

**HIV/AIDS EDUCATION AND THE PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS: INVESTIGATING
THE POTENTIAL OF AN E-LEARNING PROGRAMME**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature :

Date :

ABSTRACT

The focus of my study was to investigate an existing professional development programme for HIV/AIDS education in schools using e-learning as a delivery method. I investigated aspects of pedagogy that provide efficient workplace training for educators, such as constructivist approaches to adult teaching and learning, assessment strategies, creating opportunities for communication and a focus on learners' voices as crucial elements of in-service training. I reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning as a delivery method and discussed the trade-off between richness and reach in education.

I focused on interpreting and making meaning from the experiences of the educators who participated in the e-learning pilot study. I scrutinised the participants' electronically submitted journals in which they documented their experiences of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module. My aim was to interpret their descriptions of how they experienced their growth as educators and to analyse their views on how the module enabled them to implement courses on HIV/AIDS across the curriculum.

My research methodology was a combination of interpretative and critical research, focusing on interpreting and making meaning from the experiences of the individuals who took part in the study. To produce data I used a cyclical process where the participants performed key roles, giving regular feedback, recording their experiences and contributing to the upgrading of the programme.

HIV/AIDS and its possible impact on education have changed the rules of many aspects of classroom learning programme development, including sex and sexuality education. The Department of Education alone can therefore not sustain quality HIV/AIDS education, and it is imperative that departmental efforts should be augmented by tapping into existing professional development programmes offered by higher education institutions. I also support the international tendency that integrates aspects of HIV/AIDS education into all the Learning Areas because HIV/AIDS affects all aspects of life.

OPSOMMING

Die fokus van hierdie studie was om 'n bestaande professionele ontwikkelingsprogram, vir MIV/vigs-onderrig in skole te ondersoek. E-leer as 'n geskikte onderrigmetode het deel van hierdie ondersoek gevorm. Ek het verskeie pedagogiese aspekte ondersoek wat geskikte indiensopleiding vir opvoeders bied, onder andere konstruktivistiese benaderings tot volwasse onderrig-en-leer, assesseringstrategieë, die skep van kommunikasiegeleenthede asook 'n besinning oor die belangrikheid van deelnemers se opinies. Die voordele en nadele van e-leer as 'n geskikte onderrigmetode en die balans wat tussen reikwydte ("reach") en volheid ("richness") gehandhaaf moet word, is krities bespreek. Ek het die elektronies ingehandigde joernale, waarin deelnemers hulle ervarings van die *HIV/AIDS and Education*-module gedokumenteer het, bestudeer om hulle ervarings te ontleed en te vertolk. My doel was om hulle sienings oor hulle persoonlike groei as opvoeders en hoe die module hulle bemagtig het om MIV/vigs-onderrig in alle leerareas oor die kurrikulum heen te kan implimenteer, te dokumenteer.

My navorsingsmetodologie was 'n kombinasie van interpretatiewe en kritiese metodologie en ek het gefokus op die interpretasie en meningvorming van die deelnemers na aanleiding van hulle ervarings. Om data te genereer (produce) het ek 'n sikliese proses gebruik waarin deelnemers sleutelrolle vervul het, soos om gereelde terugvoer te lewer, ervarings aan te teken en bydraes te lewer om die program te verbeter.

MIV/vigs en die moontlike impak wat dit op onderwys en onderrig kan hê, het die reëls van leerprogramontwikkeling verander, met inbegrip van onderrig oor seks en seksualiteit. Die Nasionale Departement van Onderwys (NDvO) kan nie alleen MIV/vigs-onderrig van gehalte verseker nie, dit is dus noodsaaklik dat die NDvO se pogings ondersteun moet word. Die NDvO behoort gebruik te maak van bestaande hoër opvoedkundige instansies se professionele ontwikkelingsprogramme. Ek ondersteun ook die internasionale tendens waar MIV/vigs-onderrig in alle leerareas geïnkorporeer word, aangesien MIV/vigs 'n impak op alle aspekte van die lewe het.

Dedicated to Ouni, Cherié Ouni

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION

1.1. BACKGROUND AND SUBSTANTIATION OF THE RESEARCH

The effect of HIV/AIDS on our communities is by now well known. During the conference on HIV/AIDS and the education sector, 30 May to 1 June 2002, held at Midrand, the representatives accepted the following declaration of intent: “We must be pro-active and innovative as a matter of urgency, to protect the lives and wellbeing of our people” (Conference on HIV/AIDS and the Education sector: The coalition against HIV/AIDS, 2002:1). In sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 80 per cent of HIV/AIDS infections are heterosexually transmitted, it is taking on pandemic proportions (Du Toit, 2002:9, Daniel, 2000:46). Figures released in December 2002 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) show that sub-Saharan Africa is home to 29,4 million people living with HIV/AIDS, including approximately 3,5 million new infections which occurred during 2002 (UNAIDS, 2002).

1.1.1 The impact of HIV/AIDS on South African life

The spreading of the HIV/AIDS pandemic will, according to Coombe (2001:1-3), have a widespread impact on South African life. The diminishing growth rate will have a demographic impact as the life expectancy of South Africans is expected to drop from 68 years to 48 years and the orphan ratio is expected to increase by a factor of five by 2005. A decline in productivity due to illness, absenteeism and death will have an economic impact. A survey commissioned by the Henry J. Kaiser Family

Foundation, a Washington-based philanthropic organisation, found that the people who are the most adversely affected by HIV/AIDS in South Africa are the poor people. This two-year survey found that families are cutting their spending money to pay for health care; schooling of especially girls is prematurely terminated; and that malnutrition and an increased strain on extended families were some of the long-term ramifications (Thom, 2002:11). The government's revenue from taxes will shrink and demands for health care will increase. Some social consequences will be an increase in poverty, an escalating crime rate, and a growth in the number of unsupervised and abandoned children (Coombe, 2001:1-3). Professor M.J. Kelly of the University of Zambia is of the opinion that 3,5 million learners younger than 15 years will be orphaned by AIDS within the next few years, and he therefore urges the South African government to educate educators about AIDS (Rademeyer, 2002a:7).

1.1.2 The impact of HIV/AIDS on education

What this could mean for education is that fewer children will enrol in schools because of illness, death and impoverishment. Sexual behaviour and attitudes about sexuality among a substantial sector of South African youth are alarming. Van Eeden, quoting from results about the sexual behaviour of South African youth, published in the *British Medical Journal*, states:

In a study involving 269 705 learners, between the ages of 10 and nineteen, from 1 418 South African schools, a third of these learners believe that they are HIV positive (2004:23). Van Eeden maintains that in spite of educational programmes like *Soul City*, a television programme, and the *loveLife* campaign, "a campaign aimed at

educating youth about safe(r) sexual behaviour, the youth in this group insisted that girls are not allowed to refuse their boyfriends intercourse” (2004:23). More disturbing is that the majority of the youth that participated feel that any form of unwelcome touching, or as Caelers supporting this finding describe it, “unwanted touching” (2004:19), is not a form of sexual abuse (Van Eeden, 2004:23).

Qualified educators may be lost to education due to death and illness. The World Bank report on HIV/AIDS shows that 44 000 (12%) of South African educators are HIV positive and this could result in a crippling shortage of educators as the country will need 30 000 newly qualified educators per year, but it only has the capacity to train 20 000 educators per year (Lund, 2002:1). A contributing factor, according to the 2003 Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) annual report, is that by 2005 an estimated fifth of South African university students and a quarter of Technicon students could be HIV-positive. The quest for education could therefore show a steady decline and the steady growth pattern in tertiary education could be halted (Rademeyer, 2004:8). Managing schools with decreasing financial support will become very difficult. The psychosocial trauma of losing friends and family members will negatively affect educators, learners and families and may lead to a decline in school effectiveness. Developmental gains and further developments in educational goals will be unattainable in the future (Coombe, 2001:2-4).

1.1.3 Mitigating the impact of HIV/AIDS on education

Prevalence rates among young people have been rising steadily. Educators and learners are at risk. Findings from the *British Medical Journal* show that participants

in their study on the sexual behaviour of South African youth stated that, if they tested positive, they would not inform their families of their status. More alarming, they would carry on having unprotected sexual intercourse and 12,7% still believed that intercourse with a virgin will cure them of HIV (Van Eeden, 2004:23). The fear of rejection by the community is a possible reason for this behaviour, as in some South African communities disclosing one's HIV-positive status can lead to the individual's excommunication.

According to the *British Medical Journal*, “[t]his failure of education comes at an important cost; youth who believed they were HIV-positive had misconceptions about sexual violence, and about the risk of HIV infection” (Caelers, 2004:19). Caelers calls on those responsible for HIV/AIDS education to take the personal experiences and environments of South African youth into account when developing effective learner material (2004:19).

The health of the education system itself is at risk. It is important that the education service be protected to be able to continue to provide education of acceptable quality. Coombe (2001) suggests the following:

1.1.3.1 Stabilising education services

The education system must be protected so that educators can teach, learners are able to enrol and stay in school, and the professional and financial systems are performed adequately. This will require that:

- HIV/AIDS education must be included in every education plan;

- there are enough educators to replace or substitute for those who are either leaving or who are ill and absent;
- enough educators are trained;
- support is provided to educators to cope with trauma; and
- ways are found to replace leadership and management skills.

1.1.3.2 Counteracting the pandemic's impact

The learning environment must be a safe and caring environment for all. It means that:

- schools must be safe places for all learners;
- a culture of care must be established;
- there is zero tolerance of violence; and
- the human rights of everyone are nurtured.

1.1.3.3 Responding to HIV/AIDS

Education in South Africa is heading for a crisis because of the HIV pandemic. Deaths caused by AIDS-related diseases are increasing and fewer students are enrolling. According to Meerkotter, University of the Western Cape, the Faculty of Education of this university should put in place drastic measures to address the crises (De Vries, 2002:5). Van der Merwe from the same faculty agrees and emphasises that, since educators in South Africa are dealing with a new curriculum with a new innovative way of thinking, it is imperative that training and re-training should be adapted to take into account these changes (De Vries, 2002:5).

The education system must continue to provide quality education to learners in and out of the formal educational programmes (drawing on Coombe, 2001:2-3). In chapter two, I discuss the position of the Department of Education regarding HIV/AIDS and education. In the Western Cape, the Minister of Education is concerned that the opportunities to educate people about how to protect themselves from getting infected by HIV/AIDS are not equally effective. He committed education to this process of educating young people (Dugmore, 2004:11-14).

In studies to establish the impact that sexuality education programmes have on South African youth, Dr Neil Andersson, chairperson of the Africa branch of Community Information Empowerment and Transparency (CIETAfrica), found that sexuality programmes in schools have the biggest influence on the youth. He states that programmes like *LoveLife*, a campaign for safe(r) sexual behaviour, promote condom usage but do not dispel myths about HIV (Van Eeden, 2004:23).

From the above it is clear to me as an education manager that education has to take up the challenge and educators have to respond. If, according to Andersson, the sexuality programmes at school have a meaningful impact on youth, the Department of Education is duty bound to explore all possible avenues to educate educators. In chapter six I will make recommendations regarding the augmentation of the WCED's efforts.

1.2 PERSONAL POSITIONING

I was one of those South Africans who believed the myth that the HIV/AIDS epidemic/pandemic affected only those people with behaviour patterns that put them

at risk. People with *dangerous* lifestyles, such as people who share needles for intravenous drug use and males engaging in homosexual activities, were most likely to be infected. Being infected was something that *they* deliberately sought out and maybe even deserved. I also believed that people from certain cultural backgrounds were more affected than others were. Their moral standards were under suspicion and their life styles were therefore *blamed* for their *supposed* higher infection rate. Even their living conditions and their traditional customs were questioned and given as *reasons* to substantiate these assumptions. These assumptions conform to what Du Toit, an AIDS counsellor busy with her Masters degree on HIV counselling, found during her research, which is that the average South African feels that their families are safe from HIV/AIDS because homosexual, lesbian and immoral people are more at risk of getting infected (2002:9).

During my further studies at the University of Stellenbosch, and especially during a module in environmental education, I was introduced to a critical perspective on HIV/AIDS as an environmental problem. These new perspectives changed my beliefs and my attitude to a certain extent. I started to see the bigger picture but this epidemic/pandemic continued to be something removed from my own reality. Although I was more aware of how the virus was spreading in South Africa, I still held some of my old personal beliefs. People with a careless lifestyle and who were from a particular cultural background were, according to my thinking, more at risk than other people.

1.2.1 A change in my personal beliefs

I was however forced to confront reality when my son, at this stage a fourth year medical student, was exposed to blood that might have been infected with the virus. While assisting at the delivery of a sixteen-year-old woman's baby, the blood from the umbilical cord, cut by the doctor, was accidentally sprayed into my son's unprotected eyes. The period that followed, starting with trying to find a pathologist at six-o'clock on a Sunday morning to have the woman's blood tested, then waiting for the results and the subsequent uncertainty about the accuracy of the test result (the blood could be in the three month window period when infected blood normally does not test accurately because it can take up to three months for the virus to be detected after infection occurs) was understandably traumatic for my family. The fact that my son had to take the drug 3'-azido 3'-deoxythymidine (AZT) to *slow* down and not *prevent* the possible infection of HIV/AIDS was deeply unsettling. The initial three months of waiting for the window period to pass, then waiting for the test to be repeated and living through the second waiting period of another three months, after which the test had to be repeated once more to ensure accuracy, put tremendous strain on family relationships and emotions.

My son's experience made me realise that my views of HIV/AIDS were simplistic and that I had to consider the many other complex possibilities. This made me aware that the AIDS virus can be contracted in many ways, yes lifestyle decisions do play a major part, but the reality is that innocent individuals are also at risk, for instance, medical staff that come into contact with blood, blood transfusion patients, patients who receive blood and many more. Innocent bystanders become inadvertently victims because of the actions of others, children who are raped and or sodomised, taking or

being forced to take intravenous drugs are but some of the preventable cases. The reality is that in many cases these infections could have been avoided if the children were knowledgeable and knew how to protect themselves against these unscrupulous people. I realised that education could play a major part in addressing this need.

During this time, a group of grade six learners approached me with a request for permission to raise funds and raise awareness at school for an HIV/AIDS care centre that mainly cares for babies and toddlers. This started me thinking about my role as an education manager in sharing knowledge about HIV/AIDS, alerting me to the fact that education managers should play a bigger part in the HIV/AIDS and education arena. I realised that putting structures in place to educate learners, and seeing to it that the process happens, was only a part of a complex problem. Providing clinical knowledge about HIV/AIDS addresses an educational issue only; tolerance, acceptance and understanding of, and support for infected and affected people are issues that also must be shared with learners. The complexity of this task dawned on me when I realised the enormous challenge that this presents to practicing teachers' professional development. I started questioning the way HIV/AIDS was included in the curriculum. I was, however, fortunate that I could address some of the issues that I have raised, because the educators in my school bought into the idea of combating this pandemic on a wider front. Non-governmental institutions were approached to address learners and to provide in-service training to the educators. I organised various talks that included a variety of speakers who informed learners, educators and parents on specific topics. These topics included first-aid safety protocol, an HIV-positive person sharing daily obstacles that he/she encountered and a discussion of the Human Rights Bill.

1.3 THE RATIONALE BEHIND THIS STUDY

The implication of this pandemic for professional development (PD) concerns me as an education manager. Educators are confronted with various changes in education, especially changes in the curriculum. These changes and the accompanying in-service training, or the lack of adequate training in some cases, place huge burdens on educators. Educators are exposed to compulsory training sessions that lead to changes in the planning of educational programmes, presentation of material and assessment of learners' work. The changes to outcomes-based education (OBE) put strain on educators who were not skilled in this approach. Jansen, Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria, is very critical of the changes that have taken place in education since 1992. In an open letter to the new Minister of Education, Ms Naledi Pandor, he addressed various concerns:

- A stop has to be put to the issuing of senseless new policies.
- Educators have reached a stage of saturation.
- Most of the policies of her predecessors have failed.

He pointed out that, according to research, enhancing the quality of education and increasing effective learning take time. With this as background, he suggested that:

- Each school must have a properly qualified educator for every learning area.
- Each learner must have a textbook.
- Every school must have electricity and toilets.

- The financial investment in in-service training must be doubled.
- Care must be taken that the in-service trainers must be completely qualified to do the training.
- Educators must be supported *in* their classrooms and this support must be sustained over a longer period (based on Jansen, 2004:8).

I realised that educators were put under enormous strain by the Department of Education's in-service programmes. Jansen's letter confirms the sentiments of many education managers that the morale amongst educators is low and that it is important not to put more strain on them by means of new in-service initiatives. For professional development (PD) to be accepted by educators, innovative strategies are necessary. I realised that alternative PD initiatives had to be explored to accommodate educators' need for training, taking into account the workload to which educators are subjected. It was against this background that, when I encountered the *HIV/AIDS and Education* WebCT module developed at the Education Faculty, Stellenbosch University, I realised that this module could fulfil some of the needs for an alternative professional development delivery method.

My initial focus for the study was to investigate an in-service delivery method that would satisfy the needs of in-service educators in terms of the content of professional development (PD), and that could be structured in such a way that it would not have a negative impact on educator time. My original proposal was *Professional development of practising educators to integrate HIV/AIDS across the intermediate school phase curriculum*. For study purposes, the title was however changed to read as follows: *HIV/AIDS education and the professional development of teachers:*

Investigating the potential of an e-learning programme. The focus of the study therefore changed and the research processes were guided by the following questions:

- What professional development (PD) opportunities exist for workplace training of educators concerning HIV/AIDS?

- Can an existing web-based professional development programme, HIV & AIDS and Education, and designed for pre-service student teachers be of value for PD purposes?

The first question will be partly addressed by a literature study discussing current and past WCED initiatives. This will be supplemented by empirical research informed mainly by my own personal experiences. The critical evaluation and scrutiny of the journals of in-service educators who participated in the pilot study, and the measurement of their responses against a framework or an assessment protocol will guide the second question. The assessment protocol associated with the e-learning module mentioned earlier was developed and adjusted for in-service participants in conjunction with Schreuder, based on his experiences gained by working through large numbers of student-educator journals.

The need to explore alternative approaches for PD is necessary as it seems that the WCED favours what Bagwandeem and Louw refer to as the “deficit” model (1993:67), where a “deficit” model implies that educators have deficits in knowledge and skills, identified by the authorities and addressed by programmes designed to fix these deficits (Clark, 1992:75 in Hargreaves & Fullan, 1992). In an interview with a

WCED subject advisor, Reddy found many indications of this approach in the WCED (2001:162). (See chapter two for details.)

1.4 SCOPE OF THE RESEARCH

I approached the WCED for permission to conduct the study in schools under their auspices. Permission was kindly granted on the 28th May 2003 (Appendix A). Educators from schools in the Somerset West and Strand area were approached to take part in the pilot study (Appendix B). I decided to approach fifteen educators; two principals, two deputy principals, a Junior Phase head of department, an Intermediate and Senior Phase head of department, six post level one educators, two post level one junior primary educators and a librarian. I decided on these educators because of the differences in their teaching experiences, different computer skills levels, the different grades that they teach and their involvement in school management, namely as grade heads, Learning Area heads and the learning areas that they teach.

I also approached two previously disadvantaged schools but, after lengthy discussions, we could not come to a workable agreement for their participation. It was not because of a lack of trust or a reluctance to participate, but rather due to physical and financial constraints. My aim was to involve one of these schools by including five of their educators.

I have approached the WCED with various requests for financial assistance and/or for support by supplying computer equipment, but was never successful. I discussed my

needs with Peter Fenton, HIV/AIDS coordinator of the WCED, but he never responded positively.

1.5 CHAPTER ORGANISATION

- **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND ORIENTATION**

In chapter one, I reflect on a number of areas where HIV/AIDS can have an impact on society. I included a brief reference to the possible impact that HIV/AIDS could have on South African life, and in particular possible effects on education. I pointed out that education, by educating the youth that are in the school system, is in a position to help mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS. I pose the research questions that guide the study. I position my personal beliefs and attitude towards the pandemic and its implications for education, and explain how an incident in my family circle changed my views on HIV/AIDS.

- **CHAPTER 2: EDUCATION POLICY RELATED TO HIV/AIDS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL REVIEW**

In chapter two, I discuss the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (no. 27 of 1996). I address the need for professional development (PD) in South African education. To understand the desperate need for professional development, it is necessary to provide a brief historical background. I will look critically at policy and at whether it provides an efficient and effective response to professional development.

- **CHAPTER 3: HIV/AIDS, EDUCATION AND IN-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN APPROPRIATE E-LEARNING MODULE**

In chapter three, I examine the possibilities of e-learning as a preferred option for professional training/development. I review the advantages and disadvantages of e-learning as an approach to educating and learning, as well as for PD purposes. The structure of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, developed by Schreuder for education students in the Faculty of Education at Stellenbosch University, is critically evaluated against the following:

- the threat of the possible trade-offs between richness and reach in education;
- some principles of adult learning;
- constructivism as a preferred learning theory in professional development, and the importance of acknowledging various knowledge interests in creating learning opportunities; and
- outcomes-based education (OBE) as an appropriate framework for curriculum development.

