

The Career Orientation of Final Year Teacher Training Students

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ABSTRACT This research was prompted by the assumption that the many problems that South African education faces must have an adverse effect on the career orientation of student teachers. The ecosystemic theory of Bronfenbrenner was used as the theoretical framework. In establishing the conceptual framework, negative forces on the teachers are discussed, as these are eminent in societal expectations about teachers, their professional identity and the retention rate in the teaching profession. For the empirical study all the final year teacher training students at one of the largest universities in South Africa were requested to complete a questionnaire. These findings were verified in a focus group interview with five purposively selected respondents. The findings nullified initial assumptions. Not only were the students strongly committed to their chosen career, but they also conveyed a strong message about moral values and the teachers' roles in being models to those in and outside the school.