An investigation into the *criteria* used in assessing *Professional Studies* in Teacher Education at Mkoba Teachers’ College in Zimbabwe

by

**Morrison Mwamba Ngwenya**

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

of

**Master of Education**

in the subject

**Didactics**

at the

University of South Africa

Supervisor: Prof MEW McDonald

November 1998
Declaration

I declare that, *An investigation into the current practices and procedures in the assessment of professional studies in Teacher Education at Mkoba Teachers' College in Zimbabwe*, is my own work and all the sources that I used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

(Morrison Mwamba Ngwenya)

Date 7/4/99
Dedication

This research study is dedicated to my father Amon Mwamba Ngwenya, my mother Margaret, my wife Irene and my children Prisca, Peter and Priscilla.
Summary

Mkoba Teachers College is one of thirteen Primary school Teachers Colleges in Zimbabwe offering a University of Zimbabwe Diploma in Education programme comprising Theory of Education, Academic Studies, and Professional Studies. This study sought to investigate the validity of current assessment procedures in Professional Studies. Results of the study revealed historical influences upon assessment procedures at Mkoba. Over the years assessment has been by way of two course work assignments in Syllabus B, an end-of-year examination in Syllabus A, and a research of limited scope. The study tended to indicate the need to amplify the scope of assessment procedures beyond the two course work assignments, the end-of-year examination and the research of limited scope. Despite these indications, an analysis of certification results at Mkoba for the period 1976 to 1996 showed that 5955 good quality professionals were produced. The study thus declares assessment procedures at Mkoba Teachers College valid.
Acknowledgments

It is not possible to enumerate all the people who helped in the shaping of this dissertation. However, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Higher Education and Mkoba Teachers’ College administration for granting me permission to carry out my research study at Mkoba. The administration, members of the teaching staff, the library staff, and the typists were very helpful in this regard.

I would like to express my special gratitude to my supervisor Professor M E W McDonald for her patience and scholarly guidance she afforded me in the course of the supervision. She provided invaluable advice. Without her guidance, the quality attained in this study would not have been achieved.

Unisa library staff need special mention. I was served with the relevant reading material at the time when I needed it. Many thanks to the whole staff. My wife Irene provided both moral and material support. She needs special mention for the sacrifices she made towards this course in hard times.

Last but not least, I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Tom J.E. Bourdillon, chairman of the Department of Teacher Education at the
University of Zimbabwe for his invaluable assistance. Without his help, the quality achieved in this study would not have been achieved. To all the people I mentioned and those I may have missed, God bless.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER ONE

**INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

1.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 1

1.2 Statement of the problem ................................................... 6

1.2.1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 6

1.2.2 Formulation of the problem ............................................. 8

1.3 Clarification of concepts .................................................... 9

1.3.1 Applied Education .......................................................... 9

1.3.2 Professional Studies ....................................................... 11

1.3.3 Assessment ................................................................. 11

1.3.4 Mkoba Teachers College .................................................. 12

1.4 Methods of investigation .................................................. 14

1.5 Programme of study ....................................................... 17

## CHAPTER TWO

**RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION**

2.1 INTRODUCTION ............................................................... 19

2.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES .................................................... 20

2.2.1 Introduction .............................................................. 20

2.3 CASE STUDY AS METHOD OF INVESTIGATION ..................... 22
CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE ON THE CONCEPTS
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION ................................................................. 29
3.2 PROFESSIONAL STUDIES .................................................. 30
3.3 THE CONCEPT ASSESSMENT .................................................. 33
   3.3.1 Models of Assessment ......................................................... 34
      3.3.1.1 The behaviourist idea of competence ......................... 34
      3.3.1.2 The generic competence model.................................... 35
      3.3.1.3 The interactive competence model ............................ 35
      3.3.1.4 Summary of the concept assessment .......................... 39
3.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY .................................................. 40
3.5 CONCLUSION ................................................................. 42

CHAPTER FOUR

A SURVEY OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AND ITS ASSESSMENT IN TEACHER
EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN ZIMBABWE: 1900 TO 1997

4.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................... 44

   4.1.1 The development of teacher education in the period 1900 to
        1927 .................................................................................. 44
      4.1.1.1 Early Teacher Education in Southern Rhodesia (now
           Zimbabwe) ..................................................................... 45
   4.1.2 Summary of the developments in African Education in the period
        1900-1927 ........................................................................ 48
4.1.3 Assessment in teacher education in the period 1900-1927 .......... 49
4.1.4 Teacher Education and assessment in the period 1928-1962 ....... 52
4.1.5 Scheme of association and its relevance to the development of teacher education in Zimbabwe ............................................. 55
4.1.6 Assessment of Professional Studies in teacher education as a whole and its relevance to Mkoba Teachers College .................. 57
4.1.7 Observations on the criteria and instruments of assessment used in the period 1928 - 1962 .................................................... 62
4.1.8 The development of teacher education and its assessment in the period 1963 - 1986 ............................................................... 63
4.1.9 Assessment in Professional studies in the period 1987 - 1997 ...... 70

4.2 SUMMARY ............................................................................... 73

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION ....................................................................... 74
5.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH DESIGN ...... 74
5.3 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON ASSESSMENT ......................... 76
5.3.1 Introduction ........................................................................ 79
5.3.1.1 Assessment in the Department of Art .......... 76
5.3.1.2 Assessment in the Department of English ......... 77
5.3.1.3 Assessment in the Department of Home Economics 78
5.3.1.4 Assessment in the Mathematics Department ...... 80
5.3.1.5 Assessment in the Department of Music ........... 81
5.3.1.6 Assessment in the Physical Education Department 82
5.3.1.7 Assessment in Religious and Moral Education .... 83
5.3.1.8 Assessment in the Department of Science ......... 84
CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................112

6.1.1 The historical development of Professional Studies in Teacher
Education in Zimbabwe and at Mkoba in particular? ....................113
6.1.2 What are the criteria of assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba
Teacher’s College? ................................................................115
6.1.3 How valid are the criteria of assessment used at Mkoba Teachers
College? ..............................................................................118

6.2 CONCLUSION .................................................................119

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS .....................................................120
LIST OF TABLES

1.1 Enrolment pattern at Mkoba Teachers College ..................................... 15
1.2 Course structure pattern 1976-1996 ................................................... 15
2.1 The various colleges in Zimbabwe ...................................................... 21
3.1 Major characteristics of instruments of validity .................................... 42
4.1 The first mission stations in Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) ............................. 45
4.2 Grading scale for assessment of written work ........................................ 60
4.3 Revised grading scale for assessment of written work ....................... 61
4.4 The level of training, names of qualification, and institution where trained .................................................. 64
5.1 Age ranges of respondents to the questionnaire ................................. 97
5.2 Institutions and the courses offered .................................................. 98
5.3 Experience, area of experience, and duration .................................... 99
Appendices

A Syllabi 129
B Interview schedule 134
C Questionnaire 136
D Analysis of the results in the period 1976 to 1996 141
E Supervisor’s letter 142
F My application for permission to Ministry 143
G Reply from Ministry 144
H My application for permission to College 145
I Reply by College 146
J Letter to Bourdillon 147
K Document on absenteeism of students in Professional Studies 148
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

The curriculum of primary teacher education of Mkoba Teacher’s College, based at Gweru in Zimbabwe, has three broad categories which are: theory of education, academic studies and professional studies. These three elements of the curriculum complement each other in the development of a future classroom practitioner capable of developing the capacities of pupils. Hwata (1996:01) stipulates the aims of Professional Studies in the following terms:

i) To ensure that persons preparing to teach demonstrate functional insight into the teaching and learning process;

ii) To promote awareness of the roles of teachers in the learning process;

iii) To sensitise students to the needs and characteristics of effective learners of various ages and abilities;

iv) To develop men and women who are dedicated, creative and enthusiastic teachers;

v) To develop teachers who can contribute towards assuring quality education by diversifying and directing instructional strategies so that pupils are motivated to achieve their potentials;

vi) To develop commitment to professional studies, its problems, structure and processes;

vii) To encourage the acquisition of knowledge and skills, and to develop attitudes, values, and priorities required for the effective operation of their curricula and their services to the nation;

viii) To cultivate the ability to utilise critical, independent, and experimental approaches to problems of teaching and learning in order employ revolutionary methods of relating theory to practice;
ix) To ensure that students develop the necessary evaluation skills as well as resourceful abilities to implement innovative professional studies programmes.

To achieve the aims and goals espoused above, the Department of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers College divided Professional Studies syllabus into three categories, namely Syllabus ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’. Syllabus ‘A’ provides the theory and basic teaching skills with a direct bearing on the practice of education, and foundation theory in Mathematics and Languages. This syllabus also embodies Educational Media and Technology, as well as aspects of general methodology and management applicable to the primary situation. This syllabus is also a compulsory element of Professional Studies where the student acquires theories of teaching and learning in the various subject areas referred to above.

Hwata (1996:01) further identifies seven target objectives of the Syllabus ‘A’ course which are to:

i) develop general teaching skills that cut across subject boundaries and are applicable to all fields of knowledge;

ii) develop a clear perception of teaching (investigation, experimentation, problem-solving, small group teaching, and pupil-pupil interaction);

iii) develop sound pedagogical principles;

iv) create a platform for professional development for both lecturers and students;

v) develop a framework/and or perspective of thinking about classroom problems rather than as a general definition of how teachers behave in classrooms;

vi) develop functional skills in Mathematics and languages; and

vii) create awareness and consciousness about their professional responsibilities.
The second component of the Professional Studies course is Syllabus 'B'. Hwata (1996:3) observes that the major concern of the Syllabus 'B' course is the development and implementation of different types of content for both acquaintance and enrichment (taught at each grade level) and the acquisition of methodologies appropriate to each one of the different subject areas that are offered (namely Art and Craft, English, Mathematics, Home Economics, Music, Physical Education, Ndebele, Religious and Moral Education, Social studies, Environmental Science, Shona and Aids Education) which form the primary school curriculum. In this syllabus, students are taught how to apply the theories they will have acquired in syllabus 'A'.

In the same document Hwata (1996:5) says the target objectives of syllabus 'B' course are therefore to:

i) develop curricular, managerial and instructional skills applicable to different age groups;
ii) create and sustain pedagogical knowledge (that is how a subject is transformed to make it accessible to students of varying abilities and interests);
iii) create adequate subject matter knowledge for effective teaching;
iv) expose students to new ideas, people and experiences;
v) develop a reflective and analytic stance towards one’s teaching,
vii) develop a mental attitude to infuse and exchange new ideas and opinions.

The third and final component of the Professional Studies course is Curriculum Depth Study which attempts to instil in students investigative, interpretive, applicative and innovative skills which help students to be sensitive and keen to
explore and resolve important problems that impinge on practice of education. The target objectives of this syllabus are to:

i) develop and foster reflection in lecturers and students which help to enhance quality of education;

ii) create inquisitiveness and inquiry attitude which enhances professional growth;

iii) develop in students critical assessment of their environment in education;

iv) create a large scope for transparency in all those concerned with the process of education;

v) challenge lecturers’ and students’ fears of not knowing, of not understanding and of not coping with problems;

vi) develop a capacity to question sources;

vii) develop mental attitude that not only yields answers to problems, but also new insight and new challenges;

viii) foster critical thinking and decision capacities in both lecturers and students;

ix) expose lecturers and students to a wide variety of research skills and encourage them to be involved in small scale research in order to teach by example.

Hwata’s document referred to in the preceding reference, stipulates how Professional Studies should be assessed. It says assessment procedures should include continuous assessment for all programmes, coursework assessment in Syllabus A, B, and C, final written examination in Syllabus A and a few of the B courses, internal assessment by subject heads and lecturers, internal assessment by clusters, internal assessment by the Board of Examiners and final assessment by the Department of Teacher Education’s external assessors.

In his concluding remarks, Hwata (1996:5), head of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers College says:
“In essence, lecturers and students need to develop a perception of Syllabus A, B, and C (as an integral whole) whose components are supportive and complementary to each other. Furthermore, lecturers’ and students’ vision of professional studies must revolve around realistic application of knowledge in the teaching/learning situation to bring about change and growth, dynamic encounter of the curriculum leading to its renewal and/or innovation, and continued professional development leading to lifelong learning, training and retraining to increase skills on the job.”

These views expressed by Hwata on Professional Studies closely resemble those expressed years earlier by Orbell (1979:10) who, in his address to the Mkoba Conference of Teacher Educators in 1979, said (1979:10):

“Well are professionals in the sense that we satisfy three core criteria of a profession, namely, that we have undergone formal training leading to mastery of a generalised cultural tradition, we have developed skills in some forms of its use, and there are institutional means of making sure that competence will be put to socially responsible uses.”

Orbell seems to define Professional Studies by alluding to three discernible criteria. These are:

i) there must be some specialised training for a person to become a professional;
ii) professionals should develop skills in the course of their training; and
iii) these skills should be applied to a social, economic, political and environmental cause.

This study, therefore, embraces Orbell’s observations with regard to the concept and criteria of Professional Studies, and accordingly the researcher formulated the following questions to underpin this research:

i) What is the curriculum of teacher education with specific reference to Professional Studies and its assessment in Zimbabwe since 1900 up to the present day?
ii) Are there any marked stages in the qualitative development of Professional Studies and its assessment in Zimbabwe?

iii) What are the major components of Professional Studies in primary teacher education at Mkoba Teachers' College?

iv) How has Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers College been assessed over the years?

v) How is Professional Studies currently assessed at Mkoba Teachers' College?

vi) How valid are the instruments of assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers College?

To address these questions in this study, the beginning of schooling and formal education in Zimbabwe is traced from 1900 when it started with the arrival of the missionaries in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). In this historical development, four phases or periods have been identified. These are: 1890 - 1928; 1928 - 1962; 1962 - 1986; and 1986 - 1997. Each period has specific landmarks which indicate important events in the development of teacher education and its assessment. These phases are highlighted in this study (see paragraphs 4.1.1 to 4.10 on pages 44-72).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.2.1 Background of the problem

Teacher assessment is an important instrument of modern school policy in the current environment of accountability and professionalism. The uniqueness in teacher qualities emanates from teachers' practical knowledge based on experience and ongoing education. This practical knowledge which is described as knowledge used and reflected upon by teachers, is contextualised. Its assessment therefore
implies that personal dispositions and context-specific features should be taken into account. Beijaard and Verloop (1996:281) aptly express the relationship between the nature of the teaching profession and its assessment in the following words:

"Teaching is a complex activity; teachers' practical knowledge which reflects this activity, is often unarticulated or tacit. Therefore the assessment of teachers should preferably take place in their natural classroom contexts and do justice to contextual differences and the dynamics of teaching for teachers do not think and behave the same in different situations".

Mhlanga (1988:1) identifies some of the roles of Applied Education when he says that applied education is meant to prepare students so that they are able to successfully man classes single-handedly without the support of qualified teachers in the same classroom. Professional Studies is the rationale for teaching a subject, the development of the knowledge of content or key concepts, a good grasp of how to teach the subject and how to create varied learning activities, and the ability to make and use learning aids and other resources. It is in the light of these aims (see paragraph 1.1 on page 1), that Bourdillon (1978:87) set out guiding principles for educators of teachers. In his opinion, three principles need to be borne in mind when making assessment and these are:

i) the need to distinguish between ongoing 'developmental' evaluation of students and final assessment;

ii) the need for each component chosen for inclusion in final assessment to evaluate different sets of skills; and

iii) the need for the assessment instrument to be computationally simple.

Echoing Bourdillon's sentiments, Gilbert (1978:79) observed that particular skills which each component of the assessment scheme assesses must be determined very carefully. Beijaard and Verloop (1996:281) suggested that:
"An interactive combination of direct and authentic assessment methods is required, consisting of interviews, observations, written reports and portfolios."

1.2.2 Formulation of the problem

The problem which this study addresses may be stated thus:

What are the criteria used in assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba Teacher's College in Zimbabwe and how valid are they?

In order to address the problem, the following sub-problems were identified for scrutiny:

i) What is the historical development of Professional Studies in teacher education at Mkoba Teachers' College?
ii) What are the criteria used in the assessment of this subject at Mkoba Teacher's College?
iii) How valid are the criteria?

This study is, therefore, a critical analysis of the criteria of assessment used at Mkoba Teachers' College in Professional Studies. To address these research questions, the relevant concepts are clarified. These concepts are ‘applied education’, ‘professional studies’, and ‘assessment’. The historical development of Mkoba Teachers College is also provided in order to further put the study into perspective.
1.3 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

McMillan and Schumacher (1989:84) observe that an operational definition assigns meaning to a variable by specifying the activities or operations necessary to measure, categorise, or manipulate the variable. The purpose for defining terms is to minimise ambiguity.

1.3.1 Applied Education

The concept is made up of the main concept of Education and Applied. Collins Cobuild English Language Dictionary (1987) defines Education as follows:

the system of teaching, usually at school or college; the gradual process by which a person gains knowledge through learning; the knowledge or training that you have gained through formal and systematic study; the field of study concerned with theories and methods of teaching; and, the general area of work that is concerned with teaching people especially in school or college

In the light of this definition, Education is a branch of knowledge which concerns itself with principles of teaching and learning. The same works define Applied Education as:

"If you apply an idea, a process, skill... to a particular job or activity, you adapt it and use it in the job or activity"

Applied Education is concerned with the practice of education. In other words, trainees learn how to put into practice principles of teaching and learning. The Official Ministry of Primary Teacher Education Syllabus and Regulations (1978:11) defined Applied Education as follows:

"The courses are meant to provide students with a grasp of the learning concepts applicable to each subject; to relate these to the primary school child in general and progressively to the chosen age group in particular; to acquire the knowledge and skills relevant to successful teaching; and to evaluate the methodology involved."
In his address to the Applied Education Workshop held at the Oasis Hotel Mhlanga, (1988:01), isolated four aspects that approximate the official definition of *Applied Education* above as:

(i) it is the rationale for teaching a subject;
(ii) a knowledge of content, key concepts and objectives;
(iii) a good grasp of how to teach the subject and how to create varied learning activities and;
(iv) making and using learning aids and other resources.

In the light of the above observations *Applied Education* is viewed at Mkoba Teachers College as that branch of study which helps student teachers to interpret the variables of instruction and integrate them into a well articulated plan and programme of action (Mhlanga 1988:1; Hwata 1996:1-5; see paragraph 1.1 page 1). The designation *Applied Education* was used at Mkoba Teachers College until 1988 when applied education was upgraded. The upgrading of Applied Education involved recognising that the subject was just as important as Academic Study and therefore a proper syllabus was supposed to be designed and approved by the Department of Teacher Education. The time allocated to Applied Education should also be increased so that more time could be spent in developing professional skills. *Assessment* of the subject was also improved by specifying how it was going to be assessed, what instruments were to be used, how many items would be presented for assessment in each subject, and how often. It was felt that this development improved the quality of this subject and that the products (graduands) of this system deserved to be called professionals. The new term *Professional Studies* was consequently adopted. In the light of this brief
exposition, the two terms, 'Applied Education' and 'Professional Studies' may be used interchangeably because, the content of the subject did not change.

1.3.2 Professional Studies.

*Professional Studies* (formerly *Applied Education*) is the rationale for linking theory with practice. In the Zimbabwean context and at Mkoba Teachers' College in particular, it is viewed as that branch in teacher education which is dedicated to preparing, developing and sustaining the skills of the actual teaching. In *Professional Studies*, the student tests his or her findings from theory, or experiments with reality itself and learns more by doing it (Hwata 1996:1-5; see paragraph 1.1). The major responsibility of *Professional Studies* is to help the student teacher interpret the variables of instruction and integrate them into a well articulated plan and programme of action. In the light of this functional definition, the two terms ‘*Applied Education*’ and ‘*Professional Studies*’ may be used interchangeably (see 1.3.1).

1.3.3 Assessment

Salvia and Ysseldyke (1998:5) observe that assessment is the process of collecting data for purposes of (1) specifying problems and (2) making decisions about students. Among the decisions educationists may make about students are referral, screening, classification, instructional planning and evaluating pupils' progress. Baty (1888:43) in her address to the Applied Education Workshop held
at the University of Zimbabwe, identified four dimensions of the *Applied Education* course which she said should be *assessed* namely:

(i) The conceptual understanding of the subject;
(ii) Classroom management skills;
(iii) Learning resources; and
(iv) The reports on classroom work where they could focus on a single teaching aspect of a subject then focus on aims, use of aids, practical work, organisation of group work, projects, and the design of a unit of work.

Participants to the workshop alluded to observed that student teachers should understand the philosophy of and the justification for teaching Applied Education to learners, the major concepts to be developed in the learners, and the key topics for content coverage. The participants also agreed that in addition to conventional tests of students knowledge of methodologies, assessment should also include some practical measures such as portfolios of classroom ‘products’ such as pupils’ work. Finally, the participants to the workshop also said that the other aspects to be assessed should include knowledge of syllabuses and guides, practical work on textbook evaluation, and reports on the use and learning potential of a selection of collected resources. Assessment at Mkoba Teachers’ College is therefore geared towards measuring the extent to which all the skill areas above have successfully been achieved.