Since the WCED has provided a free computer to schools and subsidised Internet access, an on-line professional development approach could help to provide for the needs of educator in-service professional development.

- **CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Various views on and theoretical frameworks for research processes are discussed to help me to select suitable methodologies for this study. I explain the preferred research methods and address how participants were included during the research process. I discuss how data was gathered, produced and analysed. To ensure that the research findings were accurately reflected, I made use of Krefting's four criteria, based on Guba, for assessment of trustworthiness.

- **CHAPTER 5: CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE WEB-BASED PROGRAMME**

In chapter five, I critically evaluate the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module. The selection criteria used for and profiles of the pilot study participants are explained. Educator journal responses are assessed according to assessment protocols (see table 3.3) developed by Schreuder and myself, and the most conspicuous differences and similarities between the responses of in-service educators and those of student-educators are briefly noted.

- **CHAPTER 6: REFLECTIVE PERSPECTIVES**

I discuss the government's, and in particular the WCED's, response to the pandemic. I discuss the value of this study and point out the limitations. I discuss further research possibilities and make some recommendations. I conclude with a personal reflection and note that, as an education manager, I must play a leading role in helping to curb this pandemic.

CHAPTER 2

EDUCATION POLICY RELATED TO HIV/AIDS AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A CRITICAL REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

During a conference on HIV/AIDS and the education sector, *The Education Coalition against HIV/AIDS*, 30 May to 1 June 2002, held at Midrand, conference participants representing every sub-sector of South Africa's education sector, at the invitation of the Minister of Education, accepted the following *Declaration of Intent*:

- We must be pro-active and innovative as a matter of urgency, to protect the lives and wellbeing of our people;
- Education must lie at the heart of the national response to HIV/AIDS because at present it is principally through education that we can hope to achieve an HIV/AIDS free South Africa;
- In counter attacking HIV/AIDS, the education sector can – and must – work in coalition of partners which includes all government departments;
- Incorporate the special perspectives of young people.

The education sector is particularly responsible for:

- Helping to contain the spread of HIV/AIDS;
- Providing safe and secure learning environments;

- Ensuring support is provided;
- Responding to the learning needs of orphans and other vulnerable children;
- Guaranteeing the quality of the nation's education and training programmes in the circumstances of HIV/AIDS.

(Conference on HIV/AIDS and the Education Sector, 2002:1-2)

The effect of HIV/AIDS on our communities has been described time after time. In sub-Saharan Africa, where more than 80% of HIV/AIDS infections are heterosexually transmitted, it is taking on pandemic proportions (Du Toit, 2002:9; Daniel, 2000:46). Figures released in December 2002 by the World Health Organisation (WHO) show that sub-Saharan Africa is home to 29,4 million people living with HIV/AIDS, including approximately 3,5 million new infections which occurred during 2002 (UNAIDS, 2002). According to a Western Cape Education Department document, WCED HIV/AIDS Life Skills Programme, an estimated 5,5 million South Africans are HIV positive. It further states that an estimated three quarters of all new HIV infections occurs amongst people between the ages of 15 and 25 (Fenton, 2002:1).

I agree with former Minister of Education Kader Asmal that the only way to curb the spread and growth of the pandemic is through education. Minister Asmal is of the opinion that education is the only socially accepted 'vaccination' for HIV/AIDS (Jongbloed, 2002:37; Rademeyer, 2002a:7) Whilst informing and educating teenagers and adults about HIV/AIDS is of the utmost importance, I believe that educating younger children and pre-adolescent will be the only way to make a significant contribution in the fight against this pandemic. A person who is HIV positive has

found in his dealings with youth that some of South Africa's youth is sexually active at a mere six years of age. According to this person the largest growth rate of HIV/AIDS infection is in the age group of 12 to 19 year olds (Anderson, 2002). It is therefore vital to educate our educators about HIV/AIDS because educators in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases of primary schools will have to take on a leading role in educating and equipping the youth of South Africa with the necessary survival skills and attitudes to help them identify risk situations and develop strategies to avoid being infected. In his message to educators, Minister Asmal reiterated that South Africans must be educated in taking the necessary precautions to be careful and sensible about their sexual behaviour, preventing themselves from becoming infected and infecting others (Jewkes, 2000:1-4).

The need for the professional development of practising educators to create educational spaces for learners to become acquainted with the nature and threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is vital. Government policy in this regard is to provide professional development for educators of the Learning Area (LA): Life Orientation (LO) in the Intermediate school phase. The Western Cape Education Department has planned to have all LO educators in the Intermediate School phase trained by September 2002. All primary schools under the auspices of the WCED are by law compelled to start HIV/AIDS education through a Life Skills Programme from January 2003.

As an education manager it is important to me that educators, who are in most cases instructed to attend professional development programmes, are offered opportunities for workplace training that is relevant and appropriate. It is also important that the

trainers are properly skilled, authorities on course content and familiar with appropriate adult learning pedagogy.

2.2 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD) AND IN-SERVICE EDUCATOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING (INSET)

The terms PD and INSET are often used interchangeably and Craft indicates that these terms are often used to cover a wide range of activities or opportunities for learning. These activities contribute to the learning of educators once formal training has been completed (1996:6). For Bleckman (1989), PD includes “the new learnings of teachers and others associated with schools” (in Holly & Maclaughlin, 1990). It is furthermore important to take cognisance of Billings’ (1977:22) position that PD indicates that educators move forward in knowledge and skills (in Bell & Day, 1991:4). As for INSET, Bagwandeem and Louw state that it “embraces all experiences that a teacher may undergo for the purpose of expanding his/her professional or personal education” (1993:19). MacNeil adds that INSET should be based on coherent activities that are co-ordinated to enrich and broaden attitudes, to increase participants’ knowledge base and improve the skills of professional educators to ensure that they will become more competent (2004:26).

To improve the quality of education, INSET strategies should be coupled with strategies that will result in the improvement of workplace conditions, better education provision and the upliftment of socio-economic and political standards (Van den Berg, 1983:4 in Ashley & Mehl, 1987). As this study is about the new learning of educators, I prefer to use the term professional development, based on Bleckman (1989 in Holly & Maclaughlin, 1990).

The participants in this study commented on how their participation in the pilot study broadened their knowledge base of HIV/AIDS, and that this made them more confident in engaging with learners during Life Orientation lessons that involved sexuality education (BS, GM, LK, PV & TA). Taking into account the above, participation in the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module could result in more competent educators with improved skills.

2.2.1 The need for professional development (PD)

Education in South Africa has experienced a range of changes since the first democratic election in 1994. Educators have been subjected to policy changes, indicating direction changes for education and schooling, which included directives governing the changing roles of educators. (See paragraph 1.3 for Jansen's (2004:8) views.) The Department of Education declared that "[n]o longer will teachers (sic) and trainers just implement curricula designed by an education department. They will be able to implement many of their own programmes as long as they produce the necessary outcomes" (1997:29). To manage change effectively, PD is important and the DOE embarked on a cascade model leaning towards curriculum changes and new classroom practices (Reddy, 2001:47).

The two main service providers that traditionally deliver educator PD in South Africa, according to Hartsthorne (1985:1), are the Department of Education (DOE) officials and private sector initiatives (in Ashley & Mehl, 1987). It is interesting to note that Hartsthorne (1985:2) concludes that the DOE cannot cope with the range of in-service programmes (in Ashley & Mehl, 1987).

There are indications that PD provision by the WCED needs to be augmented. Reddy has documented that the experience of some educators with whom he has worked, was that PD sessions were badly organised and poorly presented, lacking departmental follow-up support (2001:155; 2001:161). In KwaZulu-Natal, educators reported similar experiences (Pithouse, 2001:155). Reddy further describes WCED INSET processes as “being technical and viewing teachers (sic) as passive receivers of knowledge” (2001:164). It is disturbing to note Potenza and Myokolu’s position on PD in Gauteng, where they claim PD was not considered or included while planning curriculum development (1999:236 in Jansen and Christie, 1999). More disturbing is Reddy’s observation that the same seems to be true of the WCED (2001:156).

2.2.2 Reasons why the WCED’s HIV/AIDS PD initiatives should be augmented

In my opinion, there are three reasons why professional development programmes like those proposed by the WCED need to be augmented.

Firstly, the implication of the scope of the pandemic on South Africa’s society justifies maximum effort in using all education resources optimally to ensure an enlightened and properly informed community. One or two educators per school entrusted with the responsibility to educate the community are insufficient. However, limited financial and human resources as well as a multitude of other professional development needs constrain education authorities in their efforts to ensure a corps of proficient educators to handle this predicament facing our communities and schools. This challenge comes at a time when the biggest crisis confronting the education system in post apartheid South Africa, according to Schreuder, is to train thousands of

under-qualified and unqualified educators to implement curriculum transformation (2002:4).

Secondly, using one specific LA, Life Orientation, to achieve the goals of HIV/AIDS education – educating the youth about HIV/AIDS – may not be adequate. As HIV/AIDS affects all aspects of life, I think that HIV/AIDS education must form an integral part of all LAs. The possibility exists that LO may become “nobody’s LA taught by anybody”, which is what happened to “Youth Preparedness” in the previous dispensation. The international tendency is to integrate aspects of HIV/AIDS education into all LAs. I think that in South Africa this route may also be the more productive and efficient one.

Thirdly, as no one is exempted from this pandemic, almost all educators will eventually be confronted by learners who are either infected or affected by HIV. The idea that one in four South Africans might become infected is too terrible to grasp (Jewkes, 2000:2). It is imperative that educators must be afforded all the opportunities to become equipped to deal with this pandemic. Educators have a unique opportunity to change the course of this pandemic as they can influence learner’s ideas about sex and relationships (Jewkes, 2000:10).

2.3 A SHORT HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The President of South Africa, Mr. Mbeki, posed the following question at the first Cabinet meeting after the second democratic election of South Africa in 1999: “Is our education system on the road to the 21st century?” (Department of Education, n.d.a:1)

The reason for this question is found in the history of education in South Africa. In education, we find distinct political or state motivated eras. We had the colonial era, which included the Dutch colonisation and British occupation periods. The apartheid era followed, with the National Party with its apartheid policy in power. The post-apartheid era, after the first democratically elected government, followed.

It is necessary to touch briefly on the history of education in South Africa to get an idea of educational needs provision or lack thereof. It will provide some perspectives on issues regarding funding, educator training, educator development, responsibility and curriculum structures. In the current system, transformation of education is a high priority, which is understandable as progress or the perception of progress is visible and/or measurable to role-players.

During the colonial era, various wars were fought for domination of the land. Behr and Macmillan describe educational provision during the Dutch colonisation period (1652 – 1795) as, “being on a small scale, chiefly with a missionary purpose and under the direct control of the church” (1971:1-4). Even then, it was practice to have separate schools for white and slave children.

The British occupation period (1806+) brought a formal system of secular education with English as the official language (Hofmeyer, 1982 in Engelbrecht, Kriegler & Booyesen, 1996:8). In 1910, the Union of South Africa was formed and state schools offered free compulsory education to white children but not to African children (Graaf & Gordon, 1992:209 in Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1996:8).

During the apartheid era (1948 – 1994), educational opportunities in South Africa were unevenly and unfairly distributed amongst the different race groups of South Africa. These disparities caused discrepancies in the levels of education of the peoples of South Africa. The laws on compulsory school attendance and distribution of financial support *inter alia* affected the quality of education for the various race groups. State schools were to provide free and compulsory education for white children; all other races were excluded (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1996:8). During the apartheid years, the financial contribution that the then government made to the education of learners was based on different scales for different racial groups. ‘White’ education was subsidised more favourably than ‘coloured’ and ‘black’ education. Estimated per capita spending on educare by education departments according to race group in 1990 were as follows: White – R1684, Indian – R118, Coloured – R752 and African – R38 (Gerwel, 1992:28). This led to inferior school facilities for ‘coloured’ and ‘black’ learners with, in most of these schools, no sports fields and ill equipped laboratories and libraries. Furthermore, youth of school going ages found themselves outside the formal education system. Financial imbalances also affected the qualifications and qualification opportunities for educators and prospective educators.

The National Education Policy Investigation (NEPI) report (1993), confirmed that South Africa did not have a core curriculum for all schools, but after negotiations between government, opposition parties and various political organisations in 1992, a national core curriculum was developed (Reddy, 2001:31). In 1994, the first non-racial democratic elections were held in South Africa. The African National Congress (ANC) formed the first representative government. One of the ANC’s election issues was a radical vision for a transformed educational system based on equity,

democracy, the redress of past inequalities and responsiveness to development needs (Mathieson in Sayed & Jansen, 2001:43). Adding, Reddy drawing on Hartshorne (1985), emphasise that pre-1994 PD was not common in black (in this context meaning non-white) education, with the result that these educators found themselves in an embattled and static profession (Reddy, 2001:46). A new education system based on the principles of equity, access and relevance was one of the fundamental changes and for the first time in South African education history all citizens had equal access to education and training (Reddy, 2001:33-34).

To achieve this, education of equal quality delivered by equally or suitably qualified educators, the government embarked on a system of creating new policies, policies that were aimed at levelling and equalling education provision to all learners. Jansen however criticize the fact that each new minister who takes office, either put new policies in place or change existing policies to the detriment of education, the learners and to the frustration of educators (2004:8).

2.3.1 Kader Asmal's reply to Mr. Mbeki

Against this historical background, the former Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, provided President Mbeki with a bold and emphatic answer when he outlined the education plan for the next five years. He went further and called upon all South Africans to join hands in the spirit of Tirisano to address the following five most urgent problem areas in education:

- the dysfunctional state of many institutions;

- the continuing inequities in terms of basic facilities and learning resources;
- the unacceptably high levels of illiteracy amongst the youths and adults;
- sexual harassment and violence, including crime and drugs; and
- the scourge of HIV/AIDS (Department of Education n.d.a:1).

It is clear that these problems must be addressed so that the failures and inherited disparities of the past can be eradicated. Only then will we be able to formulate a positive answer to the question that Mr. Mbeki posed in Cabinet. In his State of the Nation address on 25 June 1999, President Mbeki identified education and training as critical priorities to meet the challenges for the creation of a democratic and prosperous society.

2.3.2 Kader Asmal's action plan

In former Minister Asmal's reaction to the Presidents' challenge to the Education Department, he identified nine priorities in his Call to Action and Implementation Plan, which according to him constitute the basic building blocks for enabling the development of a fully functional education and training system. The nine priorities are as follows:

- We must make our provincial systems work by making co-operative government work;
- We must break the back of illiteracy among adults and youths;

- Schools must become centres of community life;
- We must end conditions of physical degradation in South African schools;
- We must develop the professional quality of our teaching force;
- We must ensure the success of active learning through outcomes-based education;
- We must create a vibrant further education and training system to equip youth and adults to meet social and economic needs of the 21st century;
- We must implement a rational, seamless higher education system that grasps the intellectual and professional challenges facing South Africans in the 21st century; and
- We must deal urgently and purposefully with the HIV/AIDS emergency in and through the education and training system.

(Department of Education, n.d.a:3)

A close examination of the nine priorities reveals that, and taking into account the financial constraints and pressing delivery needs on education, HIV/AIDS PD should have preference. Government, however, would seem to prefer prioritising short-term, visible issues first. A few examples are as follows: Outcomes-based education was introduced (it might even be considered to have been rushed into place) to demonstrate that a “new” education system, affording everyone equal opportunities, could replace the previous dispensation; higher education institutions were amalgamated and renamed; and language policies were addressed to show a willingness to accommodate the wider population. Given the pressure on government

funding, all available PD programmes, especially from non-governmental organisations (NGOs), should therefore be embraced and maximum use should be made of all the resources and opportunities.

Since President Mbeki stated that education and training are the “decisive drivers in our efforts to build a winning nation”, all role players in education are therefore obliged to ensure that the rollout of Tirisano is successful. According to Minister Asmal, this plan underpins three key shifts in policy after democracy. The first phase was to replace the unfairly biased previous order with a democratic order marked by non-racism and non-sexism. The second phase is marked by deepened reform and accountability for performance and delivery across the system. The final phase will focus on the capacity building of educators and educational managers. The implementation plan for Tirisano, 2001 to 2002, comprise six programmes, each addressing a specific need in education and training.

The programmes are:

- Programme 1: HIV/AIDS
- Programme 2: School effectiveness and educator professionalism
- Programme 3: Literacy
- Programme 4: Further education and training
- Programme 5: Organisational effectiveness of the national and provincial departments
- Programme 6: Values and education

(Department of Education, n.d.b:1-2)

These programmes are divided into different projects, which in turn address specific educational issues. Although many activities are outlined in the plan, I will concentrate on Programme 1: HIV/AIDS.

Programme 1: HIV/AIDS

Project 1: A Threat to the Education System

Project 2: The Curriculum

Project 3: Learners with Special Needs (LESN)

Project 4: In the Workplace

Project 5: Awareness, Information and Advocacy

Project 6: Early Childhood Development

Project 7: Higher Education

Project 8: Implementation of the Strategic Plan and Refinement
of Strategy

Each one of these projects has different strategic objectives, several activities or implementation strategies, outputs or aims and a time frame for estimated completion.

The strategic objective for Project 2: The Curriculum is: *Ensure that Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education is integrated across the curriculum at all levels and educators are appropriately trained and resourced.*

The different activities for Project 2 include:

- Tutor training;

- Monitoring the training of educators;
- Reproduction of material for tutor trainers, educators, learners, parents and lay counsellors;
- Support educators during implementation period;
- Initiate workshops and supply communication and advocacy material;
- Produce illustrative learning programmes and guidelines on how to integrate HIV/AIDS into the curriculum of all learning areas; and
- Strengthen existing administrative and management structures.

Various timeframes were set to achieve these outputs culminating in completion by February 2002. The Department of Education will continue to monitor educator support and the implementation process of the programme (Adapted from the Department of Education, n.d.b:7-8).

In his address to the South African Parliament in February of 2003, Minister Asmal re-iterated the Government's position on HIV/AIDS, namely that the promoting of awareness, life skills education and HIV/AIDS education form the core of the Government's approach to eradicate HIV/AIDS in South Africa (Department of Education, n.d.c:1). To achieve this goal, the government of South Africa has a national policy on HIV/AIDS for learners and educators in public schools, and students and educators in further education and training institutions in place, namely the National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act no. 27 of 1996). This policy gives guidelines to all South Africans involved in education and training. I would like to emphasise no. 17:

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In all instances, this policy should be interpreted to ensure respect for the rights of learners, students and educators with HIV/AIDS as well as other learners, students and members of the school and institution communities (Department of Education, 1999:16).

I find it rather disturbing that according to the National Education Policy Act, 12.1, “the governing body of a school or the council of an institution *may* develop and adopt its own plan on HIV/AIDS to give operational effect to the national policy” (Department of Education, 1999:15; emphasis added).

Personally, I would like to see that it is compulsory for all schools under the jurisdictions of the various Provincial Education Departments to have HIV/AIDS school policies in place. These policies should be forwarded to the various departments and be scrutinised by experts on policy matters and HIV/AIDS. This is to ensure that the policy is legally and factually correct.

2.4 THE QUESTION OF RESPONSIBILITY

The question may arise whether it is the responsibility of educators to inform or educate learners about HIV/AIDS. As South Africa ratified the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995, the South African government agreed to implement the articles (clauses) in the Convention.

Article 18 says that a child should have access to information that will help the child promote his/her physical and emotional wellbeing. Sexuality education and information on HIV/AIDS will certainly help a child in this regard. So, South Africa has agreed to ensure that children have access to this type of education (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:111).

By signing this agreement, the South African government accepted the responsibility to provide education to all learners and in the process making educators and parents/guardians co-responsible.

Improving the quality of education should be paramount to educational policy makers. Availability of funding for educational research is at a premium; this obliges educational researchers to ensure that their research is relevant to education in South Africa. Policy makers must allow researchers enough time for in-depth research and not pressurise them to conform to tight time limitations. This dilemma puts pressure on both researcher and policy maker; the researcher needs time to include all role players and to be thorough and transparent, and the policy maker has to produce for and satisfy the governing department.

Policy makers are primarily or even exclusively interested in research that addresses problems that are on their agenda (Husén in Keeves, 1988:174). In South Africa, we cannot afford this viewpoint; we have to act with the best interest of our children in mind. Today's youth are the leaders, decision makers and economically active citizens of tomorrow. The increase in the death rate and the reduction in life expectancy are

carving away at our future (Daniel, 2000:50). This results in a change in the population structure that influences the economic sustainability of the region negatively.

