

**Experiences of induction by beginner educators in Bochum East Circuit, Limpopo  
province**

by

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## DECLARATION

I, Thobja Marcus Matsebane, declare that this dissertation, "Beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province", is my own work and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged in the complete references.

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**SIGNATURE**

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved wife, Stephina Moshao Matsebane, for her motivation, courage and continued support throughout the period of my studies. She endured my absence and stress with tolerance which contributed to the successful completion of this study.

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## ABSTRACT

Induction for teacher development is important for quality teaching and learning to take place in schools. The process of induction should be well-structured so that it is not mistaken as just an orientation to school procedures; it should be well-planned and implemented for the purposes of professional development and support (Rolley, 2001). The main aim of this study was to investigate beginner educators' experiences of the induction process for professional development in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The assumption was that if schools are held accountable for learner performance, then support measures in terms of induction should be provided to newly appointed educators. Poor performance or educator turnover can sometimes be ascribed to inadequate interventions or the design of educator induction programmes. Although educators may have received the best training at university or training college, they still need to adjust to the realities of classrooms.

To achieve the aim of the study, a qualitative research approach was followed to collect data through semi-structured interviews. The study is ensconced in the Educator Development Theory which acknowledges that educator preparation is rarely sufficient to provide all the knowledge and skills necessary for successful teaching. A great deal of knowledge and many skills are, mostly, acquired while on the job and principals should, therefore, adequately induct newly appointed educators. Four beginner educators and two principals from average performing primary schools were purposively sampled in the Bochum East Circuit of the Limpopo Province. A thematic analysis was carried out to generate themes that addressed the problem of the study. The findings from participant responses revealed differences in an understanding of the induction process. Support from the principal, HoDs and fellow colleagues were considered to be part of induction. Recommendations include that educators should be given continuous professional development through standardised induction programmes which could be adjusted to the needs of the school.

**Key terms: induction, orientation, mentoring, beginner educator, professional development.**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DoE: Department of Education

HoD: Head of Department

PAM: Personnel Administrative Measures

SMT: School Management Team

NSNP: National School Nutrition Programme

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the systemic and systematic transformation of schools depends on how educators teach and how learners learn (Hargreaves, 2007), the induction of newly appointed educators should be systematic; it should be well organized or arranged according to a set plan and/or grouped in terms of a system. Systemic transformation should assist newly appointed educators to understand the meaning of induction in the entire system since educator development affects the entire body or system of education (Joseph & Riegeluth, 2010). The induction of beginner teachers is important as the core business of the school is to have quality teaching and learning take place. The process of induction should be well-structured so that it is not mistaken as just an orientation into school procedures. Induction should be well-planned and implemented for professional development and support (Rolley, 2001).

Induction is part of professional development and, ultimately, aims to promote an educational support system where all educators succeed in assisting learners to perform well (Joseph & Reigeluth, 2010). It is, therefore, the responsibility of principals to ensure that educators understand that elements of the education support system, such as educator induction, are geared to improving the teaching of all educators in a new environment. Improved teaching and learning can only be assured if there is collaboration and interaction between stakeholders in the development of education support programmes (Hargreaves *et al.*, 2007). Principals are, essentially, responsible for the provision of support and for monitoring and evaluating their schools' performance. Their role in leading and managing schools is crucial to the transformation and improvement of schools.

The assumption that underpins this study is that a lack of support for new educators may be a contributing factor to the inability of schools to deliver quality teaching and learning. The role of the principal in inducting newly appointed educators should lead to improved teaching and learning and to educator retention. The different forms of induction provided for newly appointed educators should develop their individual skills, knowledge, expertise and other aspects as educators (Brophy, 2001). Support for newly appointed educators should occur gradually in a step-by-step manner and on a continuous basis. It is also important for schools and the Department of Education (DoE) to acknowledge induction as an important tool for improving the quality of teaching and learning.

## **1.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of the study was to investigate how beginner educators experience the induction process during their professional development in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The assumption in this study was that if schools are held accountable for learner performance, then educators should be provided with support measures for improvement (Joseph & Rigeluth, 2010). The government should not make demands on schools without ensuring that there is support for educators in order to help improve teaching and learning. Measures should be in place to induct newly appointed educators to have an educator workforce with training and skills that will enable them to deliver high-quality teaching and learning to learners (Asia Society, 2013). If the education policies related to educator professional development practices remain unchanged, then the goals and standards that schools aspire to meet will simply continue to be a legacy of unfulfilled reforms (Policy Brief, 2011). In order to achieve improved performance in schools and to help learners achieve set goals, the very culture of educator support must change. Schools should provide incentives and structures to attract, develop and retain the best educators with skills to satisfy the needs of the learners.

### 1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Beginner educators find the transition from student to newly qualified teacher problematic (NQT) (Capel, 2006:393). Sun (2012:5) maintains that the smooth transition of beginner educators into the profession has failed because of a lack of clear guidance in, and help from, induction programmes in schools. All schools have a vision of quality teaching anchored in a system of performance assessment, comprehensive induction and collaborative professional learning (Policy Brief, 2011) and induction should, therefore, impact positively on the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

According to Shalem (2003), poor performance and educator turnover can be ascribed to an inadequate conceptualization and/or intervention design of educator induction programmes. The question is: Do schools have an induction programme that supports educators to provide learners with quality teaching and learning? Although beginner educators may have received the best of training at university or training college, the realities of the classroom often conflict directly with what they learnt at those institutions. Their new careers may cause beginner educators to feel inadequate in managing their classrooms; in dealing with disciplinary problems; in meeting learner needs; and in adapting to the school culture (Stanulis *et al.*, 2002).

A major part of induction carried out with beginner educators in schools does not support areas like the role of the teacher, discipline, problematic learner behaviour and collaboration with colleagues (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1990). It is crucial that the gap between being a student teacher and a beginner educator be closed. According to Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1990), one of the ways in which this gap can be closed is through mentoring. Teacher induction and mentoring are two terms that are sometimes used interchangeably, but mentoring has become the dominant form of induction support over the last twenty years. Induction should not only be the pairing of a new teacher with an experienced one; it should include continuous support during the year for the new educators from carefully selected and well-

prepared mentors who are able to provide high-quality mentoring. Effective induction should also include regular scheduled common planning time with other educators for on-going professional development and a standardised evaluation of the new educators throughout the process (Sun, 2012). Carter and Francis (2001) point out that mentoring is the most effective and advantageous way of supporting beginner educators' professional development, but they suggest that there is a limitation on the direct impact of mentoring on the beginner educators' teaching skills. The main goal of mentoring is for more experienced educators to pass on their expertise in teaching and learning to less experienced educators.

Kajs (2002) maintains that mentoring does not only support the transition of beginner educators but that it also helps to decrease the number of beginner educators leaving the profession soon after being appointed. Research has shown that the general experience of beginner educators is that they feel as if they have been thrown into the raging current of the school and have to devise a means of survival (Rolley, 2001). Generally, beginning educators are enthusiastic and attempt to be innovative in their teaching, but school systems usually do not recognise and take advantage of this enthusiasm (Weiss, 1999) which may result in some beginner educators becoming demoralised and others leaving or quitting the profession at a very early stage. Another debilitating factor is that the value of the teachers' work is not appreciated because its impact does not provide immediate results; as a result, there is no recognition or positive reinforcement of the beginner educators' work and they become discouraged (Cairns & Brown, 1998).

#### **1.4 RATIONALE FOR UNDERTAKING THE STUDY**

As a researcher, my personal interest in the study was prompted by my experience as a school principal where three beginner educators, fresh from university, were appointed. These educators struggled with many issues, including lesson planning, assessment of learners and keeping accurate records of learners' performance. I heard colleagues talking about how one of these educators was discouraged and was



contemplating leaving the teaching profession. As a principal and in line with the findings of Feiman-Nemser (2001); Ganser (2002); Gold (1999) and Hegstad (1999), I have come to the conclusion that educator training does not adequately prepare educators with the knowledge and skill necessary to become successful educators and that a major part of teaching can be learnt only while on the job. Bubb and Early (2004) stress the importance of professional development and maintain that continuing professional development is an investment for the educator as well as for the school because educators who are adequately developed through induction rarely leave the profession.

Being aware of the problems experienced by beginner educators and ensuring that their needs are addressed will add greatly to the quality of education, in general, and to the teaching profession, in particular (Steyn, 2004). The induction of beginner educators is crucial in determining the successes of, and in meeting the challenges faced by, these educators. Once the successes are achieved and the challenges are identified, it is necessary to reinforce the successes and deal with the challenges so that the appointment of these educators will not be a futile exercise; they will benefit their schools, in particular, and the Education Department, as a whole. The support for beginner educators is crucial for the education fraternity and because the National Department of Education has awarded bursaries to most of these educators to address the shortage of educators. If these educators leave the teaching profession because they are not well-supported or well-inducted, the good intentions of the department will be nullified. This study, therefore, aims to explore the experiences of beginner educators in order to make recommendations on how induction programmes can be developed to support them to achieve quality teaching and learning in their classrooms.

## **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTION**

The main research question was: *How do beginner educators experience the induction process in their schools?* The sub-questions were:

1. *How are beginner educators inducted in their schools?*
2. *What challenges do beginner educators face during the induction process?*
3. *What support/mentoring is provided for beginner educators during the induction process?*

## **1.6 AIMS/OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The main aims of the study were to explore the following:

- How beginner educators experience the induction process in their schools.
- How beginner educators are inducted in their schools.
- The challenges they face during the induction process.
- The type of support/mentoring provided to them during the induction process.

## **1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theory that was used as a framework for the research on beginner educator induction for professional development is the Educator Development Theory. The theory acknowledges that teaching is complex work and that educator preparation is rarely sufficient to provide all the knowledge and skills needed for successful teaching. Much of the knowledge and skills can only be acquired while on the job (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2002; Gold, 1999; Hegstad, 1999). It is, therefore, necessary for the principal at the school to provide an environment in which educators can learn the relevant skills and continue to prosper as educators. Support programmes should be geared to improving the teaching performance of newly appointed educators in order to enhance the growth and learning of the learners (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2002; Gold, 1999; Hegstad, 1999).

## 1.8 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative case study was implemented to collect data from principals and beginner educators in four primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. Data was collected from principals and teacher participants using semi-structured interviews to explore the beginner educators' and principals' experiences of the induction process in the schools. A pilot study was conducted with one principal and one teacher before the actual study commenced when eight individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with four beginner educators and four principals from the four selected primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. Documents, such as the Personnel Administrative Measurement dealing with the role of principal, were analysed for the purpose of triangulation.

The study used a qualitative case study approach to interpret meaning constructed from participant contributions made during face-to-face, one-on-one, in depth and semi-structured interviews which were conducted to establish how educators experience professional development in terms of induction in public primary schools. It was anticipated that answers and their meanings obtained from the interviews might reveal the experiences of both principals and educators related to the professional development process and how it affects the quality of teaching and learning in primary schools. The epistemological and ontological assumptions underpinning this qualitative study were that knowledge is constructed through participants' social interaction with reality. The principals and the educators participating in this study come from different social worlds, and it was expected that, therefore, the realities they constructed may differ (Merriam, 1994:6). This qualitative paradigm also enabled an inductive analyse of the data and the use of the analysis results as findings of the study.

