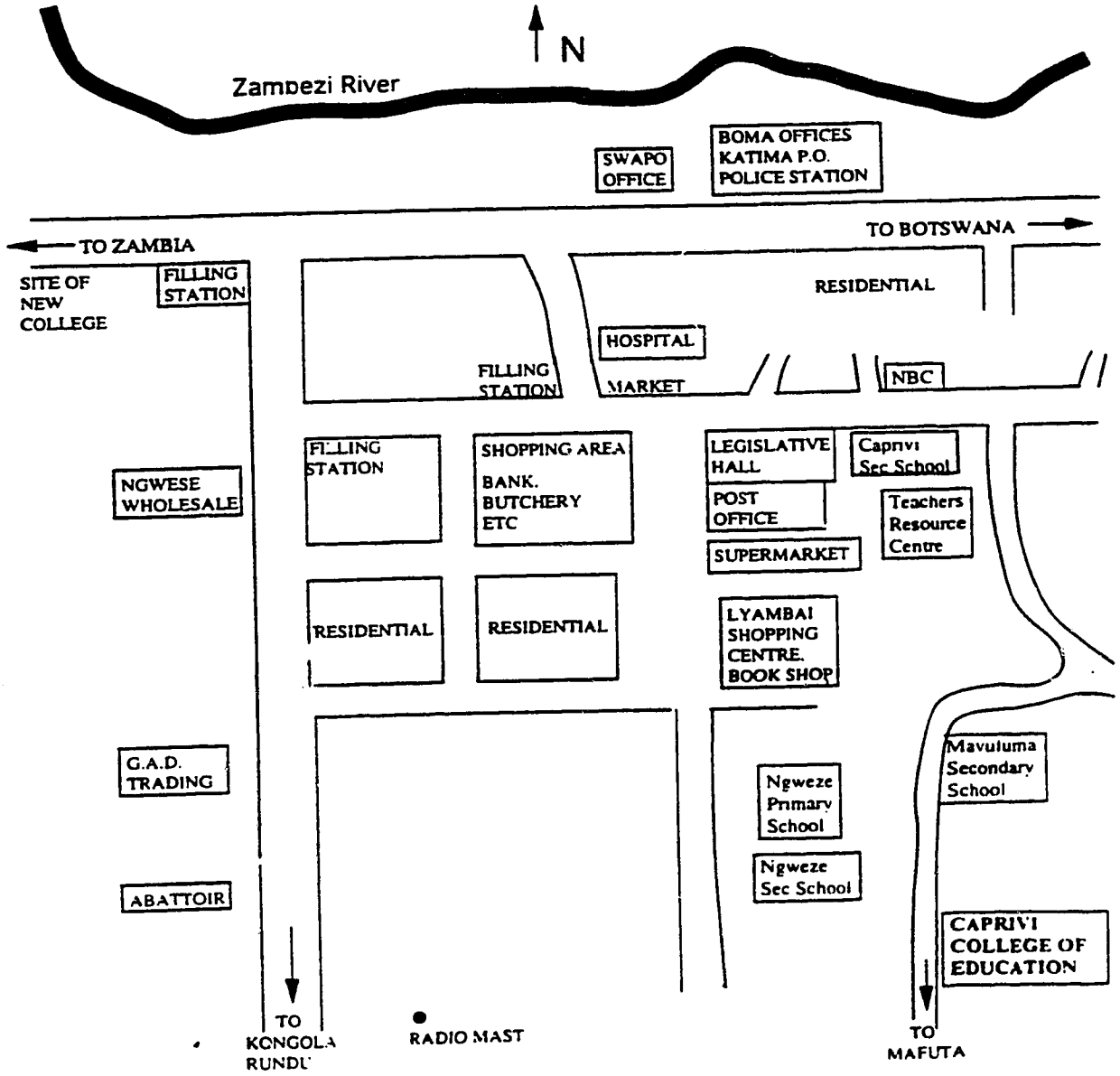
At the end of the three year program, there should be a final assessment in all subject areas. The final assessment will be based on continuos assessment, the yearly summative reports, assessment of school-based studies and a major project work.