In the declaration of intent after the conference held at Gallagher Estates in Midrand, the participants agreed that: “Education must lie at the heart of the national response to HIV/AIDS because at present it is principally through education that we hope to achieve an AIDS-free South Africa” (Conference on HIV/AIDS and the Education Sector, 2002:1). The question of responsibility is therefore clear: the Government via the Department of Education (DoE) *must* take the initiative and responsibility to ensure that HIV/AIDS education programmes are in place. The primary target group should be children who have not yet established ‘at risk’ behavioural patterns.

2.5 ACCEPTING THE RESPONSIBILITY

Over the next few years, I started reading more about the HIV/AIDS epidemic/pandemic. The most important fact that I have learnt was that in South Africa 90% of infections are caused by heterosexual activities. However, the following two statistics from research by the Community Agency for Social Inquiry published in February 1999 made me realise how critical the situation is:

- 10% of children are **11 years or younger** when they have their first sexual experience; and
- 67% of all children **choose** to have sex for the first time (Inquiry findings published in HIV/AIDS life skills and sexuality education:

Primary School Programme, Van der Merwe, Edwards, Louw, Odendaal, Kekana, Tsonga, Rousseau, Wilson, Van Zyl, 2002:196).

As a school manager, I realised that we as educators have a responsibility to educate our children about this epidemic/pandemic. As the curriculum co-ordinator responsible for the schools' academic planning and timetable, I regarded it as part of my duties to also co-ordinate HIV/AIDS programmes in the school's curriculum. This coincided with the WCED's programmes that shared information about HIV/AIDS with schools. Awareness campaigns were launched to disseminate information to schools. The information schools received were mainly about HIV/AIDS policies, rights and responsibilities, rules regarding compulsory first aid kits (universal precautions), non-discrimination against infected learners and educators, and non-disclosure of the status of infected learners and educators.

Mention the word AIDS and you will get a variety of responses from disinterest and fear to total lack of knowledge. What is abundantly clear, however, is that most people do not think it will affect them and therefore they do nothing about it" (Archimedes, Autumn, 1996. As quoted in the Somerset West School Clinic, 2002:1).

As there is no known cure yet for this epidemic/pandemic, I agree fully with former Minister of Education Kader Asmal that the only course of action left is education. Minister Asmal argued that education is the only 'vaccination' for HIV/AIDS (Jongbloed, 2002:37; Rademeyer, 2002a:7). The only known solution or option is to **prevent** infection by the HI-virus. In discussions with someone living with HIV, the

desperate reality of this epidemic/pandemic hits home even more forcefully. According to this person, being infected strips one of one's dignity, one's ability to live life to the fullest and robs one of certain choices about one's future. Choices about a life-partner/s and freedom of movement are to an extent determined or influenced by the infection. It robs the infected person of the possibility of having his/her own biological children, because ensuring that children will be born HIV free is extremely expensive and not guaranteed to be successful. It places a huge financial burden on the infected person and his/her family, as the financial costs of the treatment, whether it is medical or a healthy living style, are exorbitant and out of reach for a large percentage of infected people (Anderson, 2002).

In his address to the nation on 9 October 1998, the then Deputy President Mr Mbeki said that as a nation we have closed our eyes for too long, for too many years we have allowed the virus, HIV, to spread and at a rate that is one of the fastest in the world (Jewkes, 2000:19). It is safe to say that in general educators might be as misinformed about HIV/AIDS as I was before I realised that this epidemic/pandemic is a greater threat and has a greater impact on South Africans than I had dared to acknowledge or accept. This is confirmed by the fact that the Western Cape Education Department has embarked on a programme to educate educators about HIV/AIDS. The different Metropoles are responsible for the co-ordination of their own programmes under the auspices of the respective HIV/AIDS co-ordinators. In his Education Vision 2020, the Superintendent-General for Education in the Western Cape, Mr Swartz, states that:

Dealing with HIV/AIDS is the one priority in the national Department of Education's Corporate Implementation Plan, Tirisano, that Minister

Kader Asmal refers to as ‘the priority that underlies all priorities’, unless we succeed, we face a future full of suffering and loss, with untold consequences for our communities and the education institutions that serve them (Western Cape Education Department, 2002:34).

I attended an HIV/AIDS Life Skills Programme in September 2002 in Somerset West, Metropole East. This is to comply with the Government’s National HIV/AIDS Policy, paragraph 2.10.3, which states that “[a]ll educators should be trained to give guidance on HIV/AIDS” (Republic of South Africa, 1999:4).

2.5.1 A personal realisation

At this course, I realised that something must be done about this lack of knowledge amongst educators, especially primary school educators, as children between the ages of six and thirteen should not be sexually active. My reasoning was that educating primary school children to follow a safe and responsible lifestyle and to equip them with knowledge on how to protect themselves from getting into situations where they could be infected should halt or slow down the spreading of this virus. This proved to be a very naïve point of view in the light of the “Baseline survey on HIV/AIDS knowledge, attitudes and related life skills” by Van der Merwe *et al.*

2.5.2 WCED initiatives

During this time, the WCED started with HIV/AIDS information sessions and in-service training for primary school educators. As my school’s academic leader,

curriculum manager and the person responsible for HIV/AIDS education, I attended the four-day HIV/AIDS in-service training course in Somerset West mentioned above. Seven of my staff members, one from each grade, also attended the course. We received a detailed handout and the course was well presented. The following experts shared vital information with the attending educators:

- Dr J. Hugo provided information on the
 - sexuality and HIV/AIDS education framework;
 - components of HIV/AIDS empowerment; and
 - participatory learning methods in sexuality and HIV/AIDS education.

- L. Abrahams spoke about
“Exploring values and feelings about sexuality and HIV/AIDS”.

- B. Anderson, a person living with AIDS, gave
a personal account of his day-to-day experiences.

- Sister Y. Banks spoke on
“The background and facts about HIV/AIDS”.

- Dr J. Kallis gave a medical perspective on
“The disease, transmission and the stages of HIV/AIDS”.

- Sister Fanie and Dr. M. van Biljon addressed the issue of
“A positive lifestyle”.

- J. West focused on
“Adapting the curriculum to provide support to a learner with
HIV/AIDS”.

- C. de Vries and M Dunn addressed the
WCED’s HIV/AIDS policy.

- T. Eiman discussed
“Social issues”.

- Dr E. Lawrence spoke on
“First aid at school and HIV/AIDS”.

- Dr M. van Biljon dealt with
“Informing your governing body and parents”.

Panel discussions focussed on

- prevention and sexually transmitted diseases;
- incorporating HIV/AIDS in the curriculum; and
- how to deal with sensitive questions and situations.

(Somerset West School Clinic, 2002)

I realised that this information would probably only reach the attending educators, because in practice information gained at courses are seldom shared with non-attending educators. The volume of information course attendants receive over a period of four days and finding the time in a busy school schedule to report back in detail are two limiting factors. Dommissie criticised what she called a winning plan that did not work: a national school-based HIV/AIDS programme implemented to train educators to present life skills and AIDS education. The plan was that the Education Department was to train two educators in every school, who in turn were supposed to train the rest of the educators to become skilled as life skills educators. The desired cascade effect that this plan was based on did not, according to Dommissie, materialise, because neither she nor her colleagues who were active educators received this training (2002:10). The WCED formed cluster groups of schools according to demographic location with the intention that educators attending WCED training sessions would in turn organise sessions for the educators in their specific cluster. According to Hendricks, cluster groups were established to help overcome the barriers that prevent the cascade effect of information to happen (2004). The clustering of schools was unfortunately not co-ordinated by the WCED. Schools were grouped into different clusters for different LAs. The school where I am at present is, for example, in different clusters for the LAs Life Orientation, Mathematics and Languages. It belongs to two additional clusters for HIV and AIDS education and for assessment.

I agree with Du Plooy and Westraad (2000:13), who argues that once in-service training has been completed, additional or follow-up workshops should be organised to address planning challenges and implementation issues. Drawing on Fullan

(1999:85 in Du Plooy and Westraad, 2000:13), they claim that most forms of in-service training are not designed to provide the necessary ongoing learning processes needed to develop new skills and behaviour. “No matter how much advance staff development occurs, it is when people actually try to implement new approaches and reforms that they have the most specific concerns and doubts” (Fullan, 1999:85 in Du Plooy and Westraad, 2000:13). I further agree with Kubheka that “[t]he necessity to rethink in-service practice is long overdue”(2000:29). The South African Government supports this position and has committed itself to improving the quality of education and learning in South Africa, and to reform and re-direct in-service training. The need to re-evaluate in-service training is therefore recognised by the South African Government (Republic of South Africa, 1995:29-30). Du Toit argues that educators should undergo an HIV/AIDS course of *at least* two months and should then receive further support before they should be allowed to instruct learners about HIV/AIDS because educators are not qualified as psychologists or counsellors. According to her, a wrongly-informed/unqualified educator might do harm when giving incorrect or partially correct information to learners (Du Toit, 2002:8). This training has to take into account that there are still 2 200 educators in the WCED’s employ with only a Grade 10 school education and a one or two year educators’ qualification. These educators are encouraged to obtain a Grade 12 qualification. Educators are expected to attend various in-service training sessions and meetings organised by the WCED. According to WCED policy, it is compulsory for all educators to attend eighty hours in-service training per year. During these training sessions, Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) amongst others are on the agenda. Huge quantities of paper work and many policy changes are given to the already over-burdened educators (De Vries, 2004:3). Consequently,

educators find the demand to attend WCED training sessions and meetings, in addition to school-based staff meetings and grade meetings, and their daily teaching, assessing, marking and extra-mural responsibilities, difficult to manage.

As a school manager who regularly attends WCED, Educator Unions and Principal Associations in-service training and meetings, I am aware of the efforts that these groups put into their respective programmes. Personally, I found the efforts of the Educator Unions and Principal Associations superior to those of the WCED. The reason for this is that these groups focus their efforts on the educators that are attending the sessions, whereas the WCED frequently expects attendants to go back to their schools and train the rest of the staff. As mentioned above, the WCED embarked on a system in which schools were grouped into clusters with the intention that a 'cascading' effect of information sharing would take place. However, time constraints prevent the successful implementation of this model.

It is obvious that in-service training plays an important role in creating and retaining quality educators. It is therefore important to reach as many educators as possible to improve their skills with as many different in-service training methods as necessary. To use technology, especially the World Wide Web (WWW), is an option that needed to be investigated. The Western Cape Minister of Education, Mr Colin Dugmore, in his speech to the Western Cape Executive on 22 June 2004 emphasised the importance of technology in education service delivery when he described the aim of Khanya, the WCED's project to introduce technology-based curriculum programmes, as a support for teaching and learning using information and communication

technologies (ICT). Khanya's aim is to supply every high school in the Western Cape with a computer laboratory by 2005 (Dugmore, 2004:9).

2.5.3 Further studies

It was at this time that I was introduced to a compulsory *HIV/AIDS and Education* module for all education students developed by the Education Faculty of the University of Stellenbosch. Education students are required to complete this compulsory Intranet-based study module in order to gain the necessary credits towards their education qualification. I decided to investigate the possibility of adapting this module for in-service educators. The research presented in my dissertation resulted from this initiative.

2.5.4 This study in context

The WCED provided all schools that have electricity with a computer and free Internet access. All these schools receive the majority of WCED correspondence via the Internet. According to Dugmore, 99,9% of schools in the Western Cape were linked to the Internet during 2003 (2004:9). At this stage (2004), only 50 schools still have to be supplied with electricity. With this in mind, the in-service module under development would give all participating educators who are computer literate the opportunity to be exposed to the in-service material.

Kubheka, agreeing with Craft (1996), found that an inherent flaw of in-service training is that the training courses offered are not linked to or in support of each other, and happened on a seemingly ad hoc basis, thus having little impact on teaching

practice (2000:29). An example is the 2004 Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in-service courses during which dates for different LA in-service training sessions coincided with each other and with assessment training and HIV/AIDS in-service training. This resulted in educators being required to attend more than one in-service session at the same time at different venues. My current school found that the following activities were all scheduled to start at the same time but at three different venues on 23 February 2004:

- an **assessment** training session;
- an **HIV/AIDS** meeting; and
- an Intermediate Phase **RNCS** training session.

In this school, the same person, an Intermediate Phase educator, serves as both the assessment co-ordinator and the HIV/AIDS convener. This is not an isolated example. A further concern is that training and meeting times are scheduled and cancelled at very short notice. The HIV/AIDS meeting scheduled for 23 February 2004 was, for instance, cancelled at 11:40 on the 23rd. It creates the impression that the WCED does not co-ordinate its in-service programme efficiently.

Educators who attend courses seldom – if ever – give meaningful reports about courses attended. One participant's journal entry states that “[t]eachers, remember, have NO time!!!” (LS). It is difficult to find additional time to report on a course in an already overcrowded timetable, according to Knight (1993:82). For Murphy, another reason for the problem is the inability of educators to cope with the different demands

on their time (1985:243). The possibility to interact firsthand with the course material will give *all* educators the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the training.

During his research, Kortekamp found that in order for in-service programmes to be successful, programmes must be systemic and ongoing, integrated with the educational process, based on participative governance that creates shared responsibility and be perceived as significant to the professional development of the educator (1984:12). By making a course available to educators in a way that allows them to work during time slots that suit their individual programmes and to control their own pace affords them the opportunity to construct knowledge meaningfully. Drawing on Rosewell (1983), Murphy believes that “[e]verybody knows what teachers need, but only teachers themselves know what teachers want” (1985:9). Adding to this argument, Kubheka suggests that planning for adequate resources, such as space, equipment, finances and time, is of the utmost importance (2000:111-112). Dommissie sums it up as follows:

...they [educators] were not invited to enter the plan at the initial stages and offer their own insights but rather the plan was imposed on them. If they were included one big obstacle would have become apparent – that educators, particularly the ones that make things happen in schools, are overburdened already (2002:11).

Following discussions with Professor Schreuder and with permission from the Western Cape Education Department, and seeing that we had the necessary infrastructure, it was decided that I would undertake a pilot study at my school,

Beaumont Primary School, with volunteer educators from our staff. I later decided to include educators from three other schools. We decided to use the Internet-based *HIV/AIDS and Education* module of the University of Stellenbosch Education Faculty, available at <http://learn.sun.ac.za/SCRIPT/Course502>. The programme was administered by the University of Stellenbosch to enable the educators to gain access to the module free of charge.

2.6 THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

The Department of Education alone cannot sustain quality education about HIV/AIDS. Partnerships between government and Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) must be formed. HIV/AIDS is not only a 'schools' issue because there are too many at-risk children and young people who are not in school. According to Coombe, the government has a role to play in

- strengthening local responses;
- creating policy and regulations;
- delivering social services to community requirements; and
- ensuring that adequate resources are channelled to those who can use them (Coombe, 2001:5).

However, to manage this pandemic government must work in support of communities. Coombe refers to the successful Zambian home-based care model where local communities took the responsibility to fight HIV/AIDS (Coombe, 2001:4-5).

I agree with the former Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, that the only way to curb the spread and growth of the pandemic is through education. Minister Asmal is of the opinion that education is the only socially accepted 'vaccination' for HIV/AIDS (Jongbloed, 2002:37; Rademeyer, 2002a:7). Whilst informing and educating teenagers and adults about HIV/AIDS is of the utmost importance, I believe that educating younger children and pre-adolescents will be the only way to make a significant contribution in the fight against this pandemic. A person who is HIV positive has found in his dealings with youth that some of South Africa's youth are sexually active at as young as six-years old. According to this person, the largest growth rate of HIV/AIDS infection is in the age group of 12- to 19-year olds (Anderson, 2002). It is therefore vital to educate our educators about HIV/AIDS, as educators in the Foundation and Intermediate Phases of primary schools will have to take on a leading role in educating and equipping the youth of South Africa with the necessary survival skills and attitudes to help them identify risks and avoid infection.

The need for the professional development of practising educators to create educational space for learners to become acquainted with the nature and threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is vital. Government policy in this regard is to provide professional development sessions for educators of the Learning Area (LA): Life Orientation (LO) in the Intermediate school phase. The Western Cape Education Department (WCED) has planned to have all LO educators in the Intermediate school phase trained by September 2002. All primary schools under the auspices of the WCED are by law compelled to start HIV/AIDS education from January 2003.

2.7 WESTERN CAPE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The WCED has committed itself to deal with HIV/AIDS. According to the WCED most children enter the education system HIV-negative. The WCED is therefore committed to educate learners about the dangers of this virus. The WCED's approach stems from the constitutional values of our democracy. The approach is twofold: firstly, to educate learners about HIV/AIDS and secondly, to ensure that there will be no discrimination against any learner or educator who is affected by HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS can affect learners and educators in several different ways. They can either be infected by HIV/AIDS or they can be affected by HIV/AIDS. People are affected when they find themselves in a situation where they either live with or look after family or friends who are infected by HIV/AIDS.

2.7.1 Approach by the WCED

To empower people with knowledge, the WCED has embarked on an HIV/AIDS Life Skills Programme. With this programme, the WCED endeavoured to put a sexuality education programme in place for all learners in the Western Cape Province.

The WCED supports the government's implementation plan for Tirisano. The WCED accepted the Tirisano mandate that HIV/AIDS education forms a *mandatory* part of the curriculum and *must* be integrated into the curriculum at all levels. The WCED is adamant that it should not be viewed as an add-on to other learning areas, or an optional learning area. The WCED therefore advises that sexuality education and HIV/AIDS education must be *mainstreamed*, and therefore timetabled for approximately half an hour per week (on average for a year). Although sexuality

education is dealt with in LO, a cross-curricular approach can also be utilised (Fenton, 2002:1-9). As this study involved the primary school curriculum, learners and educators, my focus was on what happened in or was planned for these phases in education.

2.7.2 WCED: HIV/AIDS in-service training

During 2002, the WCED, in line with Tirisano, started the Life Skills and HIV/AIDS in-service training programme for educators. The programme is based on the rationale that:

Because HIV/AIDS is mainly spread through sexual contact, HIV/AIDS education should always be presented in the context of sexuality education, (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:iv).

As discussed in paragraph 2.5.2, seven of my colleagues and I attended an in-service Life Skills training programme. At this training course, I realised that the WCED, although making huge strides and putting in expertise, money and time, was only reaching a very limited educator audience. In 2.9.1, I discussed the reality of educators attending courses and the difficulties in reporting on and sharing newly gained knowledge with their colleagues.

2.7.3 Educator training

During 2002, WCED in-service primary school educators were trained in HIV/AIDS education and sexuality education to equip them with the appropriate knowledge and

skills. One educator per grade from each primary school was invited to attend these four-day workshops. These workshops were conducted and managed by the AIDS-coordinators of each of the 19 education support centres.

Each primary school course covered the following minimum content:

- HIV/AIDS education policy, bio-medical facts and statistics;
- Rights and responsibilities: exploration of personal values, culture, religion and vulnerability;
- Defining HIV/AIDS and sexuality education: age-appropriate knowledge, values and skills, gender issues, violence, sexual abuse, bereavement, care and support;
- Context within the curriculum and the Life Orientation Learning Area;
- Strategising around time-tabling and implementation, working out of unit lessons;
- Dealing with parents and the community;
- Establishment of a school HIV/AIDS co-ordinator and development of a Health Advisory Committee.

(Fenton, 2002:4)

It is further planned that during the latter part of 2003 primary school educators will undergo basic counselling training so that they can support learners affected by HIV/AIDS.

2.7.4 Learner support material (LSM)

The WCED invited primary schools to obtain the sexuality-related learner support material (LSM) from the department for use during 2003. These LSM included Educator's Resource Manuals, Educator's Guides for grades one to seven, Learner Activity Books and Educational Posters. Additional materials, including parent guides, readers, reference materials, care and support manuals and videos are being developed.

2.8 WHY AUGMENT THE WCED INITIATIVE?

Since the WCED is committed to the health and safety of learners and staff, it is Dugmore's concern that the response to HIV and AIDS has not been guided by a comprehensive approach in the Western Province. His view is that great work has been done in terms of treatment, but that strategies for prevention have been dangerously neglected. Dugmore feels strongly that the AIDS Council has failed to steer a community-driven initiative throughout the province. He has committed education to ensure that prevention is given renewed impetus (Dugmore, 2004:11). If education is to play a part in curbing this epidemic/pandemic in South Africa, South African educators have to receive HIV/AIDS training. The South African Government, who in turn should decentralise it to the nine education departments of the nine provinces, should initiate this training. According to Pretorius,

Research shows that *higher education levels* correlate with *lower infection rates* among the youth, and schools are in an ideal position to reach children in the 'window of hope' age group of five to 14 years, where infection rates are the lowest (2002:6; emphasis in original).