## **1.9 RESEARCH METHODS**

The research methods included sampling, interviews, document analysis and data analysis.

### **1.9.1 Sampling**

This study used purposive sampling in order to select principals and beginner educators from two primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The selected participants were questioned on how beginner educators are inducted in their schools; the challenges they face during the induction process and the type of support/mentoring they are provided with during the induction process. The total sample comprised six participants (two principals and four beginner educators with not more than two years' experience in the field) who have undergone professional development through induction. The sampled participants were interviewed to obtain meaningful data related to the phenomena under investigation. Educators who were never inducted were excluded from the sample.

The principals and educators in this study are from Quintile 2 schools which are no fee schools. The learners do not pay school fees as most people in the area are unemployed. The majority of educators are highly qualified and the schools' enrolments increase on an annual basis as these schools are located in a young and growing community. The schools hire newly qualified educators at the beginning of every year.

### **1.9.2 Interviews**

Participants in this study were individually interviewed, using one-on-one, semi-structured interviews during which certain questions were probed further for meaning, clarity and depth (Creswell, 2003). Six participants consisting of two principals (two females) and four beginner educators (one male and three females

fresh from university) consented to be involved in the research. The educators are products of the Fudza Lushaka Bursary Scheme and were interviewed after school hours in their respective schools so as not to interfere with the normal teaching time. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes during which the following interview schedule was used:

### **Interview schedule**

*When did you start teaching?*

*Were you ever inducted? When was this done?*

*What are your experiences of the induction process?*

*What challenges did you face during the induction process?*

*What support/mentoring was provided to you during the induction process?*

*What were your expectations of the induction process and were they met?*

*What aspects of the induction process you consider benefited your teaching?*

*How was the induction process evaluated?*

*Is there anything else you would like to add?*

### **1.9.3 Documents analysis**

Official documents, such as the Personnel Administrative Measurement which outlines the role of principals, were analysed as a means of gaining information about how educators should be professionally developed. Other documents from the school, like the staff development programme and the evaluation reports, were analysed and then triangulated with the data from interviews.

### **1.9.4 Data analysis**

The data analysis started with the researcher listening to the taped responses of the participants and their transcription. The transcribed data was read and re-read to deduce logic and to get a sense of the participants' varied understanding of their

experiences of how principals induct educators in primary schools. The data was coded using open-coding – a word-by-word, phrase-by-phrase and sentence-by-sentence analysis to get initial codes (Strauss 1987:55-56). The codes were then grouped into categories which were merged into broad themes (Glasser& Strauss 1999:76).

### **1.10 CREDIBILITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS**

The credibility and trustworthiness of a study is revealed through the quality of the participant responses given during interviews; the research results obtained from the triangulation of the interviews; and the multiple sources and documents used during data collection (Schwandt, 2007:299). The researcher was as objective as possible but also sensitive to personal bias and how it could shape the study. It was difficult to avoid filtering data through a personal lens, specifically influenced by the researcher's Mathematics teaching background (Creswell, 2003: 182). In acknowledging the existence of bias, values and interests or reflexivity, the researcher affirms that he attempted to limit personal interpretation while acknowledging that it was intrinsic to qualitative data analysis. Member-checking was done to obtain evidence of the authenticity and credibility of the data and to meet the ethical requirement of constructing a trustworthy research that may be of benefit to the teaching profession. Briggs (2007:115) emphasises the importance of retaining the records of conversations to check their veracity with participants.

### **1.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Ethical considerations, rules and behavioural expectations about correct conduct towards respondents, employers, sponsors, researchers and learners (De Vos, 1998: 240) were observed in all instances as they are a widely accepted set of moral principles for individuals or groups. Firstly, for permission to conduct research was applied for from the Limpopo Provincial and National District offices and then ethical clearance was requested from the University of South Africa (Unisa) before

commencing with the field work. Principals and beginner educators at selected primary schools were asked for permission and consent to participate, using letters explaining the purpose of the study. All participants were assured of their voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time should they wish to do so. Participant confidentiality and anonymity was assured concerning any information provided. McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 334) believe that information given by, and about, participants needs to be kept confidential unless otherwise agreed, through informed consent. Only the researcher had access to the names and data which was collected data anonymously. The privacy of the respondents would be protected at all costs. Privacy in this case means that which normally is not intended for others to observe or analyse (Sieber in De Vos *et al.*, 2005: 61 Once participants' consent was obtained pseudonyms were used to protect their identity (Trochim, 2001:24; Ary, 2006:484).

### **1.12 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This study used information received from the available participants and, therefore, the findings are not generalized to all areas of education because it represents the perceptions of a small sample of principals and educators involved in the induction process in schools. Furthermore, the findings of this study cannot be reproduced because the conditions under which the phenomenon was investigated cannot be exactly the same as those of other groups studied in such an inquiry. In other words, the findings are applicable only to those principals and beginner educators in the primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province to which the study was confined.

### **1.13 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of the research is that it has resulted in making recommendations to assist the Department of Education and policy makers to develop tools and strategies to help principals and educators understand the induction process. These

strategies of improving induction of new educators may assist principals struggling to implement the goals of induction in schools.

## **1.14 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS**

The main terms and concepts used in the study are clarified below.

### **1.14.1 Beginner educators**

For the purpose of this study, beginning educators or newly appointed educators refers to those educators who have taught for less than four years after graduation from college or university.

### **1.14.2 Induction**

Induction is a fundamental process of settling newly appointed educators in a new environment (Ajowi, 2011). It is intended to effectively introduce newly appointed educators to work procedures, rules and regulations and to assist them to quickly adapt to teaching. The induction of newly appointed teachers is an important administrative and supervisory function of the school administrators; how new teachers are introduced to their work can greatly influence the contributions that they will eventually make to the school. Some researchers define staff induction as an extension of professional preparation for teaching (Lyons, 2010), while others see it as a process whereby beginners are supported to demonstrate competence (Dowding, 1998). It is worth noting that induction does not have an appraisal component.

Dowding (1998) believes that induction should be disassociated from appraisal in the sense that induction, unlike appraisal, is a positive, caring and an uplifting experience. Induction is an on-going process that includes formal and informal professional and social development. Castetter (1996) defines induction as the efforts



of the school in enabling and assisting newly appointed staff members to carry out their designated duties as required while ensuring that the school's normal functioning is not disturbed.

### **1.14.3 Mentoring**

School principals play a vital role in determining the direction of their schools. Their abilities are central to building schools that promote effective teaching and learning. Mentoring is an important element of a comprehensive induction programme because it provides support and development to new educators through face-to-face interaction with experienced mentors who provide insights on teaching practice through classroom observation; by conducting formative assessments on the progress of new educators; by giving feedback; and by providing support related to the challenges faced by newly appointed educators (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). A good mentor should not only be a veteran teacher with effective instructional practices, but should also have developed specific skills to support new educators.

### **1.14.4 Orientation**

Principals of schools should devise orientation programmes for newly appointed educators to expose them to the school reality and to provide them with essential information about their new environment. Newly appointed educators need to be settled in new surroundings and orientation by the principal or experienced staff will make beginners feel more welcome. The orientation process gives new educators information concerning their duties, school policies and the vision and mission of the school. It is vital for integrating beginner educators into the teaching profession and for socialising them by taking them to a tour; showing them the school environment; and introducing them to their colleagues and other stakeholders.

### **1.14.5 Expectations**

Newly appointed educators come to teaching with certain expectations. It is the duty of the principal to guide and assist them in creating realistic expectations of the profession. Unclear or confusing expectations of school principals, parents, learners and colleagues may lead to new educators experiencing a sense of disorientation and inadequacy (Day, 1999:72). Therefore, the principal should ensure that newly appointed educators know exactly what is expected of them.

## **1.15 RESEARCH PROGRAMME AND CHAPTER OUTLINE**

The following is a description of the research programme in terms of a chapter outline:

- Chapter 1 presents the purpose of the research and explains the rationale for the study; it stipulates the specific and general aims of the study; it explicitly describes the research design and the measures taken to establish credibility; it acknowledges the limitations of the study; and it indicates the possible significance of the study for the greater research community.
- Chapter 2 is a literature review related to the experiences of educators concerning induction as a tool for professional development as well as the challenges they face during this process. With reference to the relevant literature, the possible implications of developing educators professionally in public primary schools are explored. Reference is made to similar teacher development programmes in other countries and the effect they have on teaching in primary schools.
- Chapter 3 presents the research design and methodologies used and justifies the choices made with regard to research instruments and strategies in terms of the research topic as well as the research purpose, questions and objectives.

- Chapter 4 concerns the analysis of how educators and principals experienced the induction process for the professional development of educators in primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. Through the analysis and interpretation of responses and *verbatim* quotations, themes are developed. With reference to relevant literature the possible implications of inducting educators for professional development in primary public schools is indicated.
- Chapter 5 presents the research findings and conclusions reached from the rich description of the participants about their experiences of the induction process in selected primary schools in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. Informed by these conclusions a few tentative suggestions on the way forward regarding induction for the professional development of beginner educators by principals are offered. In doing so, some recommendations are made related to the needs and concerns of principals and educators involved in the professional development process, using induction as a strategy to offer support to beginner educators and principals.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The induction of newly qualified educators who are starting a new job in a new school environment can be a challenging experience. Beginner educators cannot produce their best work and achieve the objectives of the schools that employed them if there is no proper induction programme to guide, introduce and initiate beginning educators. They need guidance and orientation to adjust to the school environment; to school work; and to their colleagues and learners with whom they have to interact (Steyn, 2004:1). The best way of supporting and developing novice educators is to have a constructive induction programme that trains and sustains them. There is also an overwhelming feeling that induction conducted at schools should be context specific in order to enable new educators to adjust to the specific school culture.

A significant characteristic of the teaching profession is its ability to ensure the smooth transition and success of its new entrants by bridging the gap between actual classroom practice and field practice. After the initial excitement of joining the teaching profession, beginner educators often face multiple problems related to their chosen careers; the discrepancy between their vision of teaching and its reality makes it more difficult than they anticipated. They are often burdened with the more difficult tasks that experienced educators reject (Podsen & Denmark, 2000). However, some beginner educators conceal their difficulties as they are unable to seek help or they consider it to be a sign of mediocrity. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the principals to understand that the induction of beginner educators is vital for the improvement of quality teaching and learning.

Improvement in teaching and learning can also only be ensured if there is collaboration and interaction between stakeholders in the development of support programmes for beginner educators (Hargreaves, 2011). Principals are, therefore, responsible for the provision of support as well as for the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. Their role in leading and managing their schools is indispensable to the transformation and improvement of the schools' core business which is effective and quality teaching and learning. Since the systemic and systematic transformation of schools depends on how educators teach and how learners learn (Hargreaves, 2007), the induction of newly appointed educators should be systematic; it should be meaningful; it should be well organized or arranged according to a set plan; and/or it should be grouped in a system. Systemic transformation should make newly appointed educators understand the meaning of induction in terms of the full system since educator development affects the entire body or system of education (Joseph & Riegeluth, 2010).