## Appendix B

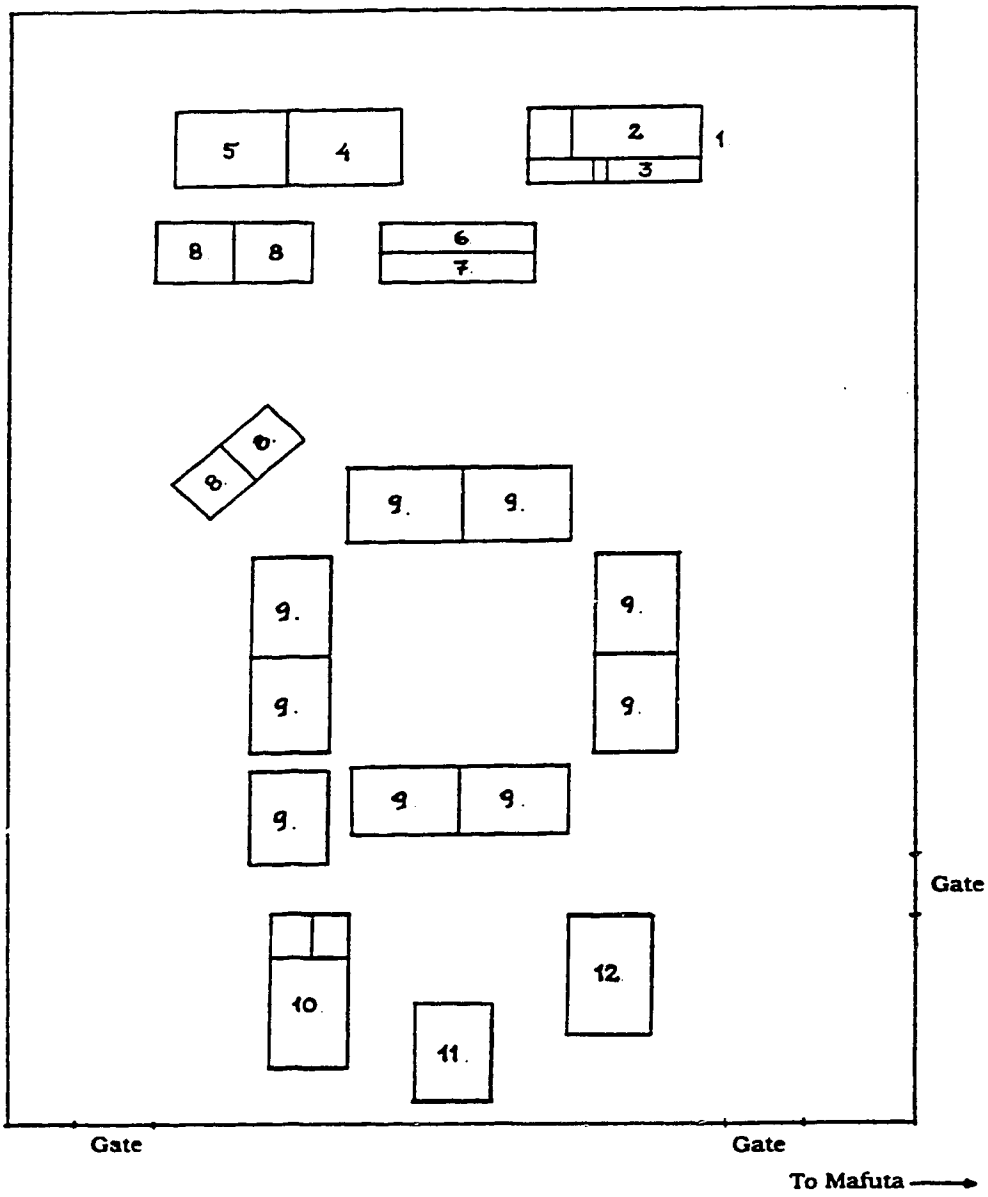
**Map of Namibia: Locations of the four Colleges of Teacher Education Offering the BETD program**