The reality according to the South African Ministry of Education in the Sixth Report on Educational Progress in the Provinces is, however, that by 2002 only 12,1% of *all* South African educators had been trained in Life Orientation programmes with an HIV/AIDS training component (Rademeyer, 2002b:8). Outcomes Based Education (OBE) is an integrated education approach with eight Learning Areas (LAs). Life Orientation (LO) is the LA that is fundamental for equipping learners to live meaningful lives in a society that demands rapid transformation. Because it is an integral part of education based on a holistic developmental plan in which the individual learner's growth is paramount, it includes sexuality education.

Another disturbing outcome of this research is that only 80% of schools had been reached with the HIV/AIDS training programme in the two-year period since the Tirisano project was implemented. In the Western Cape, only 30% of the approved budget for HIV/AIDS educator training had been spent during the first two years of the Tirisano programme; it is clear that at this rate the target of training *all* educators in the Western Cape will not be easily achieved (Rademeyer, 2002b:8). According to Dugmore, the Premier of the Western Cape's directive to the Education Department is to develop a proactive, systemic and sustainable medium term plan to expand our HIV and AIDS programmes to schools (2004:12).

It is clear that the Western Cape's Minister is concerned about the rollout of HIV/AIDS training programmes for educators. In his Education Budget speech to the Western Cape Cabinet on 22 June 2004, he gives priority to spending the HIV/AIDS budget on sustainable programmes stating, that "[w]e (the WCED) will develop a

proactive, systemic and sustainable medium term plan to expand our HIV and Aids programme to schools” (Dugmore, 2004:12).

In my opinion, there are two reasons why professional development programmes like those that the WCED propose need to be augmented.

Firstly, the implication of the scope of the pandemic in South African society justifies maximum effort to use all education resources optimally to ensure an enlightened community. One or two educators per school entrusted with the responsibility to educate the community are insufficient. Limited financial and human resources, as well as a multitude of other professional development needs, constrain education authorities in their efforts to ensure a corps of proficient educators to handle this terrible predicament facing our communities and schools. This challenge comes at a time when the biggest crises that the education system is confronted with in post-apartheid South Africa is, according to Schreuder, to train thousands of under-qualified and unqualified educators to implement curriculum transformation (2002:4).

Secondly, using one specific LA (Life Orientation – LO) to achieve the goals of HIV/AIDS education (educating the youth about HIV/AIDS) may not be adequate. As HIV/AIDS affects all aspects of life, I think that HIV/AIDS education must be incorporated into the other LAs. The possibility exists that LO may become “nobody’s LA taught by anybody”, as happened with “Youth Preparedness” in the previous dispensation. The international tendency is to integrate aspects of HIV/AIDS education into all LAs. In South Africa this route may also be the more productive and efficient one.

2.8.1 Problems with professional development programmes

One of the problems that Van Tiddens identified in his research pertaining to educational managerial problems was the lack of time principals and educators had to fulfill their responsibilities (1990:142). During my education career of twenty-four years, I have found that educators that go on PD courses seldom, if ever, report in full to the rest of the staff members. While doing a case study, Hopkins and Harris determined that time was an issue; time for staff to observe each other and to find time for cadre groups to meet in an already busy school schedule was one of the main problem areas (2001:93). It is not a question of apathy, but rather a lack of opportunity and time, as Hopkins and Harris found. My experiences also correspond with Van Staden's (1992) research. On completion of his research into PD training for educators and identifying the need for structured discussion sessions, Van Staden recommends that a system should be designed and implemented to facilitate reporting back once educators have attended in-service training sessions (1992:185). According to Hopkins and Harris, a solution for the time problem might be to adjust the school timetable to allow teachers time for collective enquiry (2001:98).

It is clear that professional development in its current form poses problems and solutions must be found. According to van Staden, the needs of educators must be recognised and addressed and the training priorities of educators must be respected (1992:167-168). As mentioned before, the South African Government recognises the need to re-evaluate and re-structure in-service training programmes (paragraph 2.5.2).

In paragraph 2.9, I discussed the fact that only 30% of the allocated budget for HIV/AIDS educator training had been spent. According to Dugmore, it will take time

to ensure quality education for all through the core programmes. In his education budget of nearly R5,5 billion, he has identified a range of initiatives that can be implemented to represent the commitment to long-term improvements (Dugmore, 2004:12).

2.8.2 School-based realities

Schools normally have regular staff meetings once a week. These meetings last on average two hours and have various items on the agenda to ensure that:

- learner information is shared;
- financial/budget information is discussed;
- various school policies are stressed;
- examination, test and assessment information is disseminated;
- educator union activities and information gets shared; and
- general inputs from the staff are welcomed.

At most schools, educators are involved in various extra-curricular activities in a school's programme, including:

- coaching sport;
- serving on school-based educational committees for curriculum development, learner academic support groups and emotional support groups;
- serving on curriculum network groups;
- serving on sport and/or cultural committees; and

participating in cultural activities.

It is clear that an educator's time, especially if a group of educators must be free to meet at the same time after school hours, is very limited and that Dommissie's description of "overburdened" educators (referred to in paragraph 2.5.4) is indeed accurate (2002:11). Jansen emphasise this educator overload (see paragraph 1.3) Even if the time to get educators together could be arranged, fitting a four-day in-service course into one afternoon and sharing the relevant information sensibly with all the educators is virtually impossible. In his Education Vision 2020 speech, Mr. Ron Swartz, Superintendent-General of the WCED, reiterated the WCED's commitment to dealing with HIV/AIDS. One approach would be to use the WCED's position as primary transmitter of knowledge, skills and values to the youth to raise HIV awareness. The aim would be to disseminate information about HIV and its transmission to help change the attitudes of young people and to inhibit the spread of the pandemic. Swartz emphasised that this would primarily be done within the curriculum (Western Cape Education Department, 2002:34-35). Dommissie criticised the Government's rollout of the HIV/AIDS training programmes where two master trainers were trained at provincial and district level with the brief to train two educators per school, who will in turn be responsible for the training of the other educators at their schools. This was seen as *a winning plan*, but she found that many educators were unaware of the **BIG PLAN** (as she describes it) that they were supposed to be part of (Dommissie, 2002:10).

The WCED embarked on an HIV/AIDS training programme in 2002. According to the WCED, approximately 85% of primary schools have received this training towards the end of 2002 (Fenton, 2002:3). In conversations with the course leaders at the HIV/AIDS in-service training course I attended, I shared and discussed my

concerns with them. I understand and accept their explanations about the problems they encounter with time and financial constraints. I also have an appreciation for their point of view that the educators that completed the training should go back to their schools and lead the HIV/AIDS programme, accepting responsibility for the life skills educator in each grade. However, Dommissie, as mentioned above, points out that this BIG PLAN never materialised (2002:10). Another problem is highlighted by Du Toit who found during HIV/AIDS counselling workshops that 50% of educators indicated that they felt uncomfortable about addressing sexual issues with learners because some of these educators indicated that they experienced problems with their own sexuality (2002:8). These trained educators must however still take the lead and responsibility for doing the preparation for Life Orientation (LO) in their specific grade, which should happen during the weekly grade meetings.

2.9 THE NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY ACT, 1996 (NO. 27 OF 1996)

Even though the national policy on HIV/AIDS, for learners and educators in public schools, and students and educators in further education and training institutions was drafted in 1996, it was only widely published in 1999. A brief summary follows:

Preamble

Deals with what HIV/AIDS is, what the symptoms are and how an individual can be infected. It states further that **no cure** exists and once infected the end result is death.

1. Definitions

Various words and phrases are defined. For example, “AIDS” means the acquired immune deficiency syndrome, that is the final stage of HIV infection; “HIV” means the human immunodeficiency virus.

2. Premises

How transmission takes place, disclosure of an individual’s status and the role of education are addressed.

3. Non-discrimination and equality with regards to learners, students, and educators with HIV/AIDS

All learners, students and educators must be treated equally. To prevent discrimination all role players should be educated about fundamental human rights as contained in the Constitution of South Africa.

4. HIV/AIDS testing and the admission of learners to a school and students to an institution, or the appointment of educators

Testing as a prerequisite for allowing a learner, student or educator to attend or to remain a member of a school community or institution is prohibited.

5. Attendance at schools and institutions by learners or students with HIV/AIDS

The rights of the individual to attend school and practical ways of getting an education are stipulated.

6. Disclosure of HIV/AIDS-related information and confidentiality

Law governs disclosure of an individual's HIV/AIDS status and it is the individual's prerogative to decide what, to whom and when information may or should be disclosed.

7. A safe school and institution environment

In all situations where *potential* exposure to HIV is a possibility, the application of universal precautions should be followed to eliminate or reduce the transmission risk. It must be assumed that all blood and all body fluids and excretions that might contain blood are potentially infected. Educators, learners and students should be trained to manage their own bleeding injuries and to assist and protect others.

8. Prevention of HIV transmission during play and sport

Transmission during play and sport is generally insignificant. Precautions like trained staff members, coaches and referees and the availability of first aid kits and adherence to universal precautions are advised.

9. Education on HIV/AIDS

A continuing age-appropriate life-skills and HIV/AIDS education programme must form part of the curriculum and *must* be implemented at *all* schools and institutions for learners and students. Parents must be informed and invited to participate in the establishing of the programme.

This programme must be based on the following principles:

- Development of preventative life skills;
- Inclusion of basic first-aid principles;
- Empowerment of learners with knowledge regarding, abuse, drugs and violence;
- Encouragement of the use of health care, counselling and support services;
- Establishing behavioural patterns towards infected people;
- Information must be accurate and scientifically correct.

10. Duties and responsibilities of learners, students, educators and parents

All role players must respect the rights of others. A code of conduct must include provisions regarding behaviour of individuals. It is recommended that an infected individual consult medical opinion regarding being a risk to others.

Parents are ultimately responsible for the behaviour of their children.

Educators have a duty to ensure that the rights and dignity of all learners, students and educators are respected and protected.

11. Refusal to study with or teach a learner or student with HIV/AIDS, or work with or be taught by an educator with HIV/AIDS

An individual who refuses to associate with an HIV/AIDS positive person should be educated and/or counselled. Persisting in refusing to associate could lead to disciplinary steps.

12. School and institutional implementation plans

The governing body of a school *may* develop its own HIV/AIDS policy. Schools should include major role players in the community to develop and adopt their own HIV/AIDS policy using a provincial educational policy for HIV/AIDS based on the national policy.

13. Health advisory committee

If possible, it is recommended that schools form their own Health Advisory Committees whose main functions include developing and maintaining health related policies and keeping the governing body informed about health issues.

14. Implementation of this national policy on HIV/AIDS

The Director General of Education and the Heads of Provincial Departments of Education are responsible for implementation of this policy. Every Education Department must designate an HIV/AIDS Programme Manager.

Heads of schools and institutions are responsible for the practical implementation of this policy.

15. Regular review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and adapted to changed circumstances.

16. Application

The policy applies to public and independent schools as well as institutions for further education and training and all educators.

17. Interpretation

In all instances, this policy should be interpreted to ensure respect for the rights of learners, students and educators with HIV/AIDS as well as other learners, students and members of the school and institution communities (Adopted from the Department of Education, 1999:1-17).

2.10 CONCLUSION

In education, when new policies or methods or strategies are introduced, the tendency often exists for the pendulum to swing from the one extreme to the other, and it takes a while to settle at an acceptable balance. According to Jansen, who is very outspoken on this issue, it is possible to enhance the quality of education and learning achievement but it will take hard, non-spectacular and patient work (2004:8).

In the case of HIV/AIDS education, the pendulum has only started to move. The Department of Education is responsible for empowering people, and in the case of education, the empowerment of educators with the knowledge to educate learners with confidence about the affect that HIV/AIDS has and will have on society. Coetzee reports that a third of South African companies taking part in a survey conceded that productivity has decreased because of HIV related absenteeism of the work force (2003:20).

I am of the opinion that the Department of Education must involve all stakeholders in this endeavour. According to Krathwohl (1993:526), who quotes House (1976; 1980) and Cronbach (1982), people feel empowered if they are involved in developing programmes that affect them. Drawing on Rippey (1973), he came to the conclusion that some people feel that it is a transactional endeavour in which professionals and stakeholders together sought the answers (Krathwohl, 1993:526).

Both the President and the Minister of Education acknowledge the gravity of this pandemic, hence the policies that the government and specifically the Department of Education have in place to manage the education of all members of society.

With the above in mind, I find it regrettable that the Western Cape Education Department does not have the following in place:

1. a specific WCED HIV/AIDS policy and
2. a specific proposal for an HIV/AIDS policy for schools.

Although the National Education Policy Act states that “[a] continuing age-appropriate life-skills and HIV/AIDS education programme *must* form part of the curriculum and *must* be implemented at *all* schools and institutions for learners and students” (emphasis added), the education of educators is largely neglected and the responsibility for it is left to one educator per grade per school who has attended a four-day in-service training course.

All educators must be afforded the opportunity to be educated or be equipped to educate themselves to an acceptable level of knowledge about HIV/AIDS so that the educator can incorporate HIV/AIDS education with confidence in lesson plans across all the Learning Areas.

I have investigated the effectiveness of integrating HIV/AIDS educator training and the appropriate curriculum approaches used. Various problem areas have been pointed out, with the availability of time being the most prominent problem. This is why the WCED’s efforts must be augmented. As this epidemic/pandemic threatens a large section, if not the whole of the population of South Africa, as many as possible role players must be included in educating our people. According to projections, all South

African children will by 2015 either be infected or affected by HIV/AIDS (Wood, 2002:7). For this reason, innovative alternatives for content and delivery of professional development programmes on HIV/AIDS should be considered. The *HIV/AIDS and Education* Intranet-based module of the University of Stellenbosch can play a part in addressing this need. The South African Ministry of Education took a decision to implement Outcomes Based Education (OBE) as an educational option based on broad generic cross-curricular outcomes. These outcomes will ensure that learners gain the skills, knowledge and values that will allow them to contribute to their own success (Schlebusch, 2000:42a-42b). The WCED is committed to ensure that Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education are *integrated across the curriculum* at all levels and that educators are appropriately trained and given adequate resources (Department of Education, n.d.b:7-8). With their programme, the WCED endeavours to put a sexuality education programme in place that must not be viewed as an add-on to other learning areas, or viewed as an optional learning area. It must be dealt with in Life Orientation and a cross-curricular approach should be used (Fenton, 2002:1-9). This will be addressed in more detail in chapter four.

CHAPTER 3

HIV/AIDS, EDUCATION AND IN-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN E-LEARNING MODULE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

When developing a PD programme, careful consideration must be given to the pedagogy that should serve as scaffold and to give rigor to the programme. In designing an e-learning module for adults, a critical pedagogy provides the scaffolding for other pedagogical considerations such as the context within which the module plays a role in the professional development of educators, theoretical orientations towards learning/teaching, the most appropriate content, the involvement of participants and aspects of assessment and evaluation (Schreuder, 2004b:7).

The business of education is learning (Weigel, 2000:8). “If you want learners to embrace training, offer choices and let them decide how they learn” (Lewis & Orton, 2000:1). In an ideal training world where learners understand their relative strengths and weaknesses, a wide range of options could be offered (Lewis & Orton, 2000:1). Unfortunately, learners do not always know their potential and, keeping in mind that learners have different learning styles, it is important to design and offer a variety of learning opportunities. Techniques to distribute and share information with individuals can and should incorporate different approaches, including printed material, visual material, audio-visual material and audio material. This is essential for learning according to Riordan-Karlsson, who draws on Piaget (1970), according to

whom learning takes place through personal interactions with events and objects. For this process to be successful, the learning experience needs to provide opportunities and activities that challenge the learners' prior knowledge and encourage the reorganisation of personal theories and beliefs (2000:2).

Education cannot afford to be stagnant, but according to Keller, educators themselves in general are guilty of resisting in-service training and thus creating an environment for stagnation (Keller, 2004). With Keller's statement in mind, it is also important to note what in-service educators have to say. Le Grange, in his research found that educators were openly critical of the WCED and its role in providing in-service support/training (2001:105). One of the principals' reaction was that "[t]he education department provides us with no support. We welcome any assistance no matter how radical it may be"(Le Grange, 2001:100).

In South Africa, we are faced with an HIV/AIDS pandemic and it is therefore imperative that we should look at various information/education/learning 'delivery' methods. As we have seen earlier, educators are in the ideal position to make meaningful contributions to combating the rampant spread of the pandemic, but they have to be properly trained. Incorporating individual needs, learning styles and addressing barriers, all possible delivery possibilities must be explored. It is important to bear in mind that different modalities do not have to compete with one another; they should rather complement each other. On-line learning offers one mode of information/education/ learning 'delivery'.

Through the Khanya Technology in Education Project, all schools that have electricity were granted a computer and free Internet access by the WCED. All these schools receive most of the WCED correspondence via the Internet. According to Dugmore, 99,9% of schools in the Western Cape were linked to the Internet during 2003 (2004:9). At this stage (2004), only 50 schools still require electricity. With this in mind, the in-service module under development would give all participating educators who are computer literate the opportunity to be exposed to the in-service material.

The possibilities that the World Wide Web and on-line teaching/learning offer add a range of opportunities in the distribution and sharing of information. It is a particularly attractive learning option as a learner, in this case an educator, can work independently and at a self-determined pace. Another benefit is that it relieves the educator, lecturer, from constantly having to interact with the learner, educator, as completed work can be assessed at any convenient time.

3.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT: THE INTERNET AS AN OPTION

LeBaron, Collier and Friel maintain that staff development, in-service training, PD, can be approached in a number of ways. It could be presented as a series of programmes enabling personnel to develop skills that will permit schools to attain their objectives. It could also offer opportunities for personal or professional growth. It should however be directed towards improved learner achievement and learning, as well as overall improvement of schools. For integrated Internet modules to be accepted by educators in professional situations, they must be convinced that using the Internet will offer them improved and expanded learning opportunities (LeBaron, Collier & Friel, 1997:1-2). An Internet-based module should therefore provide

solutions to various educator in-service training problems as access to the World Wide Web provides challenging learning opportunities (LeBaron *et al.*, 1997:2).

Some of the advantages of using an Internet-based module are as follows:

- educators can work in their own time;
- the actual time spent on training depends on the individual;
- entry levels into the programme are determined by the individual's skill level;
- the opportunity to work individually or in a group; and
- internal rather than external monitoring.

My approach to this study was based on the premise that educators have very busy schedules and that the Internet-based module on *HIV/AIDS and Education* afford educators the opportunity to work at home at times that suit their programmes. It will further allow the individual educator to decide how much time he or she wants to spend on the module. Friel suggests that in-service staff development time may initially be planned throughout several years with a learning curve that will allow adequate time to integrate 'new' knowledge into curricula. A variety of times are, according to her, available, including staff development days, after school, educator administration periods and time "found" through creative scheduling of classes (Friel in LeBaron, Collier & Friel, 1997:6). Hopkins and Harris support this view and suggest that the school timetable must be "adjusted" to allow time for educators to engage in discussions (2001:98).

3.3 HIV/AIDS AND EDUCATION: A WEB-BASED MODULE

On 21 May 2001, the Dean of the Faculty of Education of the University of Stellenbosch (US) appealed to the Faculty members to develop a module on HIV/AIDS for education students. This was in reaction to various distress-calls about the HIV/AIDS crisis in South Africa. It makes sense that the education students who will be educating South Africa's youth should have a basic knowledge of HIV/AIDS. It is especially important to primary school educators as they might find themselves in a position where they have to teach a variety of Learning Areas (LA), most significantly the LA Life Orientation. In Chapter two, I made a case for the teaching of Life Skills, which includes a strong focus on health and HIV/AIDS, not being confined to one LA but that it should be taught across the curriculum.

This appeal coincided with the University's decision to develop an electronic campus. Professor D.R. Schreuder of the Faculty of Education of the University of Stellenbosch saw an opportunity to address both these challenges. The infrastructure of the US was such that these students had access to the Internet. Using the Internet provided students with the opportunity to work on their own in their own time without it impacting on lecturer time or available contact teaching time. A module on *Education and HIV/AIDS* was developed and is available on <http://learn.sun.ac.za/SCRIPT/Course502/>. It is compulsory for all final-year education students to complete this accredited module (Schreuder, 2002:3-4).

Schreuder decided that a critical pedagogy would form the conceptual scaffolding for the module and in combination with e-learning it provided many opportunities for a

constructivist approach to learning/teaching (Schreuder, 2004b:7-8). In addition, he considered adult learning and the principles of Outcomes Based Education.

3.3.1 Structure of the module

During the development of the module, various difficulties had to be overcome. Most problematic was the fact that the PGCE and BEd programmes were full and no additional lecturer-student contact time was available. An on-line option making it possible for students to complete the module with minimum contact time appeared to be a solution. In developing this option, the following had to be considered:

- Acknowledging a number of sensitive and contentious issues, provision for interaction between lecturer and student had to be guaranteed;
- A selection of assessment approaches had to be considered;
- In selecting content that would interest students, South Africa's political and historical background had to be taken into account;
- The theoretical principles of social-constructivist approaches to teaching and learning had to be adhered to;
- Developing an e-learning module, an outcomes-based framework had to be kept in mind;

- Ensuring that students experience a positive learning encounter that makes a valuable contribution to their professional development; and
- The module had to be relevant and suitable to the needs of educators ranging from Grade 1 to Grade 12.