Induction for teacher development is important to the core business of the school which is quality teaching and learning. The process of induction should be well structured so that it is not mistaken as just orientation to school procedures; induction should be well-planned and implemented for professional development and support (Rolley, 2001).

## **2.2 INDUCTION AND MENTORING**

Numerous studies have indicated that the transition from student teacher to newly appointed educator can be problematic (Turner 1994, Koetsier and Wubbels, 1995). In order to make the transition from student life to that of educator smooth, enjoyable and productive, beginner educators need to be inducted. Two important concepts, staff induction and mentoring, are linked to induction.

Several definitions of induction are given in the literature. Some researchers define staff induction as an extension of professional preparation for teaching (Lyons, 1993),

while others see it as a process whereby beginners are supported to demonstrate competence (Dowding, 1998). It is worth noting that induction does not appear to contain an appraisal component. Dowding (1998) suggests that induction should be disassociated with appraisal in the sense that induction - unlike appraisal - is a positive, caring and an uplifting experience. According to Whitaker (2001), an effective induction process is based on exemplary teaching practice, an understanding of adult and student learning and a professional environment that supports collaboration and inquiry. Induction is an on-going process that includes formal and informal professional and social development. Castetter (1996) defines induction as the efforts of the school to enable and assist newly appointed staff members to carry out their designated duties as required and to ensure that the school's normal functioning is not disturbed.

Beginner educators should be inducted because they experience fear and insecurity during their early days of teaching. Through induction the feelings of fear, insecurity, stress and anxiety are dealt with and minimised. If beginner educators are unable to cope and overcome these negative feelings, they may leave the profession. Induction in schools also serves to address realistic educator expectations about the profession and results in job satisfaction and a positive attitude towards the school.

According to Canter and Canter (1999), staff induction programmes should include the following:

- i) Matters related to the school that include, amongst other things, the school culture, vision, mission, values, school policy, financial and physical resources and the curricular and administrative services offered by the school.
- ii) Matters related to staff members, such as the school's organisational structure, work allocation, job requirements for staff and sound interpersonal relationships.

- iii) Matters dealing with aspects of teaching and the school's curriculum which include classroom management, academic area policies, teaching paradigms and effective tuition skills and techniques.
- iv) Matters which are learner-centred, such as classroom discipline, communication with learners and dealing with learner behavioural problems which is one of the most problematic areas for the majority beginner educators.
- v) Matters related to educator-parent relationships, physical and financial resources as well as administration which are vital when staff induction programmes are designed.

Whitaker (2001) believes that issues related to classroom management, like the discipline of learners; curriculum planning; and working with learners with poor language skills, different abilities and sometimes from unsupportive family backgrounds can be overwhelming for beginner educators.

The issue of how to communicate with parents, getting acquainted with school buildings, fixed assets, teaching materials and equipment as well as issues of administrative workload, such as attendance registers, assessment forms and classroom stocktaking, causes much frustration and stress among beginner educators and needs to be thoroughly addressed during induction programmes.

Dowding (1998), Heyns (2000) and Jones (2002) maintain that the four main objectives of staff induction programmes should be that orientation should serve as a baptism of the beginner educators into the teaching profession; psychological support should help improve the welfare of beginner educators, both personally and professionally; teaching skills should teach beginner educators to learn and prune their knowledge, skills and attitudes in dealing with dynamic classroom situations; and a philosophy of education should provide critical reflection on practice skills and ensure that the beginner educators remain committed to on-going professional development. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that beginning educators who

participated in some kind of induction performed better in various aspects of teaching, such as keeping learners focused on the task, developing workable lesson plans, using effective questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet learner interests, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere and demonstrating successful classroom management. Experienced educators who serve as mentors also benefit from their participation in induction and can refine their own teaching practices and build leadership skills through reflection on their personal practices.

Mentoring is an important element of a comprehensive induction programme because it provides support and development for new educators through face-to-face interaction with experienced mentors. Mentors also provide insights on teaching practice by means of classroom observation; by conducting formative assessments on the progress of new educators; by giving feedback on these assessments, and by providing support in terms of the challenges new teacher face (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). A good mentor should not only be a veteran teacher with effective instructional practices, but should have developed specific skills to support new educators. Therefore, a rigorous selection of mentors should be based on appropriate training in mentoring and on-going professional development and support. Mentor selection criteria should take into consideration experience in teaching and a mentor's own teaching practices; subject content knowledge; commitment to on-going professional growth; and empathy with, and understanding of, the needs of new educators (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

### **2.3 CHALLENGES/PROBLEMS FACED BY BEGINNER EDUCATORS**

A review of the relevant literature indicates that there are several factors that cause the difficulties many educators face at the beginning of their careers which include the following:

- **Reality shock** - What beginner educators learn at university or college is quite different from the practical situation in the classroom. They soon learn



that the demands of teaching are greater than they expected when compared to what was taught at university/college (Brock and Grady 1997).

- **Weak knowledge and skill-base** - Because their pre-service training did not adequately prepare them for the actual demands of the teaching profession, beginning educators lack the necessary skills and knowledge, such as lesson preparation, teaching methods and assessment, pacing lessons, keeping up with paperwork, classroom administration and time for preparing lessons (Brock and Grady 1997). A lack of crucial resources, like textbooks, teaching aids, classrooms, laboratories, libraries, etc., add to the stress experienced by beginner educators.
- **Expectations of principals, colleagues, parents and learners** - These are sometimes not clear and may be ambiguous. As a result beginner educators become more stressed and more confused because of the gap between what they learnt at university, their ideals and the practical classroom situation (Koetsier & Wubbels, 1995). Brock and Grady (1997) are of the opinion that beginner educators carry tremendous workloads in that beside teaching overcrowded classrooms, dealing with a great deal of paper work and designing and keeping assessment records for all learners in the classes, beginner educators are given an endless list of supplementary duties, such as extramural activities, managing the National School Nutrition Programme (NSNP) records and keeping a stock register. Whitaker (2011) maintains that rather than balancing responsibilities of beginner educators, they are often given more work in terms of the least desirable courses or subjects, extracurricular activities that experienced educators do not want to accept and the most difficult and undisciplined students. Mohr and Townsend, as quoted by Steyn (2004), report that beginner educators often feel overwhelmed by the complexity and workload of teaching. The demands on beginner educators become very heavy which, in turn, makes them feel inadequate and unable to handle the pressure.

- **Isolation** - This phenomenon, experienced by beginner educators, is both geographic and professional because as educators they spend most of their school day alone with learners in classrooms away from their families and other adults (Brock and Grady, 1997). Where there is conflict among staff members or staff politics, such as managers being unable to interact with other staff members, beginner educators becomes exposed to a negative environment and end up being more isolated than ever from their colleagues.
- **Classroom management and discipline** - According to Steyn (2004), a further challenge for beginner educators is classroom management and discipline. Herztog (2002) believes that beginner educators' problems include their relationships with learners; working with learners who have poor language skills; working with learners with different abilities; and motivating learners' without the necessary resources. Joeger and Boettcher (2010) also report that many beginner educators carry out tasks in poor working conditions in schools where there is an absence of materials and textbooks. An adequate supply of textbooks and teaching material has a major impact on beginner educators' performance.

## 2.4 THE INDUCTION PROGRAMME

New educators in schools should participate in some form of induction support for at least two years. However, providing quality, comprehensive induction support is still a challenge in most schools and districts across the country. As the implementation of the induction process continues, so the challenges for both the teachers and the principals increase because of the lack of induction of newly appointed educators in schools. Such a programme should articulate elements of policy to help ensure that all new educators receive the support they need to develop into high-quality educators. Continuous and thorough support for new educators will assist new educators for at least their first two years in the classroom.

Induction services that end prior to two completed years fail to capitalize on an opportunity to support and guide new educators as they strive to become more effective teachers. Intensive, on-going support in their second year of teaching not only gives new educators the support they need to survive, but also assists them as they work to improve their instruction over the long term. In addition, continuous multi-year support provides structure and continuity for new educators at a critical juncture in their careers. Once this structural element is in place, the substantive elements provide the interaction and support new educators need to develop into effective instructors (Sun, 2012).

According to Boydell and Bines (1995), a planned induction programme for beginner educators is important so that they receive the necessary help. This programme needs to be context-specific and should help beginner educators to adjust to the culture of the school (Boydell and Bines; Dinham, 1992; Turner, 1994).

A set of development growth opportunities constitutes the core of an induction programme which is aimed at addressing the needs of beginner educators and consists of several steps - as suggested by Brock and Grady (1998). The steps are the following:

**Step 1: Initial orientation** - As pointed out by Heyns (2000) and Wong(2002), matters like school culture, values, vision, mission and others should be discussed by the principal with beginner educators at least two or more days before school re-opens. More personal concerns and problems can also be discussed during this time. During this step necessary school information should be imparted, including school rules and procedures, discipline policy, background information about the community, a brief school history, the duties of the beginner educator, assessment procedures, school resources, their location and procedures for requesting them (Bolam *et al.*, 1995). Mentors can also be introduced to the beginner educator.

**Step 2: The first school day** - According to Bolam *et al.* (1995) and Heyns (2000), this is the day on which beginner educators are exposed to reality. They should be formally introduced to their colleagues, general timetables, class timetables as well as personal timetables and their tasks should be explained to them. It is the main duty of the mentors on this day to help the novices face the realities of the profession (Heaney, 2001; Heyns, 2000; Mohr and Townsend, 2001).

**Step 3: The first school week** - Dowding (1998) and Heyns (2000) are of the opinion that the first school week is simply an extension and continuation of the first school day. Matters, like punctuality, attendance of school activities and assemblies, utilisation of free periods and general administrative matters, can be dealt with by the mentors.

**Step 4: Induction during the first school term** - Heyns (2000) points out that Step 4 is a vital part of professional development and that matters, like departmental and school policies, time management, classroom management and classroom observation by skilled educators, may be addressed during this step.

**Step 5: On-going assistance and development** - The induction programme is unlike programmes that stop after just one week; it is the kind of programme that is on-going and continuous. The strategies suggested by Black (2001) and Brock and Grady (1997) include periodic meetings with the principal and support from the mentors.

## **2.5 MENTORING BEGINNER EDUCATORS**

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) and Yeomans and Sampson (1994) indicate that mentors believe that the mentoring of beginner educators has a positive impact on their professional development. According to Lindgren (2005), Maldarez, Hobson, Tracey and Kerr (2007), mentoring greatly impacts the development capabilities of beginner educators, especially their ability to manage their time; their classroom management

skills; their behaviour; as well as the management of their workloads. Researchers, such as Hobson *et al.* (2008) claim that mentors also benefit professionally from mentoring which suggests that mentoring not only has a positive impact on mentees, but also on the mentors. It has been reported that mentors learn through “critical reflection on their own practice.” They learn by talking to the mentees about teaching and learning, in general, and their own teaching, in particular (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006).

Black (2001) points out that the common approach to mentoring beginner educators is to pair them with mentors; this reduces the professional isolation identified by Bolam *et al.* (1995). Bolam *et al.* (1995) maintain that mentors’ roles and job descriptions are not clear. According to these researchers, the following are some of the roles and responsibilities that mentors need to perform:

- Act as a resource for beginner teachers, including assisting them with accommodation, transport arrangements, etc.
- Listen to, and discuss, lesson ideas with the beginner with the objective to refine the beginner’s skills.
- Provide guidance and interpersonal support.