### 1.3.4 Mkoba Teachers College: a historical perspective

*Mkoba Teachers’ College 10th Anniversary Booklet (1987)* and *Mkoba Teachers College Prospectus 1998*, show that Mkoba Teachers’ College was officially opened on 10 June 1978 by the Honourable Secretary for African Education, Mr
A.J. Smith although students had opened in January of the same year. Its history not only makes fascinating reading, but is also both instructive and monumental when viewed in the overall context of Teacher Education in Zimbabwe.

In the early seventies of this century, government policy regarding “African Teacher Education” began to change. Accordingly, the Ministry of Education through its Division of African Education adopted a new policy towards African Teacher Education. The tenets of that policy were:

i) to produce 1000 Primary Teachers each year to staff schools with well-trained teachers;

ii) to give first class facilities for such training;

iii) to site colleges in the vicinity where trainee teachers carry out teaching practice;

iv) that the centre provide all the facilities required and the college be in an African environment;

v) to end or minimise the problem of teachers trained in a “European” (urban) environment being reluctant to take posts away from larger towns, and;

vi) to produce a new type of primary teacher: academically sound with a sense of dedicated professionalism and greater individual initiative.

Given the espoused new aims of African Teacher Education, when tuition programmes took off at Mkoba from April 1976, it had an enrolment of 84 students. Mkoba Teacher’s College was to be the first African Primary Teacher’s College planned and built by the Ministry to meet the expected requirements of 1000 primary teachers a year. It was also to be the first African Primary Teachers’ College to be granted University of Rhodesia Associate College status. The only colleges then with Associate College status were Hillside Teachers College in the
City of Bulawayo and Gweru Teachers College in Gweru which catered for Whites and Blacks respectively. Mkoba Teacher’s College was thus to be a blue-print for future primary training colleges. In the process of fulfilling this role Mkoba became the standard bearer of the projected new and innovative primary teachers’ colleges. It was to produce a new type of primary school teacher who was expected to contribute positively to the school, classroom and the community at large. The graduands of Mkoba were to be holders of the Certificate in Education from the University of Zimbabwe. For the training envisaged, first class facilities were required. The present Mkoba Campus is reflective of the “first class facilities” as then conceived.

The advent of nationhood in Zimbabwe saw new imperatives which required new impetuses and innovative thinking. The phenomenal expansion of primary education after 1980 demanded an equally phenomenal increase in College outputs with regard to teacher training. Inevitably certain changes set in. In 1983 Mkoba Teachers’ College and the Midlands Zintec College merged into Mkoba Conventional and Mkoba Zintec under Mr Vera (Principal), Dr Zvobgo (Vice Principal - external) and Mr Bwerazuva (Vice Principal - Internal). Lecturers from both wings supervised in the whole curriculum of primary teacher training. In these new circumstances, the enrolment patterns at Mkoba appreciated significantly. Below is a table of enrolment patterns in the period 1976 to 1996. The corresponding number of lecturers is also shown in table 1.1
ENROLLEMENT PATTERN AT MKOBA TEACHERS COLLEGE: 1976-96.

1976: 84 students and 30 lecturers
1986: 1751 students and 49 lecturers (conventional, Zintec and In-Service students included)
1996: 1355 students and 67 lecturers.

Table 1.1

In accordance with its expected role, Mkoba Teachers' College continued to be sensitive and responsive to emerging educational trends and to national needs. In this regard, course structures were designed and adjusted as and when necessary.

Table 1.2 below shows the course structure pattern in the period 1976-1991.

COURSE STRUCTURE PATTERNS 1976-1991 FOLLOWING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PERIOD</th>
<th>COURSE DURATION</th>
<th>TEACHING PRACTICE PATTERN</th>
<th>AWARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976-1984</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Term 5</td>
<td>Certificate in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Term 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Term 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985-1987</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>First year in College</td>
<td>Certificate in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second year on Teaching Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third Year in College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fourth Year on Teaching Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-1990</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>First year in College</td>
<td>Certificate in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second year out on Teaching Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Third year in College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1997</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>First year in College</td>
<td>Diploma in Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Second year out on Teaching Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.2
In the period from 1976 to date, Mkoba has benefited from the insights and expertise of a significant number of administrators. The probable result has been the kind of principle-based eclecticism and initiative that now characterises the college. Having described Mkoba Teachers College, the next section focuses on the methods used to carry out the investigation.

1.4 Method of investigation

The purpose of this study is to determine the criteria used to assess Professional Studies (formerly Applied Education) and to determine the validity of the criteria of assessment at Mkoba Teacher's College in Zimbabwe. The concepts Applied Education, Professional Studies and assessment are defined and discussed herein (see paragraphs 1.3.1; 1.3.2; 1.3.3 respectively). To answer the sub-problems (see paragraph 1.2.2: i; ii; and iii) the researcher used an eclectic design according to which elements of triangulation and the use of a case study were combined. Cohen and Manion (1994:241) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some human behaviour. The authors further say the purpose for using triangulation is to explain fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint. The use of one method of data collection tends to be biased and to distort the researcher's picture of the particular slice of reality under investigation.
Triangulation has the added advantage in interpretative research in that views of different actors may be contrasted. Cohen and Manion (1994:241) state that:

"This (triangulation) is at the heart of the intention of a case study worker to respond to the multiplicity of perspectives present in the social situation. All accounts are considered to be expressive of the social position of each informant. Case study needs to represent, and represent fairly, these differing and sometimes conflicting viewpoints."

The four methods, documentary evidence, questionnaire, interviews, and participant observation were used in this case study of Mkoba Teachers' College.

1.5 Programme of study

Chapter one introduces the study and states the problem.

Chapter two focuses on describing how the research was conducted. The three sub-problems are addressed in this chapter (see paragraph 1.2.2). Four instruments were used to collect data. The first one of these was documentary evidence which included, syllabuses, internal and external assessors' reports, minutes of departmental meetings, policy documents from the Department of Teacher Education (former Associate College Centre), and any other document that had a bearing towards the assessment of professional studies. All lecturers who joined Mkoba in 1976, heads of departments, lecturers-in-charge of clusters, and heads of subjects formed the sample of the source of the data. They completed a questionnaire and then a sample of the five most senior lecturers were interviewed. The fourth instrument for data collection was participant observation. The ten years teaching experience the researcher acquired in serving
the various subject areas that include *Professional Studies* enabled the researcher to add his observations to the data obtained in the questionnaire and interviews (see paragraph 5.5).

*Chapter three* discusses the relevant literature. International conceptualisations on the terms *Professional Studies* and *assessment* in education are examined. The rationale for this approach is to compare international practices on *assessment* with what takes place at Mkoba Teacher’s College and by so doing, a framework within which *assessment* at Mkoba can be provided. Such an approach also enables the researcher to show the extent to which the criteria of *assessment* at Mkoba measure up to international standards.

*Chapter four* focuses on the historical development of *Professional Studies* from as early as 1900 up to 1997. This approach was intended to trace the development of Professional Studies and its assessment in Teacher Education and at Mkoba Teacher’s College in particular. The current practices in *assessment* have a historical background which should provide a logical and developmental framework within which assessment at Mkoba Teachers’ College was discussed.

*Chapter five* presents the data and analyses it. The three sub-problems (see paragraph 1.2.2: i; ii; iii) are further addressed in this chapter. As the data is presented and analysed, the other two sub-problems (1.2.2: ii and iii) are answered. In the final chapter (*chapter six*) the researcher summarises, draws conclusions, and makes recommendations.
CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

2.1 Introduction.

In this chapter the researcher discusses the research design used to carry out the research. The researcher defines what a research design is first and then describes its characteristics. Nachmias and Nachmias (1981:75) define a research design as:

The programme that guides the investigator in the process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting observations. It is a logical model of proof that allows the researcher to draw inferences concerning causal relations among the variables under investigation. The research design also defines the domain of generalizability, that is, whether the obtained interpretations can be generalized to a larger population or to different situations.

In accordance with the observations of Nachmias and Nachmias with regard the research design and methodology, the researcher describes the procedures used to conduct this study. The researcher also describes the selection and sampling procedures adopted for the study and the primary methods of data collection used. The objective of this study was to investigate assessment in Professional Studies in primary teacher education at Mkoba Teachers College in Zimbabwe. Descriptive survey as a method was employed to describe the existing phenomena. This method was used to assess the nature of the existing conditions or characterize the
phenomena as it is. According to Leedy (1980) the descriptive survey design involves looking at the phenomena of the moment with intense accuracy. When using descriptive survey, the researcher observes with scrutiny the population bound by the parameters. Good (1972:328) has observed that the terms survey and status suggest the gathering of evidence relating to current conditions with the view to establishing the existing situation or current conditions. In the light of this brief background, the descriptive survey was deemed to be suitable to gather information relating to assessment procedures in Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College.

2.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES

2.2.1 Introduction

Kidder (1981:78) says a representative sample is one for which the results are what we would have found had we studied the entire population. In this study, the researcher used the cluster sampling procedure in which according to McMillan and Schumacher (1989:137) the researcher identifies convenient, naturally occurring group units such as neighbourhoods, schools, districts or regions, not individual subjects, and then randomly selects some of these units for the study. The searcher identified eight politically delineated provinces in Zimbabwe. Each province has at least one primary teacher training college as in Table 2.1 which shows the various colleges that are in the various provinces in Zimbabwe.
THE VARIOUS PRIMARY TEACHERS' COLLEGES IN ZIMBABWE.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Name of College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland</td>
<td>United College of Education (U.C.E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midlands</td>
<td>Mkoba Teachers College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manicaland</td>
<td>Mary Mount College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashonaland</td>
<td>Nyadire College, Seke College &amp; Morgan Zintec</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masvingo</td>
<td>Masvingo Teachers College, Morgenster College, Bondolfi College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matabeleland North Province</td>
<td>Gwanda Zintec College</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1

As the table 2.1 shows, there are ten primary training colleges in the country. The majority of these colleges are located in city centers except for Nyadire, one hundred and sixty kilometers to the north of Harare (formerly Salisbury), Morgenster, and Bondolfi Teachers' Colleges in the outskirts of Masvingo town (formerly Fort Victoria) in Masvingo Province. These colleges formed the target population of this study. There are quite a number of characteristics which all these colleges share. These include the fact that,

i) they all train primary school teachers on a three year programme;

ii) they have each offered teacher education programme for at least the past twenty years;

iii) they offer Professional Studies syllabus which is designed by the colleges and Ministry of Higher Education, and approved by the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe's faculty of education, (D.T.E);

iv) the colleges are associated to D.T.E. which is the certification board;

v) and last but not least, they are all funded by government.
It is of importance to note that any one of these colleges could have been selected for the purpose of this research because they all would still represent all other colleges in terms of the characteristics referred to above. Having identified the target population for the study and having identified the type of research design, the next section describes and characterizes case study.

2.3 THE CASE STUDY METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

A case study research does not aim to cover the whole population and extract common factors but to provide an in-depth picture of a particular area of the educational world, chosen because it is relatively self-contained at least as far as the purposes of the research are concerned (Drever, 1995; McMillan and Schumacher, 1989; Borg and Gall, 1991). In a case study the focus is on a number of people working together but with different roles. The aim of a case study is to understand the people as a group with their different but interdependent functions and ways of thinking. Focus could also be on a school programme such as a syllabus for the purpose of evaluating it. It is important to note that in a case study the researcher sacrifices generalizability for an in-depth understanding of a single phenomenon under investigation. The researcher adopted this approach in order to understand the reality of Mkoba Teacher’s College as an institution, because there are certain identifiable particular and peculiar factors that reflect its
own existence and life-world with regard to assessment in Professional Studies in teacher education.

2.4 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION AND THE INSTRUMENTS USED

The purpose for this research study was to investigate and determine the existing status of Professional Studies and how it is assessed at Mkoba Teachers College in Zimbabwe. Two key concepts, 'professional studies' and 'assessment' are defined and discussed at both the macro and micro levels (1.3.2; 4.2; 1.3.3; and 4.3 respectively). It should be noted however, that in defining and characterizing Professional Studies and assessment, the historical development of Professional Studies in Zimbabwe and how it was assessed was discussed with the view to establishing the background against which the assessment procedures at Mkoba can be viewed (3.1 to 3.8). In discussing the historical development of teacher education in Zimbabwe, the first sub-problem that relates to the qualitative historical development of teacher education both in Zimbabwe and at Mkoba Teachers' College is answered. To address the sub-problems, four methods were employed to collect data. In accordance with the tenets of triangulation which provides for the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some human behaviour Cohen and Manion (1994:241) say the purpose for using triangulation is to explain fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour as exemplified at Mkoba Teachers' College by studying it from more than one
Cohen and Manion (1994:241) state that:

"This (triangulation) is at the heart of the intention of a case study worker to respond to the multiplicity of perspectives present in the social situation. All accounts are considered to be expressive of the social position of each informant. Case study needs to represent, and represent fairly, these differing and sometimes conflicting viewpoints."

In accordance with the views by Cohen and Manion four methods were adopted in this study to collect data (see 1.4). Each method is described in some detail.

2.4.1 Documentary evidence

The researcher had access to primary source of data in the form of remains or relics of a given period which may not have been meant to transmit information to subsequent eras, but which nevertheless may be useful sources providing sound evidence about the past. Examples of such relics include manuscripts, archives of official minutes or records, files, letters, recordings, and many others. Thus it was logical for the researcher to seek to have access to Mkoba Teachers’ College’s relics alluded to.

The present status of Professional Studies and its assessment in teacher education at Mkoba could only be understood in the context of the historical development of this subject from the time of the opening of the college in 1976 up to 1997. The researcher accordingly was able to address the first sub-problem relating to the historical development of Professional Studies and its assessment in the training of
teachers at Mkoba by a careful scrutiny of syllabuses, official policy documents from ministry of higher and the Department of Teacher Education, internal and external assessors’ reports and any other document with relevant information on assessment of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers’ College.

2.4.2 Interview method

semi-structured interviews were used in this study. In accordance with this construct the researcher set up a general structure by deciding in advance what ground is to be covered and what main questions are to be asked. This method was chosen to solicit for high quality data. Twenty lecturers formed the sample of the interviewees. Among these lecturers, six have served the institution since 1976 and participated in the syllabus development. Eleven were heads of the various eleven subjects, four were lecturers-in-charge of the four clusters namely the Humanities (Religious Studies and Social Studies), Languages (English, Shona and Ndebele), Maths and Science cluster, and the Practical Subjects cluster (Art Education, Home Economics, Music and Physical Education). These three groups of people had invaluable experiences about the college and programme transformation since 1976 to date. The current chairman of the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe helped to enlighten the researcher on issues relating to the structuring of the programmes and policy on certification because he too was involved in the development of syllabuses in teacher education. The current chairman was with the Department of Teacher Education before Mkoba Teachers’ College was established. He therefore had
first hand information about Mkoba Teachers' College with regard to the historical phases of Mkoba Teachers' College, what aspects of the curriculum of Professional Studies was changed and for what reason and how this subject was assessed. The interview method has both merits and demerits. The researcher capitalized on the merits of the interview method in particular for it facilitated easier access to confidential information, in a face-to-face situation. It also provides an opportunity for an in-depth examination of certain selected topics. Accordingly, the researcher was able to verify information obtained through the questionnaires because the same interviewees completed the questionnaires. While the advantages of the interview method were many, the researcher was aware of certain limitations. These included a high demand on time, energy and money, problems of quantification of qualitative data obtained from various interviews and how to draw generalizations. The researcher audio-taped the interviewees to facilitate accurate retrieval of information.

2.4.3 Questionnaire Method

The researcher used open or unstructured questionnaire. This type of questionnaire was used to enable respondents to answer in their own words, so that they reveal their thoughts. The advantage of the questionnaire as a method is that it is economic, in terms of time and money, it removes interview bias and the respondents have time to give well-thought-out responses. It was reliable in collecting data. The questionnaire made it possible for respondents to reveal
confidential information because they had been assured of anonymity and confidentiality. In addition, the questionnaire had the advantage of focusing the respondent’s attention on specific issues and allowed them to express themselves as free as they wished. The researcher is aware of the limitations of questionnaire as an instrument for collecting data. These included the fact that when the question has not been understood correctly, the answer is likely to be either incorrect or incomplete. The questionnaires does not reveal emotions or sentiments. Besides, many respondents prefer not to articulate controversial matters in writing. As a result of these factors referred to, the reliability and validity of the results obtained through the questionnaire tend to be affected.

2.4.4 Participant observation

The researcher is directly involved in the assessment of students in Professional Studies at Mkoba. Ten years of experience in the interpretation of syllabuses, teaching the subject of Professional Studies and assessing students in course work, examination, practical and Curriculum Depth Study enabled the researcher to present hands-on experience in Professional Studies. The researcher also has experience as an external assessor to other sister colleges.

2.5 CONCLUSION

A case study of Mkoba Teachers’ College was chosen because it allowed the researcher an in-depth study of this institution in order to reveal any peculiarities
and uniqueness in the programmes that are run at this college. The researcher relied on documentary evidence which stipulates the expectations and requirements of the Department of Teacher Education with regard to the criteria of assessment. There were two groups of documents available for scrutiny. The first group was that of circulars from the Department of Teacher Education (formerly Associate College Center) relating to syllabus design, associate status, grading scale, principles to be borne in mind when constructing instruments of assessment, and conditions for a pass. This set of documents was very valuable in that it provided the standard and criteria set by the examining board which is the Department of Teacher Education. The other set of documents that was examined included syllabuses, reports on assessment, and policy documents in each department. Besides documentary evidence, the researcher interviewed long-serving members of this college. Questionnaires were also administered to a sample of lectures as alluded to above.

The fourth and final method used was participant observation. The use of so many methods of gathering data increased the degree of reliability and validity of research findings.
CHAPTER THREE

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE ON THE CONCEPTS PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AND ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

Chapter one introduces the study and stated the research problem. In chapter two the research design and methods of data collection is discussed. In chapter three a historical development of Professional Studies (formerly Applied Education) in teacher education in Zimbabwe as a whole beginning 1900 up to the present day is discussed. Emphasis throughout was on the development of Professional Studies and how it was assessed in the history of teacher education. The purpose of this approach is to put the assessment of Professional Studies in the training of teachers at Mkoba into context. This chapter captures a few international conceptualisations of the terms assessment and Professional Studies. The purpose for discussing international perspectives of the concepts assessment and Professional Studies is to provide a framework within which assessment at Mkoba Teachers’ College is to be analysed.
3.2 PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

Mnkandla (1996:1) sees Professional Studies as the rationale for linking theory with practice. It is the branch in teacher education dedicated to preparing, developing and sustaining the skills of actual teaching. The student tests his/her findings from theory, or experiments with reality itself, and learns more by doing it.

Mnkandla (1996:1) quotes Siyakwazi (1988) who says:

"the major responsibility of professional studies is to help lecturers and students interpret the variables of instruction and integrate them into a well articulated plan and programme of action".

A close analysis of the views expressed in the observations above shows that the aim of Professional Studies is to sensitise the student to the real world of the school and at the same time help him conceptualise the varied and intricate relationship between theory and practice, or between textbook generalisations and personal observations and experience. Kirk (1988:16) says this about the ideal of the professional teacher:

The account of teaching is an extremely demanding activity, one that encompasses a wide range of related roles and responsibilities inside and outside the classroom, one that is characterised by a commitment to self-monitoring and continued professional development.

The implication of Kirk's contribution is that teaching requires as broad and deep an understanding of the learner as possible, for concern for what is taught relates to the life experiences of the learner, and a willingness to engage the learner in the context of the learner's own intentions, interests and desires. Emphasising the
complexity of the teaching profession, Beijard and Verloop (1990:279) identify five features that characterise the teaching profession as:

i) Multidimensionality (different students, divergent reactions, activities and interruptions);
ii) simultaneity (many things happening at the same time);
iii) immediacy (the teacher has little time to think);
iv) unpredictability (it is impossible to predict what will happen with certainty, so that it is difficult to decide unequivocally);
v) and a dependency on time (activities decisions or events have consequences for following situations).

It is important to note that this complex nature of Professional Studies has been confirmed by many educationists. Calderhead and Robson (1991:1) state that the mission of Professional Studies is to enable student-teachers to develop their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter, children, teaching strategies, and the school curriculum, and to help them draw upon this knowledge in the shaping of their classroom practice. With regard to the complexity of the teaching situation, Du Plooy (1985:53) observes that the major features of a classroom situation include the following points:

i) defining the instructional problem;
ii) analysing the learner’s initial competence;
iii) formulating objectives and goals;
iv) specifying the content of the subject matter;
v) planning learning activities;
vi) selecting media;
 vii) evaluating; and
viii) analysing the feedback.

The criteria and definition of teaching as a profession is complex in nature as is evidenced by the views above. Goodlad, Soder and Sirotnik (1990:18) sum up this discussion in the following terms:
Even if a well developed science of teaching were available, its mastery by teachers would not provide sufficient guidance for the burden of judgement they carry, its full definition would not adequately frame a profession of teaching, and teacher education programme based on only this science would be seriously deficient.