The module was structured as a guided research experience for student-educators dealing with:

- The impact of HIV/AIDS on education in South Africa;
- The nature of the disease, its effects on the human body and how it is transmitted;
- Government policy, including some controversial positions, statements and policy issues;
- HIV/AIDS and education policy, including guidelines for dealing with HIV/AIDS in schools; and
- HIV/AIDS and the school curriculum, ideas for learning programme development (Schreuder, 2003:1-2).

From the above it is important to note that the 'golden rules' of OBE curriculum/programme design were consistently followed. Discrete outcomes that

were not significant or important enabling outcomes were deleted or replaced by enabling outcomes that supported the exit/culminating outcomes (Spady, 1994:19). Different paths, via Internet links, were given as options for participants to enable them to choose the selection of available information they wanted to explore. Careful consideration was given not to filter or censor the Internet material for this would have denied students the opportunity to experience the full extent of the available information and minimising their learning experience (Schreuder, 2002:5). One of the major motivations for this research was to determine how accessible and/or comprehensible the module was for in-service educators.

3.4 E-LEARNING

E-learning is education that makes use of technology to deliver learning and training programmes. Delivery of content is via electronic media, including CD-ROMs, Internet, Intranet, video conferencing, e-mail, websites, wireless and mobile learning. It took some time for the terminology to develop; circa 1995 it was called *Internet-based Training*, then *Web-based Training* to clarify that delivery could be on the Internet or the Intranet, then *Online Learning* and finally e-learning, adopted during the Dot Com boom (Kruse, 2002:1).

E-learning must therefore not be confused with distance learning. Distance learning takes place when a learner/student receives information and instructions mainly through written correspondence and contact with the educator/lecturer is mainly through written correspondence as personal interaction is normally limited. As information and communication technology (ICT) improved and computer-based learning evolved from distance learning, static programmes where instructors were

not actively involved were introduced. Both these methods needed to be refined and as technology evolved Web-based learning became possible (Urdan & Weggen in Drucker, 1999:4-6). E-learning adds value to the learning process, relating especially to the possible augmentation of quality and cost reduction. It is however important to note that e-learning is a means and not an end in itself and technology should not become the leading factor (Jansen, Van den Hooven, Jägers & Steenbakkens, 2002:3).

I do not agree with Sheidlinger's (1995) argument that the role of Internet Education is *not* to help, widen or enrich but to replace the school and educator. The analogy he uses of the tractor, which came not to improve but to replace the horse, is flawed because horses are still used as beasts of burden (Sheidlinger in Salomon, 2003:12).

A distinction between information and knowledge must be made at this stage. Information is discrete, can be transmitted, can be without context, its acquisition requires clarity and certainty, and the mastery thereof is shown in its reproduction. Knowledge is arranged in meaningful networks, constructed by the individual, must be in context, its acquisition requires conflict, doubt and uncertainty, and the mastery thereof is shown in its novel applications (Perkins in Salomon, 2003:7).

3.4.1 E-learning as a learning approach

E-learning or on-line learning is learning that is supported by the use of the Internet for interaction and distribution of materials. It is further a reciprocal process of meaning- making within a community of Internet users who are committed to increase their knowledge and understanding of a particular subject area (Rhodes, 2000:4-5). It is a highly interactive process that allows the learner to work at his/her own pace,

permitting the learner to decide whether to proceed consecutively through the material or progress intermittently, matching his/her own learning style (Drucker, 1999:2).

Rosenberg argues that e-learning is based on the following three fundamental criteria: it is networked, which makes it capable of instant updating, storing and retrieving, distributing and sharing; it is delivered to the end user via standard Internet technology; and it focuses on the broadest view of learning as it can happen outside the formal setting of classrooms (Rosenberg, 2001 in Van Valkenburg, 2004:1).

3.4.2 A definition of e-learning

The University of Stellenbosch document *Strategy for Learning and Teaching (2002 – 2004)* specifies e-learning as one of the key areas of action towards realising certain strategic priorities. The *HIV/AIDS and Education* module of the Faculty of Education addresses this as it is an “innovative facilitation of teaching/learning through among others the application of appropriate modes of delivery and technology” (Schreuder, 2004b:3). As this module is based on information and communication technology (ICT), it is necessary to differentiate between e-learning and online/computer-based training. The Telematica Institute’s e-learning group makes the following distinction:

E-learning is the use of Internet technology for creation, management, making available, security, selection and use of educational content to store information about those who learn and to monitor those who learn, and to make communication and co-operation possible.

The purpose is to support, expand, and increase the adaptability of the transfer and advancement of knowledge and skills (Telematica Institute, E-learning group, 2001 in Jansen *et al.*, 2002:2).

Cognisance should be taken of how Schreuder, who developed the *HIV/AIDS and Education* WebCT module while considering pedagogical principles, incorporated technology.

The prospects of developing good-practice e-learning modules are based on critical theory, creating space for constructivist approaches to learning, employing reliable assessment strategies and creating space for rich communication (Schreuder, 2004b:5-6).

During a WCED professional development course for the use of the Internet for Learning, Teaching and Collaboration facilitated by Tony Carr, it was found that online training was a partial success with some of the participants experiencing paradigm shifts regarding the role of the WEB in training (Rhodes, 2000:1). Designers should keep this in mind when developing online modules for adults. In addition, the concepts of adult learning should be built into the programme structure.

3.4.3 Advantages of e-learning

Various factors have an impact on e-learning, making it a viable option for distance education. According to Weller, some of these factors are access to a large global community, the removal of geographical constraints, relatively low cost, availability of information and ease of access (M.J., 2004:1). According to Wonacott, many

educators view Web-based training as the constructivist ideal, enabling learners to construct meaning through self-directed inquiry, guided activity and group collaboration on the information highway (2000:1).

With e-learning it is not necessary to place a learner in a classroom for a specific period with the intention to teach him/her new skills. It is now possible to keep the learner in the work environment and provide him/her with a series of learning objects to fill in knowledge gaps. Internet-based education and learning transcend time and space barriers. Drucker describes some of the benefits of e-learning as follows:

- Flexible and accessible. The learning programme is available and accessible over the Internet at any time and from any computer with Internet access. The learner decides whether to proceed or spend more time on an aspect of the work.
- Effective. It is an interactive process where learners can work at their own pace dictated by their prior knowledge. The learner decides when to follow a linear and/or when to follow a non-linear path.
- Convenient. The learning programme fits the learners' lifestyle as the learner can adjust the learning experience to his/her needs.
- Current and cost-effective. The material for programmes can be updated regularly ensuring that information is current. Productivity

- Compressed and retained. The content is compressed, enabling learners to retain knowledge through immediate application (Drucker, 1999:3-4).

The greatest advantage of e-learning lies in its ability to augment existing learning models and educational structures. Drucker states that there is more to on-line teaching/learning than just time-efficiency and cost-efficiency. He argues that the interactivity of the Internet creates the equivalent of a one-to-one educator-learner ratio and because of this an improvement in education productivity is possible (Drucker, 1999:4-5).

The Western Cape Education Department Curriculum Services realised that the standard model of face-to-face training might have shortcomings because it might be biased towards transmission and only allow limited resources for effective follow-up and continued interaction amongst educators. It was decided to augment face-to-face in-service training by making use of the Internet and in 2000 a pilot study, *Cognition in Curriculum 2005*, was launched (Rhodes, 2000:1). (See paragraph 3.4.2)

3.4.4 Disadvantages of e-learning

In the previous section the advantages of e-learning, especially in PD situations, have been discussed. There are however also some restrictions that need to be considered in a South African context:

- The dependence on technical infrastructure. The Internet connection must be working and the modem should be 'quick' enough. The hardware, including the hard drive, Random Access Memory (RAM), Read Only Memory (ROM) and motherboard/processor, must have adequate capacity.
- The learner using the hardware might not have the skills or knowledge to maintain the equipment and is thus dependant on technicians to maintain the equipment.
- The lack of computer skills of the learner. The older learner might not be computer literate and this could result in frustration and slow progress.
- Lack of personal interaction. Older learners, like in-service educators, need interaction and find it difficult not to be able to discuss proceedings.
- The learner is responsible for his/her own learning. Surveys done by Greenagel, Rossett and the American Society for Training and Development show that the drop-out rate is higher in e-learning than in classroom teaching as learners do not have the discipline to work on their own. Learners need an educator to stand 'behind' them (Van Valkenburg, 2004:4-5).

The key to successful e-learning lies in differentiation as some courses or modules are ideally suited for e-learning. Modules like *HIV/AIDS and Education* based at the US lends itself to this mode of learning as new information can be posted on a regular basis and a wide variety of relevant websites can be hyperlinked. The student will benefit from the advantage of current information. Courses where discussions and interaction are vital, for example drama and music tuition, face-to-face tuition in a brick-and-mortar environment will be better served.

3.5 CRITIQUE ON E-LEARNING

According to Schreuder, many critics focus on the problems related to managerial aspects associated with the proliferation of e-learning. Schreuder points out that some critics view the forces of globalisation as a threat to the boundaries between the public domain, which includes education, and market forces. The question whether e-learning can be called education when market principles are incorporated by many governments, education authorities and institutions who threaten or demand to become the determining force for developing curricula that need to ‘deliver’ or satisfy market ideologies, should be asked (Smith, 2002 in Schreuder, 2004b:2).

Some critics focus on theoretical aspects, such as the critique aimed at pedagogical issues pertaining to e-learning, which asks whether the “mere retrieval or exchange of information [is] learning?” (Le Grange, 2003:1) Another critique is that existing paper-based resources are merely made available on the Web as primarily an information delivery system (Sims, Dobbs & Hand, 2002; Weigel, 2000 in Schreuder, 2004b:5). Le Grange adds to this debate when he draws on Standish (2002:210) who claims that the Web is chaotic and that search engines have limitations in sorting

through information. Le Grange shares Burbules and Callister's (2000:61) concern that Web users, whether they are knowledgeable or novices, can become lost in an unidentified morass of information (Le Grange, 2003:4-5). A further critique against e-learning is that online experiences are impersonal, disembodied experiences. Downes, however, compares it to the reading of a book, where there is no direct contact between author and reader, yet the act of reading can transport the reader to rich engaging worlds, and this interaction between author and reader can be as intimate as any other experience (Downes, 2002:1-2).

Detractors of e-learning embrace what Haywood terms "fixed" moments in education where a learning experience means diligent students/learners attending lectures/classes under the tutelage of excellent and experienced lectures/educators who set assignments that are discussed to enrich and accelerate the acquisition of knowledge. These detractors also embrace the "fluid" moments that include time for sharing with peers, enjoying, in some cases, an insulated community lifestyle and the formation of friendships, and the building of a personal network for future use (Haywood, 1999:1). While it is possible to experience some of these fixed and fluid moments, as described by Haywood, away from an institution, the possibilities are limited. E-learning's contribution therefore lies in satisfying the distinct needs and objectives/aims of a differently-minded student/learner.

3.5.1 Trade-off between richness and reach in education

Evans and Wurster (2002), of the Boston Consulting Group argue that there is a trade-off between "richness" and "reach" when discussing the merits of traditional education versus distance education, including e-learning. For them, "richness" refers

to the overall quality of information and pedagogy, as defined by the user, alluding amongst others to relevance, accuracy and interactivity. Compared to this, “reach” refers to the number of people who are participating in the sharing of that information (Weigel, 2000:3). Adding to this Haywood criticised and warned against Noble’s implicit assumption that a “universal richness” exists within the traditional modes of education delivery. Richness need not be diluted by reach, according to Haywood, as Web technology has tremendous riches to offer, but it must be subjected to the same criteria testing fitness for purpose, which normally apply to any suggestion to change or modify delivery technique (Haywood, 1999:2-5). Cognisance must, however, be taken of Heerema and Rogers’s warning that, historically, when the number of students reached increases, the richness of information conveyed may become diluted. To prevent this, they suggest that subject-matter experts be introduced to disseminate information to participating students as a means to curb the loss of richness sacrificed for reach (Heerema & Rogers, 2001:2-4).

It makes financial sense to pool the efforts of lecturers willing to join forces to work over the Internet because participants can focus on their specific fields or areas of expertise, making it possible to achieve higher levels of richness and reach (Weigel, 2000:3; Young, 2000:1). Team-teaching, as six professors of Advanced Latin from the Associated College of the South did, is one example of how the Internet can add richness to the curriculum. The President of Lehigh University, Gregory C. Farrington, even suggests that colleges establish an “Internet league” to formalise their sharing of courses. The goal of these efforts is to improve the quality of educational resources (Young, 2000:2-4). For Haywood, well-constructed Web-based programmes would not only substitute for but also be superior to what many

students/learners receive at present (Haywood, 1999:2). According to Weigel, the process has been facilitated by the minimalist definition of education that focuses on information transfer and by the reduction of the cost of instruction (Weigel, 2000:4). Many students buy into distance education, including e-learning, because they want *convenience* or reach above all else. They accept that it will not replicate the *perceived* richness of an institution-based experience, but the accreditation of their qualification will compete with other institutions (Haywood, 1999:3).

The balance between richness and reach must be managed so that there is no negative effects either way. For in-service educators, the *reach* that e-learning provides will add *richness* to their quality as educators because it offers them an opportunity to increase their knowledge in a chosen field. For Weigel, “[a] new continuum between richness and reach, courtesy of the Internet, can afford us wonderful opportunities for enhancing the richness of our students’ educational experiences” (2000:5). It is possible, and certainly important that during the planning phase of e-learning material, basic, sound pedagogical principles be adhered to. Pendlebury defines pedagogy as the relation between curriculum, teaching and learning (1998:343).

The module *HIV/AIDS and Education*, if it could be made available to in-service educators, is an example of how educators can be *reached* and how *richness* can be added to the quality and diversity of their professional development concerning this pandemic, without affecting their daily programmes. In practice, it means that no educator has to leave his/her school to complete the module, with the result that no educational disruption occurs for the learners.

3.6 ADULT LEARNING

Mezirow argues that learning may be understood as the process of using a prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one's experience in order to guide future action (1991:12 in Mezirow & Associates, 2000:5). This is supported by Cranton, who argues that learning takes place when an individual through critical self-reflection revises old or develops new assumptions, beliefs or ways of seeing the world (1994:4). Hanson, however, warns that quantity of experience does not necessarily ensure quality of learning. "Experience may even be a block to learning for adults who become set in their ways" (Hanson in Edwards, Hanson & Raggatt, 1996:103). The question whether adults can learn to learn have to be asked and according to Rogers, "[a]ll evidence suggests that the answer is yes" (2001:33). As the focus of this study was to critically evaluate the use of the Web-based *HIV/AIDS and Education* module in an adult education context, I have not attempted to give an in-depth discussion of adult learning.

How do adults learn? According to Schaverien and Cosgrove (1999), who base their argument on research by Minsky (1985) and Plotkin (1994), adult learners with their strong repertoires of ideas and behaviours honed over a lifetime of experience, may well find learning more difficult, more in conflict with their well-established values than might younger learners (in Shepherd, Clendinning & Schaverien, 2002:3). In an attempt to find solutions to this question, I have turned to the work of Rogers, who distinguishes between the way adults learn and the way younger people learn. For Rogers, the only way an adult learns effectively is by *doing*, by being actively involved during the process rather than receiving information passively. The reasons for this are as follows:

- As a person grows older, the short-term memory faculty becomes less efficient and more easily disturbed.
- For information to pass successfully from the short-term memory to the long-term memory the process during which information is received must not be disturbed.
- Information must be internalised, the learner must make it his/her own (Rogers, 2001:40-43).

Curzon draws on Dewey who warns that mere activity does not constitute learning as the *doing* must effect a change in the learner's cognitive structures (1985:55-56). Rogers, drawing on Belbin and Belbin (1972), argues that the process of learning matters more than what is learnt. He furthermore points out that the following issues could become stumbling blocks in adult learning and must be taken into account:

- During learning adults must not be put under time pressure to perform; they must be allowed to work at their own pace.
- Most adults will be motivated to learn if it is relevant to their interest field and in particular if the skill and knowledge that they acquire can be used immediately and in practical ways.

- Learning must be structured in such a way that reinforcement and practice form an integral part.
- Prior experience and knowledge must be respected and it is essential that it should be 'used' in the learning process (Rogers, 2001:43-55).

This is supported by Hutton, who refers to Nunan's (1988) view that "adult learners are profoundly influenced by past learning experiences, present concerns and future prospects" (Hutton, 1992:173).

Piaget, according to Forman, acknowledges that what a human knows is learned from the environment and insists that learning only takes place when the individual reflects on received stimuli and during this process makes meaning so that knowledge can be constructed (in Gazda & Corsini, 1980:253-255). Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana also draw on Piaget when they argue that the difference between an adult and a child's thinking and reflecting is the difference in the quantity of gathered information and the quality of the thinking and reflecting, including, cognitive, moral, social and emotional development (2000:48).

It is therefore important to remember that to help overcome potential barriers to adult learning, the creation of new knowledge and the acquisition of skills, that the learning environment should include the adults' existing values, experience, knowledge and skills in the learning process (Shepherd, Clendinning & Schaverien, 2002:3).

3.7 CONSTRUCTIVISM, KNOWLEDGE INTERESTS AND E-LEARNING

During 2000, the WCED embarked on an on-line *Cognition in Curriculum 2005* training programme for in-service educators. In their vision of on-line learning they state that “[a]t the heart of on-line learning is the assumption that knowledge is not a given but is constructed” (Rhodes, 2000:7). As the focus of this study was a critical evaluation of a Web-based professional development programme for primary school educators, I have not attempted to discuss constructivism in depth but presented an overview as background to the development of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module. Brooks and Brooks make the follow observation:

As long as there were people asking each other questions, we have had constructivist classrooms. Constructivism, the study of learning, is about how we all make sense of our world, and that really hasn’t changed (1999:18-19).

Kegan argues that “[c]onstructivism recognises that reality does not happen preformed and waiting for us merely to copy a picture of it”, but our frame of reference, including both a habit of mind and a point of view, will determine this process (Kegan in Mezirow & Associates, 2000:52). Not what we know, but our way of knowing. Two processes are involved, namely *meaning-forming*, an activity by which we shape coherent meaning out of raw material, and *reforming our meaning-making*, a process whereby we change the very form we use for making meaning (Kegan in Mezirow & Associates, 2000:52-53).

Stimuli that we encounter from others are seldom enough or logically sufficient to convey precise or clear-cut meaning. To some extent, the consequence is that the individual has to construct or reconstruct what the intended meaning had been (Perkins, 1999:9). Individuals construct knowledge through various passive and/or active interactions with others and/or their environment. According to Larochelle and Bednarz, knowledge cannot be transmitted and neither can it be neutral because it has to be constructed and negotiated (in Larochelle, Bednarz & Garrison, 1998:7-8). Learning takes place by readjusting knowledge while the individual continuously makes corrections or changes to existing constructs. Geelan corroborates this by stating that learning must build on students' existing mental structures (1997:26).

According to Brooks and Brooks (2001), proponents of constructivist learning/teaching theory place the learner at the centre of the learning process. An educator that supports the constructivist learning theory then structures opportunities in such a way that the learner can construct and/or revise knowledge rather than absorb knowledge (2001:ix). Learners are in a position to bring some prior knowledge to a specific learning experience. According to Garmston and Wellman (1994:84), the importance of the learner's point of view is supported by constructivist learning theory. Giroux and Simon (1988:12), argue that pedagogy refers to a conscious attempt to influence how and what kind of knowledge is produced, but this process happens within and among particular sets of social and moral relations. In support of this argument, Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana emphasise that the individual must accept the responsibility to act as an active agent in his/her own development (2000:40). It is important to note that for Neubert, learning begins when learners use and expand their constructive agencies to solve problems and create meanings in

situations they find themselves in (2003:8-9). This implies that these constructed meanings make sense within the framework of a given individuals' interpretative capacity.

For Brooks and Brooks (2001), several characteristics have to be built into educational settings to encourage the active construction of knowledge. Learners should realise that the world is complex, that multiple perspectives exist and that the truth is often a matter of opinion (Brooks & Brooks, 2001:22). Drawing on Candy (1998), Mezirow adds that people participate in the construction of reality and that this construction occurs within a context that influences people (1991:xiii). For Bernstein, the richness of this knowledge construction process permits and enables comparisons and sometimes even a "fusion of horizons" resulting in a more comprehensive understanding (Neubert 2003:23). The learning process must free learners' minds, allowing them to focus on large ideas, reformulate existing ideas, make connections and follow trails of interest so that they can reach unique conclusions. This is only possible if we consider the nature of the knowledge constructed by learners. In the development of this module, richness of the educational experience was made possible in that opportunities were created for the construction of more than one knowledge interest (technical, practical and emancipatory) by a carefully selected variety of websites, articles and exercises.