# Appendix C
## C1: Location of Caprivi College (old campus)



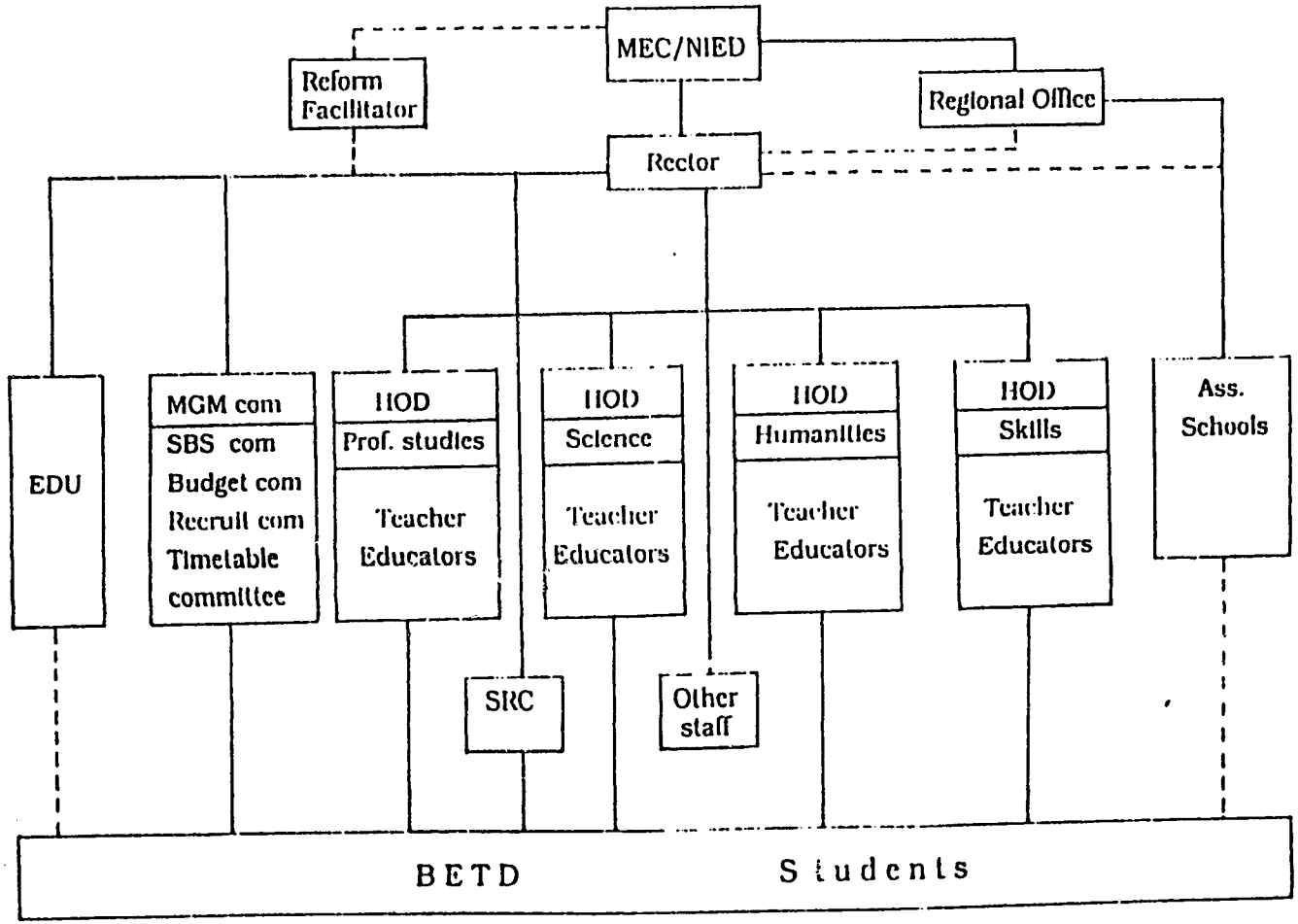
## Appendix C2:
## Caprivi College: Physical Layout, old campus




1. Administrative building
2. Rector's office
3. Secretary
4. Library
5. Arts in Culture
6. SRC office
7. Security staff
8. WC
9. Class rooms
10. Staff room
11. Science lab
12. EDII

# Appendix C3: College Organization (1995)

**CAPRIVI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**
**ORGANISATION**



## Appendix D1-5: Cover Letters

University of Alberta
Department of Educational Policy Studies
7 - 104 Education North
EDMONTON, ATA
CANADA T6G 2G5
February 7, 1995

Ms. Patti Swarts
Director, NIED
Ministry of Education and Culture
Private Bag 2034
OKAHANDJA
NAMIBIA

Dear Ms. Swarts

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BASIC EDUCATION DIPLOMA PROGRAM**

I am writing to seek your assistance in securing consent from the Ministry of Education to conduct a study of the Basic Education Teacher Diploma. The study is done in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

The proposed research seeks to undertake a study of the pre-service Basic Education Teacher reform program for Namibia, the BETD. Through participant observations, interviews, and document studies, the study seeks to explore the BETD program within the framework of attempts at development in post-Apartheid Namibia. Though the findings of the study might be of use to other colleges as well, this study proposes to undertake a case study on Caprivi College of Education.

The study will yield significant insights on issues of teacher education reform in a development which will be relevant and useful for educational policy making and implementation.

The proposed timeline for the study runs from April, 1995 to the end of August, 1995.

Your consideration of this request is highly anticipated.

Sincerely,

Nyambe John

cc. Dr. Toh, S.H. (Thesis Supervisor & Director, CIED).

## Appendix D - 2

University of Alberta
Department of Educational Policy Studies
7 - 104 Education North
EDMONTON, ATA
CANADA, T6G 2G5
March 15, 1995

Mr. Mushe Alex
Rector, Caprivi College of Education
Private Bag 1096
Katima Mulilo

Dear Mr. Mushe

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY OF THE BETD PROGRAM AT CAPRIVI COLLEGE OF EDUCATION**

This letter is intended to follow-up on our short telephone conversation previously about conducting a research study of the pre-service Basic Education Teacher Diploma at Caprivi College of Education. The study is done in partial of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

The study seeks to undertake a study of the pre-service Basic Education Teacher reform program for Namibia, the BETD. Through participant observations, interviews and document studies, the study seeks to explore the BETD program within the framework of attempts at development in post-Apartheid Namibia. Though the findings might be of relevance to other colleges as well, this study proposes to undertake a case study on Caprivi College of Education.