While there may be a few variations among educationists, there is a general consensus about the features that characterise Professional Studies. These are that:

i) practice is based on a body of knowledge which is continually refined through scholarly and systematic inquiry;

ii) acquisition of this body of knowledge requires a lengthy period of formal preparation;

iii) the practice is beyond the competence of individuals not so schooled;

iv) entry to the preparation programmes is highly selective;

v) the form of preparation involves socialisation into the professional role which is aimed at developing a strong commitment to service as a member of the profession;

vi) upon completion of the requirements of the programme members are accepted into the profession and allowed to practise autonomously;

vii) members of the profession acknowledge and undertake to adhere to particular standards of behaviour and practice;

viii) unacceptable behaviour by members is dealt with by peers, not outsiders, through censure or removal of right to practice; and

ix) the work of members is regarded as crucial to the well-being of society.

(Carr 1992: 19-30; Downie 1991:149; Lindop 1992: 157-158; Hoyle 1982: 161-162; Walker 1991:66). These views summarise what constitute Professional Studies as a discipline and point to the framework within which the teaching profession should be understood. What then are the implications of these characteristics of Professional Studies with regard to assessment? Lindop (1982:158) states that the implications arising from these characteristics of Professional Studies as identified above include:

i) the concept of restriction of entry to professional training by way of tests,
ii) the imposition of standards within a formally prescribed and agreed mode of training;
iii) further testing of competence before the achievement of professional status;
iv) they involve the rejection of some who may be highly but irrelevantly qualified and possibly of some who though highly and relevantly qualified lack and are unable to acquire the special skill and competencies associated with the practice of the profession.

These implications are directly related to the concept and process of assessment.

But then, what are the international conceptualisations about assessment?

3.3 THE CONCEPT ASSESSMENT

According to Gronlund (1985) assessment is a systematic process of determining the extent to which educational objectives are achieved. Harlen (1994: 1) echoes the view of Gronlund with regard to what assessment is, but adds that it is a process of making judgements about a student’s performance in a particular task. He further observes that the result will depend upon what the task is and how the judgement has been made in relation to what criteria or standards. The views of Gronlund, (1985) and Harlen (1994) have far reaching implications with regard to the exercise of assessment. Among these implications are that;

i) assessment is a process that has a beginning and an end;
ii) it is done for a purpose, or an objective;
iii) a task is given which is used to measure whether the respondent has understood or not;
iv) there are certain standards expected by the one who administers assessment;
v) a criterion is provided against which the expected standards can be measured;
vi) finally, the results can be used to make decisions.
The observations above assume that the learner must always reveal or demonstrate observable behaviour which can be measured. In this regard, Du Plooy (1990:53) states that:

"The criteria for assessment may be selected on grounds of utility, intellectual standards, aesthetic, ethical or religious norms, depending on the popular aim. Evaluation is always difficult and in the sphere of education and teaching it is not easy to indicate objective norms for success or failure."

Du Plooy (1990:53) further argues that the reason why assessment is difficult in education is that evaluation includes the measurement of qualities not so easy to measure objectively. Such qualities as interest, perseverance, attitude and working ability are difficult to measure. The question one could ask is, what do educationists look for when they set examinations or tests? Are there specific competencies or knowledge they will be looking for? To answer these and other questions related, Beijaard and Verloop (1990) have attempted to describe what competencies examiners look for when they carry out assessment exercises. Three groups of competences referred to as models of assessment are discussed below.

### 3.3.1 Models of assessment

#### 3.3.1.1 The behaviourist idea of competence or knowledge

The behaviourist idea of competence or knowledge rests on a description of behaviour (sometimes called performances) and the situations in which it is to take place (sometimes referred to as range statements) in a form that is capable of demonstration. Burchell (1996:252) observes that this model is linked to the National Vocational Qualifications (N.V.Q) whose approach is to specify the competencies in terms of a series of statements of competence which need to be
clearly demonstrated by the student-teacher taking an examination before the qualification is awarded. He further observes that for each occupation, these competencies are laid down as national standards, developed by a lead body which represents employers in the given occupational area. Significant in this model is the idea of competencies which should be reflected in behaviour (or performance). It has already been stated that in education, there are certain qualities that cannot be translated into measurable behaviour. Such qualities include perseverance, interest, attitude, working ability, moral dimension and many others. Assessment criteria all training institutions and at Mkoba Teachers' College have been devised to measure these competencies.

3.3.1.2 The generic competence model refers to the general abilities associated with expert performers. The principle behind this model is that the examiners would need to identify these key competencies from how expert practitioners describe their roles. The assumption behind this model is that, all skills can be translated into observable behaviour and that practitioners are always able to articulate what they do when they do something well.

3.3.1.3 The interactive competence model rests on the assumption that the key features of this interactive model are seen as performance, schema (mental representation of a set of related categories) and intellectual processes. In this regard, Burchell (1996:153) says:
Whereas, in the behaviourist N.C.V.Q. model of competence, performance is all important, here it is only one of the three related components. Part of competence is the way we perceive ourselves, the role and its schema. To change the performance significantly entails a change in schema. The development of both of these involves complex intellectual processes, some of which are not clearly understood. Between these three components, there are continual dialectical interactions. Competence itself is seen as dynamic with differing and constantly changing meanings and interpretations.

The debate about models of assessment and assessment procedures points to two very significant issues that need close examination. The first of these issues relates to the definition of teacher practical and therefore measurable classroom knowledge. What exactly constitute the teacher’s practical knowledge? The second issue relates to assessment. What possibilities and problems are related to assessment? Beijaard and Verloop (1996:276-277) observe that practical knowledge is generally used in research to indicate particular content and types of knowledge. It refers to teachers’ knowledge of classroom situations and the practical dilemmas they face in carrying out purposeful action in these settings. This knowledge determines or guides a teacher’s actions in practice. These authors (1996:277) further say:

"...this knowledge is built from personal and professional experience, is not readily articulated by the teacher and is used in complex ways during the processes of planning for and executing teaching activities, as well as in making sense of decisions already made. It consists of factual or declarative knowledge and strategic or procedural knowledge and beliefs, including norms and values.

These writers have also shown that practical knowledge has been interpreted differently depending on the purpose of researchers. Among these interpretations is pedagogical content knowledge or subject matter knowledge for teaching as the
most relevant part of teachers' practical knowledge. The authors also refer to 
other educationists who speak about pedagogical content knowledge and define 
this in a much broader sense, for example as a teacher's integrated understanding 
of pedagogy, subject matter content, student characteristics and the 
environmental context of learning. Practical knowledge may be viewed in terms of 
implicit theories or knowledge-in-action or in terms of a teacher's more 
comprehensive knowledge base referring to his or her beliefs, orientations or even 
cognitions.

Beijaard and Verloop (1996:276) conclude their discussion on practical knowledge 
by saying:

*Practical knowledge is not the opposite of theoretical or scientifically gained knowledge. Assuming that teaching is not merely a practical skill, teachers' practical knowledge, encompasses much theoretical knowledge though adapted to the relevant teaching situations.*

It is important to note that practical knowledge is highly contextualised. Its 
assessment, therefore, implies that personal dispositions and context-specific 
features should be taken into account. The two authors further observe that these 
days there seems to be a reasonable consensus that teachers have to possess 
knowledge and skill with regard to:

i) subjects and how to teach them to students (expertise in a certain 
discipline and the translation of this expertise into knowledge needed 
for teaching);

ii) problem solving or higher-order thinking, including intellectual 
qualities regarding critical analysis, reflection, evaluation, and the like 
because these are also expected from students;

iii) facilitating, managing, monitoring and evaluating student learning;
iv) curricula (why they are arranged as they are, the curriculum’s organisation or structure in relation to student results);
v) target groups and types of learning (processes and styles of learning);
vi) reflection on practical experience.

Beijaard and Verloop (1996:277) further state that the six interrelated domains are found both theoretically and practically and that they are similar to the core propositions developed by, for example, the American national Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS, 1989, Delandshere, 1994) which constitute the basis for a teacher assessment system across all certification areas.

The discussions above with regard to teaching and practical knowledge have serious implications for the development and implementation of a teacher assessment system. It has been pointed out that teaching is a complex activity, that teachers’ practical knowledge which reflects this activity, is often unarticulated or tacit. Salvia and Ysseldyke (1985:5) say this with regard to measuring educational settings:

Assessment in educational settings is a multifaceted process that involves more than the administration of a test. When we assess students, we consider the way they perform a variety of tasks in a variety of settings or contexts, the meaning of their performances in terms of the total functioning of the individual, and the likely explanations for those performances.

Beijaard and Verloop (1996:281) share the view above and therefore suggest that the assessment of teachers should preferably take place in their natural classroom contexts and do justice to contextual differences and the dynamics of teaching (teachers do not think and behave the same in different situations).
Implicit in the foregoing discussion is the suggestion that an interactive combination of direct and authentic assessment methods is required, consisting for example of interviews, observations, written reports and portfolios. A teacher’s portfolio may contain lesson plans, student’s evaluation exercises, a videotaped lesson, reflective notes on lessons given. Many combinations of direct and authentic methods can be used. Multiple sources of information are considered most promising for teacher assessment. It should be clear that assessment of teachers should not only be based on their observed behaviour, but also on their background knowledge as well as the relationship between this knowledge and observed behaviour. Such an assessment approach can only be realised by using an interactive set of direct and authentic methods. Such methods reach a better face validity than the more traditional paper and pencil examinations. This position is in keeping with the present research on teachers’ practical knowledge, which should be measured from a multi-methodical standpoint order to capture it.

3.3.1.4 Summary of the discussion on the concept assessment.

As previously asserted, it is observed that assessment is the process of collecting data for the purpose of specifying and verifying problems (academic, physical or behaviour) and for making such decisions as referral, screening, classification, instructional planning, or evaluating pupil’s progress. Assessment is therefore an approach designed to help teachers find out what students are learning, how much and how well they are learning. It is a multifaceted process that involves far more than the administration of a test. Finally, when educationists assess, they also
consider the way candidates perform a variety of tasks in a variety of settings and contexts, how they are tested, the meaning of their performances in terms of the functioning of the individual, and the likely explanation for those performances. In the light of the argument above, what characteristics should instruments of assessment possess?

3.4 VALIDITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS OF ASSESSMENT.

Harlen (1994:12) makes the following remarks about the concept validity:

*The aspect of assessment which refers to how well the results really reflect the skill, knowledge, attitude or another quality it was intended to measure is described as its validity*.

Validity is in three parts, content validity, criterion validity and construct validity.

Each one of these concepts is relevant to any form of assessment. Gronlund (1993:161) says:

'Content-related evidence of validity is critical when we want to use test performance as evidence of performance in a large domain of content. Let us assume, for example, that we have a list of 500 words that we expect our students to be able to spell correctly at the end of each year. To test their spelling ability, we might give them a 50 word spelling test. Their performance on these words is important only in so far as it provides evidence of their ability to spell the 500 words. Thus, our spelling test would provide a valid measure to the degree to which it provided an adequate sample of the 500 words it represented.'

The essence of content validity is in determining the adequacy of the sampling of the content that the test scores are interpreted as representing. There should be some relationship among:

(i) classroom instruction (with learning outcomes or objectives);
(ii) achievement domain (specific learning tasks); and
(iii) achievement test (which reflects a sample of what is expected).

Thorndike and Hagen (1997:264) shed more light with regard to the relationship referred to above. They say (1997:264):

'Consider a test that has been designed to measure competence in using the English language. How can we tell how well the test does in fact measure that achievement? First we must reach an agreement as to the skills and knowledge that comprise correct and effective use of English, and that have been the objectives of language instruction. Then we must examine the test to see what skill, knowledge, and understanding it calls for. Finally, we must match the analysis of test content against the analysis of course content and instructional objectives and see how well the former (test content) represents the latter (course content).

To the extent that our objectives, which we have accepted as goals of our course, are represented in the test, the test is valid for use in our school.

Gronlund (1993:163) views criterion related validity as:

'...concerned with the use of test performance to predict future performance on some other valued measure called criterion. For example, we might use scholastic aptitude test scores to predict course grades (criterion) and this is called predictive study.

An employment test is given in order to pick machine operators who are likely to be successful employees, as represented by some such criterion as high production with little spoilage and low personnel turnover. In other words, performance test is used to predict approximate future performance on the job.

The third and final characteristic of instruments of the assessment is construct validity. This concept is used to refer to the skills, attitude, or ability that an
instrument is intended to measure. Examples of constructs (ideas) include the following: ability to add decimals, attitude towards school, managerial effectiveness, ability to present a good lesson and many more. The construct validity of a test is the extent to which you can be sure it represents the construct whose name appears in its title. A test with good construct validity can be considered a substitute for actually observing a person displaying the skill in everyday life. Table 4.1 below summarises the major characteristics of the three forms of validity namely, content, criterion and construct validity.

THE MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF VALIDITY.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of evidence</th>
<th>Questions to be answered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content-related evidence</td>
<td>How adequately does the sample of test items represent the domain of content to be measured?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criterion-related evidence</td>
<td>How accurately does that performance predict future performance (predictive study) or estimate present performance (concurrent study) on some other value measure called a criterion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct-related evidence</td>
<td>How well can test performance be explained in terms of psychological characteristics?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.1. Adapted from Gronlund (1993:162)

3.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the concepts profession and its related characteristics, assessment and the philosophy behind assessment, the characteristics of instruments of assessment were examined. It was established that teaching as a profession is a
highly complex endeavour, characterised by a wide range of roles and responsibility inside and outside the classroom. As a direct consequence of its nature, assessment is equally difficult because of the lack of specific criteria to measure such qualities as interest, perseverance, attitude, working ability and many other qualities that may not be observed by naked eyes. A multivariant approach to assessment is therefore recommended, consisting, for example of pen and paper examination, interviews, observations, written reports, and portfolios. It was also pointed out that validity can be achieved when the examiners address the questions: How adequately does the sample item represent the domain of the content to be measured? How accurately does that performance predict future performance and how well can test performance be explained in terms of the psychological characteristics?
CHAPTER FOUR

A SURVEY OF THE HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AND ITS ASSESSMENT IN TEACHER EDUCATION CURRICULUM IN ZIMBABWE: 1900 TO 1997.

4.1 Introduction
To understand the development of Professional Studies in teacher education in Zimbabwe, there is a need to identify who the chief players were, reveal their purpose and objectives for participating in the education of teachers, examine the curriculum they offered in order to achieve their objectives, and discuss assessment and assessment procedures they employed in the whole exercise of training teachers. This approach is meant to determine the qualitative development of Professional Studies throughout this century and to point to the present status of assessment in the subject.

4.1.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE PERIOD 1900 TO 1927
Research in the origins and development of education in Zimbabwe (formerly Rhodesia) showed that formal teacher education was pioneered by voluntary agencies or Missionary Organisations who numbered fifteen (Chikukwa, 1977; Atkinson, 1972; Siyakwazi, 1980; Mandaza, 1980; and Maravanyika, 1986). The literature referred to above indicates that the following were some of the training schools established by 1928 by different denominations. Table 3.1 below shows
some of the first mission stations who pioneered the field of teacher education in the then Southern Rhodesia.

THE FIRST MISSION STATIONS IN RHODESIA.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission Station</th>
<th>Denomination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solusi</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventist Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kutama</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgenster</td>
<td>Dutch Reformed Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Augustine</td>
<td>Anglican</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Fountain</td>
<td>London Missionary Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard</td>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waddilove (formerly Nenguwo)</td>
<td>Wesleyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Selinda</td>
<td>American Missionary Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old Umtali</td>
<td>American Methodist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial shill</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1

4.1.1.1 Early teacher education in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe).

Early forms of teacher education was dominated by voluntary church organisations. Mandaza (1980:330) says this with regard to the early forms of African Education in Rhodesia:

"The efforts to train teachers was begun by missionaries on a voluntary basis. Entry qualifications for the trainees was standard three, six, and later Junior certificate".

With regard to the nature of the type of education which was offered then, Rose (1970:252) says:
"The missions provided religious instructions, simple manual instruction in building and trades, and some reading and writing in the vernacular which was either (Shona / Ndebele) and English".

It should be noted that the training was rudimentary and that there were no fixed standards in either the length of courses or entry qualifications. These early training institutions were situated in the rural areas which were suited for the farming, brick-making, road-making, building, carpentry, iron-work, and domestic work for girls. There was an important feature which marked the development of African literary education which was predominantly reading, and writing. Missionaries advocated for literary education because they were largely interested in religious and proselytising value. Bone (1970:22) says Government attitude towards African literary education was expressed by one of the Native Commissioners as follows:

"The policy should be to develop the native's natural proclivities first, on lines least likely to lead to any risk of clashing with Europeans".

In the opinion of the Southern Rhodesia Government, the natives were not supposed to receive education that would remove them from their rural homes. In accordance with the views above, Bone (1970:22) says The Chief Native Commissioner of Matabeleland in 1908 argued:

"It is labour we need in this country, and it has yet to be proved that the educated native who can write...will not work on farms and mines, but will rush to the towns and obtain employment where he can exhibit his knowledge and training".

Bone (1970:22) says in another report of the same Native Commissioner of Matabeleland (1909) reported:
"...a purely literary education should not be considered for years to come for we strongly support government control of native education, commencing by establishing agricultural and other industrial schools in certain selected parts, under carefully selected instructors." 

There was a conflict of interest between Government on the one hand and missionary organisations on the other. In a bid to control African literary education along the lines expressed above, government made it a requirement that all schools be registered and also ruled that they should be subject to inspection. To further tighten control of what education should be exposed to the Africans, government introduced some inducement to missionaries in the form of grant-in-aid of industrial training. Bone (1970:24) observes that this grant-in-aid regulation was essentially government measures directing African education along agricultural and industrial rather than academic lines. Bone (1970:24) further says that the Education Ordinances (1903; 1912; and later 1917) allowed state aid to any mission school which was kept for not less than four hour daily of learning of which not less than two hours shall be devoted to industrial and agricultural training. This regulation further stipulated that the longer the time devoted to industrial and agricultural training, the higher the grant up to a maximum of fifty pounds. Mission organisations were reluctant to accept the aid. The slowness of the missions to accept the aid was not because of their reluctance to give fifty percent weighting of the school time to industrial training. The regulations laid down in the Education Ordinances referred to above were unnecessarily too high. The missions were generally concerned with education, both literary and industrial
down in the Education Ordinances referred to above were unnecessarily too high. The missions were generally concerned with education, both literary and industrial to the degree that would enable them to effectively carry out their task of conversion and evangelism. Tindall (1984:230) observes:

"The missions had always been anxious to provide education for Africans, initially to equip them to understand Christian teaching and to enable a selected few to train as evangelists. Literacy, at least in the vernacular, was the aim and the curriculum therefore concentrated on the three R's; some training in carpentry, agriculture and hygiene was usually added to improve the standards of the village life."

Tindall (1984:231) observes that the big mission centres where there were frequently not only upper primary classes (Standards 4 to 6) but also a selection of vocational courses to train teachers, carpenters, builders, medical orderlies, and agricultural and health demonstrators were set up.

4.1.2 Summary of the developments in African Education in the period 1900 to 1927.

There are significant landmarks in the development of teacher education within this period. The first one of these landmark is that St. Augustine was the first Anglican mission station to train teachers in 1890. There were no special entry requirements both in terms of the minimum qualifications and age restriction. The highest qualification which could be attained during this period was five years of schooling. In 1918, government registered its involvement by appointing Keigwin
products. To consolidate this idea, government opened in 1920 an industrial school at Domboshawa in Chinamhora north of Salisbury (now Harare) which offered building and carpentry. A little later it opened a second school at Tjolotjo in the Gwai reserve near Bulawayo to provide similar courses in Matabeleland. Another event worth noting in this period was the Native Education Equity Commission of 1925. The commission supported government efforts to establish institutions with a bias towards agricultural and industrial instruction. The Commission also recommended that African education be separated from the department of Native Development to be placed under its own department and to have its own director. In 1927 the Native Education Department was established and a Director and three inspectors were appointed. This development was intended to increase efficiency in the education of Africans. What form did assessment take in this period?

4.1.3 Assessment in Teacher Education in the period 1900 to 1927.

It is significant to note that the small, poorly equipped, ill-funded and religiously oriented teacher training schools became the chief source of teacher supply in providing educational opportunities for the African child. Inconsistencies and discrepancies were, however, witnessed with regard to entry qualifications, selection criteria (religious background was a prerequisite), duration of the course, pedagogical knowledge, assessment criteria and procedure, and age restriction. Atkinison (1972:20) observes that the admission of trainees was based on religious faith and church affiliation. Consideration was given to candidates whose families
had long standing connections with the church. Such practices excluded nonconformists from attending teacher training schools. Atkinson (1970:21) further observes:

"...normal missionary obligation was to promote literacy, so that converts could read and understand the Bible and the service-books of the church by its nature Christianity was a philosophical exercise in which faith and schooling went closely hand in hand."