This brings us to a brief reference to assessment. It is important to remember that assessment is a complex process throughout the period during which knowledge is constructed (Brooks & Brooks, 2001:22). According to Brown (1998), these activities should be active, self-directed, learner centred and collaborative, and the information

should be available in a variety of media and sequences to accommodate differences in modality, cognitive styles, and multiple intelligences (in Wonacott, 2000:1). The assessment framework used in the analysis of participant responses proved an extremely valuable aid in this process.

3.8 OUTCOMES BASED EDUCATION (OBE)

After the 1994 democratic elections in South Africa, the new government moved away from the previous educational system based on Christian National Education principles to adopt Outcomes Based Education. OBE implied a transformation in the national education curriculum. Currently, the *Revised New Curriculum Statement* (RNCS) is in place for the foundation phase and in 2005 it will be implemented in the intermediate phase. As OBE is a framework for curriculum development that focuses on what learners/students can do after they have been taught, it was important for me to establish whether the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module achieved the desired outcomes. The pedagogy of the module is based on OBE principles. The introductory question and the cartoon were used to assess the participant's position towards and knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Working through the journal, the participant had the opportunity to monitor personal progress and growth through self-assessment. This approach to formative assessing is characteristic of OBE. I have not attempted to do an in depth study of OBE as the focus of this study was to evaluate the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module. A brief overview is provided below.

The intention of education, according to Eisner (1990), is to free the minds of children and adults from certainty (conviction) so that they can consider all/most options. He stresses that an intended curriculum should be structured to include the following

features: it must teach skills, be intellectually challenging and stimulate higher order thinking. It is important that the content should be delivered through various forms of representation and it should be connected to other Learning Areas (Eisner, 1990:1-5).

Acharya describes OBE as a framework for curriculum design and teaching that focuses on what learners can actually do once they have been taught (2003:1). The OBE approach to curriculum development acknowledges that *what* learners are learning and *whether* they are learning *well* are more important than *when* and *how* they learn it (Spady, 1994:25). In essence, OBE means, defining, organising, focusing and directing all aspects of a teaching system in relation to what we want all learners to demonstrate successfully when they leave the system (Schlebusch, 2000:43). It is important to define or categorise outcomes. Exit/culminating outcomes define what the system wants the learner to be able to do. Enabling outcomes are the building blocks on which the exit/culminating outcomes depend and discrete outcomes are non-essential detail (Spady, 1994:18).

For Lorenzen who draws on Towers, OBE is “a learner-centred, results-orientated system founded on the belief that all individuals can learn” (2003:2). To make this work, what to learn must be clearly identified, progress must be based on demonstrated achievement, multiple assessment and instructional strategies must be in place, and adequate time and assistance to complete work must be allowed (Lorenzen, 2003:2).

For Schwartz and Cavener, agreeing with Spady who believes that all learners can learn and be successful, the following three aspects of OBE stand out: the focus on

outcomes, the curriculum design process and the responsibility of the school and the educator for the learner's success (1994:327). Spady and Marshall, like Acharya, argue that the basic principles of OBE are as follows:

- Clarity of focus. Curriculum planners and educators must have a clear focus on what they want learners to do successfully.
- Design down. Determine the desired exit/culminating outcomes first, and then design and build the instructional plans to achieve these outcomes.
- Set high expectations. Expect of learners to be successful by communicating this expectation to them and challenging them to succeed.
- Use multiple instruction methods. Cater for individual needs and differences so that all learners can achieve the exit outcomes (Spady & Marshall, 1994:20-23; Acharya, 2003:2-3).

The *HIV/AIDS and Education* module served the purpose of this study, as the module prompted participants to reflect on what they have learnt and whether this new knowledge could be used in their teaching programmes. The availability of the module on the Internet and the fact that participants were not restricted to specific venues afforded participants the opportunity to access the module whenever they had time.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I have discussed the development of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module. I would like to draw your attention to the paragraph on the structure of the module where important aspects of what had to be considered before and during the development process, were discussed. I described the module as a guided research experience dealing with various issues. This demonstrates that Spady's OBE principles were adhered to. Clarity of focus, designing with the end in mind and setting high expectations were central to this process. In the broadest sense, using links to visit different websites and selected readings associated with carefully constructed journal questions can be interpreted as making use of various approaches to knowledge construction and serving a range of knowledge interests.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

As a novice researcher, I realised that I had to make the language of research meaningful for the purpose of my own research. Rather than find precise definitions for terminology or phrases, it was more important to develop an understanding of the range of terminology used and to be clear about my own understanding thereof (Griffiths, 1998:43). As there are many variables, known and unknown, operating in any educational environment, I further realised that it would be very difficult to generalise or replicate findings from this research to other contexts (Gay, 1987:4).

Although different definitions for research exist, Kemmis & McTaggart's "trying out ideas in practice as a means of improvement and as a means of increasing knowledge" (1982 in McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 1996:9) best suits and supports my viewpoint. Educational research includes the imperative of action, where action is intent on describing, interpreting and making meaning of events. Husén points out that educational research has the following two constituencies of participants:

- teachers (sic) and school administrators; and
- policy makers in education (in Keeves, 1988:173).

As I am a practising educator doing research, I want to make a contribution to the improvement of teaching practice and increase in knowledge, bearing in mind that although education research should not be value free, it should also not force values onto others. It should be transparent and balanced to empower participants to make informed choices. Keeping in mind that, according to Stenhouse (1975), research is a systematic enquiry made public, the participation of education policy makers was sought (McNiff, 1988:12).

The aim of research is not to provide a successful recipe to solve social problems, but to equip educators and practitioners to find their own solutions to some of their specific needs. Research must be relevant and embedded in reality. Educational research, like all fields of research, has its own unique priorities and specific subject needs. Kemmis argues that educational action research, as a form of educational research, places control over processes of educational reform in the hands of those involved in the action (in Keeves, 1988:48).

4.2 FOCUS OF RESEARCH

Against this background, this investigation was stimulated by a search for a strategy to deliver HIV/AIDS information and training to in-service educators in a manner that is practical, cost-effective and sustainable. In this search I was introduced to an e-learning module on *HIV/AIDS and Education*, developed for student teachers at the Education Faculty, Stellenbosch University. I was invited to make this study unit

available to practising educators, and this thesis describes this encounter. The following two research questions (as discussed in chapter one) guided the process:

- What professional development (PD) opportunities exist for workplace training of educators concerning HIV/AIDS?

- Of what value is a web-based professional development programme for HIV/AIDS education for educators?

This study therefore describes and interprets, the use of a PD module available on the web, and how in-service educators' HIV/AIDS training needs, given time and excessive in-service training sessions constrains, could be addressed by engaging with this module.

4.2.1 Research approach

The Faculty of Education at the University of Stellenbosch has developed a compulsory Internet-based module on HIV/AIDS for all final-year Education students enrolled at the faculty (<http://learn.sun.ac.za/SCRIPT/Course502/>). The Department of Didactics administered the programme. Using this module, I did a pilot study with educators from schools in two suburbs in Cape Town, Somerset West and Strand, who were willing to participate in an e-learning module of this kind.

Key features of the module are the provision of a working knowledge of what HIV/AIDS is, how it is spread, what Government (and specifically Education) policy in this regard entails and a variety of curriculum strategies for different LA's to enable Aids education. Educators will be encouraged to use these ideas in the development of learning opportunities in different school grades and LA's. An important element is the student journal, which consists of participants' responses to statements and questions. The participants are expected to maintain the journal and submit it electronically on completion of the module. At present, the journal questions and statements are aimed at pre-service student educators. Before presenting the module to practising educators, the inputs of the pilot group were used to rework the module.

Research will not and cannot provide a successful recipe to solve classroom problems; it may however empower educators (practitioners) to find their own solutions to some of their specific needs. Research must be relevant and embedded in reality. Education research, like all fields of research, has its own unique priorities and specific subject needs.

As a novice researcher, I firstly had to distinguish between the concepts of method and methodology. Le Grange borrowing from Harding (1987), argues that the terms methodology and method are often used interchangeably in research conversations (2001:70). Harding also argues that a distinction between methodology and method is necessary, where methodology refers to a theory of producing knowledge and the

rationale for the way a researcher proceeds, whilst method refers to the technique of gathering evidence (1987:2). This distinction informs my investigation.

Another issue that often dominates the discourse in social research is that of research traditions and/or paradigms, and in the literature review, different views of these concepts emerge. Le Grange describes Connole's (1993:26) viewpoint that one can either view the different traditions/paradigms as "competing paradigms or as complementary frameworks" (2001:73). I prefer to view my research as developing/growing in such a complementary framework. Connole describes four main research approaches, namely empiricist, interpretative, critical and deconstructive/post-structural (1993:22).

My research methods are influenced by a combination of interpretative and critical research traditions, because I attempt to interpret and make meaning from the experiences of the individuals who took part in the pilot study. Firstly, I hope to interpret the individual's experiences of taking part in the HIV/AIDS e-learning module. Secondly, I hope to interpret their views on how they experienced their growth as educators. Thirdly, I hope to interpret their views on whether and in which ways the module empowered them to implement courses on HIV/AIDS across the curriculum. I hope that drawing on the experiences and reflections of the participants, our own understanding of professional development in a specific context with specific goals will be shaped in order to share these experiences with the wider education community. In this way the shared knowledge could become emancipatory, supporting

the participants and myself in freeing ourselves from limiting legal, social, political, intellectual and moral forces.

4.2.2 Methodological considerations

Bassey distinguishes between three categories of research:

- Theoretical research methods, where researchers describe and interpret events without making judgements;
- Evaluative research methods, where researchers describe and interpret events so that evaluative judgements can be made; and
- Action research methods, where action researchers describe and interpret events, seeking to change them for the better (1995:6).

I set out to co-ordinate the programme within the school infrastructure and context, locating the process within the larger context of the community and the local education arena. Opportunities for participants to engage in regular critically reflective discussions about their experiences and developing perspectives were created. Participants were engaged in generating data by means of individual and group discussions as well as interviews and questionnaires. Studying the participant's journals, lesson plans/educating material and learner's books also created data. Class visits and my own journal helped to guide the data generating process. Incidents and

developments emanating during the course of events therefore directed the process. Participating educators were supplied with additional materials and information.

An important aspect of this process is the contribution of participants towards continuous adjustment and adaptation of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, ensuring appropriateness and effectiveness, in order to investigate the possibilities in wider professional development contexts. For this reason, participating educators were encouraged to continuously reflect on their personal development needs in order to cope with an HIV/AIDS focus while developing learning opportunities.

This is supported by Kemmis, who maintains that educational action research is a form of research that places control over the processes of educational reform in the hands of those involved in the action (in Keeves, 1988:48). As action research includes a whole range of approaches and practices, I agree with Reason and Bradbury's point of view that action research describes an approach that includes the whole family of techniques and methods that is participative and action orientated (Bradbury, 2001:xxiv).

4.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The term research, according to Stenhouse (1975:156 in Pring, 2000:7), "is used to refer to any systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry that aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge". In my readings, I found different overviews of research traditions and paradigms.

Van Maanen (1995), suggests that the process of research includes headwork, fieldwork and text work. Different activities should guide the methodological development.

Headwork involves thinking about:

- methodological issues/theories, analyses and criticisms of how the research should proceed; and
- epistemological issues/theories of knowledge.

Fieldwork in turn guides the following ways of gathering data:

- listening to and/or questioning participants;
- observing behaviour; and
- examining records.

Lastly, text work is the documentation of the research, which includes:

- using the data produced by headwork and fieldwork; and
- the critique and/or readings of alternative texts.

As headwork is one aspect of methodology, critical questions must be asked about how research should proceed (Van Maanen, 1995:4-5). This made me realise that to critically document the outcomes of the research, I had to think about methodological theories to guide me so that data could be produced through different methods. In producing data, I had to communicate with and listen to the participants. I had to study

and interpret their journals and the educational programmes that they produced for implementing in their classes.

Terre Blanche and Durrheim describe paradigms as all-encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking of researchers that will define the nature of their enquiry along three dimensions, namely ontology, epistemology and methodology (1999:4-6).

Table 4.1. Terre Blanche and Durrheim's three dimensions of paradigms for research methodologies (1999:6).

	Positivist	Interpretative	Constructionist
Ontology	Stable external reality Law-like	Internal reality of subjective experience	Socially constructed reality Discourse
Epistemology	Empathetic Detached observer	Suspicious Observer inter subjectivity	Political Observer construct versions
Methodology	Experimental Quantitative Hypothesis testing	Interact ional Interpretative Qualitative	Deconstruction Textual analysis Discourse analysis

A research paradigm is determined and developed along the following three dimensions:

- Firstly, ontology, the nature of reality that is to be studied and what can be known.
- Secondly, epistemology, specifying the relationship between researcher and the production of knowledge.
- Thirdly, methodology specifies how the researcher goes about doing the research and also determines how the research unfolds.

Positivist approaches provide the researcher with an accurate, measurable and testable research results. On the other hand, the interpretative approach provides subjective research results where the participants make deductions from data that are produced by the research. In the constructionist approach, the research is a fluent developing process, constructed by the researcher's framework of interpretation.

While I interpreted the participants' perceptions and in some cases their feelings, I had to be cautious, taking care to reproduce the information in a responsible and compassionate way, rather than trying to quantify their responses (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:123). With this in mind, the methodology supporting the research needs of this study is an interpretative methodology supported by the assumptions that

- "people's subjective experiences are real and should be taken seriously...

- we can understand others' experiences by interacting with them and listening to what they tell us...
 - and that the qualitative research techniques are best suited to this task”
- (Terre Blanche & Kelly in Terre Blanche & Durrhein, 1999:123).

Connole's summary of the different approaches to research draws on Locke (1988) and Schaffer (1991) and is reflected in the table below.

Table 4.2. Connole's four research approaches (1993:22-23)

	Empiricist	Interpretative	Critical	Deconstructive/ Post Structural
What is the approach modelled on?	Scientific Investigation	Interpretation of text	Focus on Judgements and insights of subjects	Deconstructing of linguistic relationships
What does it assume about reality?	It can only be understood by empirical inquiry	Multiple realities requiring multiple methods for understanding them	Multiple realities that are problematic distorted through communication	There is no 'reality' - only representation through language
What is the foundation of data	Disciplined sensory observation	Meaning is the basis, it precedes logic and fact	Meaning is found in language and behaviour	Meaning is not fixed, it shifts according to its context
How is observation done?	Through clear and unambiguous rules	Through dialogue	Critical self-reflection concerning observation	Interacting between various discourses
What is generated by inquiry	Objectivity depending on the removal of error and bias	Knowledge is dependant on the discovery process	Knowledge liberating and emancipating	Questions how knowledge is constructed individuals

What interests are inherent in inquiry?	Prediction, control and explanation	Discovers meanings and beliefs of others	Reveals interests of other forms of inquiry	Seeks to locate dominant views
What values are inherent in inquiry?	Knowledge is inherently value-neutral	Knowledge must be interpreted in terms of its value	Knowledge is never value-neutral, it represents Interests	Knowledge is never value-neutral, it contain the effects of power

Although the summary provides definite contrasts between the four approaches, in reality the situation is much less tidy. In my research, I have adopted a combination of the different approaches.

The methodology mainly employed in this research was a combination of an interpretative and critical approach as I focused on making meaning of, interpreting and describing the experiences of the individuals who took part in the pilot study.

- Firstly, I tried to make meaning from the individual's experiences of taking part in the HIV/AIDS WebCT module.
- Secondly, I interpreted their views on how they experienced their growth as educators.
- Thirdly, I described their views on how, by participating in and completing the module, they were empowered to implement HIV/AIDS education across the primary school curriculum.

The objective of the educators participating in the Internet module was to gain knowledge about HIV/AIDS, education policy regarding HIV/AIDS in schools and classrooms and suggestions on curriculum development with a focus on HIV/AIDS. The praxis of knowledge production is emancipatory and the individual is always guided by a moral disposition while pursuing his/her goals. Critical theory provides this kind of self-reflective understanding (Carr & Kemmis, 1986:131-137).

Drawing on the experiences and reflections of the participants via interviews, discussions and studying their journals, I described *my* understanding of their professional development. In this way, the shared knowledge became emancipatory, freeing the participants and myself from limiting, legal, social, political, intellectual and moral constraints.

4.4 RESEARCH METHOD

The research methods that I have used to investigate the professional development of the educators is very similar to Participating Evaluation Action Research (PEAR) process, where the educators performed key roles involving regular feedback, recording of experiences and contributing suggestions for possible future upgrading or adjustments needed for the use of the WebCT module as an in-service PD programme. As the process did not follow consecutive cycles of planning, implementation, review and reflection it does fit an action research process but the participatory nature was important and valuable for data production.

Participants were engaged in producing data by means of regular individual and, to a lesser extent, group discussions. Data was gathered by studying the participant's journals, lesson plans, educational material and learner's books. Class visits and my journal helped in guiding the data producing process. Incidents and developments emanating during the course of events therefore directed the process. Prozesky defined various degrees of participant involvement. Using his classification the educators participating in this research will be "*consulting*" participants rather than participants that "*share*" control and decision-making powers (Prozesky, 1998:29-30). The educators participating in the research were involved in interviews and discussions; in addition, their educational material and learner support material and their personal journal responses were used to produce data. The responsibility to effect changes to the WebCT programme remained with the module author.

An important aspect of this process was the continuous adjustment and adaptation of the *Education and HIV/AIDS* module in order to ensure that it is appropriate and effective, and to investigate possibilities for the wider professional development context. For this reason, educators were encouraged to reflect continuously on their professional and personal development needs in order to cope with an HIV/AIDS focus while developing learning opportunities. I forged an active 'partnership' with the participants where suggestions were made and solutions were sought. According to Bhana knowledge gained in this way should be used to improve participants' social, educational and material conditions (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:228). For Prozesky, drawing on Lewin (1946), this is a cyclical process that involves the

diagnosis of a problem situation, followed by planning interventions that result in the implementation of appropriate actions and lastly, reviewing the outcome(s) (1998:15-16). For Reason this articulates an extended epistemology that involves the three broad ways of knowing namely, thinking, feeling and acting (in Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:333). Supporting this view point Park, who concurs with Gramsci (1971), argues that it is also important to realise that these participants bring with them an everyday knowledge about their environment (in Reason & Bradbury, 2001:82). Individuals will be able to make sense of situations they find themselves in if the “way things really are”, ‘really work’ or the “true” state of affairs are represented in a meaningful construction (Pring, 2000:45 drawing on Guba & Lincoln, 1989:8).

Aspects of my research focused on evaluation of the programme and teachers experiences of working on this programme. Evaluation studies are either concerned with improving or determining a programme’s value or worth. The reason why a programme is evaluated is to determine its value or usefulness and whether it can be utilised for what it was intended for. For these reasons, evaluation studies are decision-driven instead of hypothesis-driven (Krathwohl, 1993:524-525). Prozesky maintains that evaluation leads to diagnosing the situation and then adjusting the programme based on previous learning (1998:15). Pring adds to this argument that “realities” are not objectively “out there” but “constructed” by people as they attempt “to make sense” of their surrounds (Pring, 2000:46). During this process, the evaluator(s) and stakeholder(s) might have different needs or viewpoints. It is therefore imperative that the evaluator(s) interpret the data according to definite guidelines. The inputs of the

participants formed the basis of this research. Firstly, as in-service educators the contributions they made about the effectiveness of the programme's content matter were important. Secondly, their perspectives on their ability to gain access to the programme via the Internet were equally important. Some of the participants were not as familiar with using the Internet as others were, and their contributions were valuable to the research.

The accessibility to information about HIV/AIDS is on the increase. Educators have the responsibility to decide which information about HIV/AIDS should be shared with their learners. Because accessibility to information increases at a rapid rate, educators might base their decisions on what to share on out dated information. The intention of my study was to reduce this uncertainty and to provide participants and stakeholders with the opportunity to make more informed decisions. By participating in the study, educators were exposed to Internet usage and they developed skills to access information on the Internet. This is important as participant feedback will help to determine to what extent the programme must be changed or adapted (Winter, 1989:11).

This study focused on active educators with the intention to generate information that would form the basis for informed action. The received feedback, via interviews, discussions and the portfolios, guided the development of the programme focusing on improving content and user-friendliness.

4.5 INTERPRETATIVE THEORY

In making meaning from all the information we obtain, we make use of our background knowledge to tell us what exists, how to interpret it and how to study it. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim, all research accounts are based on empirical data. Without looking beyond empirical evidence at background knowledge, however, will only reflect partial understanding of data (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:1-3).