Beginner educators starting in a new schools view the school principal as the most important person for inducting them (Brock & Grady, 1997: 23). Principals should remain sensitive to the needs of the new educators and acknowledge the fact that beginner educators are educators in transition (Wragg, *et al.*, 578) who need continual assistance. Principals, as experienced educators, should understand the problems of the beginning educators and be able to provide direct and appropriate support. This implies that support and guidance from the school principal is vital to beginner educators so that they are not overwhelmed with relationships and the complexities of their work (Steyn, 2004:84).

Systematically organised activities must be put in place as part of induction for professional development to prepare beginners for their job. Beginner educators’ skills, knowledge and expertise should be covered by the induction activities.

Induction courses, in-service training, as well as initial training should all be catered for by professional development for the quality of education in school settings and for educational performance and effectiveness (OECD, 2009:49). Induction is vital to lay the foundation of attaining the basic goals of the educational effort that will lead to the attainment of medium goals like enhancing educators' job satisfaction. Educational quality may only be achieved once performance is enhanced (Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005). Inspiring teacher education in South Africa as well as an evolving school curriculum-policy acknowledges that the professional development of teachers is of increasing importance in teacher education (DoE, 2005).

## **2.6 THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN INDUCTING BEGINNER EDUCATORS**

Principals are accountable for the quality of teaching and learning in their schools. Induction is one of the schools' efforts to support newly qualified educators to adjust to their new work environment in order to have fewer problems and so that the schools' operations may continue successfully (Casterter 1996:182). Where induction is properly implemented, educators improve teaching skills and practices that were not learnt during their original educator training (Dowding, 1998:18; San, 1999:19)., Under the principals' guidance schools should do a needs analysis to identify more relevant areas to be addressed during professional development for beginner educators in the schools which, in itself, will help the schools plan for induction.

While principals are expected to focus on the operation and management aspects of a school, a new focus of responsibility is on staff support. School leaders should create a caring learning environment that concentrates on learner success. Research by Ingersoll (2004) indicates that inadequate support from school administration is one of the three most often reported causes of a new educator's decision to leave the profession. Principals who are knowledgeable about factors affecting new educators are proactive in supporting them and are committed to professional growth to make a significant difference.

## 2.7 TEACHER INDUCTION

Supportive orientation of newly appointed educators of the school environment before the induction programme begins may reduce anxiety and feelings of isolation and make their experience a coherent, supportive, comprehensive and sustained professional development process.

According to Heyns (2000), induction is part of long-term professional development. This is a phase in which beginner educators are introduced to as many aspects of their work as possible, including an overview of departmental and school policies, time management, classroom management and classroom observation by skilled educators (Freiberg, 2002). Black (2001) and Brock and Grady (1998) point out that activities in developmental induction are designed to assist beginner educators to develop and refine those skills which are perceived to be lacking or needing attention. These researchers believe that developmental induction programmes should provide on-going support for beginner educators and suggest periodic meetings with principals for updates and information as well as support from mentors to help them understand their roles and responsibilities. For Black (2001), the common phenomenon of induction for beginner educators is pairing new educators with mentors. Mohr and Townsend (2001) support this view and add that the pairing of beginner educators with mentors has the potential to decrease professional isolation.

A study conducted in Ghana by Keengwe and Adjei-Boateng in 2012 with 30 beginner educators from six schools in three districts from one region reveals that there is a need for government and education officials to create a policy on the induction, mentoring, support and orientation of beginner educators. Another study by Ingersoll and Smith (2004) maintains that many other African and developing countries, including South Africa, do not have a clear policy on the induction and mentoring of, and support for, beginner educators; as a result the initiation of

beginner educators is usually a trial and error experience. Both studies point out that state-level teacher induction and mentoring programmes are needed to help beginning educators adjust and adapt more easily to the demands of the teaching profession as well as to enhance teacher retention in this noble profession. Apparently, school authorities see no need for proper induction, mentoring, support and orientation of beginner educators unless there is a clear policy for it.

According to Ombe, Alipio and Nhavoto (2009), in many African countries the induction of beginner educators in terms of policy and practice in schools does not take place. This trend can only be ended by creating a clear and formal policy on the orientation, induction, mentoring and support of beginner educators. The establishment of such a policy will ensure that the process is not informal and that it is not based on the benevolence of individuals, thereby making it very unsustainable and unreliable; it should be based on clear principles and guidelines that will oblige all school principals, departmental heads, other colleagues and the entire community where the school is located to properly induct beginner educators through the whole process.

Canter and Canter (1999) recommend that staff induction programmes should include aspects of the school's operation; the school's organizational structure; work allocation; interpersonal relationships; teaching and learning; and classroom discipline. Classroom discipline is a problematic area for the majority of beginner educators and, according to Whitaker (2001), can be overwhelming for beginner educators. Matters related to educator-parent relationships, physical and financial resources - as well as administration - are also vital when staff induction programmes are designed.

In planning for induction, the principal should identify initial educator needs that required to be developed in beginning educators (Suzan Rodrigues, 2004:31). Once the induction process is in place, newly appointed educators should be able to adjust to the school culture. Therefore, induction should be taken seriously and should



address issues which include formal and informal elements of social and professional development. Dowding (1998:18) is of the opinion that induction should be positive, caring and that it should be an on-going process. The formal process of induction should introduce novice educators to the practice of teaching in a more advanced, effective and professional manner, while the informal process of induction should focus on the socialisation of educators (Blandford, 2000:93).

### **2.7.1 Induction process structure**

Teacher development in the form of induction should not end with the appointment of educators, but should be an on-going process that will last throughout their teaching careers. (Enrich *et al.*, 2004:530). The structuring of an induction process should enable the newly appointed educators to gradually, but confidently, take up their responsibilities and execute their duties under the watchful eye, guidance and supervision of senior educators (Hargreaves & Jacka 1995:42). It should be structured in such a way that newly appointed educators work collaboratively in partnerships by sharing and developing mutual interests. This is heavily dependant on leadership and management in schools to achieve a better and quality education (Steyn, 2008:889).

The induction process should enable newly appointed educators to understand and, ultimately, to master all aspects of teaching as it provides them with the skills and the knowledge required to effectively and efficiently execute their roles as educators (Mizell, 2010; Ingersoll, 2012). The professional induction development programme of newly appointed educators should include an introduction to the school ethos. The mistaken view of seeing induction as a tool that fixes errors should be rejected in the minds of all involved in the induction of newly appointed educators. A better view of induction is that it is a continuous development process aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. This view that induction is part of professional development for all beginning educators should be imprinted in the minds of all involved in the induction process.

## 2.7.2 Experience of the induction process

Induction activities play a major role in socialising new educators with the school context and help them to maximise their professional and personal competence. During socialisation newly appointed educators are integrated into the school environment as quickly possible (Heyns, 2000:161). Beginner educators assume new responsibilities and roles as they face various problems in the workplace (Mohr & Townsend, 2001:9). They are usually confronted with unknown learners, experienced staff members, the curriculum and procedures and policies that often challenge them. It is during times like this that beginning educators start to realise that their previous educational experience has not adequately prepare them for the workplace.

During the induction process beginner educators become aware that colleges of education and universities did not prepare them well for actual teaching (Steyns, 2004:85). Many realise that their educator training classes were too theoretical, general and only partly relevant to actual school situations (Johnson *et al.*, 1993:296). They experience the fact that they have insufficient knowledge, a poor skills base, poor classroom management skills and a lack of discipline among the learners they teach; in other words, they lack experience to handle the realities of the classroom. The common challenge to newly appointed educators is being assigned the most difficult classes in the school (Nowlan & Steyn, 1990:13). Other than teaching, they are also expected to accept extra responsibilities, like being subject educators, sports masters, providing pastoral care as well as being class educators.

Beginning educators sometimes have to accept demeaning comments from angry parents in their daily work (Brock & Grady, 1998:181). It is the duty of school principals to make new educators feel welcome by conveying the message to all that they are valued members of the school community. Due to the inter-connectedness of the problems commonly associated with induction, it is possible to identify

strategies to simultaneously address more than one problem (Mohr & Townsend, 2001:10).

### **2.7.3 Objectives of induction**

Dowding (1998), Heyns (2000) and Jones (2002) summarise the main objectives of staff induction programmes as receiving orientation that should serve as a baptism of beginner educators into the teaching profession. Orientation also serves as psychological support to help improve the situation of beginner educators. During induction, newly appointed educators' teaching skills are sharpened and they learn to prune knowledge, skills and attitudes in dealing with their dynamic classrooms. Where effective induction has been conducted, beginner educators remain committed to on-going professional development but where it has not been properly conducted, they may experience fear and insecurity, especially during their early days of teaching. The induction process deals with, and minimises, feelings of fear, insecurity, stress and anxiety. It addresses educator expectations of the profession realistically and this may result in greater job satisfaction and a positive attitude towards the school. If beginner educators are unable to cope due to a lack of induction, they may not overcome any negative feelings and may end up leaving the profession.

### **2.7.4 Mentoring**

Principals should ensure that newly appointed educators are developed professionally by means of mentoring which is a process whereby more experienced individuals assist those who are less experienced (Zepeda, 1999). Delegated experienced educators develop a collaborative partnership with newly appointed educators; they work together, share and develop mutual interests (Tillman, 2005). Mentoring is a method whereby novice practitioners are taught to adapt to, and succeed in, new professional roles by working together with experienced individuals to develop their careers and abilities (Tally, 2008). Because mentoring entails an

interactive process between two individuals of differing levels of experience and expertise, the newly appointed educator receives help and develops teaching ability but is also involved in a process of socialization within the school (Ball, 1990).

Mentors perform a variety of intense functions that include teaching, encouraging, counselling and role-modelling. Where mentoring is used, novice educators are given a smooth and efficient transition into the teaching culture by means of support in instructional practice and in the transforming culture and profession of teaching. Educational leaders should understand that not all educator education programmes are extensive enough to effectively address or change the learned disposition and attitudes of education students (Wang & Odell, 2002). This implies that the knowledge and skills which student educators acquire during their training at college and university should be supplemented. Mentoring is a major component of induction to supplement the knowledge of beginning educators.

## **2.8 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 2 has explored induction as a tool for professional development of newly qualified educators in terms of a relevant literature review. The next chapter, Chapter 3, presents the research design and methodologies used for the study and it justifies the choices made with regard to research instruments and strategies in terms of the research topic as well as the research purpose, questions and objectives.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave a detailed description of how newly qualified educators should be inducted by relating it to the relevant literature. If they are not properly inducted or there is no programme to guide, introduce and initiate them, then the objectives of the schools that employed them cannot be achieved until they have adjusted to the work they are required to do; the environment in which they work; and the colleagues and learners with whom they have to work (Steyn, 2004:1). Novice educators need a constructive induction programme to train and sustain them.