The study will yield significant insights on issues of teacher education reform in a development context which will be relevant and useful for educational policy making and implementation.

The proposed time-line for the study is May to August, 1995.

Your consideration of this request is highly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Nyambe John

cc. Dr Toh, S.H. (Thesis Supervisor & Director, CIED).
Mr. Sinvula C.M. (Director: Ministry of Education Regional Office)

## Appendix D - 3

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

*Centre for International Education and Development*
**Department of Educational Policy Studies**
Faculty of Education

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7229
Fax (403) 492-0762

13 April 1995

Ms. Patti Swarts
Chief Teacher Education, NIED
Ministry of Education and Culture
Private Bag 13186
Windhoek
Republic of Namibia

Dear Ms. Swarts:

On behalf of the Centre for International Education and Development and the Namibia Project, I am writing in support of the request of Project scholar, Mr. John Nyambe, to conduct research on Namibian Teacher Education. For his M.Ed. thesis under my supervision, Mr. Nyambe is proposing to study the pre-service teacher education reform program in Namibia. The duration of his field work will be from May to September 1995.

Mr. Nyambe's research project will involve interviews, participant observation, and analysis of documents. The study promises to yield significant insights on issues of teacher education reform in a development context which will be relevant and useful for educational policy making and implementation.

I would greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in facilitating Mr. Nyambe's request for official approval of the proposed research study.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Toh Swee-Hin (S.H. Toh), Ph.D.
Director, CIED

cc. Dr. Ruth Hayden, Acting Project Director
John Nyambe

## Appendix D - 4

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

*Centre for International Education and Development*
**Department of Educational Policy Studies**
Faculty of Education

7-104 Education Building North,
Telephone (403) 492-7229
Fax (403) 492-0762

13 April 1995

Mr. Mushe Alex
The Rector
Caprivi College of Education
P.O. Katima Mulilo
Republic of Namibia

Dear Mr. Mushe:

On behalf of the Centre for International Education and Development and the Namibia Project, I am writing in support of the request of Project scholar, Mr. John Nyambe, to conduct research on the Basic Education Teacher Diploma at Caprivi College of Education. For his M.Ed. thesis under my supervision, Mr. Nyambe is proposing to study the pre-service teacher education reform program in Namibia, based on a case study of Caprivi College. The duration of his field work will be from May to September 1995.

Mr. Nyambe's research project will involve interviews, participant observation, and analysis of documents. The study promises to yield significant insights on issues of teacher education reform in a development context which will be relevant and useful for educational policy making and implementation.

I would greatly appreciate your support and cooperation in facilitating Mr. Nyambe's request for official approval of the proposed research study.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Toh Swee-Hin (S.H. Toh), Ph.D.
Director, CIED

cc. John Nyambe ✓

**Appendix D-5**

**REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA**

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

# NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Tel: (06221) 502446
Fax: (06221) 502446

Private Bag 2034
OKAHANDJA
NAMIBIA

ENQUIRIES: P. SWARTS

11 MAY 1995

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Mr J. Nyambe currently studying for his Masters degree in Education at the University of Alberta, Canada, is hereby granted approval for his proposed research study on the pre-service teacher education reform programme in Namibia. The duration of his field work will be from May to September 1995.

Your support and cooperation in facilitating Mr Nyambe's research study would be appreciated very much.

Thank you.

Sincerely

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
NIED NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
1995 -05- 11
Private Bag 2034
Okahandja
Namibia

Patti Swarts

PATTI SWARTS
ACTING DIRECTOR: NIED

cc Ms L. Katoma, Permanent Secretary, MBEC
Dr S.H. Toh, Director, CIED, University of Alberta
Dr R. Hayden, Acting Project Director, CIED, University of Alberta

## Appendix E

### OBSERVATION/INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

I agree to participate in the interview/observation (or the study) upon the following conditions, and shall freely withdraw from the interview/observation (or the study) should I feel that the conditions are not being met:

1. The researcher has explained to me in comprehensive terms the nature and purpose of the study.

2. The study is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw without risking any penalty or loss.

3. That I will remain anonymous in the study and that the raw data from observations and interviews, or any other interactions during the study will remain confidential. Data will not be used to disadvantage me, and that no other persons other than me and the researcher will have access to the raw data.

| _____ | _____ | _____ |
|---|---|---|
| Study Participant / Respondent. | Date | place |