Le Grange's viewpoint is that interpretative inquiry is concerned with the understanding of daily occurrences, as well as the meaning we give to phenomena as constructed through human interaction, both holistic and divergent (2001:74). In this study, I interpret, describe and document *inter alia* the participant's feelings and experiences. In paragraph 3.8 the protocols applied to assess and evaluate the participants' journals are discussed in detail.

- Firstly, because as practising educators their experiences are real and should be taken into account; and
- Secondly, I constructed meaning of their experiences by listening to and interacting with them. (See Table 3.3 for Protocols)

It was however important that I proceeded by means of “an empathic [*einfühlung*] identification with the other, a grasping of their subjective experience” (Giddens,

1976:55 in Connole, 1993:19). I also had to keep in mind that meanings are generated through language and other forms of symbolism and are negotiated (Phillips, 1987; Carr & Kemmis, 1983; Morgan, 1983 in Connole, 1993:19). To understand [*verstehen*] the language that is used, it must have the same meaning for all role players. As HIV/AIDS is a sensitive issue, and because an individual's sexuality is a deeply private matter, I had to demonstrate that I was in *emföhlung* with the participants, that I was prepared to listen and that I was able to *verstehen*, without judging them as individuals or what they were saying.

Interpretative research tries to harness and extend the power of ordinary language and expression to help us understand the world we live in (Terre Blanche & Kelly in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:123). For this constructing of meaning to be meaningful and valid, I had to make sense of the participants' feelings and experiences as they occurred in their natural settings in the 'real' world. To achieve this, I interviewed and observed the participants at different stages during the investigation.

4.6 CRITICAL THEORY

Critical theory, according to Kemmis, underpins the emancipatory intent to transform educational organisations and practices to achieve rationality and social justice. Considering the historical and ideological processes of education, the form of reasoning is practical as well as critical (Kemmis in Keeves, 1988:48; Scott & Usher, 1999:30). Critical theory has an emancipatory knowledge interest, as opposed to

technical and practical knowledge interests. In other words, pedagogy based on critical theory strives to question and challenge existing repressive ideologies and interests they serve. Empowerment leads to an understanding of the causes behind powerlessness, and recognises and acts against these powers to change life conditions. Scott and Usher maintain that knowledge is always socially constructed and geared to a particular interest (Scott & Usher, 1999:31). The possibility also exists that knowledge can be repressive. Therefore, the moral imperative of critical research is to emancipate. Critical theory makes individuals think and act in more rationally autonomous ways (Burgess, 1985:6). However, it concerns Habermas that the possibility exists that access to obtaining knowledge may be restricted and in the process de-emancipate individuals (1978:23), thus denying individuals the opportunity to be made conscious of or aware of conditions that might deny them fulfilling their basic needs (Scott & Usher, 1999:31).

Participants were afforded opportunities to construct emancipatory knowledge. Participants responded that on completion of the module they had more confidence to share HIV/AIDS information with their learners (JL, BS & BA). Working through a variety of websites and articles, they were continually prompted to question existing knowledge (BS). This new learning empowered participants to understand why things are the way they are and how they came to be that way. I interpreted this as an indication of how emancipatory knowledge was developed.

4.7 DATA PRODUCTION

Like Reddy (2001), I use the term data production because I agree with his argument that data is always produced by our own acts of will and human intent (Reddy, 2001:54 drawing on Gough, 1999:264). Kelly argues, “[a] text is any record of life held over after the moment of its production for later comprehension and interpretation. This may refer to visual material, but could also be artefacts or any remnant of a context which it is the researcher’s job to interpret” (Kelly in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:379).

I draw on Creswell’s definition of qualitative research. He suggests that it is an inquiry that explores a social or human problem, based on an approach grounded in philosophical assumptions of qualitative research and the multiple sources of information available to the researcher. This complex, holistic picture is created after analysing texts and interpreting data that were produced by the participants, while the research is conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 1998:14-15). Frankel and Devers supports Creswell’s viewpoint and go on to describe the following three key qualities of qualitative research:

- Firstly, that the logic is often inductive and consists of describing people’s particular situations, meanings and experiences.
- Secondly, that the design is emergent and flexible, a dynamic process with no blue print containing exact specifications.

- Thirdly, that the process is often non-linear and non-sequential, where the production and analysis of data often proceed simultaneously (Frankel & Devers, 2000:251-252).

In choosing a qualitative approach, I had to assure myself that I was committed to spend extensive time in the field and that I was prepared to engage in the complex and time-consuming process of data analysis. Furthermore, I realised that I had to participate in social and human research that does not have firm guidelines or specific procedures (Creswell, 1998:16-17). The nature of my research compelled me to use qualitative techniques to produce data.

4.7.1 Educator journals

The educator journals were the primary source of data as the participants had to document their responses. While scrutinising the journals, using the set protocols, I could produce data. An important feature of the module structure of *HIV/AIDS and Education* is that it allowed participants to revisit and change previous responses. The educator participants were requested to indicate every time they revisited and/or changed previous responses. In some cases, once participants were exposed to new information, some of the participants changed or amended some of the responses. This gave me the opportunity to monitor how some participants demonstrated their development and thus, value was added to my data production.

4.7.2 Discussions with participants, semi-structured interviews

As a critical interpretative researcher, I had to make sense of the participants' feelings, experiences and social situations. To achieve this, I had discussions with the educators, explaining what the process entailed and what their roles would be before they committed themselves to participate in the project. I have decided not to use questionnaires, based on Terre Blanche and Kelly's view that a questionnaire is too formal and restrictive, whereas a discussion is a more natural form of interaction (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999:128).

Walker (1992) differentiates between *authentic participation* in research and *involvement participation*. In authentic participation, the participants take ownership of and share in the way the research develops, whereas involvement in research allows participants limited powers to influence the development of the research (in Davidoff, Julie, Meerkotter & Robinson, 1993:110-111). My study focused on describing and interpreting the use of a WebCT module as a PD programme. The participants were therefore not involved in developing the structure of the programme. Their contributions were directed and limited to how the module helped them to grow personally, and how they experienced the delivery of in-service training via e-learning. Information gained from their comments regarding content, hardware and time availability, user friendliness and so forth will be addressed in the chapter on reflective perspectives. As participants' influence on developing the module was limited, their participation, using Walker's (1992) terminology, was involvement participation.

The educators knew from the outset that my role was to evaluate a WebCT HIV/AIDS module. I informed them about their specific roles in the research and we discussed the importance of their inputs. During the discussions, we discussed the topic, HIV/AIDS, extensively. I explained to them that the part they will play was twofold:

- to determine whether the programme was user friendly and if it could provide or develop into a meaningful PD programme, and
- to see their growth, if any, during the journal activity.

The educators participating in the project represented four different schools; the discussions therefore took place at each individual school and I never had discussions with the group as a whole. From time to time, I had further discussions with individual educators. These discussions centred mainly on technical problems about the user-friendliness of the programme. An interesting, possibly alarming, aspect that emerged during discussions was how much the educators learnt about HIV/AIDS during the process. I will discuss this in more detail in chapter five.

4.7.3 Keeping a research journal

I kept a research journal but found it very difficult for various reasons. I have tried to document as many activities and experiences as possible. In the beginning, I tried to document everything that was said and done but later became more selective. Terre Blanche and Kelly suggest that it is preferable to record as many verbatim quotes as possible as this will give depth to the research (in Terre Blanche & Durrheim,

1999:138). I also kept notes of how the process unfolded; again, I had to guard against being too simplistic, and I constantly had to be aware to be more detailed in my recording. According to Le Grange (2001:80), documenting should not merely report the facts of the situation, but must also involve reflective processes on behalf of the researcher.

As the WCED expected of me not to identify the names of the participants nor their schools, I could not include photographs in my journal.

4.7.4 Documentation: Learner support material

I found that in three of the four schools the educators used the learner support material, “Life Skills”, “HIV/AIDS Education” and “Activity Books”, supplied by the WCED. I also found that HIV/AIDS education in most instances was confined to the Life Skills programme during Life Orientation. In these schools, the learners were assessed on various activities during the course of the year. Some of the educators addressed questions and used opportunities to address HIV/AIDS education during other LA, but this proved to be the exception rather than the rule. In the fourth school, the educators worked with small groups of learners and information was passed on as opportunities arose, but HIV/AIDS education was not formally included into the curriculum.

At two of these schools, an eight-week programme exclusively for grade seven learners was conducted by the NGO 'Choices'. They handed out course material on completion of the programme.

4.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Data was produced through various sources and the nature of this study directed my analysing efforts towards a cyclical process. To produce and analyse data Garner proposes a cyclical paradigm: "To learn is to change; to change is to create; and to create is to learn" (1996:1). For Kemmis (1988) observing and recording of data is part of a spiral where each cycle increases the researchers' knowledge while Gummesson (1991) adds that data 'collection', as stated previously I prefer data production, analysis, action, decision making, implementation, and change often take place concurrently (Borgia and Schuler, 1996:2-4).

To make meaning of participant feedback, and to guide and focus this study, the assessment framework or protocols that appear below were developed on the basis of the impressions developed and experiences gained while assessing the journals of hundreds of student-educators who participated in this module. My using these protocols enabled me to work systematically through educator journals, identifying and recording similarities and differences. In this way, I was able to develop fairly clear ideas of what impact the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module could have for in-service educators. The table also provided a framework with implicit indicators for

professional development that I could use to ascertain whether the process was valuable as a professional development exercise.

Table 4.3. Assessment framework used for data analysis

No.	Journal question	Relates to	Knowledge interest	Protocols
1	Before you start this module, tell us how you feel about HIV/AIDS and how you think it may affect you as an educator.	Prior knowledge and existing value systems with regard to HIV and AIDS	Not applicable	Want to know more; worried about the implications; tired of hearing about HIV and AIDS
2	Look at and think about the cartoon, and write down your first impressions of it.	Cartoon: mosquitoes respond to HIV and AIDS	Not applicable	Disgust; see the humour; make links to sex and male dominance; see educational opportunities
3	How would you explain to your class the current critique on government regarding its position on the causes, transmission and treatment of HIV/AIDS?	Policy documents; newspaper reports; government websites	Political and emancipatory knowledge	New insights; understanding and sympathy with government; criticism for bad governance; criticism for lack of resolution
4	Think carefully about this, and then list the ten most important facts that you will make sure the learners in	Variety of websites	Technical knowledge	Indications that participants have studied a variety of sources of information; understanding of essential

	your class should know about HIV/AIDS. Also make reference to your sources.			knowledge of HIV and AIDS
5	In the paper, Coombe lists three areas where HIV/AIDS will hit our community hardest. Which one of these, in your opinion, presents the biggest threat to the supply of quality education, and why?	Prescribed paper	Emancipatory	Indications of constructive and critical engagement with the suggested paper; also of own prior understanding; demonstrate an understanding of the information
6	What are the reasons why girls under the age of 15 become the victims of HIV/AIDS?	Suggested and prescribed readings	Emancipatory knowledge	Indications that participants have engaged with the readings; understanding of critical gender issues in the spreading of HIV and AIDS.
7	In the introductory section, the Minister lists six reasons why educators can make a meaningful contribution to managing the HIV/AIDS crisis. Summarise these, and comment on/add to them.	Prescribed policy documents on HIV and AIDS education and schools	Technical, emancipatory	Indications that participants have engaged with readings; demonstrating their understanding that educators can make a difference

8	Many people think that dealing with sexual education in an HIV/AIDS programme encourages children to experiment with sex. What does the booklet say on this issue? How do you feel about the matter?	Prescribed policy documents on HIV and AIDS education and schools	Emancipatory Instrumental knowledge	Indications of a strong personal positioning regarding a burning issue, positive or negative
9	Read the message by the State President at the end of the booklet. Do you think that this message conveys a vague stance on the causes, transmission and treatment of HIV/AIDS, as is often alleged in the press? Motivate your response.	Prescribed policy documents on HIV and AIDS education and schools	Political; emancipatory	Indications of a personal standpoint about popular controversy blown out of proportion by the press
10	With reference to a specific learning area, name the best idea for a learning activity on HIV/AIDS education that you have come across in this section. Also tell us where you found it.	Selection of web sites on HIV and AIDS and the school curriculum	Instrumental knowledge	Indications of skills in developing curricula that focus on HIV and AIDS; indication of participant's commitment

As the production of data in this study was a cyclical process, where the problem was identified, measures to address it were implemented and the result verified, I had to be aware that the critical interpretative nature of this study had to be adhered to. Le Grange refers to Harding's (1987) view that, when doing fieldwork, there are three essential ways in which to produce data: interviews, observation and examining records (2001:79). I found the interviews and discussions with the educators participating in the research, and examining their personal journals and educator and learner support material informative and productive.

For Hara (1995:353), the researcher's viewpoint forms a critical, but accepted part of the research because the researcher's subjectivity has an effect on the research. The process of data analysis involved organising and constructing, searching for patterns, breaking down and discovering which data are important, establishing what is to be learned and deciding what to tell others (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982:154).

4.9 ASSESSMENT OF TRUSTWORTHINESS

According to Key, the purpose of corroboration is not to confirm whether participants' perceptions are accurate or represent true reflections of a situation, but rather to ensure that the research findings accurately reflect their perceptions (1997:2). Stainback and Stainback add that it helps researchers increase their understanding of the probability that their findings will be seen as credible or worthy of consideration by others (1988:64).

It is necessary to ensure the trustworthiness of this study, and Krefting suggest Guba's model to describe four general criteria for the evaluation of research. She emphasises the need to use alternative but appropriate designs, to ensure rigor without sacrificing relevance (1991:218).

Table 4.4. Guba's Assessment of Trustworthiness Model, as adapted by Krefting (1991:216-222).

CRITERION	APPROACH STRATEGIES	CRITERIA TO ESTABLISH TRUSTWORTHINESS
Truth value	Credibility	Prolonged and varied field study Time sampling Reflexivity (Journal) Triangulation Member checking Peer examination Interview technique Establishing researcher's authority Structural coherence Referential adequacy
Applicability	Transferability	Nominated sample Comparison of sample to demographic data Time sample
Consistency	Dependability	Dependability Dense description of research methods Stepwise replication Triangulation Peer examination Code-recode procedure
Neutrality	Confirm ability	Confirm ability audit Triangulation Reflexivity

In my efforts to maintain the validity of my research, I used various strategies. During informal interviews with participants, I gave them the opportunity to discuss, question and express their opinions regarding the module, their opinion on PD and their interaction strategies with their classes. Some even discussed very personal details regarding their fears involving HIV/AIDS. For Wolcott (1990) it is vital to be a good listener as it is the researcher's duty to properly interpret the responses of participants. He suggests that the researcher should be candid and should not waste time attempting to exclude personal feelings, as all primary data should be included in the final report. The researcher should seek feedback from the participants in an attempt to achieve a balance between perceived and actual importance of participant responses (Based on Key, 1997:3-8).

Using the criterion set by Krefting (1991) in table 3.4, it is clear that the truth-value was met as participants had time, could confer and were interviewed. The transferability of this research into developing this *HIV/AIDS and Education* module for all educators was borne out time and time again in the participants' journal responses. The fact that the module information was updated regularly demonstrates the dependability of the available process of learning and, lastly, it addresses the neutrality of the module as "new" information was added to the programme and it never stagnated.

4.10 SUMMARY

I have described my methodology for this study as a critical interpretative approach, focusing on making meaning, interpreting and describing the experiences of individuals. I stressed the point that I described *my* understanding of the participants' experiences. I showed that the methods used formed were similar to a PEAR process. I made use of Walker's (1992) distinction to describe educators as involved partners rather than authentic participators sharing research ownership (in Davidoff, Julie, Meerkotter & Robinson, 1993:110-111). A qualitative approach to data collection was chosen because I was committed to spend time to engage in this complex process that does not have firm guidelines or specific procedures.

CHAPTER 5

REVIEW OF EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCES OF THE E-LEARNING PROGRAMME

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Ten years into the new South Africa, the educational arena has to contend with various realities that still have to be dealt with. Some of the issues that need to be addressed include post-apartheid education transformation, suitably trained and diligent educators, a politically stable environment with attainable policies, the impact of HIV/AIDS and in-service/professional training. The impact that HIV/AIDS has on society and the role that education should play must be addressed against a perceived lack of understanding and concern about how it will affect South African lifestyles, the professional training of educators and most importantly the Education Departments responsible for HIV/AIDS education (based on Schreuder, 2003:8-9).

The Internet-based study module *HIV/AIDS and Education* offered by the Faculty of Education of the US was developed for students to gain the necessary credits towards their education qualification. My study investigated the possibilities of adapting this module for in-service educators, and their experiences of professional development related to aids education. Data presented and discussed below.

5.2 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR PILOT STUDY PARTICIPANTS

I agree with Murphy, who draws on Rosewell (1983), that “[e]verybody knows what teachers need, but only teachers themselves know what teachers want” (1985:9). Motivated by this understanding, I decided to approach educators from four different schools and from different post levels to participate in the pilot study. In an attempt to be inclusive and to avoid possible accusations that the research could be biased towards educators who were in management positions and who could be out of touch with the reality in classrooms, I have included educators who were in managerial posts and educators who were active post level one educators.

Discussing my proposed studies with my colleagues, I realised that the majority was keen and interested to take part and support me in my endeavours. I had to set selection criteria to limit the number of participants. I decided on a balance between foundation phase and intermediate/senior phase educators as well as a balance between Learning Area experts, the ages of participants and their leadership roles within the school. The following criteria were selected:

- the phase and grade the educator was teaching;
- total years of education experience;
- educator’s Learning Area;
- leadership positions they have in the school’s management; and
- the individual’s computer literacy/skill level.

5.2.1 Participant profile

The participants for this pilot study represented three parallel medium primary schools and one special needs school. Two principals, two deputy principals, one senior primary head of department, one junior primary head of department, six post level one senior primary educators, two post level one junior primary educators and one librarian volunteered to take part in the study. The one Principal and one of the senior primary post level one educators did not complete the journal activity. Of the fifteen participants, nine were female and six male.

5.2.2 Pilot study participant profiles

I include short pen sketches of the 15 participants to give some background about each individual's profile as an educator.

- **GR: A Principal**

A Parallel Medium Primary School Principal, post level four, with 24 years teaching experience and the last eight as principal. As the school's manager, he is *ex officio* responsible for all decisions taken at school.

- **MM: A Principal**

A Special Needs School Principal, post level four, with 25 years of teaching experience with the last three as principal. As the school's manager, she is *ex officio* responsible for all decisions taken at school.

- **LK: A Deputy Principal**

A Deputy Principal, post level three, at a Parallel Medium Primary School with 20 years of teaching experience and the last four as Deputy Principal. He is a grade 6-class educator. He is an elected member of the governing body and is a member of his school's senior management team. His managerial duties include the sport portfolio, learner discipline, serving on the financial committee, school timetable and staff liaison. He is the Learning Area Head for Natural Sciences. He coaches rugby and cricket.

- **SR: A Deputy Principal**

A Deputy Principal, post level three, at a Special Needs School with 18 years experience and the last three as Deputy Principal. He is an elected member of the governing body and is a member of the school's management team. He is the curriculum manager and is responsible for the school's discipline.

- **HS: A Head of Department**

A Foundation Phase Head of Department, post level two, with 18 years experience. She is a grade 3-class educator. She is an elected member of the governing body and is a member of her school's management team. Her managerial portfolio includes foundation phase academic leader and discipline. She is responsible for the foundation phase budget. She coaches athletics and netball.

- **BS: A Head of Department**

A Senior Phase Head of Department, post level two, with 25 years experience. He is a grade 7-class educator. He is an elected member of the Teacher Parents Association and is a member of his school's management team. His managerial duties include the maintenance and building portfolio, as well as the educator parent liaison. He is the Learning Area Head for Social Sciences. He is the grade head for grade seven. He organises the yearly grade-7 leadership camp. He coaches cricket and rugby. He co-organises rugby tours. He leads the school during singing at assembly.

- **IS: Librarian**

A post level one educator with 15 years of experience and is in charge of the library. Her duties include teaching Book Education to learners from grade one to grade seven. Her administrative duty is to manage the library. This includes issuing and repairing of books, ordering, invoicing, cataloguing and covering of new books.

- **BA: A Foundation Phase educator**

A grade-3 class educator with 20 years of experience. Grade head for grade three and Learning Area Head for Languages. She is the chairperson for the 'Care Group' who supports learners with emotional problems. Her extramural activities include foundation phase athletics and she is a member of the functions committee.

- **PV: A Foundation Phase educator**

Grade-1 class educator with nine years experience. She is the grade one grade head and is responsible for the academic planning and academic interventions for grade one. She is a member of the school's management team. She coaches athletics, swimming and netball. She is involved with speech and drama for the foundation phase.

- **JL: A Senior Phase educator**

A grade-7 class educator with 16 years of experience. She is the Teacher Support Team (TST) leader. Her extramural activities include teaching remedial classes, in charge of prefects, helping to lead the singing at assembly, organising school plays and revues, coaching Eisteddfod participants. She is the Learning Area Head for Languages.