This chapter presents a detailed description and discussion of the research plan that will be used to answer the research questions. The research design includes the paradigmatic assumptions that underpinned the research methodology; the way in which the researcher selected the site and the participants for the study; the data collection methods that were used; and the data analysis strategies that were implemented. The researcher also accounts for how he addressed the issue of research quality and explains his role as a researcher. The ethical considerations that the researcher adhered to are also provided (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001: 166)

#### 3.2 RESEARCH AIMS

The aims of this study were to explore how beginner educators are inducted as well as the challenges they face during the induction process in the Bochum East Circuit in the Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. The study sought a better understanding of how induction activities ensure that educators are developed professionally. The study also explored the principals' and educators' experiences of

the induction process and the effect of the induction process on educator and organizational growth.

### **3.3 PARADIGM ASSUMPTIONS**

The methodological assumptions of this study are based on an interpretivist/constructivist paradigm which provides guidelines that enabled the researcher to deconstruct the realities of the experiences of principals and educators during the induction process. Insights from the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm were combined to create meaning from the participants' unique and subjective lived experiences (Crotty, 1998). The principals' and the educators' experiences were found to reveal different views because different people's experiences are unique and the realities that emerged from their experiences are multiple. Constructivists and interpretivists believe that reality is constructed from personal experience, which varies from one individual to the next (Crotty, 1998; Charmaz, 2000; Trochim, 2001; Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The use of different methods to collect data served to generate various meanings from the participants (Barry, 2002).

The interpretive and constructivist paradigms that directed this study complemented each other with regard to researcher-participant relationships. Whereas the interpretivist approach established a trusting relationship between the researcher and the participants and enabled the exploration of rich experiences, the constructivist approach encouraged the mutual interaction between the researcher and the participants (Crotty, 1998; Terre Blanch & Durrheim, 2002; Denzin & Lincoln 2003). Both strategies were merged to elicit deeper meanings during the collection of data, data analysis and the interpretation of the data. Rapport with participants was established before commencing with the data collection process by means of communication about the research which was maintained throughout the entire research process.

### 3.4 RESEARCH APPROACH

This study used a qualitative approach to collect data and meaning was constructed from the information that participants imparted. This qualitative research approach was chosen primarily for the purpose of enabling the researcher to describe and analyse principals' and educators' collective experiences of the process of induction. The approach was deemed relevant for collecting data about the phenomenon as well as answering the research questions. Qualitative interviews used to collect data were one-on-one interactions with research participants in their natural setting (Hoberg, 1999:76).

Qualitative research enabled the researcher to analyse individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001: 395). The strength of qualitative research is the rich and detailed descriptive data collected from the participants, including expressed feelings, thought processes and emotions – which would have been difficult to obtain using other research approaches (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Merriam, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999). According to Cohen *et al.* (2002:137), some characteristics of the qualitative approach are that humans actively construct their own meaning of experiences and that meanings arise out of social situations which can be handled through an interpretive process.

Another reason for choosing the qualitative research approach is that the participants' natural setting provided a holistic understanding of the induction process (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). In order to understand a phenomenon there is a need to understand the context because different situations affect behaviour and perspective and vice versa (Creswell, 1994:154).

The limitations of using a qualitative research approach are that it is a time-consuming process and that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis (Merriam, 1998). This requires competence and

capability in data collection and document analysis. Qualitative research also has the possibility of researcher bias as researcher subjectivity comes into play during data collection, data analysis and data interpretation. To ensure rigor in this research process, the researcher used a reflective journal and memos during fieldwork and data analysis to record and reflect on the details of the research process.

### **3.5 DATA COLLECTION**

Data collection is dependent on the chosen research design and the research site; it includes the method of sampling and results in the analysis process.

#### **3.5.1 Research Design**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006), research design is a plan and structure of investigating and obtaining answers to research questions. The case study design used highlights how the study was conducted; the procedures used; and describes the setup of the data collection and analysis. The case study design is an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon such as experiences of induction by beginner educators within a real-life context like the school (Yin, 2009). This research focused on how principals induct newly appointed educators in their schools. In line with the study of Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:184), this qualitative case study will enable readers in similar and different circumstances to understand the results of the study. The case study ensured that the researcher was able to capture and explore the unique circumstances of the participants.

#### **3.5.2 Research Site**

This study concentrated on the induction experiences newly appointed educators in two purposively selected schools in the Capricorn district of Limpopo Province.



### **3.5.3 Sampling**

Two schools in the Capricorn district of the Bochum East Circuit that are involved in the induction of newly appointed educators were sampled to obtain meaningful data concerning the phenomena under investigation. The participants in this study included two principals and four educators. The study focused on educator induction for professional development for rich, in-depth information. Purposive sampling ensured the selection of information-rich participants who were easily accessible and willing to be involved in the study (Patton 2002; Trochim, 2001; Fraenkel & Norman, 2006). Since only a few cases were involved in the study, it was not easy to guarantee that all participants would provide data truthfully because of the intensity of the data collection procedure (Patton, 2000). The site where participants were based, Bochum East Circuit in the Capricorn district, was within easy reach and enabled the researcher to make multiple visits until data was saturated (Stake, 2000).

### **3.5.4 Data Collection Method**

Data collection in this study was accomplished through face-to-face, in depth, semi structured interviews with the selected school principals and educators to explore their experiences of the induction process and how it benefited them and the school as a whole (see Appendices F & G). Interviews are relevant in a qualitative study because they facilitate interactive dialogue between participants and researchers (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006:38). Interviews were conducted on an individual basis, rather than in a group (Bogdans & Biklen, 2003, cited in Anderson & Ferguson, 2007). The researcher initiated the conversations with the specific purpose of reassuring participants to obtain relevant information focused on the research question (Cohan *et al.*, 2000:268). The questions asked related to the experiences of the principals and the educators regarding induction programmes.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted after school hours to avoid disrupting participant educators' teaching time and the principals' daily management of their schools. Semi-structured interviews are relevant in a qualitative study because they facilitate interactive dialogues between participants and researchers (Halcomb & Davidson, 2006:38). The interviews were tape-recorded after consent was received from the participants. The recordings ensured the collection and storing of data in the exact manner in which it was provided (Blaxter *et al.*, 2004: 172). An open dialogue took place with the participants who revealed their lived experiences (Merriam, 2000) and their active involvement in the meaning-making process which was used for constructing and interpreting the conveyed knowledge. Hannan (2007) contends that a great deal of qualitative material comes from talking to people, either through formal interviews or casual conversation. The researcher tapped the depths of reality of the situation to discover participants' meaning and understanding by showing empathy with the interviewees and thereby winning their confidence. The conversations with the participants were open and free and the researcher refrained from being obstructive and from influencing the interviewees.

The semi-structured interviews used contained some pre-set questions, but the researcher allowed scope for open-ended answers (Hannan, 2007). The semi-structured interviews enabled him to follow up on answers using probing questions for greater depth and clarity (Morse & Field, 1995). Most of the research questions focused on what, how and why questions and were further probed with the aim to obtain rich data from the interviews (Seidman, 1991; Marshall, 1999; Trochim, 2001; Creswell 2002; Rubin & Rubin 2005). Through the semi-structured interviews, most participants revealed their intentions, beliefs, values and reasons related to how they experienced the induction process (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). The data produced was triangulated to obtain common factors in the experiences of the principals and the educators.

### **3.5.5 Data Analysis**

Qualitative data analysis is a systematic process of coding, categorizing and interpreting data to provide an explanation of the phenomenon under study and to answer the research questions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:364). During the data analysis the researcher discovered general statements about relationships among categories of data. The analysed interview transcripts and open-ended question responses helped identify common themes (McMillan, Mcqueen & Neidig, 2003:65). In line with recommendations made by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), the interview transcripts and other information was first chronologically ordered. This involved careful reading of data at least twice during long and undisturbed periods. The next step was to conduct initial coding by generating numerous category codes and by labelling data that was related. The codes were colour-coded to extract the findings and grouped according to similarity before being categorised. The categories were then itemised in terms of the research questions. The tape-recordings assisted the researcher in that he was able to replay the interviews when transcribing and analysing the data.

### **3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS AND CREDIBILITY OF THE STUDY**

The trustworthiness of the study was revealed by the extent to which the researcher was able to produce findings worth paying attention to and which were convincing for readers (Poggenpoel, 1998:349; Lincoln and Guba, 1985:296-300). The trustworthiness of the study was further ensured through the kept records and an audit trail of the research process that is provided in an appendix at the end of the study (Patton, 2002). All the different data sources and/or methods were also triangulated to ensure trustworthiness of data; interview data collected from the principals and the educators was on their experiences of induction programmes and this was triangulated to identify the emerging trends and challenges in the induction process.

To enhance credibility, member-checking took place whereby once the collected data was transcribed; it was returned to the participants for their responses and comments and to verify the accuracy of the interpretation. Participants were given the opportunity to acknowledge or correct what the researcher represented in terms of their perspectives and meanings (Patton, 2002). Participants also reflected on their views and alerted the researcher to opinions that they felt he should not publish (Patton, 2002; Seale, 2000).

Qualitative research findings are normally not generalised; they are linked to similar contexts by the reader when details of the research context are provided (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004; Seale, 2000; Trochim, 2001). The generalisation of the findings is limited to the schools and participants selected for this study. The findings of this study provide insights that could lead to a better understanding of the experiences of principals and educators during the induction process.

In this report *verbatim* interview transcripts and direct quotes of the participants' responses are used to share data with the readers (Seale, 2000). Reflective journals and memo notes helped capture the researcher's assumptions of the general research process. The results of the study have been confirmed or corroborated by participants after member-checking for potential bias, distortion of research findings and alternative explanations (Seale, 2000; Trochim, 2001).

### **3.7 ETHICAL ISSUES**

The researcher followed the procedures given in the ethics agreement. Essential ethical considerations - as identified by Jansen in Maree (2007:41) - include the issue of the confidentiality of the results and the findings of the study as well as the protection of the participants' identities. All participants signed consent letters before the interviews and they were assured of their right to withdraw from the interview if they did not want to continue with the interview. Additional consent was obtained from participants to be tape-recorded during the interviews. The

researcher's responsibilities also included ensuring that participants came to no harm, confidentiality, reciprocity and providing feedback on the findings. Adherence to confidentiality was ensured by making sure that names of participants as well as the sites would only be known to the supervisors. Although it is not always possible for people not to be identified, attempts were made to preserve the anonymity of individuals (Gray, 2009). The principle of respect for participants so that the study could achieve meaningful results was adhered to at all times (Moreno, 1999). Copies of the recorded tapes were made available to the university after the interviews were analysed.

The way questions were directed aimed at protecting participants during the course of the interviews (Gray, 2009). Participants were never embarrassed, ridiculed, belittled or generally subjected to any mental distress (Sudman, 1998). Matters which included values, ethical issues and permission, which are vital to the data collection process, were considered. Prior to the collection of data, application was made to the provincial education department for permission to visit the selected schools and interview the educators well in advance of proceeding with the study (Creswell, 1994:148). Application for permission to visit the schools and interview the educators was also sought from the school governing bodies (SGBs). All the participants read and signed letters of informed consent that explained the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter included the title of the study as well the researcher's details.

It was explained to the participants that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time should they wish to do so without any negative consequences. They were assured of participant confidentiality; they were told that should they consent to be interviewed, their information would not be revealed to any third party and this would be guaranteed by not asking participant to provide their names, the name of their school or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation in this study.