It is clear from the quotation above that the primary aim of missionaries was evangelical rather than academic, technical or industrial training. Peaden (1973:78) echoes Atkinson when he says:

"The missionaries had opened schools as a means of furthering their evangelistic policies. Converts needed to be taught how to read and write so that they could study the Bible and church doctrines. There seemed to be no standard requirements of education before a student could be admitted to the training institution".

Atkinson (1973:96) comments there were difficulties concerning the curriculum, since it was by no means evident that the missionary teachers would be in a position to keep pace with the academic and technical standards which Rhodesian schools were likely to require. The quality of teachers who were produced during this period has been summarised by the Hardfield Commission of 1928. The Commission observed that at one training school, the amount of time devoted to professional subjects in a 45 hour week was half an hour yet this centre was a fully accredited training centre.
The training and assessment of the teacher education curriculum in this period has been summarised by Bone (1970:35) in the following terms:

"Inevitably training classes and school classes overlapped: training institutes are carried on in connection with first class schools, the literary and industrial courses in the upper classes being followed often both by the senior scholars and by those in the teacher training classes. Inevitably too, a large number of students have no intention of becoming teachers and only took the course because, excluded in the school classes, they had no choice but to enter these (teacher training) classes in order to take a higher education".

The situation as it is reflected in the observation above shows that there was a need for order, planning and control since there were no clear assessment instruments nor were there uniform procedures of assessing would-be-teachers. On their part missionaries observed change in behaviour, respect and in some instances conformity as a sign that the student had passed. This situation is well summarised by Bone 1970:28 in the following words:

"..it is safe to conclude that 99% of the teachers of third class schools are professionally unqualified. Their academic qualification was, on average Standard two or Three, but not all areas, not all mission societies reached this level. In Fort Victoria (now Masvingo Province) 275 of 519 teachers had not themselves passed beyond the infant class level".

Teacher education was set to improve in the next phase for with the creation of the Advisory Board of Education in 1925 the period 1928 to 1962 witnessed marked improvements in the development of teacher education as a result of more commissions that were set up to investigate the education system.
4.1.4 Teacher Education and assessment in the period 1928 - 1962.

Teacher education continued to be dominated by missionaries. This period was, however, marked by government involvement in African education with a view to monitor the quality of education. The first Director of the new Department of Native Education was Harold Jowitt, a professional educator with fourteen years of experience in what is today Kwazulu Natal Republic of South Africa. This was a remarkable achievement on the part of the government because, for the first time they appointed a professional to supervise African education. Jowitt was empowered to pursue community development. Among the achievements registered during his time of office were that he started the unification of the Shona dialects, promoted the use of the vernacular (either Shona or Ndebele) in the schools, organised Jeans teachers as community improvement demonstrators and as supervising master teachers in village schools, and promoted maternity care, child welfare, irrigation health and agricultural improvement. Jowitt made some achievement with regard to improving the welfare of Blacks, but fell short of improving their academic education. During this same period, government introduced its famous five year-plan. Under the new Director of African Education H.C. Finkle (1956-61) government announced its plan to achieve primary education up through Standard 3 for all children in urban areas and for as many as possible in rural areas. Government in addition appointed A.J. Smith as the new Secretary for African Education in 1960, who insisted that all mission stations should meet the standard and criteria set by the University of Rhodesia.
The Department of African Education was reactivated in the period 1935 to 1954 under the new director George Stark. He too was a professional educator who had come from South Africa. Parker (1970:255) commends Stark in the following terms:

“His administration saw the advent of government-managed urban primary schools, the establishment of secondary schools, improved teacher education, and other improvements.”

Government increased its participation in African education in the 1940's to meet the demands for education which had developed since the inception of the two government institutions at Domboshawa near Salisbury and Tjolotjo near Bulawayo in 1920 and 1921 respectively. By taking over responsibility of the primary schools in village settlements at Highfield in Salisbury and Luveve in Bulawayo, government was able to inspect the schools, see the overall picture of the development of African education, set standards and insist on conformity to these standards, and finally provide financial support to the schools. Important developments occurred during this period. First, it was agreed in principle that secondary education was essential if Africans were to take a full part in the life of a modern society. The first Secondary School was opened at St. Augustine’s mission in 1939 to address the urgent need to produce a class of educated Africans capable of understanding responsible leadership within the life of the Anglican church. This development was important in that for the first time, six students sat for the Junior Certificate and wrote Cambridge examinations. A central Government secondary school opened at Goromonzi in the Chinyika Reserve in 1941. With these
developments the minimum educational qualification for a new untrained teacher was raised from Standard 4 to Standard 5 in 1945 and to Standard 6 in 1951. Of those who were trained, the vast majority had taken a two-year training course after Standard 6. In 1949 Kutama mission opened to provide post Junior Certificate qualification for teachers of upper primary classes. In 1946 Goromonzi School started to provide a four-year course to Cambridge School Certificate, the same examination as that taken in the European secondary schools. The Kerr Commission was instituted in 1950 to investigate African Education. Tindall (1984:233) says the recommendations of this commission:

"...improved teacher's salaries, increased its grants for secondary and teacher training work and encouraged the opening of more of these vital institutions."

The Commission alluded to above impacted on the education system in respect of increased salary for all teachers, both in Government and in aided schools, brought about parity between Government and mission education, extended facilities for training teachers at all levels and improved facilities for industrial education. These efforts were further augmented with the opening of the University of Rhodesia and that of Umtali Teachers' training college both in 1956 which was a landmark in the development of teacher education in Rhodesia. The first professor of the University of Rhodesia was an educationist who insisted that all training institutions should meet the standards set by the University. Umtali teachers' college was the first private primary teachers' college to be granted the status of University affiliate. The status of associateship was an important landmark in the
institutions should meet the standards set by the University. Umtali teachers' college was the first private primary teachers' college to be granted the status of University affiliate. The status of associateship was an important landmark in the development of teacher education. Among the implications of this development was that for the first time there was going to be a board which would set standards for teacher education, that a team would be appointed to supervise and ensure that standards were met, and that certificates would be awarded by the University and not by the Ministry of Education as was the case before. The scheme of associateship needs close examination at this stage.

4.1.5 The Scheme of Associateship and its relevance to the development of Teacher Education in Zimbabwe.

The idea of associate status for colleges originated in the 1945 McNair Report of Teacher Training in England and Wales. That report led to the creation of Institutes of Education first in England and then in the English-speaking countries.

A few years later, the report of the East and Central African Study Group recommended the co-ordination of teacher training along the lines of English institutes of education. The Associate Centre for Colleges was created at the University of Rhodesia in 1956. Among other things, the scheme permits the university to certify students who complete the programme of study proposed by the colleges and approved by the Associate College of education as well as students who are not directly taught by the University but are found to be
subject areas utilising the services of team specialists from both within and outside the University. The University receives and approves examination questions for each college, organises and moderates the final examinations in all colleges. To this end the Associate Centre (now Department of Teacher Education) produced documents for use by all associate colleges in a bid to improve the quality of Teacher Education. Among the documents that have been produced over the years which have continued to be revised are:

I) Criteria for Associate Status (CE/78/92)
ii) Regulations for the Certificate or Diploma in Education (DTE/AB/28/90)
ii) Guidelines for designing syllabuses for all subjects (ACC/AB/1/86).
iii) Duties of the external assessors (CE/6/81/47/84/90).
iv) Grading scale for the assessment of teaching practice, course-work, and examinations (ACC/9/86/89/92).
v) Guidelines for external assessors (CE/33/83/DTE/43/90).
v) Computation and presentation of marks (DTE/16/90/92).

The introduction of the concept of associateship had far-reaching implications for the qualitative development of teacher education and its assessment. First government announced its five-year plan 1956-61, under the new Director of African Education, H. C. Finkle, who himself was an educationist. One important development that needs mentioning is that the main aim of the plan was to achieve primary education up through Standard 3 for all children in urban centres. With the introduction of a standards control board at the University of Rhodesia, assessment in teacher education began to take shape. Although at this stage government had not started to enforce the requirement that teacher education be monitored by the University of Rhodesia, quality teachers had started to be
produced for both the primary school teachers at Umtali teachers' training college for primary and at Gweru (Gwelo) teachers' college for secondary teachers.

4.1.6 ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN TEACHER EDUCATION AS A WHOLE AND ITS RELEVANCE TO MKOBA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

The regulations which bound Mkoba Teachers' College at the time of its opening in 1976 were stipulated in the University of Rhodesia (now University of Zimbabwe) Criteria for Associate Status (see 3.1.5). Section 1.2 spelt out conditions under which all colleges were to operate:

i) This shall apply to those institutions which do not seek to participate in the work of the University but which seek to obtain the University's participation in their work.

ii) Associate Institutions are motivated by a desire to raise their standards and heighten their prestige.

iii) The University shall confine its role to the provision of professional guidance and supervision to Associate Institutions to ensure that they operate at a level appropriate to their own nature and purposes which need not be at University level.

iv) Where appropriate, the University shall, through appropriate Faculties, be responsible for examining students in Associate Institutions as well as for the award of Certificates and Diplomas to successful candidates.

Following the criteria for Associate Status outlined above, the University produced Regulations for the Diplomas and Certificates in Education contained in the document D.T.E./AB/28/90 amended. In its introductory statement the regulations read:

'The Diploma in Education of the University of Zimbabwe will be awarded to candidates who have satisfied the University through the Department of Teacher Education that they have registered for
and successfully completed an approved programme of study at an Associate College..."

To ensure that the Criteria for Associate status above is met, the University introduced:

(i) entry requirements;
(ii) registration requirements;
(iii) programme of study; and
(iv) examination requirements.

The document further stipulated that:

i) Where specific courses are mounted in Applied Education (now Professional Studies) such as in colleges training teachers for primary schools, such courses will be examined by selected course work and by a final written examination or approved equivalent (with an Approved equivalent in Sciences, and performing skills in Music and Physical Education).

ii) It shall be the responsibility of each college to testify that each candidate has reached a level of satisfactory competence in English.

From 1976 up to 1984, Mkoba Teachers’ College was battling to understand and meet the requirements of the Associate Centre for Colleges at the University of Rhodesia, (now University of Zimbabwe). Of relevance to this study is the document on the Guidelines for Designing Syllabuses (ACC/28/82). The Department of Applied Education at Mkoba produced a simplified version of guidelines for designing syllabuses for implementation by the various subjects. Each subject syllabus was supposed to have the subheadings contained in the criteria for associate status. Mhlanga’s (1982: 1) document contains the requirements (ACC/28/82) as follows:
A brief explanation of the nature of the subjects, the target population and the structure of the programme should be reflected in the preamble. The long range goals and aims in relation to needs of learners and those of society should be reflected. The objectives should be specific, with learner achievement embracing cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains normally in behavioural terms. For example:

'By the end of the course students should be able to...'

The content (subject matter, skill etc.) to be taught and learnt was to be in fairly broad groupings. Approaches should reflect how the course is to be presented to student teachers for example lectures, class discussions, practical work, field work, visits to settlements, and video observations. With regard to assessment, the Associate College Centre (now Department of Teacher Education) circulated a policy document relating to assessment and assessment procedures. These policy documents were to guide colleges so that colleges would meet the requirements of the University. Four areas were supposed to be assessed as follows:

i) Course-work assignments  
ii) Practical work  
iii) Written Examination  
iv) Dissertation (later called Curriculum Depth Study / C.D.S). Each College was given the latitude to interpret this document with regard to the nature, quality, and quantity of assessment items to be presented.

The Associate College Centre also circulated a document which reflected the grading Scale to assist in the assessment of written work and possibly to guide the colleges in any other form of assessment. Table 3.2 reflects the demands expected
GRADING SCALE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF WRITTEN WORK

ACC/870/82

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>SYMBOL</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>In addition to the ORIGINALITY of the answer, there is a marked AWARENESS OF ALTERNATIVES and a capacity for SELF-CRITICISM of ideas even as they are being presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Work characterized by its ORIGINALITY; UNUSUAL and effective organization of the answer. UNUSUAL and perceptive choice of illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>The display of understanding is accompanied by some vivid and appropriate ILLUSTRATION.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Satisfactory, BOTH as an ANSWER to the question and in its display of UNDERSTANDING of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail, but can supplement</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Either a PARTIAL ANSWER + SOME UNDERSTANDING; or fair to sound understanding but the QUESTION NOT ANSWERED, or clear answer but INADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E+</td>
<td>SOME understanding RELEVANT to the question is displayed; little attempt to answer the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E</td>
<td>SOME UNDERSTANDING of the topic is displayed but this is NOT made relevant to the demands of the question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>F+</td>
<td>Remarks and ideas which hint at some awareness of what the question is about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>No work submitted, or COMPLETELY WRONG &amp; IRRELEVANT information and ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2

The grading scale for the assessment of written work was accompanied by another document relating to the principles which were supposed to guide colleges.

Bourdillon (1978:66) set out three principles which had to be borne in mind when making a final assessment of the abilities of students in teacher's colleges with regard to their theoretical courses. Bourdillon (1978:67) stated that colleges are expected to:

i) distinguish between the ongoing ‘developmental’ evaluation of students and the final assessment;

ii) each component chosen for inclusion in the final assessment should evaluate different set of skills;

iii) the assessment scheme should be computationally simple.
From the time of its inception, Mkoba Teachers' College battled to understand, interpret and implement policy documents from the Associate College Centre. Many reviews took place with a view to improve the quality of graduands and also to make the interpretation of these documents easier for colleges. One such change was the Grading Scale as in table 4.3 below.

**A REVISED GRADING SCALE FOR THE ASSESSMENT OF WRITTEN WORK ACC/9/70/82/88**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>%age Range</th>
<th>%age Mark</th>
<th>Scale Eqv</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>In addition to the ORIGINALITY of the answer, there is a marked AWARENESS OF ALTERNATIVES, and a capacity for SELF-CRITICISM of ideas even as they are being presented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinction</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Work characterized by its ORIGINALITY: UNUSUAL &amp; effective organization of the answer, UNUSUAL &amp; perceptive choice of illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>70-79</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Work characterized by markedly clear ORGANIZATION; question answered in a clearly LOGICAL order, with WELL-SELECTED illustrations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merit</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>The display of understanding is accompanied by some vivid and appropriate ILLUSTRATION.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Satisfactory, BOTH as an ANSWER to the question and in its display of UNDERSTANDING of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail but can supplement</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Either a PARTIAL ANSWER + SOME UNDERSTANDING; or fair to sound understanding but the QUESTION NOT ANSWERED for a clear answer but INADEQUATE UNDERSTANDING</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>F+</td>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Remarks and ideas which hint at some awareness of what the question is about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No work submitted or COMPLETELY WRONG &amp; IRRELEVANT information and ideas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.3

The table 4.3 above shows that per centage ranges and mark ranges were included in the reviewed grading scale. The reasons cited for the changing and improving the grading scale were:
i) Varying practices had been followed in arranging for marks of borderline pass/fail students with some in the same profile of marks being recommended for passing and others referral resulting in discrepancies.

ii) There were an increasing number of students going on to take further University courses such as B.Ed at this or other universities. Difficulties had arisen and were likely to continue to arise since only transcripts of percentage marks were provided and marks below 50% were generally regarded as failures.

iii) The increasing pool of well-qualified secondary school leavers applying for places in teachers’ colleges made it appropriate to emphasize quality in teacher education by raising the pass level from 45% to 50% a standard that should now be readily attainable.

4.1.7 Observations on the criteria and instruments of assessment used in the period 1928 to 1962.

The review of Regulations for the Certificate and Diploma in education showed that there was a shift from the use of symbols such as A, A-, B+ through to F to literal mark ranges zero to hundred per cent. This was to be replaced by percentage marks and percentage range equivalent. The mark range between E+ to F whose equivalent was 0-39 was to be regarded as an outright failure. Initially candidates whose marks fell within the range 0 - 39, a descriptive symbol 'R' was used to mean that such candidates could be referred. Referring a candidate meant that either the candidates could repeat the whole course (usually a year) or withdraw. Armed with:

i) syllabus guideline
ii) grading scale and
iii) a guide on principles of assessment. Mkoba Teachers’ College was ready to assess students in Applied Education. But what were the conditions for a pass?

To satisfy the requirements of Applied Education, a candidate had to obtain an overall pass grade average of course work and dissertation derived as follows:
On course work the candidate was expected to pass on average all the ten subjects on offer (10 subjects), weighted 60%. The candidate could, however, pass if he or she passed in at least 70% of the subjects on offer, which meant a pass in any seven subjects out of the ten. The dissertation/ Curriculum Depth Study was weighted 40%. The two, an average of course work marks in the ten subjects plus the marks of the dissertation, were supposed to average a minimum of 50%.

With regard to the computation of marks, once again a document was produced showing among other things that a mark of 50 or more is a pass, a candidate with a mark between 40 and 49 will supplement, a symbol of S shows that the candidate will supplement, and a mark of less than 40 is a complete failure. What new developments were witnessed in the next phase?


The next phase of teacher education was influenced by commissions of enquiry into the African education system. Of particular significance was the Judges Commission of 1962. The commission was tasked to review the education system identify problems and make recommendations One important recommendation of this report was that:

"Teacher training at P.T.H. level should, as soon as possible be concentrated in a few well-equipped centres of optimum size, the number of which shall be extended and expanded" (Judges Report 1962:53).
This recommendation had far reaching implications for the development of teacher education and its assessment in Rhodesia. The requirement that training be concentrated in a few well-equipped centres of optimum size raised the quality of teacher education in general. The first step in raising the quality of primary education was the introduction of the T2 Certificate in 1964 at Umtali college. The entry qualification of this programme was a two-year post Cambridge School Certificate. This course was designed to train academically advanced primary school teachers, teachers who would operate efficiently up to standard six. Another important landmark in the development of teacher education and its assessment took place in 1966 when the Secretary for African Education, A. J. Smith announced the famous Seven-Year Plan to restructure African Education. The significance of this plan was that all aided colleges were to close down or merge to form one college of acceptable standard. Table 3.3 below shows the pattern of the new plan in the preparation of teachers. The table shows among other things, the level at which the teacher was required to teach, name of qualification, nature of work, length of training, and the institutions which were to train the teachers.

**TEACHER’S COLLEGES AND THE LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION OFFERED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher required for</th>
<th>Name of qualification</th>
<th>Nature of work</th>
<th>Length of training</th>
<th>Institution of training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>T 4</td>
<td>Infant class teaching</td>
<td>2 years post Std. 6, later 2 years post grade 9</td>
<td>Umtali, United Teachers’ Bondolf, Morgen ster Colleges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary School: 3 to 7</td>
<td>T 3</td>
<td>General Primary School Subjects</td>
<td>3 years post grade 9 or post Junior Certificate</td>
<td>United College, and Mlezu College of Agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grades 8 &amp; 9</td>
<td>T 2B</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>2 years post</td>
<td>United Colle-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Subject in Junior Sec. School</th>
<th>preparation subjects</th>
<th>Cambridge School Certificate</th>
<th>ge.Mlezu College of Agriculture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senior Sec. School Form 1 to 4</td>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Secondary School Subjects Forms 1,2 &amp; 3.</td>
<td>3 years post 1st Class Cambridge School Certificate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The establishment of the National Advisory Council of Teacher Training (NACOTT) comprising representatives from colleges, the University Institute of Education and the Division of African Education was yet another development recorded in teacher education. The function of this board was to co-ordinate the colleges, discuss matters on teacher education, set up liaison between the colleges, Ministry and the Institute of Education later on to be called Department of Teacher Education. The formation of this board meant that the quality of education in all sectors, the primary, secondary, primary teacher education, and secondary teacher education would be co-ordinated and monitored very closely.

In 1971 NACOTT changed its name to the National Advisory Council on Teacher Education (NACOTE). One very important recommendation of the Secretary was that all mission training schools were either to close down or meet the University requirements stipulated in its condition for Associateship. This development resulted in the establishment of the United College of Education. The significance of this development is that, for each sector, a specific qualification was required. The T1 qualification was acquired by those teachers who would teach academic subjects in the secondary sector T2A graduates were
qualified to teach academic subjects in the secondary schools. Those schools established specifically for practical subjects were referred to as F2 schools. The qualification for teaching in F2 schools was referred to as T2B. An important development relevant to this study was the introduction of T3 qualification (see table 3.3 above). These teachers would teach in the primary sector. Chikukwa (1977:135) says:

"These planned developments had inevitable concomitant implications on teacher education. NACOTE, through sub-committees, embarked on feverish syllabus preparation for both primary and secondary college courses. To emerge from the collective expertise of the NACOTEC Curriculum designers was a new teacher who was a knowledgeable, understanding teacher, who stimulates the child and leads him through facts, which before were too often given as items to be learned."

