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**PREPARING TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS:
A NEW CONCEPTION FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHER
EDUCATION**

A thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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ABSTRACT

PREPARING TEACHERS AS PROFESSIONAL EDUCATORS: A NEW CONCEPTION FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

This thesis proposes a new conception for pre-service teacher education. Current pre-service teacher education programmes are, in the main, one-dimensional, skill-based and performative: one-dimensional, in that programmes focus on preparing teachers to deliver a pre-determined curriculum; skill-based, in that professional judgement and reasoning are ignored; and, performative in the prescribed nature of knowledge and the drive to establish standards and competencies. Rather than focusing on professionalism - which is at the heart of what it means to be an educator - professionalisation, economic-driven policies and political ideologies underpin contemporary pre-service teacher education programmes.

The new conception for pre-service teacher education has at its core, teachers as professional educators. This thesis argues that in order for teachers to become professional educators, their preparation ought to be enhanced and broadened to incorporate aspects of professional judgement, professional expertise, and ethical and moral commitment. To enable this to occur, pre-service teachers need to learn what it means to be moral agents through active and authentic engagement within communities of practice and learners. In sum, the professional educator's role is argued to be an agent for, and of, change who promotes and engenders an education system that underpins a socially, culturally and economically just society.

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