Participants were interviewed in a private room where only the researcher and the participant were present. Participants were given pseudonyms/numbers to conceal their identity (Cohen & Manion, 1996:367) and they were assured that the data would be used for research purposes and for improving the quality of education.

### **3.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The vastness of the Bochum East Circuit in the Capricorn District of Limpopo Province and its rural nature influenced the choice of sample. To reduce the travelling costs involved the researcher targeted schools that were within easy reach. To avoid any direct influence on the study, none of the respondents who were interviewed were from neighbouring schools. The researcher could not interview educators from schools within his school vicinity due to his position as a principal in the district.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the research paradigm and assumption of the study and research methods used in carrying out the research were presented. The selection of participants, data collection instruments and procedures and data analysis were discussed in detail. Strategies used in ensuring trustworthiness and credibility of the study as well as ethical considerations were also highlighted. The chapter concluded with the limitations of the study. In the next chapter, Chapter 4, the interpretation and analysis of the data and the research findings will be described.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESEARCH FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 3 consisted of a discussion of the research design and methodologies used and a justification of the choices made with regard to research instruments and strategies in terms of the research topic as well as the research purpose, questions and objectives. This chapter presents the data gathered during the semi-structured interviews with principals and beginner educators. The presented data is discussed in terms of the aims of the study and the research questions. The gap identified in literature is the lack of a standardised induction programme for beginner educators. The aim of this study was to explore how beginner educators are inducted in their schools; the challenges faced by beginner educators during the induction process; and the type of support/mentoring provided to beginner educators during the induction process.

The main question asked was: *How do beginner educators experience the induction process in their schools?* The sub questions were:

1. *How are beginner educators inducted in their schools?*
2. *What challenges do beginner educators face during the induction process?*
3. *What support/mentoring is provided to beginner educators during the induction process?*

#### 4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The following table, Table 4.1, summarizes the biographical information of the participant educators and principals.

**Table 4.1: The Biographical Information of Participant Educators and Principals**

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Experience in the post</b>
Teacher 1	Female	3	1year
Teacher 2	Female	4	1 year
Teacher 3	Male	5	2 years
Teacher 4	Female	1	1 year
Principal 1	Female	Primary school	4 years
Principal 2	Female	Primary School	4 years

### **4.3 RESEARCH THEMES**

The research questions suggested the following themes which will be followed by a detailed explanation:

**Theme 1** – Experiences of induction in teaching

**Theme 2** – Challenges of the Induction process

**Theme 3** – Benefits of the induction process

**Theme 4** – Support mechanisms during induction

**Theme 5** – Expectations during induction

#### **4.3.1 Theme 1: Experiences of induction in teaching**

In this study four educators and two principals were interviewed. All four educators interviewed indicated that they had been inducted but they felt that the period of induction was inadequate. There were mixed feelings about their experiences of the induction process. Most of the participants valued the support experienced and viewed it as very positive. This is how they experienced the induction:

*It was a good experience because I was with my HOD, helping me with many things, showing me many things like how to mark registers, prepare lesson plans and many other things, so it was quite a good learning experience.*



*I submitted my file to the HOD; she then sat down with me and praised me where I did good and also showed me areas that I needed to improve on. Yes, so I can say induction was also evaluated.*

Only one educator differed from the other participants and said:

*I am afraid of saying I was inducted because it was very brief. I cannot say it was induction, they just showed me my HOD and said: "Whatever you are looking for this is the person to speak to"; it lasted for a day or so.*

The principal participants were of the opinion that induction, though greatly valued by newly appointed educators, was informal or minimal. The following were responses from different principals:

*There was no formal induction; we have a general working policy on how we do things at our school. We make a copy for the educators; take the educators through the document and they keep the document as a reference.*

One principal commented in this way about the induction of newly appointed educators:

*The process is about familiarising new educators with the school and their duties before they assume duty by introducing them to the staff members and children, explaining their duties to them, discussing school policies and also giving background information on the community.*

*As the principal I have appointed a mentor to every beginner teacher to act as a sounding board for the beginner's ideas and concerns, as a resource for the beginner and also as a coach in work skills. Thereafter, the mentor will evaluate the beginner and give feedback to the principal.*

*Yes, newly appointed educators are inducted and the last time it was done was in January 2015.*

Educators and principals appear to have a different understanding of what induction is. Although most of the educator participants felt that they had a positive experience, their understanding of induction is based on factors, such as support from HoDs regarding the marking of registers and the preparation of lesson plans. Principals, on the other hand, seem to feel that orientation in the form of providing a policy to educators and introducing them to their leaders means they have conducted induction in their schools. It seems that the schools do provide some support to newly appointed educators which is, however, construed as only informal induction and experienced differently by the participants. Their views about induction reveal a lack of understanding about, and the importance of, having a standardised induction programme for all schools. The principals also believe that the induction process must be evaluated in order to identify areas that need to be improved.

School principals have an important role to play in ensuring that the induction of newly appointed educators is systematic, meaningful and well-organized. Induction should acquaint newly appointed educators with the meaning of induction in the complete system as their development affects the entire body or system of education (Joseph & Riegeluth, 2010). Principals should ensure that there is a smooth transition and success of new educators in the teaching profession. The induction of newly appointed educators serves as a bridge between actual classroom practice and field practice (Podsen & Denmark, 2000).

The role of the principal in inducting newly appointed educators should lead to improved teaching and learning and to educator retention. The different forms of induction provided to newly appointed educators should develop their individual skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics (Brophy, 2001). Support for newly appointed educators should be done gradually in a step-by-step manner and

on a continuous basis. It is, therefore, important for schools and the Department of Education (DoE) to treat induction as an important tool for improving the quality of teaching and learning.

#### **4.3.2 Theme 2: Challenges of the induction process**

Both the educators and the principals indicated that there were challenges during what they understood to be the induction process. The participant educators revealed their fears and frustrations in interacting with experienced educators; whether they would feel accepted in the school situation; and whether they would cope in class because sometimes they needed support during teaching time. The following comments were made by the educators:

*The problem was that on the first day, there were many educators and I was afraid, asking myself, "How am I going to cope with them and how am I going to relate to them all?" It was very frustrating to me.*

*It was very frustrating. The challenge was facing the younger learners and the language barrier.*

*It was challenging in the sense that it was disrupting my teaching and learning process. At the same time I had to be in class and then if I needed something I had to go out of class to consult my HOD and it was not thoroughly done and it was continuous because I had to consult with him over and over again.*

Another concern of the educators was the manner in which induction was conducted. They said:

*Induction was done in the first week at my new school, it was brief.*

*Yes, I was inducted on the first day; introduced to Educators, SGB's and to learners*

These two educators suggest that the induction was very brief and that it differed in terms of the time frame and scope which indicates the intensity at which it was conducted. All participants, however, agreed that the beginner educators were fearful and felt insecure because they lacked the required experience.

The two principals who were interviewed maintained that newly appointed educators' fears and insecurities affected their work performance; the newly appointed educators do not even ask the principals if they do not understand what is in the policy document. This insecurity becomes a challenge for the principals who are inducting them. One of the principals said:

*They just look at the document, you don't know whether they are concentrating or learning anything, whether they understand or not because they don't ask questions. They just use the document as a reference afterwards.*

The other principal expressed a similar sentiment:

*Maybe they are still scared or shy or whatever, they will not ask questions.*

The two principals also cited some challenges in inducting newly appointed educators who were insecure and less knowledgeable about the school values on their first teaching days. One principal commented:

*Beginner educators don't feel free to ask questions for clarity even though you are open to them; they are also challenged by community values. They seemed not to understand them. This thing of teaching effectively from day one challenged them because it was their first day at school and they thought that after they are inducted they are expected to teach.*

It seems that the challenges faced by the novice educators also affect the principals because they stated that the newly appointed educators were afraid to ask questions and, as a result, may not be able to comprehend the school values. The principals also felt that induction contained too much information at one time; they are of the opinion that that is not the way it should be done. Somehow, they have a vague idea of what induction entails because they only associate it with support for newly appointed educators. While the educators experienced challenges of insecurity in being accepted by the more experienced educators, they were also afraid that they might not cope and they feared asking questions. These comments suggest that there is a need for an induction policy to guide schools on induction and what it should entail.

Most beginner educators often face multiple problems related to the teaching profession because of their feelings of insecurity regarding their competency and of how they would be accepted and accommodated by experienced educators at the school. The discrepancy between their training and actual teaching seems to exacerbate problems more than anticipated. Newly appointed educators experience the frustration of being burdened with more difficult assignments than experienced educators (Podsen & Denmark, 2000). Because of their fears and discomfort, newly appointed educators tend to conceal their problems and it is, therefore, the responsibility of principals to make them feel welcome and secure in order to be integrated in the school for the sake of improved teaching and learning.

According to Brock and Grady (2011), beginner educators experience a huge workload and overcrowded classrooms and they have to deal with a great deal of administrative work. All these roles place a heavy burden on beginner educators; they end up feeling inadequate and they are unable to handle the pressures of classroom management and maintaining discipline. Steyn (2004) believes that classroom management and discipline are serious problems for beginner educators. Herzog (2002) adds that beginner educators' problems include working with learners with poor language skills; their relationships with learners; having to work

with learners with different abilities; and dealing with problems of motivating learners who are unmotivated.

#### **4.3.3 Theme 3: Support/mentoring provided during induction**

The participant educators were positive about being given support - but mainly from fellow colleagues and HoDs. They viewed the patience of HoDs during assessment and being provided with resources for facilitating their teaching and learning as support. These were the responses from some of the educators:

*It was positive in a way. There was support throughout the teaching and learning process. It was not judgmental, because when I consulted, they did not say you are always coming and asking and you are disturbing us, but they were giving me good support. I was specifically helped by my HOD on formal assessment, it was very confusing and I was greatly appreciative of the support.*

*I got mentoring and support from my HOD and colleagues. I was given files, preparations, planned assessment tasks, teacher's guide of those who were teaching the subject. So there were lots of resources and many of them were not used.*

The principals who were interviewed believe that their managerial function of assigning HODs to check the work of the educators to ensure that teaching and learning took place is a kind of support for newly appointed educators. They also believe that giving HoDs and experienced educators instruction to help execute their duties is giving support. The following comments were made by principals:

*Instructions are given to the HoDs to check the work the first month to see if they (the newly appointed educators) are complying or doing what is expected of them in the lesson plans. The HoDs are with the educators who are teaching the same subject. If they are struggling with certain concepts they can ask other*

*educators who are teaching the same subject, so sometimes they are cross-teaching when it is necessary.*

Another form of support principals think is important is the provision of resources and information to newly appointed educators. One principal said:

*I provide them with handouts information, such as well typed school's constitution, policies and resources, such as textbooks, teacher's manual, and workbooks to be used when teaching.*

All the participants were positive that some form of support was being provided to newly appointed educators. The provision of resources, the control of teaching and learning as well as team work is apparently greatly appreciated as support by all participants who feel that it makes the execution of their tasks possible. HoD guidance and provision of resources as well as team teaching are the main types of support provided to beginner educators.