The observation above points to efforts to improve the pedagogical skills of the teachers. The Ministry of African Education announced its new policy on primary teacher education in 1973. Umtali Teachers’ College was expanded to a T3 centre, and another T3 Government college was opened at Mkoba in 1976 as a model for all future teachers’ colleges (see 1.3.4). This development was a landmark in the qualitative development of primary teacher education because Mkoba was built as a model to be followed by all other institutions with an interest in the training of teachers. First, all missionaries who wished to train teachers were expected to provide the facilities and equipment which government had provided at Mkoba. Secondly, Government announced closer involvement in primary teacher education, hitherto a predominantly missionary endeavour.
Another landmark in the development of teacher education came in the wake of the Lewis-Taylor Commission (1974:142) into African education. One recommendation of this report read in part:

"Whatever the merits of the curriculum, the degree of success that will be obtained will depend upon the quality of teachers, their knowledge, skills and commitment, the continuing support they receive, the resources available to them and their pupils for teaching and learning, the security and career prospects they enjoy." (The Lewis-Taylor Report 1974:142)

It should be noted that these developments were a continuation of the main concerns of the Judges Report of 1962 which sought to identify ways of improving the quality of education. In order to establish a coherent system of education the Teacher Education Supplementary Course (TESC) was introduced to improve lecturers' pedagogical skills the syllabi were improved with the establishment of the Curriculum Development Unit in 1975 as a support unit in syllabus development.

Further steps in syllabus development were made in 1975 when a seminar was conducted at Gwelo Teachers' College. This seminar resulted in the setting up of Committees which were tasked to look into the education system. The T2 Working Party was to look into secondary education while the T3 was to re-examine the T3 courses. Of significance was the report of the T3 Working Party. The team recommended the replacement of professional subjects with what was called professional foundations, the replacement of 'curriculum subjects' by applied education, the introduction of qualifying courses in Maths and English,
and the option for a college to adopt a modular or linear approach in the teaching of these subjects. As should be clear, the subject professional studies was beginning to get recognition and its status was being raised.

Another landmark in the development of *Professional Studies* was the publication of The Primary Teacher Education Syllabus and Regulations in 1978. This syllabus was popularly known as the ‘Pink Book’ because of the colour of its covers. With regard to *Applied Education* (now Professional Studies), the Syllabus (1978: 11) stipulated:

> "The courses are meant to provide students with a grasp of the learning incepts applicable to each subject, to relate these to the primary child in general and progressively to the chosen age group in particular, to acquire the knowledge and skills relevant to successful teaching; and to evaluate the methodology involved".

The official syllabus stipulated three broad guidelines to be followed by colleges.

a) colleges were supposed to work out their own course programmes from the syllabus bearing in mind the following:
   i) each topic was to be dealt with in the context of teaching it to primary school children within grades 1 - 7;
   ii) that each topic would involve the students in practical experiences with children;
   iii) that during the first year all student teachers would observe other teachers teach and be involved in learning with groups of children through the whole range of the primary school.

b) The syllabus suggested the learning and teaching sequence within a topic; and,

c) The syllabus further suggested that the practical aspects of the course would involve students in:
   i) organising group learning situations,
   ii) teaching topics by discovery-learning and planning for their subsequent development; and
iii) constructing useful teaching and learning apparatus and aids appropriate to junior and infant situations.

To further develop the syllabus, a National Teacher Education Conference was convened at Mkoba Teachers' College in 1979. The Conference was attended by representatives from the university of Rhodesia (now University of Zimbabwe), Heads of applied education from the various colleges, heads of schools, and any one with an interest in teacher education. The task of this conference was:

(i) to officially monitor the examinations;
(ii) to discuss professional liaisoning;
(iii) to discuss assessment procedures; and
(iv) to decide which approach to follow, either the modular or linear in the teaching of applied education.

The conference resolved that the monitoring of examinations was important for it would raise the professional standards of student teachers and would standardise approaches to the assessment of student teachers. This recommendation strengthened the position of the Associate College Centre with regard to its role in the examinations in all colleges. Representatives agreed that weighting must have a bias towards internal assessment for it has the merit of being developmental. Final assessment it was agreed must be given to second year work which was their final year for their Applied Education.

With regard to professional liaison in colleges, the participants agreed that lecturers taking Applied Education courses should sit together to draw up a list of all the skills that they think make up an effective teacher. From the list they would
select what skills next to be tackled by each department. The purpose for this exercise is to reduce duplication, overlapping and possible neglect of some important skills in the process. Tutor seminars should be organised within colleges to provide platform for an exchange of skills and ideas. On assessment of student teachers, the participants recommended that a teacher should be competent and effective in his functioning in live situations (see 1.3.3). To this end, in final assessment there would be a shift of emphasis from theory of education to the practice of education, that is, from Professional Foundations to Applied Education. It should be noted that by this stage, the subject Applied Education and its assessment had taken shape. What was left was to further improve its quality as was the case in the next phase.


The Judges Report of 1962 had recommended that more Main Subjects be taught in order to provide the content which was believed to be lacking. This resulted in overemphasis on Main Subject at the expense of Applied Education. It has already been pointed out above that applied education as a subject was introduced as a result of the T3 Working Party formed at a National Conference on Teacher Education at Gwelo Teachers' College in 1975 (see 3.1.8.). This development had been followed with the publication of the Primary Teacher Syllabuses and Regulations in 1978. By this date it had been realised that there
was a need for changing the area of emphasis from Main Subject to applied education.

In 1985 Mkoba Teachers' College hosted another National Teacher Education Conference. Members to the conference appointed a Teacher Education Review Committee (1986). This Commission's report (1986) had a tremendous impact on the improvement of the quality of teacher education and its assessment. The results were that applied education was elevated to the status of main subject with regard to syllabus approval, time allocation and final assessment. The subject changed its name from Applied Education to Professional Studies to suit its function, namely that of training professional teachers (see 1.3.2.). A follow-up workshop was held at The Oasis Hotel in Harare in 1988 among other things tasked to create more time for Professional Studies and finding ways of improving the quality of Professional Studies and its delivery system. Presenting a paper at the workshop Mhlanga (1988: 1) highlighted four aspects of the role of Applied Education as follows:

i) it is the rationale for teaching a subject;
ii) knowledge of content and key concepts and objectives;
iii) good grasp of how to teach the subject and how to create varied learning activities; and

Following the TERC Report of 1986 and the Oasis workshop held in 1988, subsequent policy decisions that were made in order to improve the quality of
Applied Education (now professional studies) and its assessment included the following:

i) The recommendation that Professional Studies be divided into three Syllabuses 'A', 'B' and 'C' (see 5.4.2 - 5.4.4)

ii) That all Primary teachers' colleges were expected to observe correct procedures in drawing up syllabuses for the professional studies courses.

iii) That colleges were required to document their plans and decisions with regard to conditions for a pass, the weighting, assessment procedures for each of the three syllabuses 'A', 'B' and 'C'.

iv) That each college was to make its local arrangements with regard to assessment procedures.

Another step taken to improve Professional Studies (formerly Applied Education) was the debate whether Main Subject should be phased out completely so that more time would be created for Professional Studies, and the possibility of clustering certain subjects so that more time would be spent on Professional Studies. In this regard Hwata (1994:5) isolated three important implications arising from the Commission's report that had a bearing towards Professional Studies and its assessment:

"Curriculum development in Primary Teachers Colleges revolved around the area of professional studies with the major thrust to improve professional studies syllabuses with regard to time allocation, assessment procedures and approval of syllabus by the Department of Teacher Education".

"Colleges defined weighting and assessment more precisely and much more operationally in an examination situation and the requirements for a pass in each subject were equally clearly defined".

"Criteria for the award of distinction in section IV was defined and documented" (paper presented at Montclair Casino Hotel 6 June 1994).
4.10 SUMMARY

This chapter established that formal education in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) began with the arrival of the White Missionaries in the period between 1800 and 1900. The historical survey has also established that there are three distinguishing phases in the qualitative development of teacher education, namely 1890 - 1928; 1928 - 1962; 1962 - 1986; and 1986 - 1997. Assessment of Professional Studies was rudimentary in its early stages developed qualitatively with the introduction of scheme of association initiated by the University of Rhodesia (now University of Zimbabwe). The quality of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers’ College improved when the status of the subject was elevated with regard to the approval of the syllabus by the Department of Teacher Education more time allocation, and final assessment.
CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher presents the data collected during the research. The background information on the type of the research design and on the respondents is presented first. The purpose of this approach is to provide adequate information and a framework within which the data can be collected and presented. The relationship between the type of the research design and the research instruments is crucial for an understanding of any research study. This is so for the type of design tends to dictate the type of research instruments to be used. With these observations in mind, the background information on the research design was presented.

5.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE RESEARCH DESIGN

Tuckman (1994:366) quotes Bogdan and Biklen (1992) who observed that qualitative research (case study) has five distinguishing features that characterise this type of research design. These features include the fact that:

(i) the natural setting is the source of data and the researcher is the key data-collection instrument;
(ii) it attempts primarily to describe and only secondarily to analyse;
(iii) the concern is with the process, that is, with what has transpired as much as with product or outcome;
(iv) its data are analyzed inductively as in putting together the parts of a puzzle;
(v) and it is essentially concerned with what things mean.

These features mark what is called ethnographic research which is based on the fundamental beliefs that events must be studied in their natural settings, and that events can only be understood when one understands how the phenomenon is perceived and interpreted by the people who participated in them. Ethnography relies on observations of interactions and interviews of participants to discover patterns and their meanings. Tuckman (1994:366) further observes:

"the researcher visits a site or field location to observe perhaps as participant observer - the phenomena that occur in that setting. The researcher also interviews people in and around the setting. The researcher attempts to identify the chief concerns of the various participants and audiences and to assess the merit, worth, or meaning of the phenomena to the participants."

Tuckman’s observations have direct relevance to the phenomena under investigation. Mkoba Teachers’ College as an institution has participants who have worked in the College since its inception in 1976. Their experiences as either students or lecturers formed very valuable data to answer the research problems such as can be articulated in the following questions:

(i) What is the historical development of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers’ College?
(ii) What are the criteria of assessment used at Mkoba?
(iii) How valid are these criteria of assessment?
To address these research questions, the researcher examined the *course objectives* of each department at Mkoba Teachers’ College. *Assessment strategies* were also examined. To answer these questions, the researcher presents data collected from:

i) the documentary evidence available;
ii) questionnaire;
iii) interviews; and
iv) participant observations in that order.

5.3 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE ON THE ASSESSMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

5.3.1 Introduction

Documents are one source of information about an event or phenomena that participants or observers prepared, usually in the form of *minutes* or *reports*. Minutes are a written description of the actions considered and taken during a meeting and are an official record of all transactions and proceedings by the members of the organisation holding that meeting. Included in the list of such official documents were reports, newspapers, eyewitness accounts, and any other form of transcription that described what happened during an event. Two phases were identified in the historical development of *Professional Studies*. The first period was 1976-1986 and then 1986-1997 respectively. The documents consulted in this research study included the following:

i) Syllabuses for each department;
ii) Official policy documents;
iii) Departmental minutes;
iv) End of year departmental reports,
v) External assessors' reports;
vi) Minutes of the academic board meetings, and any document that had a bearing upon the subject applied education.

In all these documents, the researcher focused on issues that related to assessment in Applied Education. To contextualise assessment, the study isolated first the objectives and then examined assessment procedures that were put up in order to determine whether the objectives were achieved or not.

5.3.1.1 Assessment in the Department of Art Education :1976-86

The Department operated on a modular approach. Documents available showed that each module had five objectives stated as follows:

By the end of the course students were expected to be able to:

i) identify significant problems in the teaching of art and suggest possible solutions to the problems;
ii) carry out practical improvisation activities;
iii) prepare a series of visual materials designed to help the teacher to motivate children and promote their perception;
iv) execute more advanced practical skills in relation to more creative lesson approaches;
v) make detailed process reports on processes executed in art/craft activities, and;
vii) demonstrate understanding in small research activities;

Assessment was made up of two items. Students submitted one written assignment for assessment. The second instrument for assessment was the file. The file was supposed to be up to date. Candidates should develop an index and produce an envelop with current lecture notes, personal notes and samples of work done in the studio. Covers were supposed to be renewed and these covers were to be artistically decorated by the student (ST/No. 54/86)
The syllabus did not specify the weighting of the various components. Neither did it say which aspects of the syllabus should be assessed. This period did not have the external assessors’ report on the subject.

5.3.1.2 Assessment in the Department of English : 1976-86.

The objectives of this syllabus were divided into knowledge, skills, and attitude objectives. There was only one syllabus for both module one and two. The objectives relating to knowledge, were stated as:

The newly qualified teacher was expected to be able to:

i) possess a broad understanding of the nature and function of language;
ii) have a soundly-based philosophy of teaching English as a second language so that he can formulate a list of objectives for teaching it;
iii) possess adequate knowledge of some crucial aspects of the grammar of the English Language for teaching purposes;
iv) be acquainted with the objectives of the primary school language course;
v) be conversant with the methods of second language learning and teaching;
vi) be conversant with the strengths and weaknesses of the existing textbooks and teaching materials;
vii) realise the learning problems encountered by pupils from various socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds.

With regard to skills, the newly qualified teacher was expected to be able to:

i) select and apply appropriate methods and techniques to further the acquisition and development of the skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing;
ii) teach stories, composition, comprehension, pronunciation, sentence structures, child drama, poetry and rhymes, and many other aspects of English.

On attitudes and values, the newly qualified teacher was expected to appreciate the importance of English not only as an official language in Zimbabwe, but also as
a vehicle of international communication. He or she should be able to appreciate
the need to expose children to reading materials that are consistent with the new
socio-political order in Zimbabwe

These objectives were assessed as follows:

i) Assignments 40%
ii) Resource Notes 20%
iii) File Presentation 10%
iv) Teaching Performance 30%

5.3.1.3 Assessment in the Department of Home Economics:1976-86

The Home Economics Syllabus (Stencil. No 56/88) had no objectives. The
document had no assessment procedure either. In a final assessment report of the
year ending 1988 however, there was an indication of what items were used for
assessment. These were:

i) Assignments 25%
ii) Test 25%
iii) File 25%

In his end of year report, Mhlanga (1988:1) reported that in Home Economics
items that were submitted for assessment included two written assignments, two
tests, a practical examination, micro-teaching, and a resource file.
5.3.1.4 Assessment in the Mathematics Department: 1976-86

The objectives for this course were stated as follows (ST. No 270/82)
Students were expected to be able to:

i) identify and remedy their mathematical content difficulties which have serious consequences on their teaching, especially where such difficulties emanate from their lack of understanding of and inability to describe basic mathematical ideas;

ii) use mathematical language clearly and concisely to explain and express mathematical and physical concepts;

iii) apply fundamental theories of learning Mathematics in teaching Mathematics to primary school children; and

iii) teach Mathematics in the Zimbabwean context.

Assessment was conducted as follows:

For module one:

One-hour examination paper on content (Core-Maths) was written.

Micro-teaching: At least one teaching lesson with pupils.

Final mark was obtained by finding the arithmetic mean of the scores above.

For module two:

One-hour paper was written.

One assignment on mathematical education was presented.

Micro-teaching: at least one teaching lesson.

The arithmetic mean of the three scores gave the final assessment for the module.

The final Applied Education grade was obtained by finding the arithmetic mean of module one and two. The report on final assessment for the year ending 1987 said the students showed problems with regard to scheming and planning so the Department had to make a handout on this before students went on First Year Teaching Practice. Assignments on scheming and planning were mostly
satisfactorily done. The students who did poorly had to redo the work. With regard to Micro-teaching, this was done with each group except for C and D who were interrupted by examinations. In this area the department suffered from shortage of staff; more students could have been seen teaching if more staff were available.

5.3.1.5 Assessment in the Department of Music: 1976-86

Course objectives were structured as follows:

By the end of the course students were expected to be able to:

i) attain musical literacy up to grade two;
ii) sing reasonably well in both systems of notation;
iii) plan, teach and evaluate simple music lessons effectively;
iv) improvise and use simple percussion instruments;
v) appreciate the role of music in the development of a child;
vi) prepare and effectively use repertoire for all primary school grades in as many languages as possible.

Assessment was to be continuous assessment and a course file. (Stencil No. 410/86). The syllabus did not specify how many items of assessment were to be used and in which areas. The position by 1988 had improved to four assessment instruments as follows:

i) tests,
ii) assignments,
iii) files, and
iv) projects, but there was no indication of the weighting on the syllabus.

The number of items of assessment were not reflected. The external assessors (1986) reported that the files were neat and well presented. However there were areas with scant information. More exercises on theory were expected,
assignments and general notes needed to be seen in this area. The question of just how much theory is required for this group needed to be carefully examined. There needed to be a clear distinction between Tonic Solfa Notation and Staff Notation and also how the two could be used together. The report further said *Song Albums* had lots of mistakes detected by the team. Since these files were to be used as resource files for teaching, every effort should be made to ensure that the content in the file is corrected.

*With regard to assignments*, the report further said these could be geared towards preparing student teachers for Teaching Practice. For example, students could be asked to prepare relevant audio visual aids to enable them to teach certain concepts of Music easily, such as charts, flash cards, work cards, instrument making, games and many more. Many of these were said to be useful especially when teaching in the rural areas where materials and resources are scant (ACC Final Examination on Mkoba, 1986).

### 5.3.1.6 Assessment in the Department of Physical Education: 1976-86

The *objectives* of the Department of Physical Education were seven. By the end of the course students were expected to be able to:

i) organise a variety of activities and games suited for the age, sex and ability of the class;

ii) organise the class, equipment and lessons effectively;

iii) coach and referee some of the major games;

iv) extend their knowledge and skills in Physical Education;

v) select and use resource materials effectively;
iv) demonstrate the ability and confidence in expressing themselves in basic facts concerning physical education;

v) and interpret the primary school syllabus.

Assessment of this syllabus was structured as:

i) five major assignments 80%

ii) and file assessment 20%

The External Assessor's report on Mkoba Teachers' College of November 1988 was silent about Applied Education (DJ/BMH/1988)

5.3.1.7 Assessment in the department of Religious and Moral Education: 1976-86

The document of Religious and Moral Education had no course objectives. It did not have assessment procedures either (ST/No.10/88). The 1986 applied education report for internal assessment observed that, Applied Education was not being presented to the external assessors, but Curriculum Depth Study which the college had resolved to present in place of Applied Education in line with the options set by the University (HOD 1986 Applied Education Report for Internal Assessment.). In another report the Head of Department reported that many changes had been taking place in terms of the direction of course assessment procedure. This had been due to the advent of the new approach by the Associate College Center which wished to formalize and unify the teaching and assessment of Applied Education in all colleges (HOD 1988 Annual Report).
Mhlanga (1988:1) reported that by 1988 the department had designed assessment instruments as follows:

i) Course work 60%
ii) Content assignments 10%
iii) Teaching skills 10%
iv) Special aids 10%
v) File 10%

5.3.1.8 Assessment in the Department of Science: 1976-86

The objectives of this section read: By the end of the course the students were expected to be able to exhibit and use the following skills:

i) introductory skills;
ii) management skills;
iii) writing;
iv) interpreting the syllabus;
v) scheming and planning;
vi) self-evaluating and evaluation of pupils and the school;
v) improvise and use aids.
vii) use the scientific method; and
viii) demonstrate knowledge of the content.

For assessment, the syllabus showed:

i) tests in content;
ii) micro-teaching; and
iii) science improvisation articles and kit. (Stencil No. 51/84). There was no weighting reflected on the working document.

In a report (1986:1) on Applied Education the Department observed:

*Performance generally is mediocre with no distinction at all. There are twelve scoring ‘E’ grade and two outright failures. The mediocre performance is largely due to lack of motivation. Students appear to take Applied Education as a pass time(sic) activity and thus lack commitment as they have for Professional Foundations and Main Study. (Kwaramba, P.J for Head of Department; Science 1986).*
5.3.1.9 Assessment in the Department of Social Studies: 1976-86

The objectives were stated as follows: By the end of the course students were expected to:

i) have acquired some techniques and strategies which would enable them to prepare and manage a Social Studies lesson;

ii) be able to locate, design and effectively use resources in the teaching and learning situations;

iii) be able to interpret and implement current syllabuses;

iv) and have developed positive attitude towards the teaching of Social Studies.

Assessment instruments were four items weighted as follows:

i) Micro-teaching sessions 50%

ii) Written assignments 20%

iii) The File 10%

iv) Practical work such as making of aids 20% (ST No 42/83)

5.3.2 Discussion of the data obtained in the documents examined for the period 1976 - 1986.

An examination of these documents revealed that some syllabuses had no objectives (see paragraph 5.3.1.3) while others had no assessment procedures clearly laid out, nor did they say which aspects were to be assessed (see paragraphs 5.3.1.1; 5.3.1.3; and 5.3.1.5). Some subjects were not presented for assessment for it was optional (see paragraph 5.3.1.7). It would appear that
candidates still passed with or without Applied Education as in the example above. As a direct consequence, students developed a negative attitude towards the subject (see paragraph 5.3.1.8). Some departments had micro-teaching as one of their assessment instruments on paper but this instrument was not used, because either there were organisational problems or the department was understaffed (see paragraph 4.3.1.4). Before the College had completed the exercise of interpreting the document (ACC/AB/1/82/86), new recommendations arising from Teacher Education Review Committee of 1986 (TERC Report) were introduced. This situation resulted in a variety of assessment instruments and procedures which were supposed to be interpreted and implemented. Some of these instruments were not easy to interpret within departments. Besides, some assessment instruments like the file and micro-teaching were hardly implemented either because of manpower shortage or the time tables could not allow. The new structure and organisation of Applied Education which started in 1986 was intended to improve the quality and status of Professional Studies.

5.4 DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE OF ASSESSMENT IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES IN THE PERIOD 1986 - 1997

5.4.1 Introduction

This period was important in two or more ways. First, following the Teacher Education review Committee of 1986 (TERC Report) Mkoba, together with all the other Colleges were required to reorganize, restructure and refocus the
Applied Education Syllabus with a view to improving the quality of the subject with regard to assessment, and delivery system. 1988 is particularly significant in that it marked the period when the College was mounting workshops in Applied Education. The purpose of these workshops was to find ways of implementing the proposed Applied Education Syllabus.

5.4.2 Policy changes in Professional Studies and its impact on assessment

In his end-of-year report, Mhlanga (1988:1) said:

*As an outcome of the ACC (Associate College Center) academic board’s acceptance of the recommendation of the TERC report with respect to raising the status of Applied Education in the colleges, two syllabi in Applied Education had to be adopted by colleges by January 1988.*

The report went on to point out that the Department had gone a long way in trying to map out the strategies to implement the policy changes by January 1989. Following the Teacher Education Review Committee Report (1986), Applied Education was to have three syllabuses

5.4.3 Assessment in Syllabus ‘A’

It has already been observed that the TERC report of 1986 gave birth to two syllabuses in Applied Education. Syllabus ‘A’ focused on common aspects of Applied Education such as Teaching Methods, Educational Media and Technology, Foundation Mathematics, and Foundation English were meant to
raise the status of *Applied Education* (Mkoba Teachers’ College: 20th Anniversary 1976-1996 p17; ACC/AB/1/89). The objectives of Syllabus ‘A’ read as follows:

By the end of the course students should be able to:

i) demonstrate basic preparation skills such as scheming and lesson preparation;
ii) present selected lesson episodes to a small group of pupils so as to exhibit certain teaching skills;
iii) use the systems approach to learning and instruction;
iv) employ such technical skills as media design, construction and analysis to augment their teaching activities;
v) spell out the rationale for teaching Mathematics and language; and
vi) apply such theories in the methodologies used in instructions in these areas.

*Assessment* of this syllabus was to be as follows:

i) Courseware assignments 40%
ii) Practical work 20%
iii) Written examination 20%
iv) Dissertation 20% (Stencil No. 536/88)

The objectives of this syllabus changed slightly in 1991. The last two above were dropped. The rest were restructured. Assessment instruments and procedure were also changed. Students were to submit three (3) course work assignments with a weighting of 20% on average. There was to be an examination of one three-hour paper also weighted 20%. Both the examination and course work carry 40% of the total mark in Professional Studies.

5.4.4. *Assessment of Professional Studies Syllabus ‘B’*

*Syllabus ‘B’* was to focus on concepts and teaching techniques unique to each subject area. Reporting on developments in *Applied Education* the Investigating
Subcommittee to the Academic Board of the Department of Teacher Education (formerly Associate College Center) referred to three key background documents. It said these documents had arisen in the first instance from the National Workshop in Applied Education held in July 1988, and subsequently the ideas had been further discussed at various regional levels and in-college fora. Relevant to this research was its recommendations on assessment procedures. It said three compulsory components had to be borne in mind as a condition for a pass. 

**Syllabus 'B'** component had to be based on course-work. The committee encouraged that there should be schemes of coordination within the College whereby assignments are set centrally, depending on topic coverage within Syllabus 'A', but written (and graded) from the perspectives of individual Applied Education Courses. The organisation and clustering of courses, the requirements for a pass in the Syllabus 'B', and the weighting of this component within the section, was to be the subject of flexible interpretation and decision by Colleges.

*In Art and Craft Syllabus B,* the objectives did not change. What changed was the assessment instruments and procedures. Four instruments were outlined for assessment as follows:

i) One Essay  
ii) Two Process reports and production  
iii) File work - Emphasis on research  
iv) Two productions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instrument</th>
<th>Weightage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One Essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Process reports and production</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>File work - Emphasis on research</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two productions</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The candidate was to attain an overall mark of at least 50%  
(Stencil No. 300/91)
Home Economics Syllabus B did not change its objectives either. It also improved on the assessment instruments:

i) Assignments 25%
ii) Tests 25%
iii) Practical work 25%
iv) File 25%

Assessment was to be on courseware, and the candidate was to pass on an average of 50% (Stencil No. 291/91).

In the English Department Syllabus B, assessment was to be based on three assignments of equal weighting and the student had to pass on average. The department dropped resource notes, the file and teaching performance (St No. 412/91).

In the Maths Department Syllabus B simplified its assessment procedure to two one-hour paper core Maths test - 60%, and one assignment on teaching Maths - 40% (ST No. 146/92).

In the Music Department, assessment was to be done on continuous written assessments. The overall course work assessment was to be based on third year work while first year work played some supportive role. The final mark was to be the aggregate of four assignments where each was be marked out of 100% and the total mark for the four averaged to the final total mark of 100%. (ST No. 204/91)
Physical Education syllabus B reduced the number of major assignments from six to two written assignments, one of improvisation to carry 80%, and file assessment to carry 20%. (ST No. 298/91)

Religious and Moral Education Syllabus B retained the number of items for assessment, but adjusted course work marks from 60% to 40%, and the rest remained as they were. Environmental and Agricultural Science syllabus B restructured the instruments of assessment and provided weighting as follows:

i) One assignment 20%
ii) Low cost gadget (improvisation) 20%
iii) Test 20%
iv) File 20%

To pass, the student was required to score at least on average 50%.

Shona Syllabus B (one of the major indigenous languages) reduced items of assessment by dropping minor assignments and micro-teaching. The three major assignments were to be set on media, methods and content and all of them were allocated 40% of the total. In Social Studies, the items of assessment were reduced to two written assignments at 50%, a file with resources notes 25%, and production 25%. Total weighting of the whole syllabus is 100%. (see paragraphs 5.3.1.1 - 5.3.1.9)

5.4.5 Assessment in Curriculum Depth Study (C.D.S)

The third component of Professional Studies is Syllabus C, which is known as Curriculum Depth Study. The documents available show that this syllabus was
viewed as complementing Syllabus ‘B’ section, and that it is an extension of the *Applied Education* section of Teacher Education Curriculum. In his preamble, Mhlanga (1988: 3) observed that a great deal of emphasis needed to be placed on the link between subject content, theory and practice. The student would thus be expected to demonstrate his understanding of the subject philosophy, content and methodology blended together at the application level (*C.D. S. Departmental Guidelines* 1988). Assessment of C.D.S. was to be in accordance with the criteria established in the College’s official C.D.S document (DTE/AB/31/90).

Mkoba Teacher’s College mounted workshops, in a bid to harmonize operations in *Professional Studies*. A meeting was held on 27/1/88, which meeting agreed that there was to be a reallocation of time between *Main Subject* and *Applied Education* in order to raise the status of *Applied Education*, that the syllabus be reviewed. The department also agreed to marry some subjects in order to reduce the number of subjects on offer, thereby increasing time for treating the subject (Meetings of the Department of Applied Education; 14/11/88; 06/07/88; 06/12/88 and Proposal for the Administration of Applied Education at College; 1988). *How did these developments impact on the assessment procedures?*

The broad objectives of the syllabus were that by the end of the course and through C.D.S., each student was expected to be able to:

i) develop and extend his/her knowledge and understanding of a chosen theme in a chosen subject;

ii) demonstrate a clear understanding of the theoretical base underlying the teaching of subject or theme;
iii) get opportunity to experiment with methods and approaches in the teaching of the subject, and thus keep abreast of any relevant new trends;  
iv) become sensitized through the study of his chosen subject or theme to the basic problems of curriculum development and possible ways of dealing with these problems in the context of the Zimbabwean primary school.  
(Applied Education C.D.S. Departmental guideline 1988)

With regard to assessment, the same document said whilst it was not required that the student pass C.D.S. In its own right, it was important that C.D.S made a meaningful contribution in the determination of the final Applied Education mark. In this light the condition for a pass was that all work to be assessed needed to be submitted in the first instance. The students were to obtain an average in the offered subject areas, taking into account that a minimum of two thirds of the subjects were supposed to be passed at least. This would make sixty six and two thirds of the final mark and C.D.S. would make the other thirty three and a third.

In the period following the TERC report of 1986, the C.D.S. syllabus was also reviewed. Two sections of the document changed. First to be improved was the preamble.

_The Curriculum Depth Study course is intended for the pre-service students. The intentions of the syllabus is to lay a foundation for simple, small-scale and classroom oriented research skills. It emphasizes the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills and values, so as to produce a child oriented teacher who is vitally concerned with children and their growth, behaviour and learning problems (ST No.11/91)._ 

The document outlined the criteria of assessment. Since there was no formal examination in Curriculum Depth Study, final assessment was done by coursework. Students were assessed on the basis of the production of a research report
(write-up) of between 4000 and 5000 words long. The weighting for this syllabus would be 20% (ST No. 11/91).

Armed with this document, the various subject areas worked out their own marking schemes that were to satisfy the general expectations of the department. Documents for each department were examined closely and below is the pattern that was established in this research per department:

In the *Art and Craft* department assessment in the Curriculum Depth Study was to reflect the following features: The work was to be presented in a folder or file neatly covered and labeled, preferably portraying the content on the cover. Samples of children’s work, questionnaires, lesson plans, illustrations, and anything that would show genuine research were to be included. The final draft was to be critically edited to avoid unnecessary mistakes. It is interesting to note that *no breakdown of the weighting was suggested* (ST No. 104/88).

*Home Economics* outlined the breakdown of chapters and what was expected in each chapter. Once again no weighting was suggested (ST No. 72/89). On the other hand, the *Mathematics* Department subdivided each chapter, showing what was expected in each section of the chapter and how many points were allocated (ST No. 249/88). The document referred to above had details enough to guide the examiner stage by stage.
Music followed the pattern in Home Economics above, suggesting a breakdown of chapters to be followed by the student. No weighting was suggested either (ST No. 211/88). Physical Education had the same pattern as Music and had no weighting (Head of P.E. Department, E.C. Chikumbu, 1988).

Religious and Moral Education outlined criteria for assessment. It required logical presentation, understanding of the topic, showing great resourcefulness, displaying mature originality, interpretation, analysis, synthesis of findings, personal suggestions for future improvements. Assessment procedure was stated as follows:

i) Programme 30%
ii) Scheming 10%
iii) Planning 10%
iv) Final Write-up 50%
Total 100%

The Science Department produced a guide for C.D.S. but no weighting was indicated. (ST No. 217/87). The Shona Department also produced a guide that had no weighting suggested. (ST No 53/86). Social Studies also produced a document to guide in the production of a C.D.S. research project, provided criteria for assessment but no weighting was suggested (ST No 280/85).
5.5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION OF DATA OBTAINED ON DOCUMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1986 TO 1997

The documents outlined general expectations leaving each subject to work out its own scheme which would satisfy the departmental expectations. The documents referred to above show that there were variations in the interpretation of the document produced by the Department of Applied Education. Except for Religious and Moral Education no other subject indicated the weighting on their Curriculum Depth Study (C.D.S.) guideline. This showed that there was disharmony in the conduct of C.D.S. among the various subject areas.

5.6 THE RESULTS OBTAINED THROUGH THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The researcher administered twenty copies of a questionnaire to lecturers at Mkoba Teachers' College. The purpose for distributing the structured to lecturers at Mkoba alone was to solicit for information that related to the way Professional Studies was assessed at this institution. The distribution of the respondents was as follows: Six of the lecturers had been involved in the development of the syllabus since the opening of the college in 1976. Four were lecturers-in-charge of the four clusters, and ten were heads of the ten subjects. Of this number, seventeen returned the questionnaire. This number was acceptable number because represented eighty five per cent of the respondents. The questionnaire had thirty items altogether. Below is the analysis of the responses item by item.
* The first question was on gender. There were fourteen males and three females who completed the questionnaire.

* Item two was on age range for the females was that two were in the 41-45 age range and the third in the 46-50 years age range. The age range for the males was as in Table 5.1:

**AGE RANGES OF RESPONDENTS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age range</th>
<th>Number of people in the group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-50</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-55</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1

* Item three requested for information relating to qualification, where and when the qualification was obtained. As Table 5.2 below shows, eight lecturer were trained at Mkoba Teachers College and therefore had a primary teaching background. These lecturers were the chief informants in this study because of their experience in the syllabus development at Mkoba Teachers College. Five of these lecturers were sampled for interviews. The criteria used in this sample was their period of service in the College. The researcher identified five lecturers who joined the institution in 1980 and earlier. This sample was important in that they:
(i) had a minimum of seventeen years of service in this institution;
(ii) trained in the primary sector;
(iii) already in the service in the two phases identified above, namely the period 1976 - 1986, and 1986 - 1997, and were involved in the development of the syllabus both at Mkoba Teachers College and at national level.

Table 5.2 shows the various institutions identified by the respondents and the courses they offered.

### INSTITUTIONS AND THE COURSES OFFERED.

| Qualification | No. In the group | Training institute. | Period of training.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P.T.H.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Morgenster</td>
<td>1960-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.2 A.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gwelo Trs' College</td>
<td>1974-75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.2 B.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Gwelo Trs' College</td>
<td>1977-78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Daramonbe, U.C.E;Bondolfi.</td>
<td>1967-73, all the three of them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Gwelo Trs' College</td>
<td>1972</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3 Mkoba,2 U.C.E,3 G.T.C.</td>
<td>1980-88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.2

* Item *four* required experience, and area of that experience. This question was intended to isolate those lecturers who had been trained in the primary sector and had worked in the primary sector, and had subsequently been promoted to lecture at Mkoba Teacher's College. The responses showed that fifteen lecturers (88 %) of the respondents had trained in the primary teachers’ colleges and so, had
relevant experience both as students and later as lecturers. This information was confirmed in the interviews that were conducted. Of the five interviewees, three of them were former students of Mkoba Teachers' College. Table 5.3 below shows the distribution of the responses.

**EXPERIENCE, AREA OF EXPERIENCE AND PERIOD STAYED IN THAT INSTITUTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Period of experience</th>
<th>No of respondents.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teacher</td>
<td>10 years plus</td>
<td>7 (41% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec. School teacher</td>
<td>10 years plus</td>
<td>9 (52% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headmaster</td>
<td>5 years plus</td>
<td>2 (11.76% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headmaster</td>
<td>10 years plus</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's College</td>
<td>10 years plus</td>
<td>15 (88% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Education Officer</td>
<td>10 years plus</td>
<td>1 (5.88% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, specify Curriculum Development Unit</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>1 (5.88% of the respondents)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3

* In item five, lecturers were asked to indicate the assessment instruments they were currently using in their departments. The pattern of responses showed that seventeen (100%) used course work assignments, five (29%) used practical work, seventeen (100%) used Curriculum Depth Study, one (5.88%) used tests and one (5.88%) used micro-teaching for assessment. The interviews confirmed the discrepancies revealed in the statistics above. The interviews revealed that there is no uniformity with regard to which items should be used for assessment across the departments. It was confirmed that the Mathematics
Department used end-of-year tests for assessment. Interviews also established that there was no department which used micro-teaching for final assessment although this information had come out of the questionnaires.

* In item six respondents were asked to identify weaknesses inherent in some of the instruments of assessment referred to above. Ten (58.8%) respondents said major weaknesses were that students plagiarise assignments. Fourteen (82%) responses said coursework assignments alone without end-of-year examinations were inadequate. Nine (52%) said assignments should have a practical bias. The same number (52%) said tests do not cover content of the subject but methodology alone. Sixteen (94%) respondents said two coursework assignments do not cover much of what is covered in the course of the year. Fifteen (88%) respondents said there is no uniformity with regard to the questions set from group to group. Fourteen (82%) said two questions are too few to cover the whole syllabus. Kit production covers one area only so this is inadequate. Too large numbers of students put too much pressure on lecturers and this tends to affect the quality of marking.

* In item seven respondents were asked to list the strengths they that think are found in the current system of assessment. Only two strengths were mentioned by two (11.76%) respondents. The respondents said assignments allow students to read widely. They also pointed out that practical examinations are foolproof and so are good. These views were disputed by the majority of the respondents (88%)
who did not see any advantage in assessing students using only one type of instrument.

* In question eight, the respondents were asked to make suggestions which could be put in place in order to improve assessment. The respondents suggested that every area should be examinable, that assignments should be set at a central place for all subject areas to minimise duplication, that enrollment should be reduced so that marking becomes thorough with fewer students and that time should be increased for more coverage of all areas in teaching. Some respondents suggested that content is necessary and therefore it should be introduced even if only by way of enrichment. They further suggested that the methodology paper should be practical although they did not suggest how this could be done. They also pointed out that students should satisfy examiners of their ability to teach before they proceed to the next stage, and that college should introduce a written examination in Professional Studies.

These views were confirmed in the interviews that were conducted. Interviewees were of the opinion that all syllabuses in Professional Studies should be examinable if the quality of assessment is to improve. Examinations would help not only change the attitude of both the students and lecturers towards the subject but unnecessary duplication would be minimized. These views were confirmed by a survey carried out by the Department of Professional Studies on student absenteeism. Sections 2.1 on lecturers' views (items 2.1.1 to 2.1.20) and section
2.2 on students’ views (items 2.2.1 to 2.2.16) confirmed that both the lecturers lack commitment towards *Professional Studies* because it is not examinable.

* In item *nine* respondents were asked to list the weaknesses that have been identified in their area by external assessors. The following remarks were made: First items of assessment are too limited in number so the number should be increased, that college should add a methodology paper to final assessment, that there is need for practical assignments and that there is need for uniform marking criteria for C.D.S. They also pointed out that assignments were below standard and that repetition of certain assignments encourages students to copy from the previous years so this should be avoided. Finally, they suggested that examinations in Syllabus ‘A’ and coursework assignments should be classroom based.

* In item number *ten*, respondents were asked to comment on the external assessors suggestions above. All the respondents agreed on the observations made by the external assessors. The observations above were reiterated by the interviewees. They were of the opinion that assignments tended to be duplicated and due dates sometimes uncoordinated.

* In item *eleven* respondents were asked to further comment on the observations made by the external assessors with regard to lack of time and lack of coordination of assignments. Respondents suggested that there was a need to harmonise the
dates when all the assignments should be submitted in order to give students reading time, encourage students to make quality work and that students should not be allowed to submit substandard work. They also said variations in C.D.S topics should be maximised. They also suggested the trimming of Syllabus B by marrying those topics that are common to certain subjects. They suggested that the marking guides for C.D.S. should be reviewed and that the marking should be objective. They said a section in the assessment of Syllabus A should have content and that the number of assignments be increased. They further said weak students should fail and be allowed to repeat in the following year. The respondents agreed that the negative attitude in students towards the subject should be changed and that classroom based assignments be encouraged for all the subjects.

* When they were asked whether the time allocated in Professional Studies is adequate or not, thirteen out of seventeen (82%) said the time allocated to Professional Studies was inadequate. This view was confirmed through the interviews that were conducted. In fact, efforts have been made to create more time but the timetable is already overloaded with the introduction of more subjects such as Aids Education. In a survey conducted at Mkoba Teachers' College on Absenteeism it was established that the timetable is congested (See the report on absenteeism: 2.1.9).

* When the respondents were asked in item twelve, to suggest the time they think is favourable for the coverage of the syllabus, twelve respondents (70%)
* Item *fifteen* listed instruments for assessment which were used before 1986. Respondents were asked to indicate which instruments they used during that period. They indicated all the five below as follows:

i) Course work assignments  
ii) Written examination,  
iii) Oral examination,  
iv) Micro-teaching,  
v) File presentation and,  
vi) Curriculum Depth Study.

* In item *sixteen* respondents were asked to indicate with a cross which instruments were dropped from the list above after 1986. They indicated micro-teaching, and file presentation. The interviews confirmed that for final assessment, the two instruments referred to above were indeed dropped. When they were asked to provide reasons for dropping some of the instruments referred to above, the respondents stated that, it was not possible to observe all the 400 students teach, consequently they relied on group assessment. Files could be filled with borrowed or plagiarised material thereby giving a false picture by overloading files, yet application of skills was not evident. This exercise was as a result unreliable. Students were assessed as a group rather than as individuals. Notes were poorly done so that files were dropped because they were poorly supervised by lecturers.

* In item *eighteen* respondents were asked to cite problems affecting the assessment of *Professional Studies*. They cited among other problems that too large numbers of students affect supervision, the marking and assessment of
practical skills, that students had attitudinal problems because they leave out certain subjects since they still passed on an average of seven subjects out of the ten that were on offer (see document on absenteeism 2.1.1.9; 2.2.1.0; 2.2.14; 2.2.15 and 3.4). They also cited limited time for Professional Studies in the year which is thirteen weeks per year-group. They cited the duplication of assignment topics which resulted in plagiarism, which compromised the quality of the work produced. Some respondents argued that rewrites are not useful for students because students copy from those who have received their marked assignments.