Newly appointed educators should be provided with support during their first year at the school to improve teaching and learning. Furthermore, the experienced staff in the school should embrace the newly appointed educators and involve them in team work to ensure collaboration and interaction in the development of support programmes for beginner educators (Hargreaves, 2011). Principals are responsible for ensuring the provision of support as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the schools' performance. Their role in leading and managing schools is indispensable to the transformation and improvement of schools' core business which is effective and quality teaching and learning.

#### 4.3.4 Theme 4: Expectations of the induction process

There were mixed reactions regarding expectations of the induction process. Most educators felt that their expectations were met; only one felt otherwise. The following is a comment from a participant whose expectations were met:

*Some of them were met, like I already said, my HoD was with me for the first week and what I was expecting from her, she provided.*

Another educator, who felt that although some expectations were met the most important expectation of mentoring was not met, said:

*But some of them were not really met. The other day I remember I was put in another class and I was alone there; there was no one there and it was very difficult for me as a first time teacher in my first class. I expected to be given one senior teacher to be with me, but it did not happen. I expected to be given duties by the principal as described by the PAM as well as my duties as a teacher.*

The two principals' expectations of newly appointed educators were similar because both expected their educators to be integrated into the school system immediately. One principal, whose expectations were not always met and who insisted that new educators should ask for assistance from the principal or the HoDs if they encountered problems agreed that this was not always be possible given the limited time that was allocated to induction, said:

*We expect them to be part of the staff from the beginning, maybe there is not enough time that is given to them afterwards because we expect that afterwards they can come to you or their HoDs because HoDs cannot always go to them. So the expectation is that we give them something and then we expect them to come to us, but that does not always happen.*



The other principal, who was satisfied that expectations were met and who felt that educators who know how the school operates have met expectations, commented:

*I also expected beginner educators to have knowledge of the operation of the school and I think my expectations were met.*

The understanding of expectations by educators and principals differed. The educators had little understanding of how induction should be conducted. They believe that they should be mentored by experienced educators and this did not happen. They also know that they had to be given tasks in terms of what the Personnel Administrative Measurement (PAM) prescribes and they expected their roles as newly appointed educators to be clarified, but this was not the case in their schools. Some kinds of support and mentoring were provided by their HoDs but other kinds were lacking.

According to Canter and Canter (1999), staff induction programmes should include support on school policy; physical resources; and the curricular and administrative services offered by the school. Other issues should include matters directly affecting staff members, such as work allocation; sound interpersonal relationships; and classroom management.

Whitaker (2001) maintains that issues related to classroom management, like the discipline of learners; curriculum planning; working with learners with poor language skills and with different abilities and sometimes from unsupportive family backgrounds, can be overwhelming for beginner educators.

Boydell and Bines (1995) suggest that it is crucial that beginner educators should receive help in the form of a planned induction programme which should be context-specific to suit the needs of beginner educators in adjusting to the school culture. In support of this, Brock and Grady (1997) are of the opinion that the

induction programme should consist of a set of developmental growth opportunities that attempt to address the needs of beginner educators.

According to Heyns (2000) and Wong (2002), newly appointed educators should be orientated to acquire the necessary information about the school which may include a tour of the school; an explanation of the duties of the beginner educator, the school rules and procedures and the discipline policy; background information about the community; locating resources; school activities; etc. (Heyns, 2000). Mentors can also be introduced to beginner educators. Further strategies that can be used by principals to assist beginner educators may be regular meetings with the principal concerning their roles and responsibilities as educators and the pairing of new educators with mentors (Black, 2001). Mohr and Townsend (2001) support Black by adding that such pairing of beginner educators with mentors has the potential to decrease professional isolation.

#### **4.3.5 Theme 5: Benefits of the induction process**

The participant educators in this study were positive and believe that their cooperation and willingness to learn and work as teams benefitted both their induction as newly appointed educators and the school. They said:

*Yes, I benefitted a lot really. If you don't know, you must learn and if someone is teaching you, you must learn and become better; you will see your weaknesses and then change. I didn't know how to record the task and she showed me how to do it and I benefitted a lot from it. It will not be good for new teacher not to be inducted by the principal, deputy or HoD or how to be shown how things are to be done.*

*I came to a school because there was a problem with learners' performance and I brought improvement on the performance of the learners and not on myself.*

The educators felt that consultation, teamwork and motivation from other educators benefitted them. One educator commented:

*Yes, consultation helped to ground me. It showed me that when we work together in a transparent way, and I am doing what is expected in my department, then things will just go smoothly; consultation helped.*

The principals expressed mixed thoughts about the benefits of the induction process and based them on different aspects of their management functions. One principal understood the benefits of the induction process to be guidance in executing classroom tasks. The following was the comment from the principal:

*I think there were some benefits, because if you just put them in class without guiding them through what you are doing in school, how will they know. If they start working on Wednesday and Friday they must submit the registers. If they did not go through the process, how will they know who to submit to; so I think there are benefits?*

The other principal, who based his understanding of the benefits on the use of the school policy which is related to the constitution and who believes that the school operates through policy and that it should be the operational tool in inducting educators, stated:

*I think they have benefited from the constitution and other policies of the school because these are the main guidelines of the operation in every school*

The same principal also admitted that emphasising policy only to newly appointed educators also was not enough for induction and said:

*But I think there are some shortcomings that we still have to work on, because I think it is important but it does not really happen the way it must.*

It seems that the educators in this study are positive and believe that their cooperation and willingness to learn and work as part of a team benefited their induction as newly appointed educators as well as the school. They also felt that consultation, teamwork and motivation from other educators benefited them. However, it seems that the principals have mixed thoughts about the benefits of the induction process, based on the different aspects of their management functions. They also understand the benefits of the induction process to be guidance in executing classroom tasks. They further base their understanding of the benefits of induction on the use of the school policy which is related to the constitution. They believe that the school operates through policy and that it should be the operational tool in inducting educators.

Induction for teacher development is important for the core business of the school which is quality teaching and learning. The process of induction should be well structured so that it is not mistaken to be just orientation to school procedures. Induction should be well-planned and implemented for professional development and support (Rolley, 2001).

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that beginning educators who participated in some kind of induction performed better at various aspects of teaching, such as keeping learners focused on tasks; developing workable lesson plans; using effective learner questioning practices; adjusting classroom activities to meet learners' interests; maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere; and demonstrating successful classroom management. Experienced educators who serve as mentors also benefit newly appointed educators by their participation in induction; they may help newly appointed educators refine their own teaching practices and build leadership skills through reflection on their own practices

#### 4.4 CONCLUSION

In Chapter 4, a data analysis and research findings were presented in terms of themes supported by *verbatim* quotations. An analysis of the experiences of induction of beginner educators in Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province was given. The final chapter, Chapter 5, summarises the findings of this study, draws conclusions and makes recommendations.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province. The rationale for the study was that educator training does not adequately prepare educators with all of the knowledge and skills needed to become successful educators and that a large part of teaching can only be learnt while on the job. Novice educators are assisted with issues, like lesson planning, the assessment of learners and keeping accurate records of learners' performance, which is considered to be a sort of continuing professional development. Most of the participants educators appreciate this because they feel that it is an investment in terms of the development of educators as well as for the school's success; supported educators rarely leave the profession (Bubb and Early, 2004).

In Chapter 1, the research purpose was presented and the rationale for the study and the research questions were explained. The research design and the measures taken to ensure trustworthiness and credibility of the study were briefly described. The limitations of the study were acknowledged and the possible significance of the study to the greater research community was suggested. Chapter 2 consisted of a review of the relevant literature related to the role of principals in inducting beginner educators; how they managed the induction programme of beginner educators and the challenges faced during the induction process. The possible implications of inducting, mentoring and supporting beginner educators were explored. In justification of his claims the researcher referred to similar studies done describing the induction of beginner educators in other countries and the effect they

had on teacher retention and the sustenance of educators. Chapter 3 established the research design and methodologies used and justified the choices made with regard to research instruments and strategies in terms of the research topic as well as the research purpose, questions and objectives. The data gathered during the semi-structured interviews with beginner educators and principals was presented and discussed in terms of the aims of the study and the research questions. The gap identified in literature was the absence of structured induction programmes and principal's incompetency in conducting induction. Chapter 4 gave an account of data analysis and presented the research findings in themes, supported by *verbatim* quotations, as well as an analysis of how beginner educators and principals experience induction in the Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. Chapter 5 gives a summary of the research findings, draws conclusions and makes recommendations.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.2.1 Experiences of induction in teaching**

This study clearly revealed that both educators and principals have a different understanding of what induction is. Although most of the educator participants had a positive experience of induction, their understanding of induction was based on the support they received from HoDs related to classroom administration and logistics. Principals, on the other hand, felt that orientation through the provision of policy to educators and introducing them to their mentors meant that they had conducted induction in their schools. It seems that the support provided to newly appointed educator is construed as informal induction and that different participants experience it differently. The views held by the participants about induction show a lack of understanding of the importance of having a standardised induction programme for all schools.

The participating principals believe that the induction process should be evaluated to improve the different ways in which induction is conducted. An established policy would be important for inducting newly appointed educators. If schools had a policy with clear guidelines the understanding of induction would be the same for all stake-holders.

The experiences of newly appointed educators suggest that to most of the participant educators, establishing social relationships seem to be important because they appreciated the guidance from senior educators in the preparation of lessons and lesson plans in relation to the set structure of the school. According to Steyn (2004:1), beginner educators need to adjust to the work environment and establish a working relationship with colleagues. The process of induction is important as it gives new teachers an opportunity to reflect on what they know from their training and what is expected in practice. Wang and Odell (2002: 46) maintain that newly appointed educators realise during induction that their knowledge and skills from training is insufficient in the actual school environment.

### **5.2.2 Challenges of the induction process**

Challenges faced by the educators also affect the principals because they are afraid to ask questions which hamper their ability to learn the school values. The mixed understanding of what induction is because too much information is given at one time and beginning educators feel that that is not the way induction should be done. The educators seem to have a vague idea of what induction entails even though they appeared to link it to support only. Because educators are insecure and feel isolated from the experienced educators, their inability to cope might stem from their fear of asking pertinent questions.

A well-structured induction process that is closely monitored has the potential to reduce feelings of fear, anxiety, insecurity and stress caused by the shock of reality (Mullins, 1996: 116). The implication is that induction process should be used as a



tool to inform new employees about what is expected of them in the job and to help them to cope with the stress of transition. It is during this period of induction that attitudes, standards, values and patterns of behaviour expected by the school and the department are instilled in the newly qualified employees.

### **5.2.3 Support/mentoring provided during induction**

The provision of resources as well as teamwork was greatly appreciated by all participants because it makes the execution of their tasks possible. HoD guidance and the provision of resources as well as team-teaching are the main types of support provided to beginner educators. An induction process that is aimed at developing new educators professionally should be a collective responsibility of all stakeholders, including individual staff members, school governing bodies, principals and the DoE (Huberman, 1995: 96). It is imperative that newly qualified educators be provided with a sustainable comprehensive support system

The provision of psychological support for new educators will undoubtedly enhance their personal and professional welfare. If the relationship between the principal and the new educators is going to develop to its full potential, there must be an underlying element of trust and friendship. A harmonious relationship will encourage new educators to work hard without the fear of making elementary mistakes. If this is in place, all other conflicts of differing teaching philosophies; different approaches to learners; and different planning styles can be resolved in such a way that everyone wins and learns from experience (Graham *et al.*, 1992:24).