Another observation which was made was that standardisation of marking guides needed to be uniform with respect to the subject area expectations.

Finally, respondents said that the large numbers of students for the few lecturers (see document on student absenteeism item 2.1.20) caused lecturers to set simple tasks which were easy to mark, and that cycles exchange notes and assignments by so doing the same notes are used over and over again.

*In item nineteen when respondents were asked whether lack of end of year examination in Professional Studies has created a negative attitude in students, thirteen said yes while four (23%) said that it was not true. The number of respondents who said indeed lack of examinations has created a negative attitude is very significant for it represents seventy six per cent (76%) of the responses. In the interviews conducted, the feeling that end-of-year examinations were very important was confirmed. The document on student absenteeism confirmed that*
lack of end-of-year examinations in *Professional Studies* indeed created a negative attitude both in students and lecturers (see item 2.1.11 and 3.4). In fact, all the five interviewees concurred that end-of-year examinations were necessary for this approach will change the attitude of the students.

* In item *twenty* respondents were asked whether there is need for end of year examinations. Ten said there is need for them while six disagreed. Ten is a significant number for it represents fifty eight per cent (58%) of the total responses while six represents thirty five per cent (35%) of the responses (see item 2.1.11).

* In item *twenty-one* they were asked whether all areas were covered in assessment using the current instruments. Fifteen (88%) said the items of assessment were inadequate while two (11%) said they were. Fifteen is a very significant number for it represented eighty eight per cent (88%) of the respondents.

* In item *twenty-two*, sixteen (94%) respondents said there was no frequent liaison in the setting of assignments among departments while one respondent said there is. The document already referred to on student absenteeism confirmed that there is no liaison among subject areas in the setting of assignments (2.1.13; 2.1.14). This issue of lack of coordination among the various subject areas with regard to the setting of assignments was confirmed in the interviews.
* In item twenty-three respondents were asked if there is any mechanism put in place to minimize plagiarism. Sixteen, which is ninety four per cent (94%) of the respondents said that there was no mechanism put in place to minimize plagiarism. All the five interviewees confirmed that there is no mechanism in place to minimize plagiarism.

* In item twenty-four respondents were asked what criteria was used to select topics for assessment. They cited relevance of topics to current changes in the teaching of the subject, importance of topics in preparing students to teach effectively, course coverage and more important aspects of the teaching profession such as scheming, planning, and use of media.

* In item twenty-five respondents were asked whether marking guides were prepared for all topics. Fifteen (15) said yes while two said no. A very significant percentage eighty eight per cent (88%) said marking guides were prepared for each assignment set. Interviews confirmed that marking guides were indeed prepared for all the assignments that were set because it is the requirement of the examining board.

* In item twenty-six fifteen (88%) respondents said students have failed in the past in Professional Studies. Interviews and the survey conducted on student absenteeism referred to above revealed that although students failed in certain
subjects, in the final analysis they will still pass on average in section four of the syllabus (see document on absenteeism 2.3.5 and 2.3.6).

* In item twenty-seven when respondents were asked to specify the area in which students have failed in Professional Studies they cited, Curriculum Depth Study, Course work assignments, in Syllabus ‘A’ examination.

* In item number twenty-eight all the respondents concurred that when students fail in any aspect of the syllabus, they are given a second chance. When the interviewees were asked to justify that they agreed that it was better to give a student a second chance than a supplementary examination for the latter is time consuming.

* In item twenty-nine respondents were asked whether the clustering of subjects has improved assessment in Professional Studies by creating more time there by allowing for effective treatment, fourteen (82%) said no while two (11%) said yes and only one said he or she was not sure. The issue of clustering of subjects in an effort to create more time was discussed and effected in 1992. Interviewees were of the opinion that clustering had not worked as much as it had been envisaged because the areas that had been identified as core areas had not yet been implemented. In languages for example, there are areas that could be treated from a common point of view but this has not yet been effected.
In item thirty respondents suggested that *Professional Studies* may be improved by increasing contact time. The lecturers who were interviewed argued that there is not enough time to conduct practical exercises that would prepare the students for the actual teaching. They further suggested that all *Professional Studies* courses should be treated on linear bases instead of modular approach to create more contact hours. Micro-teaching should be assessed and the mark incorporated rated with other areas of *Professional Studies* so that students become serious on this aspect of the course.

All the interviewees agreed that there was need to vary Curriculum Depth Study topics each year to minimize plagiarism. Another observation made was that the attitude of both lecturers and students towards this subject should change. The five lecturers interviewed unanimously agreed that the cause of this negative attitude is that unlike other subjects, *Professional Studies* had no end-of-year examination. Interviewees confirmed that there was a need for liaison between subjects on the setting of assignments and examinations. Such an approach would minimize duplication. The researcher confirmed this duplication in such subjects as languages where assignments demanding for the same skill such as syllabus interpretation could be done in either Shona, Ndebele, or English. Subjects like Social Studies, Environmental Science, and Home Economics have been observed to set assignments which were almost identical. Conditions for a pass should be reviewed.
5.7 CONCLUSION.

Four instruments namely documentary evidence, questionnaires, interviews, and participant observation were used to gather the data in this research study. The results of the study show that, there are two phases that marked the historical development of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College. In the first phase (1976 to 1986) documents examined showed that there were variations in the way Professional Studies (formerly Applied Education) was assessed. Assessment instruments range included an unspecified number of assignments, tests, resource notes, file presentation, micro-teaching, project, teaching assignments, special aids and peer teaching. Data collected from questionnaires and interviews confirmed that each department had its own set of assessment instruments. Interviews revealed that resource notes, files, micro-teaching, project peer-teaching were problematic in implementing, either because they were difficult to interpret or there was inadequate manpower to conduct the exercises.

In the period that followed (1986 to 1997), there was an improvement in that some instruments that presented problems were dropped and those that remained were restructured. Both the questionnaires and interviews confirmed that time allocated to Professional Studies Syllabus B is inadequate. The research also established that the number of items for assessment does not cater for all the areas that are covered.
CHAPTER SIX

DEDUCTIONS, IMPLICATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this research study was to investigate the criteria used to assess Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College and to determine the validity of the criteria. The intention of this chapter is to establish whether the data collected answered the research questions raised at the beginning of the study. In order to answer the main problem the following research questions were raised:

i) What is the historical development of Professional Studies in teacher education in Zimbabwe in general and at Mkoba Teachers' College in particular?

ii) What are the criteria used in the assessment of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College?

iii) How valid are the criteria of assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College?

Paragraphs 4.2-4.10 addressed the first research question which sought to trace the historical development of assessment in teacher education in Zimbabwe as a whole and at Mkoba Teachers College in particular while paragraphs 5.3 - 5.7 addressed the second and third research questions. This section discusses the data obtained to answer the research question (see paragraph 1.2.2 ) , draws conclusions and makes some recommendations.
6.1.1 The historical development of Teacher Education and Professional Studies in Zimbabwe in general and at Mkoba Teachers' College in particular?

This first research question was answered in four (see paragraphs 4.1.1 on page 44 - 4.10 on page 72). The data collected from documentary evidence, questionnaires, and interviews revealed that Mkoba was established in 1976. It inherited a teacher education and assessment system that had been established as early as 1900. The data collected revealed that there were four phases that marked the development of teacher education in Zimbabwe, namely 1900 - 1927; 1928 - 1962; 1963 - 1986; and 1987 - 1997 in that order. Each phase had its own landmarks. St. Augustine Anglican mission station pioneered in the training of assistant teachers in 1890. In this period Government registered its involvement by opening Domboshawa and Tjolotjo training centres in 1920 and 1925 respectively. What was significant in the development of teacher education, was that there were inconsistencies and discrepancies with regard to entry qualifications, selection criteria (which was religious background), duration of the courses, pedagogical skills, assessment criteria, and age restrictions.

The data collected revealed that the major qualitative development that occurred in the next period (1928 - 1962) was the opening of the University of Rhodesia (now the University of Zimbabwe), and Umtali Teachers' College, both in 1956.
Umtali Teachers' College was granted university associate status in the same year. The implications of this development were that for the first time, there was going to be a board which would set standards for teacher education. A team had been appointed to supervise and ensure that the standards had been met and that the certificates would be awarded by the university and not by the Ministry of Education, as was the case before. As part of improving the quality of teacher education, the university documents which would be used to guide trainers. Among such documents were the criteria for associate status, regulations for the certification and award of diplomas and certificates, guidelines for designing syllabi, duties of external assessors, grading scale, and computation and presentation of marks. This development marked a tremendous improvement in the quality of assessment of teachers in general and of Applied Education in particular. By 1975 the following institutions had been established: Umtali, Gwelo Teachers' Colleges, United College of Education, training T4 teachers who would teach infant classes, Umtali, Mlezu College of Agriculture, training T3 for primary, and T2B, T2A, T1, for vocational and general secondary training (see table 4.3 page 64). With the establishment of these institutions the quality of Professional Studies was improved. In the last phase (1987-1997) emphasis was on qualitative development. Significant developments in this phase were that Professional Studies was divided into three Syllabi, A, B, and C. The subject changed its name and status from Applied Education to Professional Studies (see paragraph 1.3.1 on page 9 - paragraph 1.3.2 on page 11).
For the first time curriculum development in Primary Teacher Education revolved around the area of Professional Studies with the major thrust being to improve Professional Studies syllabi with regard to time allocation, assessment procedures and the approval of syllabi by the Department of Teacher Education.

The documents and the interviews revealed that Mkoba was born against the historical background discussed above. Mkoba was the first of the Colleges planned and built by the Ministry to meet the expected requirements of 1000 primary teachers per year (see para.1.3.4 page 12). It was also the first African Primary Teachers' College to be granted University of Zimbabwe Associate status. It was to be a blueprint for the future training colleges and the standard bearer for all the other colleges. With regard to assessment, four areas were supposed to be assessed: course work, practical work, written examinations, and dissertation. At Mkoba, each department was given the latitude to interpret the guidelines provided for by the Department of Teacher Education at the University of Zimbabwe. As should be evident, the foregoing discussion addressed the first research question, which sought to investigate the qualitative historical development of teacher education and its assessment in Professional Studies (formerly Applied Education) in Zimbabwe as a whole and at Mkoba Teachers' College in particular.

6.1.2 What are the criteria used in assessing in Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College?
The data collected revealed that assessment in Professional Studies could be divided into two developmental phases. In the first phase following its opening in 1976, a variety of criteria were used to assess Professional Studies. The range was unspecified in number. The criteria comprised, assignments, tests, resource notes, file presentation, micro-teaching, special aids, and peer teaching. The instruments were as many as the subjects were because, each department had the latitude to choose what instruments to use in assessing Professional Studies. Besides the discrepancy alluded to with regard to lack of uniformity instruments of assessment, some instruments were not only difficult to interpret, but difficult to implement. It was established that such instruments like resource notes, file presentation, micro-teaching, and peer-teaching were difficult to employ for a variety of reasons. Another weakness that was established was that the weighting was not clearly defined and as a result, there was no uniformity with regard to departmental expectations. It was also revealed that some departments operated with syllabi which had no objectives, or assessment procedures (see para. 5.3.1.3 page 78 Home Economics and 5.3.1.7 page 82, Religious and Moral Education).

Data revealed also showed that it was optional to present students in Professional Studies because students could pass on an average of at least seven subjects (see 5.3.1.7 page 82). The implications of this position was that a student could decide to work hard in any seven subject areas, ignore the other three subject areas but still pass on average. It was also established that students tended to have a negative attitude towards some Professional Studies subjects because all they needed was an average of seven subject to pass on average. The implications of
this scenario was that a candidate could do extremely well in any three or four subjects to offset weak marks obtained in the other two or three areas and still pass. This situation was bound to impact on the validity of the whole exercise of assessment.

In the period 1987-1997, remarkable developments were registered in the assessment of Professional Studies. The data revealed that as a direct result of the Teacher Education Review Committee (1986), a series of workshops were held to develop both the teaching staff and the syllabus. Three syllabi were borne out of Professional Studies Syllabus. These were Syllabi 'A', 'B' and 'C'. The Department of Teacher Education insisted that no subject area was going to operate with a syllabus that was not approved. This development meant that no syllabus would be approved without objectives, assessment procedure and criteria of a distinction. Among the improvements that were registered during this period were that subject areas were clustered according to common areas in order to create more time by reducing the number of subjects. Assessment of Syllabus 'A' was through course work assignments, practical work, and end-of-year written examinations. The data obtained also revealed that two course work assignments were submitted in Syllabus 'B' for each subject area. Syllabus 'C' was assessed through a dissertation referred to as Curriculum Depth Study. The conditions for a pass were that the candidate was supposed to pass each syllabus. It was also established that the time allocated to Professional Studies 'B' was inadequate. The data obtained also revealed that two assignments per subject area
were inadequate for only two skills areas were tested from a wide range of topics.

6.1.3 How valid are the criteria of assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College?

Harlen (1994: 12) says the aspect of assessment which refers to how well the results really reflect the skill, knowledge, attitude or another quality it was intended to measure, is described as its validity. The extent to which the criteria of assessment used at Mkoba Teachers' College are valid was determined in the data collected. The documentary evidence, the questionnaire, the interviews and observations indicated that assessment of Professional Studies improved tremendously since 1986. Among the improvements recorded were that, the status of Professional Studies was raised to the level of Main Subject, that the syllabi were approved by the Department of Teacher Education, that the subject was divided into three components, namely Syllabi “A”, “B”, and “C” so that each area focuses on specific skill area thus improving the quality of delivery system and assessment across the subjects. Another improvement was recorded in the criteria of assessment, the number of items for assessment, the weighting, and the conditions for a pass. These were specified for each subject area. In the light of these qualitative developments the system of assessing Professional Studies at Mkoba could be said to be valid. An analysis of the results at Mkoba Teachers’ College beginning 1977 up to 1996 (see appendix D for the analysis) reflected a hundred per cent pass rate (100%) each year. The analysis showed that a minimum of five distinctions were registered each year, with the highest figure recorded in 1996 with 53 distinctions. There are, however, a few weaknesses that were revealed by the data collected. The data collected through the questionnaire (see paragraph 5.6 page 95, items 12; 13; 19; 20; 21; 22; and 23), confirmed by the results of the interviews, showed some weaknesses that need improvement. In a survey on student absenteeism carried out by the Department of Professional Studies in 1996, both lecturers and students concurred that some lecturers pay lip
service to this subject (see 2.1.1-2.1.20 of the document on absenteeism in Appendix K). Such a negative attitude impacted negatively on the students. The students in turn reflected the same attitude (2.2.1-2.1.16 of the 1976 document on absenteeism). The data collected also revealed that respondents suggested ways of improving the system (see 5.16 items 8;10; and 30 page 100 and 109 respectively). The survey referred to above also made recommendations that were meant to improve Professional Studies with regard to attitude and strategies of delivery. The foregoing discussion, shows that the data collected revealed more strengths than weaknesses in the system of assessing Professional Studies.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

This research study investigated assessment in Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College in order to establish the current practices with regard to the criteria of assessment. To put the research problem into context, a historical development of Applied Education (now Professional Studies) in Zimbabwe as a whole and at Mkoba Teachers' College in particular was discussed in chapter one (see paragraph 1.3.4 page 12). Literature reviewed in chapter three in order to put assessment into international perspective. The two concepts that are relevant to this research, Professional Studies and assessment were examined (see paragraph 1.3.1 and 1.3.3 page 11-13). Documentary evidence on the historical development of assessment at Mkoba Teachers' College from 1976-1997 were examined (see paragraph 5.4 page 85) and the perceptions of lecturers confirmed the results through questionnaires and interviews (see 5.6 page 95). The main findings of this research study were as follows:

1. Assessment in Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' college has a historical background which has shaped its qualitative development. The data collected revealed that since its inception in 1976, Mkoba attained University Associate Status, a prestigious status whose implications are that the University sets standards, approves the syllabi, monitors implementation of these syllabi,
1.20

provides expert supervision through external assessors, and certifies the graduands. The quality of the pass rate that is reflected (ref. appendix D) is testimony of the high quality of its products.

2. Among the weak areas needing improvement are the following:
   * Contact time is very inadequate.
   * Instruments of assessment are too few (only two course work assignments for the whole syllabus)
   * Assignment topics are not only uncoordinated in terms of due dates but there is duplication from subject area to subject area, resulting in plagiarism which sometimes goes undetected.

3. The third and final point established was that Professional Studies has no end-of-year examinations. The questionnaire and the interviews revealed that the lack of an end-of-year examinations tended to develop a negative attitude and lack of commitment towards the subject in the students.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings, the researcher would like to make a number of recommendations with the anticipation that they could help to improve the system of assessment in Professional Studies. The recommendations are based on items 8, 10, and 30 of the responses from the questionnaire which revealed weaknesses in the system. The following recommendations are made:

1. More contact time should be afforded to the subject to enable syllabus coverage. Time could be created by reducing Main Subject which as at now has an equal number of hours as Professional Studies per week.
Professional Studies should be examinable. Students are not as committed to *Professional Studies* as they are in the other subjects which are assessed through an end-of-year examination.

The setting of assignments should be co-ordinated across the subject areas to minimise unnecessary duplication which leads to plagiarism. This study has established that assignments are duplicated from one area to another. Given this situation, students are tempted to ‘copy’ from the one he or she may have submitted in another area.

Vary the assignment topics all the syllabi, Syllabus A, Syllabus B, and Curriculum Depth Study. Once again this would reduce chances of plagiarism.

All the three courses in *Professional Studies* should be treated on a linear basis rather than a modular approach. This suggestion was arrived at because some groups are deprived of their contact hours time while others benefit.

6.4 RESUME

This study was focused on *assessment* in *Professional Studies* at Mkoba Teachers College. The study has established that *Professional Studies* has a historical background which has shaped it into its present status. The quality that has been achieved to date is a result of the control, monitoring and supervision done by the Department of Teacher Education (formerly Associate College Centre) at the University of Zimbabwe (formerly University of Rhodesia). The study also recommends for improvement in such areas as time allocation, introducing end-of-year examinations, co-ordinating the setting of assignments and
harmonising the due dates. The areas recommended for improvement might help change the attitude of both the students and lecturers.
REFERENCES


Calderhead, J. and Robson, M. 1991. ‘Images of Student Teachers: Early Conceptions of Classroom Practice’. In Teaching and Teacher Education 7 (1) :25-56


Mkoba Teachers' College. 1983. *Department of Social Studies Applied Education Syllabus 'B'*

Mkoba Teachers' College. 1986 *Department of Art and Craft Applied Education Syllabus 'B'. Stencil No. 54.*

Mkoba Teachers' College. 1986. *Department of Music Applied Education Syllabus 'B'.*


Mkoba Teachers' College. 1991. *Department of Physical Education Syllabus 'B'.*


Teacher Education Conference: Mkoba Teacher’s College September 11-14: 1979.


APPENDIX A

MKOBA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

APPLIED EDUCATION

SYLLABUS 'C'

1.0 PRELIMBRE

The Curriculum Depth Study course is intended for the pre-service students. The intention of this syllabus is to lay a foundation for simple, small-scale and classroom oriented research skills. It emphasises the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills and values, so as to produce a child oriented teacher who is vitally concerned with children and their growth, behaviour and learning problems.

2.0 AIMS

The Syllabus intends to:

2.1 Create an awareness, understanding and appreciation of social change in society in order to justify either the continuation of the present practices in education or changes in the present practices;

2.2 develop in students a critical appreciation of existing teaching materials in the context of the primary school curriculum;

2.3 help generate interest and involvement in social and educational problems; and

2.4 help students gain insight into the development and organisation of the educational system in Zimbabwe.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students will be able to:

3.1 undertake a systematic evaluation of teaching and learning materials and relate these to course materials;

3.2 use a variety of methods in teaching the various units in a selected subject area, in order to determine the merits or demerits of the methods used;

3.3 design and develop simple, learning and teaching materials for classroom use and be able to evaluate their degree of effectiveness;

3.4 contribute in a significant way to the teaching of the chosen subject area through small-scale research;

3.5 pay attention to the characteristic qualities of educational research as a way of improving their teaching skills; and

3.6 discuss, in conjunction with the course of a research project, the criteria and role of educational research in the context of educational practice in the schools.
MKOBA TEACHERS COLLEGE

PROFESSIONAL STUDIES SYLLABUS 'A': GENERAL PRIMARY COURSE

1.0 The intention of this syllabus is to lay a common foundation for the teaching of such topics as related to Methodology, Foundation Language, Foundation Mathematics, and Educational Media and Technology for the three year preservice teacher education course.

2.0 AIMS:
The syllabus intends to:

2.1 develop in students basic concepts and skills in teaching;

2.2 develop students' understanding of trends in Educational Media and Technology and Educational change and development that affects methods of teaching at primary school level; and

2.3 lay a common foundation in the main ideas, theories and methodologies in Mathematics and Language learning.

3.0 OBJECTIVES:
By the end of the course students should be able to:

3.1 demonstrate fundamental preparation and documentation skills;

3.2 present selected lesson episodes, to a small group of pupils so as to exhibit certain teaching skills;

3.3 employ suitable technical skills in media design, construction, and analysis to augment their teaching activities; and

3.4 explain the rationale for the teaching of Mathematics and Language.

4.0 CONTENT

4.1 Preparation skills

4.1.1 Principles of scheming
4.1.2 Principles of lesson planning
4.1.3 Evaluation of pupils' work
4.1.4 Self evaluation,

4.2 General teaching skills
4.7.3 Methods of teaching mathematics
4.7.4 Learning resources.

5.0 APPROACHES
5.1 Lectures
5.2 Seminars and workshops
5.3 The project method
5.4 Micro-teaching
5.5 Practical work
5.6 Collection and making of resources.

6.0 ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES
6.1 The College curriculum in the Professional Studies Department has ten subjects on offer (Syllabus B). In addition each student is required to complete a course in Syllabus 'A' and to also opt to do Curriculum Depth Study (CDS) or Syllabus 'C' in only one of the subjects on offer.

6.2 CONDITIONS FOR A PASS
To pass (i.e. satisfy requirements of section IV of the Primary Teacher Education Course), a candidate must obtain a PASS in EACH of the compulsory components: viz Syllabuses A, B and C.

6.3 WEIGHTING IN SECTION IV
6.3.1 Syllabus A 25%
6.3.2 Syllabus B 50%
6.3.3 Syllabus C 25%
6.3.4 Total weighting 100%

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE THREE COMPONENTS

7.1 SYLLABUS 'A'
7.1.1 Coursework
Two major written or practical assignments weighted 12 1/2 %
7.1.2 Examination
One three-hour paper weighted 12 1/2 %

7.2 SYLLABUS 'B'
7.2.1 Coursework
7.2.1.1 Average of ALL subjects taken weighted 50%
7.2.1.2 Clustering of the B course is implemented with third years only
7.2.1.3 Each student is expected to have an in-depth study in SEVEN of the Subject Areas offered in College as follows:

Core Subjects
MKOBA TEACHERS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (DPS)

1.0 PREAMBLE

This paper attempts to do three things: Viz:

1. Spell out the statement of purpose upon which the teaching of the professional studies course revolves.

2. State the overall aims of the professional studies component of the teacher education curriculum and syllabus specific objectives which relate to (A, B and C courses).

3. Demonstrate in a broad outline how aims and objectives will be achieved.

1.1 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

As an integral part of the teacher-education curriculum: the Professional Studies Course exists to:

* Be an effective vehicle in the education of teachers with a clear vision on the place of application of knowledge. The DPS "MOTO" is that Knowledge apart from application falls short of the department’s desire for its trainees. The DPS wants learners to apply what they learn so that they can change and grow in the process.

* Be a catalyst to bring existing knowledge, teaching skills, methodologies and different instructional technologies into a dynamic encounter spanning the whole spectrum of the teacher education curriculum in an attempt to create awareness for curriculum renewal and/or innovation in teacher trainees.

* Provide the nation’s teacher-trainees with a training that will make them sufficiently analytic and resourceful professionals. That is, professionals who can share experiences with other professionals, on their triumphs and tragedies so that the teaching profession continues to explore more fervently and apply the most appropriate knowledge, using the most appropriate methodologies and technologies in their most conducive environment in order to expeditiously solve human problems of teaching and learning.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROFESSIONAL STUDIES COURSE

Next, we will do two things: (1) state the overall aims of the course (P.S.), together with Syllabus specific objectives and (2) show how we attempt to operationalise and achieve these aims and objectives.

Report of the Teacher Education Review Committee (1986:21-22) Section C: General Programme Aims of Teacher Education; states the goals. Among other goals, the Professional Studies programme has enlisted the following aims:

1. To ensure that persons preparing to teach demonstrate functional insight into the teaching/learning process.

2. To promote awareness of the roles of teachers in the learning process:
3.1.1.4 One of Indigenous Languages

3.1.1.4.1 Shona
3.1.1.4.2 Ndebele

3.1.2 ELECTIVE SUBJECTS

Each student chooses ONE SUBJECT from each of the following SUBJECT GROUPINGS:

3.1.2.1 Home Economics and Art education
3.1.2.2 Social Studies and R.M.E.
3.1.2.3 Physical Education and Music Education

4.0 ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES

4.1 Coursework:

There will be TWO written assignments of equal weighting from each of the 7 subject areas done.

4.1.1 Average of ALL subjects taken weighted ....50%
4.1.2 Clustering of the B course is implemented in the third year
4.1.3 Each student is expected to have an in-depth study in SEVEN of the Subject Areas offered in the college
4.1.4 Students pass with a minimum of FIVE (5) out of SEVEN (7) subjects as follows:
   4.1.4.1 Any three (3) of the core subjects
   4.1.4.2 Any two (2) of the three (3) elective subjects

DEPARTMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

OCTOBER 1996: A REISSUE
Appendix B

Interview Schedule for lecturers at Mkoba Teachers’ College.

Preamble.

I am carrying out a search study in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education ( didactics ) with the University of South Africa. Assessment in Professional Studies is my area of research. You have been identified as one of the chief informant for the good reason that you have been involved in the development of this subject at Mkoba since 1976 or a little later than that. May I extend my sincerest gratitude and appreciation to you for affording me the opportunity to interview you.

1. When did you join Mkoba teachers’ college ?

2. Where had you been teaching before that ?

3. What is your first professional qualification?

4. Where and when did you obtain this qualification ?

5. I realise you joined Mkoba in 1976/7/8/9/ or 80. Do you still remember what instruments were used to assess Applied Education ?

6. One of the recommendations of the Teacher Education Review Committee of 1986 was that all professional studies syllabuses be approved by the department of teacher education. What was the position with regard to designing and approval of syllabuses before then ?

7. How was this recommendation going to improve the quality of professional studies ?

8. What prompted the change in the syllabus of professional studies ? Were there weaknesses that were identified in that syllabus ?
Are there any developments since 1986 that you know of that have been put into place to implement this recommendation?

Would you say this objective has been achieved?

Colleges have the latitude to design their own syllabuses. Of what advantage has this been to Mkoba Teachers' College?

What problems have been highlighted by the external assessor in your area?

How have you tried to reduce those weaknesses?

Students submit a maximum of two assignments for course work assessment. Do you think these assignments are adequate in view of the fact that the syllabus itself is very long?

Some lecturers feel that the assessment tends to be too theoretical and that it lacks a practical element. Do you agree?

What mechanism has been put in place to minimise copying of assignments and C,D,S.?  

Some lecturers feel that there is a lot of unnecessary duplication of certain skills from one subject to another. Do you agree?

Clustering of subjects was meant to solve this problem. Do you think this has been achieved?

Do you agree that students are not motivated in this subject because it is not assessed through an end-of-course examination?

In your opinion is there a need for an end of course examination in Professional Studies?

Are you happy with the current assessment system?

Suggest what you think could be done to improve assessment in this subject area.
Appendix C

QUESTIONNAIRE ON ASSESSMENT IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AT MKOBA TEACHERS' COLLEGE IN ZIMBABWE.

Dear fellow lecturer,

I am carrying out a research study to determine the exact nature and extent of the quality of assessment in Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College. You have been identified as one of the chief informant in this study because of your involvement in the development of this subject at Mkoba since 1976 when the college opened. Your frank and honest responses will be appreciated and treated in the strictest confidence.

1. Indicate your sex with an ( X ) in the space provided.
   Male [ ]
   Female [ ]

2. Please put an ( X ) in the box that approximates your age.
   31-35 [ ]
   36-40 [ ]
   41-45 [ ]
   46-50 [ ]
   51-55 [ ]
   56-60 [ ]
   60+ [ ]

3. Please indicate with in the spaces provided your qualifications, where you obtained them, and when.
   Qualification       Where obtained       When obtained
   P.T.L.               .........................   .........................
   P.T.H.               .........................   .........................
   T2A                 .........................   .........................
   T3                  .........................   .........................
   T4                  .........................   .........................
   C.E.                .........................   .........................
   Dip. ED.             .........................   .........................
   B. Ed.               .........................   .........................
Grad. C. E .................................................
M.Ed. ..........................................................
Other, specify ...........................................

4. Please indicate in the spaces provided your area of experience and duration of that experience.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Period of experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary school teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary sch. teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy headmaster</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Tr. College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Ed. Officer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other, specify</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Indicate assessment instruments you are currently using in your subject area
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

6. What weaknesses have been identified in some of these instruments?
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

7. Comment on what you think are the strengths in the current system of assessment
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

8. What suggestions would you make in order to improve assessment of Professional Studies?
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

9. What has been observed as weaknesses in your instruments of assessment by external assessors?
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

10. What did external assessors suggest?
..................................................................................................................................................
..................................................................................................................................................

11. Briefly comment on the suggestions made
..................................................................................................................................................
12. Professional Studies time is inadequate  

YES NO  

[ ] [ ]

13. Suggest how much time should be allocated 

............................................

14. Explain your reasons for the time you suggested in 13 above 

............................................

15. Indicate with a ( X ) the assessment instruments which were used before 1986 

- course work assignments [ ] 
- written examination [ ] 
- oral examination [ ] 
- micro-teaching [ ] 
- file presentation [ ] 
- project ( curriculum depth study ) [ ]

16. Indicate with a ( X ) which instruments were dropped from the list. 

- written examination [ ] 
- course work assignments [ ] 
- oral examination [ ] 
- file presentation [ ] 
- micro-teaching [ ] 
- curriculum depth study [ ]

17. Why were they dropped ? 

............................................

18. What problems do you see affecting the current practice of assessment in Professional Studies ?  

............................................
19. Professional Studies ‘B’ is not assessed through end-of-year examination. Has this created a negative attitude in student?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]      NOT CERTAIN [ ]

20. Is there need for an end-of-year examination?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]

21. Are all areas of the syllabus assessed with the instruments you use now?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]      UNCERTAIN [ ]

22. Is there frequent liaison across the subject areas in the setting of assignments?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]      UNCERTAIN [ ]

23. Are there mechanisms that have been put in place to minimize plagiarism?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]      UNCERTAIN [ ]

24. What criteria have you used to select topics for assignments in your subject area?

........................................................................................................

25. Are marking guides prepared for all topics?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]      UNCERTAIN [ ]

26. Have students failed before in Professional Studies?

YES [ ]      NO [ ]

27. Specify the area in which they failed

........................................................................................................

28. What does your subject area treat students who have failed an assignment?
29. Has clustering of subjects improved assessment in professional studies?

YES [ ]  NO [ ]  DON'T KNOW [ ]

30. Suggest how professional studies may be improved...

...........................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................
# MKOBA TEACHERS' COLLEGE

## GRADUATING STUDENTS: 1976 - 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF PASSES</th>
<th>NO. OF DISTINCTIONS</th>
<th>NO. OF DOUBLE DISTINCTIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PRE-</td>
<td>IN-</td>
<td>SUP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>118</td>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>136</td>
<td></td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>198</td>
<td></td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>243</td>
<td></td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>243</td>
<td></td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>322</td>
<td></td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3Yr)</td>
<td>307</td>
<td></td>
<td>307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4 Year)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>317</td>
<td></td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>297</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>5365</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students with Tripple distinctions: Dube Nyengeterai 1992
Zhakata Patricia 1995
Tinoota Philemon 1996
Khoza Prisca 1996
Sibanda Sukoluhle 1996
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Mr M M Ngwenya (student number 776-747-1) is currently registered at the University of South Africa for the degree MEd in Didactics. The title of his dissertation is: *Assessment in professional studies in the training of primary school teachers in Zimbabwe: A case study*. Mr Ngwenya’s supervisor is Prof M E W McDonald of the Department of Secondary School Teacher Education in the Faculty of Education.

In order to be able to complete this dissertation, Mr Ngwenya will have to do research in Colleges of Education in Zimbabwe.

Prof M E W McDonald
(Supervisor)
9/07/04
The Secretary
Ministry of Higher Education
P.O.Box UA 275
Union Avenue
Harare

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Ref: Permission to carry out research in Higher Education in Zimbabwe

I am applying for permission to carry out a research in Higher Education. I am enroled for a Master of Education (Didactics) with the University of South Africa. My research topic reads:

Assessment in Professional Studies in Teacher Education in Zimbabwe: A case Study.

I look forward to a favourable reply from you. I thank you in advance.

Sincerely Yours

Ngwenya M.M.
7 August 1997

Mr M M Ngwenya
Mkoba Teachers College
P O Box Mk 20
Gweru

Dear Sir

RE: Permission to Carry out Research on Assessment in Professional Studies in the Training of Primary School Teachers in Zimbabwe: A Case Study

In response to your letter dated 15 July 1997 referring to the above subject, I would like to inform you that the Ministry has no objection to your request. Please make the necessary arrangements with the Institutions concerned so that you can proceed with your research. The Ministry would really appreciate a copy of your report.

Wishing you all the success.

Yours faithfully

Tinarwo A. (Mrs)
for: SECRETARY FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
Mkoba Teachers' College
P.O.Box Mk 20
Gweru
15 July 1997

The Principal
Mkoba Teachers' College
P.O.Box Mk 20
Gweru
Dear
Re: Permission to carry out research in college.
I am requesting for your permission to carry out research at Mkoba Teachers' College.
I am enrolled for a Master of Education with the University of South Africa. My research topic reads: An investigation into the current practices and procedures in the assessment of Professional Studies at Mkoba Teachers' College in Zimbabwe.

I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully

Ngwenya M.M.
15 July 1997

Mr. M.M. Ngwenya
Mkoba Teachers College

Dear Sir

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH ON ASSESSMENT IN PROFESSIONAL STUDIES AT MKOBA TEACHERS COLLEGE

We acknowledge receipt of your application in respect of the above matter. College has no objection to your request. College would appreciate a copy of your report.

Wishing you the best of success.

Yours faithfully

S. Mlambo
PRINCIPAL
Mr. T. Bourdillon
Mkoba Teachers’ College
P.O.Box Mk 20
Gweru
20 April 1998

Mr. T. Bourdillon
University fo Zimbabwe
Department of Teacher Education
P.O.Box MP 167
Mount Pleasant
Harare

Dear Sir,

Re: Request for extra assistance on my M.Ed. dissertation.

My name is Morrison Ngwenya, a lecturer at Mkoba Teachers’ College. I am enrolled for a Master of Education (Didactics) with the University of South Africa. I am working on a dissertation entitled:

Assessment in Professional Studies in Primary Teacher Education in Zimbabwe: A case study.

I am asking for assistance in the following areas:

(i) Literature on the historical development of Professional Studies in Zimbabwe from 1900 to date,

(ii) That you read and make comments on the chapter which I enclosed.

Please feel free to make any suggestions with regard to the lay out of the whole chapter. I would like to thank you in advance.

Yours Faithfully,

Ngwenya M.M.
MKOBA TEACHERS' COLLEGE
PROFESSIONAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT
REPORT ON STUDENT ABSENTEEISM

1.0 PREAMBLE
In 1996 there was growing concern among lecturing staff on students' absenteeism from lectures especially the third years. A committee was set up with the blessing of the HOD to look into the possible causes of the problem.

The committee gathered data by asking lecturers, students and administration to give their views in this report. The views have been classified into three categories namely those given by Administration, Lecturers and Students.

2.0 VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE THREE GROUPS

2.1 LECTURERS' VIEWS
2.1.1 If a student absconds from a lecture, there is no other instrument to use except the $2.00 fine.
2.1.2 Lecturers arrive late for their lectures and students after waiting for 10-15 minutes dismiss themselves.
2.1.3 Lecturers absent themselves without making prior arrangements as a result those remaining in the subject area have nothing to offer.
2.1.4 Lecturers dismiss students early. This is evidenced by students disturbing other lectures in progress by asking for room keys from room mates.
2.1.5 Too many meetings at short notice as a result those remaining cannot take over lectures.

2.2 STUDENTS' VIEWS
2.2.1 Uncoordinated assignment due dates
2.2.2 Repetition of topics both in 1st and 3rd year: no new information offered.

No new information offered
2.2.3 Stress due to overworking: need for rest
2.2.4 Relevance of content in some areas leaves a lot to be desired
2.2.5 Lecturers send students to sleep when presenting lectures.
2.2.6 Settling private affairs
2.2.7 Lecturers come late for lectures: regulation time stipulates 15 minutes for waiting.
2.2.8 Administration failing to act on those who abscond.
2.2.9 Theory of Education over emphasises its value
2.2.10 In some applied areas syllabi completed in the first year
2.2.11 Lecturers use groupwork when they have not prepared and planned for the lecture as a result reports from various groups not followed up in the next lecture.
2.2.12 Applied should be strictly for first years only and not third years who have completed their teaching practice.
2.2.13 Too much drinking on the part of students hence hangover problems
2.2.14 Negative attitude towards PS B.
2.2.15 Passed assignments in three quarters of PSB subjects, why bother with the rest.
2.2.16 Completing CDS projects.

2.1.6 Lack of planning: boring lectures
2.1.7 No random roll calls
2.1.8 Poor timing of micro teaching after only three weeks of beginning of a cycle Dip Ed I students go for micro teaching.
2.1.9 Congested time table giving no room for research
2.1.10 Lack of use of different methods, techniques and strategies in lectures hence students lose interest and motivation
2.1.11 Lack of a final examination
2.1.12 Lecturers not concerned about student absenteeism
2.1.13 Ill timing of assignment deadlines.
   At times assignments are submitted on the say day and this overburdens students.
   In some cases, assignments are given and deadlines come to early in the term such
   that students feel that the course is over.
2.1.14 Uncoordinated assignment deadlines in the three departments
2.1.15 Failure to convince students the relevance and importance of PSB in the college curriculum in so far as it prepares a teacher for life in schools.
2.1.16 Students lack commitment
2.1.17 N/R students may have personal problems (genuine) but at times may take advantage of the problems.
2.1.18 Abuse of college leave passes
2.1.19 Belief by students that they can never fail in PSB course.
2.1.20 Too many students per group and students believe they won’t be noticed.
2.1.21 Too much drinking by students

2.3 VIEWS FROM COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION
2.3.1 Size of groups compared to main subject groups may inhibit roll-calls such that students take advantage of this

2.3.2 Students’ move from one subject area to another frequently compared to main subject can be a contributory factor as students believe that lecturers may not take roll call.

2.3.3 Casual approach to preparation and lecturing by lecturers may be a contributory factor.

2.3.4 Students always asked to go and read in the library - half hearted approach by lecturers. In the long run, lecturers fail to be exemplary and show a negative attitude towards the area.

2.3.5 Students attach less importance to PS. Marriage in the following areas is not a happy one: TOE, TP, PS. There is need for improved relations. Students need to see the interconnectedness of TOE, PS, TP.
2.3.6 The way the profile for final presentation is arranged waters-down PS i.e. TP,TOE,MS,PS. It should be: TOE,PS,TP,MS. The present arrangement may have a psychological effect on lecturers.

2.3.7 Psychologically, the image status given to some subjects in PS also may be contributory.

2.3.8 Subject groupings/pairings may also be contributory.

3.0 OBSERVATIONS

3.1 Research has been an eye opener to existing problems related to lecturer-student operations in PSB. It was interesting to note that all parties involved appreciated the problem through self-criticism, concern and open-mindedness.

3.2 Views raised by all parties if seriously taken should help in dealing with the problem.

3.3 It appears there are no co-ordinated mechanisms or instruments for dealing with the problem of absenteeism.

3.4 Seemingly negative attitudes in PS exist in both lecturers and students.

3.5 Lack of respect for time.

3.6 Congested time table affects both the student and the lecturer.

3.7 Inadequate facilities, that is, shortage of rooms as evidenced by clashes caused by congested time table.

3.8 Professional studies should be able to meaningfully and successfully “sell its commodity” to enable students to attach value to it.

3.9 Lack of strategic planning and programming by subject areas.

3.10 Demotivating delivery systems used by lecturers and such systems are characterised by casual approaches.

3.11 Lack of integration among departments

3.12 Uncoordinated approaches to the problem of absenteeism.

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS:

4.1 Every lecturer should be convinced that professional studies is important. There is need for full commitment by lecturers through preparation and delivery.

4.2 Cluster (LIC and HOSs) to ensure there is no early dismissal or late beginning.

4.3 Use subject area attendance registers.
Lecturers should avoid teaching the same topics year after year.

There is need for meaningful, adequate and challenging content in 1st and 3rd year in PS courses.

Students should be cleared by subject areas before they are finally cleared by administration if they intend to leave college. For example on the leave pass, there should be room for more than one signature.

The fine should be increased from $2.00 to $5.00.

There is need for sound relationships among departments.

Staff Development Programmes should be mounted in PS to motivate members this can be realised through workshops and seminars.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT
5.1 For a student to miss a lecture for no reason, a fine of $5.00 would have to be paid.

5.2 If the same student misses another lecture from the same subject area, he will sign a warning at LIC level. A third offence should call for a warning from the HOD. A fourth offence would call for academic board decision on the mode of punishment through the Vice Principal's Office.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MR. GUDO G.L. CHAIRMAN
MR. MLENGA, F. SECRETARY
MR. MAPOSA, M.C.
MR. CHIKUMBU, E.C.
MR. LUTHULI, A.