### **5.2.4 Expectations of the induction process**

The educators participating in this study believe that they needed to be mentored by experienced educators; however, this did not happen. In a study by Brock and Grady (1977:23), beginner teachers consider the school principal to be the most important person in the induction process which implies that without visible

support and guidance from the school principal, beginner teachers may feel at a loss in their work

Newly appointed educators should be guided and assisted to create realistic expectations of the profession. Unclear or confusing expectations by school principals, parents, learners and colleagues leads to new educators experiencing a sense of disorientation and inadequacy (Day, 1999:72). It is, therefore, extremely important that new educators should know exactly what is expected of them.

### **5.2.5 Benefits of the induction process**

Newly qualified educators need to be settled in their new environment and it is through induction that beginners may feel welcome. By means of orientation and induction programmes new educators are exposed to reality and they are provided with essential information. Schools use the orientation process to give new educators an indication of their duties, school policies and the vision and mission of the school. Principals, through their induction programmes, should integrate beginner educators into the teaching profession and socialise them by taking them to a tour, showing them the school environment and introducing them to their colleagues and other stakeholders.

The induction programme prepares beginner educators for interaction with their colleagues and to face the daily pressures they will experience in teaching. The new educators need to be guided because, upon arrival in a new working environment, they start to realise that the training they received as students is not sufficient to deal with the realities of their chosen profession (Wang & Odell 2002:46). During this time the new educators start to feel inadequate as a result of insufficient knowledge and skills to do their jobs. They need to be guided and helped to acquire and develop the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes for teaching. New educators must be equipped with methods and techniques of teaching, learner assessment, time management and classroom management

### 5.3 CONCLUSIONS

This study explored how principals induct beginner educators in terms of professional development. The results highlight the need for school principals to have a common understanding of induction as well as a policy on how to conduct the process formally. It may be concluded that there is a need for all schools to have a standardised policy on the induction of newly appointed educators. Support by HoDs in the form of guidance and the provision of resources as well as team-teaching is appreciated by beginner educators and it is part of the induction process. Mentoring by senior experienced educators is vital for newly appointed educators to help them adapt to the school environment and to meet the challenges and demands of the teaching profession. Finally, induction is of great benefit to beginner educators if there is guidance, consultation, teamwork and motivation in the competent execution of school tasks which would lead to effective and quality teaching.

### 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made, based on the findings of the study:

- A formal and standardised induction programme should be devised for all schools which focus on the personal and professional growth and development of newly appointed educators. Beginner educators should be inducted using a standardised induction programme to facilitate their integration into the school system and with colleagues. They should be welcomed, orientated on the school environment, policies, resources and their senior colleagues during their induction. The principals should take a leadership role in this regard.
- There should be a clear and explicit policy on the induction of newly appointed educators which can be conducted formally by all school principals. The policy should be mandatory to ensure that beginner educators

are helped to overcome challenges when entering the teaching profession for the first time.

- Support from HoDs through the provision of resources; the control of teaching and learning; as well as teamwork should be strengthened as it makes the execution of classroom tasks - which constitute the core business of the school - possible.
- Experienced and more senior educators should be appointed as mentors to help beginner educators overcome challenges and adapt to the realities of the teaching profession. Mentors should be matched with mentees in terms of such factors as teaching the same subject and teaching in the same phase or department. Years' experience in teaching should also be considered when appointing mentors.
- Beginner educators' roles and duties as spelled out by the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) should be clearly explained to them. Furthermore, since induction has benefits, like teamwork and motivation, for the beginner educators, it should be conducted as cautiously and as thoroughly as possible by school principals.

## 5.5 DELIMITATIONS

This study was limited to school principals and beginner educators in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province because its purpose was to explore how beginner educators are inducted in their schools; the challenges they face during the induction process; as well as the type of support/mentoring with which they are provided during the induction process. Induction is part of professional development and, ultimately, aims at producing an educational support system where all educators succeed in helping learners perform well (Joseph & Reigeluth, 2010). The study attempted to answer the following research questions:

- *How do beginner educators experience the induction process in their schools?*
- *How are beginner educators inducted in their schools?*

- *What challenges do beginner educators face during the induction process?*
- *What support/mentoring is provided for beginner educators during the induction process.*

The main variables that were examined were the experiences and challenges of beginner educators and the support and mentoring given to them in their schools during their professional development. The researcher's reason for undertaking the research was a desire to explore the induction of novice educators in order to identify problems and make recommendations to solve these - particularly because he is a principal who is frustrated by the feelings of insecurity of beginner educators who contemplated exiting the teaching profession because they were unable to adapt and meet the demands and challenges of the profession. He was curious to learn whether this was the case throughout the circuit and if other beginner educators were receiving the support and mentoring that they need. If they were getting support and mentoring it would be interesting to document what kind of support and mentoring was being offered and what could be done to provide this support and mentoring to all beginner educators.

Other options that could have been explored were the high turnover of educators, despite the attention and money that the department was spending on training beginner educators and the seemingly high salaries that are paid to educators as a whole. The topic of this study was particularly chosen because the researcher felt that principals were positive in their attitude to beginner educators and they were willing to provide them with support and mentoring but lacked the necessary skills and knowledge with related to induction. The focus was on Limpopo Province, in particular, because that is where the researcher works and for practical reasons, like distance and time, which would make it convenient to do the study there. It was hoped that the study would reveal certain findings that would be beneficial for the way principals conduct induction for beginner educators so that they are inducted and well-prepared to confidently and proudly execute their core duty to provide

effective, quality teaching and learning for learners, in particular, and to improve performance in the education system, as a whole.

## **5.6 LIMITATIONS**

The limitations of this study are the subjective bias of the researcher; the theoretical objectives adopted; and the sample chosen as targets which directed the study and resulted in it being based on relatively few case studies. The researcher's interest in the topic and his passion to improve the standard of the induction of newly appointed beginner educators may have influenced his interpretation of the findings of this study. However, his supervisor acted as a critical reader in checking the possible bias. The practicality of limited time to complete and submit the dissertation for the Master's degree restricted the deeper probing of the topic.

## **5.7 FUTURE RESEARCH**

This qualitative case study attempted to provide some insight into how beginner educators experience the induction process in selected primary schools in Limpopo Province. A larger quantitative study could be undertaken to enable a generalisation of findings to a larger population. Issues that emerged from this study, such as the complexity of, and the workload in, facilitating learning and the induction of new educators - a structured procedure for monitoring and evaluating the induction process, could be explored further to identify solutions to the problems. Principals should consider the benefits of consulting with the beginning educators about their expectations of induction and mentoring arrangements to reduce the isolation experienced by beginning educators.

## **5.8 CONCLUSION**

Chapter 5 has presented a summary of the research findings and reached conclusions from the rich descriptions of participants' experiences.

Recommendations, based on the findings of this study, were made and suggested areas of study for future research on induction experiences of beginner teachers during their professional development were identified.

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## APPENDIX A: LETTER TO HOD, LIMPOPO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Mr Thobja Marcus Matsebane, a student at UNISA, College of Education, doing research with Dr S. T. Mampane, a lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Policy Study, towards an M.Ed Degree. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's Mini Dissertation is titled: "Beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province." The study aims to explore how beginner educators experience the induction process during their professional development in Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to principals, beginner educators and policy makers with regard to the strategies to be used in the induction of beginner educators in schools.

Participation in this research is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will sign a letter of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the study as well the details of the researcher. I will ensure that confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is protected as no participant will be required to provide their names, name of their school or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Mr TM Matsebane

Student number: 3116-948-1

## APPENDIX B: PERMISSION FROM LIMPOPO DoE



**LIMPOPO**  
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

### DEPARTMENT OF **EDUCATION**

Enquiries: MC Makola PhD, Tel No: 015 290 9448 .E-mail: [MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za](mailto:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za)

P O BOX 7998  
MANTHATA  
0788

MATSEBANE TM

**RE: Request for permission to Conduct Research**

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"EXPERIENCES OF INDUCTION BY BEGINNER EDUCATORS IN BOCHUM EAST CIRCUIT IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE"**.
3. The following conditions should be considered:
  - 3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.
  - 3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.
  - 3.3 The conduct of research should not anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.
  - 3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.
  - 3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).
  - 3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.
4. Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

Cnr. 113 Biccard & 24 Excelsior Street, POLOKWANE, 0700, Private Bag X9489, POLOKWANE, 0700  
Tel: 015 290 7600, Fax: 015 297 6920/4220/4494

***The heartland of southern Africa - development is about people!***

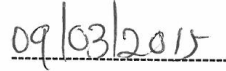
5. The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.



**Mashaba KM**

**Acting Head of Department.**



**Date**

## **APPENDIX C: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY**

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

#### **THE CHAIRPERSON, SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY**

My name is Mr Thobja Marcus Matsebane, a student at UNISA, College of Education, doing research with Dr S. T. Mampane, a lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Policy Study, towards an M.Ed Degree. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's Mini Dissertation is titled: "Beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province." The study aims to explore how beginner educators experience the induction process during their professional development in Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to principals, beginner educators and policy makers with regard to the strategies to be used in the induction of beginner educators in schools.

Participation in this research is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will sign a letter of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the study as well the details of the researcher. I will ensure that confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is protected as no participant will be required to provide their names, name of their school or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Mr T M Matsebane

Student number: 3116-948-1

## APPENDIX D: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

#### THE PRINCIPAL

My name is Mr Thobja Marcus Matsebane, a student at UNISA, College of Education, doing research with Dr S. T. Mampane, a lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Policy Study, towards an M.Ed Degree. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's Mini Dissertation is titled: "Beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province." The study aims to explore how beginner educators experience induction process during their professional development in Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to principals, beginner educators and policy-makers with regard to the strategies to be used in the induction of beginner educators in schools.

Participation in this is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will sign a letter of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the study as well the details of the researcher. I will ensure that confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is protected as no participant will be required to provide their names, name of their school or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Mr T M Matsebane

Student number: 3116-948-1

## APPENDIX E: CONSENT LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

#### THE PARTICIPANT

My name is Mr Thobja Marcus Matsebane, a student at UNISA, College of Education, doing research with Dr S. T. Mampane, a lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Policy Study, towards an M.Ed Degree. The research I wish to conduct for my Master's Mini Dissertation is titled: "Beginner educators' experiences of induction in the Bochum East Circuit in Limpopo Province." The study aims to explore how beginner educators experience induction process during their professional development in Bochum East Circuit of Limpopo Province. The knowledge and information obtained from this study will be relevant and valuable to the principals, beginner educators and policy makers with regard to the strategies to be used in the induction of beginner educators in schools.

Participation in this research is voluntary and the participants have the right to withdraw at any stage of the study with no negative consequences to them. All the participants will sign a letter of informed consent which will explain the nature, purpose and objectives of the study. The letter will also include the title of the study as well the details of the researcher. I will ensure that confidentiality and anonymity of all participants is protected as no participant will be required to provide their names, name of their school or any personal details that could identify them or be traced back to them. There are no known risks to participants resulting from their participation in this study.

Yours sincerely,

Mr T M Matsebane

Student number: 3116-948