- **LS: An Intermediate Phase educator**

A grade-5 class educator with 26 years of experience. She is the grade head for grade five. Her extramural activities include didactic help in mathematics and languages. She is the Learning Area Head for mathematics.

- **HH: An Intermediate Phase educator**

A grade-6 class educator with seven years experience. He is the Learning Area Head for Life Orientation, Mathematics and Social Sciences. He is an elected member of the governing body. He is responsible for the maintenance of the

sports fields. He is responsible for the prefects. He coaches athletics, swimming, cricket and rugby.

- **TA: An Intermediate Phase educator**

A grade-5 class educator with 9 years experience. He is a member of the school's Caregivers committee, supporting children from broken homes. He coaches speech and drama. He coaches cricket, athletics and rugby.

- **GM: A Senior Phase educator**

A grade-7 class educator with 5 years experience. She co-ordinates the schools' social functions. She is the Learning Area head for Natural Sciences. She coaches athletics and hockey.

- **JH: A Senior Phase educator**

A grade-7 class educator with 4 years experience. He leads the singing during chorus practise. He coaches cricket and hockey.

5.3 PEDAGOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Participants in the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module were challenged to position themselves regarding political issues. As these issues influence society and social life, it is important to sensitise participants about them. Participants were required to express an opinion about politically sensitive issues, such as why underage girls are at a high risk of being infected by HIV and to comment on criticism leveled at the

government's position on HIV/AIDS. Participants were also asked to assess the State President's point of view on HIV/AIDS, as reported in the press.

Scott and Usher maintain that knowledge is always socially constructed and geared to a particular interest (1999:31). For Le Grange, critical pedagogy incorporates the following elements: knowledge is not fragmented and it is relevant to the social lives of participants; participants are empowered to actively participate in decisions that will affect their lives (2001:205). Socially constructed knowledge, according to McLaren, requires that the world we live in is cognitively constructed through social interaction with others, and depends on culture, context, custom and historical occurrences (in Darder, Baltodano & Torres, 2003:72). Questions should be asked about a controversial issue such as HIV/AIDS and the responses should be discussed against the particular social background. I therefore agree with Anderson (1993 in Reeves, 1996:3) who argues that critical theory should be taken seriously because it encourages the continuous interrogation of the cultural, political and gender assumptions underlying any instructional module – everything must be questioned, including law, science, religion and Western philosophy (Reeves, 1996:3). History and the social situations/circumstances that developed from South Africa's political past do, to some extent, determine our personal interactions and social behaviour patterns. Because of the close relationship between politics and social circumstances, questions regarding political issues had to be asked. For McLaren, it means that our everyday common sense understandings must be lived out (in Darder *et al.*, 2003:72).

5.3.1 Pedagogical aspects of the module

While developing the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, Schreuder used the following directives to organise the content:

- political dimensions and developments;
- impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector in South Africa;
- the cause, nature, spread and effects on the human body of HIV/AIDS;
- HIV/AIDS and the Education Policy; and
- the educator, HIV/AIDS and the curriculum (Schreuder, 2003:9).

The journals that participants had to keep while completing the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module included questions based on these directives. The participants were given the opportunity to decide in which order they wanted to complete the journal activities. The course reading material was structured to offer participants a number of choices. It included compulsory reading material, recommended material and material for voluntary reading. The journal questions were based on the selected reading material, with the compulsory reading material enabling participants to answer the questions, but the recommended and voluntary reading material providing a more in-depth appreciation of the issues at hand.

It is important to assess whether the journal activities adhered to the directives that Schreuder set out to achieve while organising the content. It is also important to establish whether Schreuder structured the journal questions in a way that participants' construction of knowledge could be followed and assessed. The introductory question and the cartoon proved successful as tools to provide insight

into the participants' knowledge and opinion of HIV/AIDS. These questions gave the participants the opportunity to share their view of HIV/AIDS, while the concluding question offered the opportunity to evaluate their personal growth. This was encouraged by the structure of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module because participants were allowed to revisit, assess and adjust previous responses.

5.3.2 A social critical pedagogical framework

Inherent in the module were ample opportunities for participants to construct *technical knowledge* (e.g. "What is HIV & AIDS?") as well as *practical knowledge* ("How can I focus on HIV & AIDS in developing learning programmes?"). However, earnest efforts were made to move beyond these two knowledge interests to an emancipatory knowledge interest, which is the basis of critical pedagogy. Giroux and Simon (1988:13), suggest that teaching and learning must empower students to understand *why* things are the way they are and *how* they came to be that way, making the familiar strange and the strange familiar (drawing on Clifford, 1981, Clifford & Marcus, 1986, McLaren, 1986, 1988). For Schreuder, a critical pedagogy and e-learning provide many opportunities for a constructivist approach to teaching/learning. The following principles and features of constructivist teaching/learning were considered while creating the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module:

- Presenting the learning materials as part of a social problem (Huang, 2002:29) that will touch the lives of all teachers.

- Taking into consideration the existing cognitive structures of participants (Spigner-Littles & Anderson, 1999:205) based on individual experiences, whether these be valid, invalid, complete or incomplete.
- Posing challenges to these cognitive structures, creating opportunities for the identification, by participants, of their own knowledge gaps, existing misperceptions and myths (Kaufman, 2003:214 in Schreuder, 2004b:9).
- Presenting new information in such a way that it offers participants the chance to critically appraise the new facts (Schreuder, 2004b:9).

According to Perkins (1999), research shows that active engagement in learning may lead to better retention, understanding and active use of knowledge. Engaging participants in the discovery or rediscovery process may energise them and lead to deeper understanding (Perkins, 1999:7-10). Constructivism as a learning theory is a process whereby individuals create or construct their own *new* understanding or knowledge through the interaction of what they already know and believe, and the ideas, events, and activities with which they come into contact (Cannella & Reiff, 1994).

5.3.3 Constructivist approach to teaching/learning

Schreuder argues that an important aspect of the role of a constructivist educator is to be no more than a guide, who introduces and guides the “learner/student” through various aspects of the available learning material. In the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, hyperlinks were created to allow participants to visit appropriate learning sites, such as different websites, newspapers, academic papers and policy documents (Schreuder, 2003:10).

Schreuder succeeded in incorporating elements of a constructivist approach to learning and teaching for the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, because the module encourages participants to *articulate* what they know and it gives them the opportunity to *reflect* on what they have learned. The journal activities support the participants and require them to *negotiate* their own *understanding* (based on Jonassen quoted in Huang, 2002:30 in Schreuder, 2003:9-10).

Evidence that the in-service educators took time to *articulate* what they know and *reflected* on what they were learning is found in their journals as can be seen from the following extracts:

- I was totally surprised at the fact that there were so many issues surrounding this epidemic that I would never have thought about otherwise (GM).

- Although I have attended a number of seminars, workshops and training sessions on HIV/AIDS, this programme encourages you to think about your role and responsibility (TA).

- I was exposed to a wide range of informative topics allowing for introspection to be done – assessing my feelings and responses and understanding. Apart from the basic knowledge of generally known info, a vast amount of knowledge was gleaned relating to policies etc. that affect the individual, community and schools. I was continually prompted to divert my thought processes in different directions and then make meaningful deductions (BS).

Evaluating the individual in-service educator's journal responses, it was evident that these educators *negotiated* and constructed their own *understanding* of HIV/AIDS and education as he/she progressed through the module, and that these experiences can be interpreted as emancipatory.

- One participant responded as follows: “Personally, working through this module has been an enriching and enlightening experience”. This participant added, “I would also liked to have been exposed to a short course/document etc on counselling techniques which I feel is going to become vitally important if we are to ‘listen’ and react to situations which will occur in our classrooms”. This participant demonstrated that to construct a better understanding of HIV/AIDS information, exposure to lay counselling is necessary for him/her (BS).
- Another participant wrote in his/her journal in response to the first question: “What would my reaction be if I was to hear that one of my learners is HIV positive? By then it would already be too late to go and read up about it”.

After completion of the module, he/she wrote: “Currently I am incorporating more of the HIV matters in my class (on their level) and I feel more confident when taking part in a conversation re HIV. I’ve certainly learnt a lot!” (PV). This educator moved from being unsure of her reactions to having enough confidence on HIV/AIDS information to incorporate this information in her educational programme.

- An interesting response was as follows: “This was a very enlightening experience as there were a number of issues dealt with here that I never knew anything about. What had the most impact was the fact that I never realised that there was so much I can do as an educator, I never realised or even considered how much of an impact I can have and how far I am able to spread the word in the community by just talking about it” (GM). This participant incorporated the community as well as the learners; while negotiating his/her understanding, he/she started to think about the wider picture.

There is evidence that the participants have improved their understanding of HIV/AIDS significantly (technical knowledge interest). One participant, for instance, wrote, “I’ve certainly learnt a lot!” (PV) The impact of the study for GM lies in the fact that she has not realised how much an educator can do or even that her position as an educator places her in a position where she can make a positive contribution to society. In general, the participants found the experience enriching and enlightening.

5.4 MODULE QUESTIONS AND EDUCATOR RESPONSES

Due to very little face-to-face contact between educator and student in an e-learning module, the challenge is to ensure student participation. In this *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, space was created for participants to reflect on their understanding of the different issues. As participants worked through the module, they were also afforded the opportunity to continually reshape their understanding and perspectives. Student journals presented a solution as they offer space for participants to develop their own learning (Schreuder, 2004b:10 drawing on Kaufman, 2003:215).

To make meaning of participant feedback, and to guide and focus this study, I followed the assessment framework as discussed in par. 4.8. I was cautious not to “state a *knowledge claim*”, borrowing from Creswell, because it would mean that I would be commencing the project with certain assumptions of what participants would experience and learn (2003:6). Participant responses were therefore assessed with these protocols as my focus. These protocols were assembled from studying a large number of participant responses. I was especially on the lookout for indications of the construction of knowledge representing different knowledge interests, as this would confirm pedagogical richness of the learning experience. The framework therefore merely formed scaffolding from which I could position myself while evaluating responses. I also had to be aware of the fact that I was an active participant, careful not to interpret the participants’ responses according to my personal views, but interpreting and representing their views.

5.4.1 Introduction and assessment of participant

Question one encouraged the participant to evaluate and share his/her knowledge of HIV/AIDS. The purpose of this question was to establish the participant's existing point of view on HIV/AIDS, and to a lesser extent to form an idea of the social and cultural identity of the participant. It helped to position the participant with regard to his/her view on HIV/AIDS and education. By comparing a participant's response to question one and his/her reaction to later questions, it was possible to establish whether constructing of knowledge took place.

- **Journal Question 1**

Before you start this module, tell us how you feel about HIV/AIDS and how you think it may affect you as an educator.

The responses of the in-service educators showed that these educators were ready to take on the responsibility to deal with this difficult issue in class by incorporating sexuality education in the curriculum. Educators also identified the magnitude of this task and that educators are “morally” obliged to take on the responsibility.

- JL's response highlights the *impact* that educators have on learners. As she is an experienced educator, it is important to take note of her point of view. “A difficult question to answer! A teacher has enormous impact on a child's life, and is an invaluable tool that can be used to influence decisions that a child may make. In short, a teacher is a role model and mentor - a powerful source of knowledge, trust and faith” (JL).

- In his response, TA addressed the *moral* obligation that educators have towards learners. “It is an issue I cannot ignore anymore. It is my duty and responsibility to educate, develop skills how to prevent infection and how to deal with this pandemic. Moral values have to be instilled and cultivated and change of attitudes encouraged” (TA).

- For PV, the *responsibility* that educators have to be informed/educated about this pandemic is of importance. “I think it is the responsibility of each South African citizen to become well informed of the symptoms of HIV and how to react towards such learners/parents/relatives or friends” (PV).

- In his response, BS highlights the *need* to be equipped to deal with this pandemic. “As an educator, I will need to become familiar with various counseling skills i.e. how to listen in order to understand and be sympathetic rather than prejudiced or judgmental” (BS).

I found that the in-service educators have not addressed the issue of how they feel about HIV/AIDS. It is clear that they did not have any hesitation in responding as professional educators, but hesitated to respond as members of society (as individuals).

For Schreuder, an individual’s sense of humour reveals to some extent how that individual sees things (makes meaning of things) and how he/she thinks about issues. It was therefore important for Schreuder to encourage participants to reveal something about themselves, and their norms and values. He used a cartoon to achieve this and

according to the response a participant gave, he was able to form an idea about the participant's view on the seriousness of HIV/AIDS. Some student-educators felt that it was God's way to punish homosexual people and people who live promiscuously. Some of the participants saw the humour in the cartoon and felt that some people might relate better to humour.

- **Journal Question 2:**

Look at, and think about the cartoon, and write down your first impressions about it.

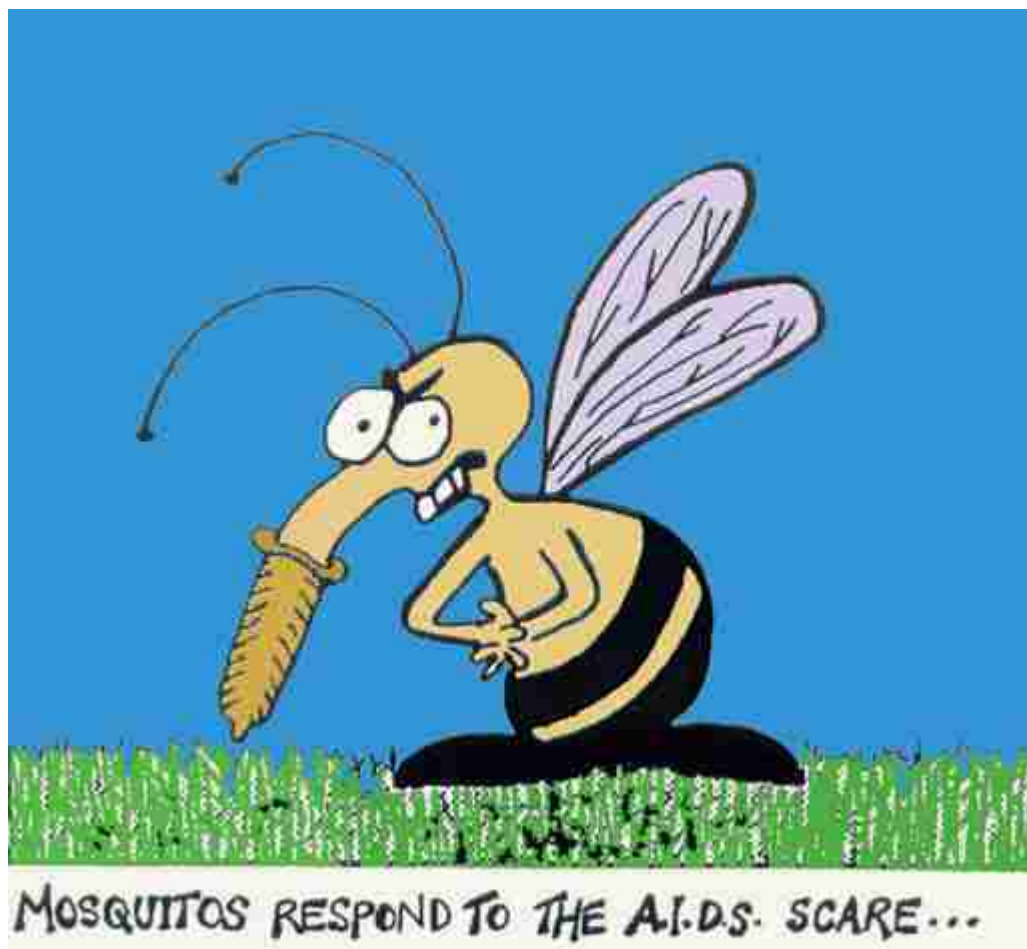


Figure 5.1 Mosquito cartoon

- One of the in-service educators wrote, “[t]his is a very funny and cute cartoon; it should be used to make people aware of the benefits to wearing a condom. People respond better to humour than anything else” (GM).

This participant qualified her answer and considered *how* people might respond. For her it was important to reach as many individuals as possible. She acknowledges the fact that humour can be used to convey information.

- Another participant reacted as follows: “Funny, but useless. The mosquito can’t spread any diseases. If only people would be so intelligent” (HH).

This response is problematic as the participant states that mosquitoes do not spread any diseases, whereas mosquitoes in the malaria-infected areas of South Africa spread malaria. This participant’s interpretation differs from the previous participant in that the previous participant saw the possibility that people might react to the humour in the cartoon, while this participant thought that this cartoon was funny.

- “Whilst I can see the obvious humour in the cartoon, I am also aware that it also trivialises the issue” (JL).

For this participant, it is possible that humour might interfere with the seriousness of the message. JL contemplates the possibility that the cartoon or humour may distract from the seriousness of the message, and it is important to keep this in mind when selecting material for educating purposes. In some situations or for some age groups

humour may work, whereas in other situations it might not; the educator will have to make the decision.

5.4.2 Political dimensions and developments

Questions three and nine gave participants the opportunity to assess the political backdrop against which various role players perform.

- **Journal Question 3:**

How would you explain to your class the current critique on government regarding their position on the causes, transmission and treatment of HIV/AIDS?

The participants realised that educators cannot only criticise the government's standpoint on HIV/AIDS. In their discussions with learners, they will criticise the government's position, but they will also point out why the government takes a particular stand.

- “Government is irresponsible on the issues of HIV/AIDS. They take a political stance instead of addressing the real issue. This state of affairs means we have to take the initiative, change our behaviour, stand on our rights and not wait for the Government to do something” (TA).
- “Government's position has caused much debate on the HIV-AIDS issue. It would however be counter-productive to attempt to negate government's

stance through criticism. I would prefer that we make use of their arguments as an added tool in combating the pandemic. For example, the issue of poverty and malnutrition can be regarded as contributing factors and it is therefore vital that children are made aware of these pitfalls” (SR).

- “The fact that HIV/AIDS is not prevalent among black people, that this pandemic is not limited to ‘poor’ communities. That we will ALL be affected; learners, their parents or our colleagues may suffer with this disease” (IS).

These in-service educators realised that they have to be sensitive to political issues as HIV/AIDS affects people of all communities, poor or rich, all cultures, races or religions. This pandemic knows no boundaries. Different groups of people might, because of different agendas, criticise the government on their stance or perceived lack of it towards HIV/AIDS. HIV infected people from the poorer communities might criticise the government for a perceived lack of financial and/or medical support. Financial or pharmaceutical donors might criticise the government for mismanagement of funds or of the ineffective distribution of money or medicines. Health workers might criticise the government for the lack of facilities, including hospitals, clinics, transport, etc. The media criticise the government on a regular basis for their handling of HIV/AIDS issues. A report by Davis claims that the government “will not in any meaningful manner treat the disease” (Davis, 2002:9). The participants realised that they have to balance their learner material with the facts about HIV/AIDS with reference to different points of view. In their responses, TA mentioned that we, as individuals, have to take the initiative and not wait on the government, while SR highlighted the poverty factor that should be considered. Both

TA and SR maintained that government should be supported in their efforts to curb this pandemic, and that positive criticism might be healthy and to the benefit of most South Africans.

▪ **Journal Question 9:**

Read the message by the State President at the end of the booklet. Do you think that this message conveys a vague stance on the causes, transmission and treatment of HIV/AIDS, as is often alleged in the press? Motivate your response.

According to their responses, participants can be divided into two groups. One group found the President's message on the causes of HIV/AIDS to be vague and uncommitted. The other group felt that the President is very direct and certain of the causes and the way forward in fighting the pandemic.

- "I believe that the stance on the causes, transmission and treatment is very vague and possibly almost non-existent. I think the route taken by the President in this speech is to try and encourage/sketch the consequences only. For the individual, society and country as a whole I believe that he is also trying to relinquish some of the responsibility associated with HIV/AIDS. There is no mention of short, medium and long-term programmes to be implemented to educate the masses. The fact that something must be done is correct. The 'how' and 'when' is very vague" (BS).

- “I think that the argument by government of whether HIV Virus causes AIDS is a futile one which seems to avoid the real issues of this pandemic. Whilst it is important to debate the various issues, valuable time is being wasted and is therefore counter productive. Our energies could be channelled into thinking of ways in which the disease can be combated” (SR).

- “I, however agree that poverty and malnutrition do play an important role in the spread of the disease. What I understand from President Thabo Mbeki’s speech is that the disease cannot be confronted on the issue of sexual promiscuity or irresponsible sexual attitudes only, but that poverty and malnutrition have some bearing on the spread of HIV-AIDS” (SR).

Cognisance should be taken of the view expressed by SR, who is an experienced education manager at a special needs school, that this pandemic must be fought within communities because it influences community life. Factors like substandard housing and the lack of basic amenities, together with poverty, need to be addressed simultaneously with HIV/AIDS.

- “No, I do not think that it is vague. The President addressed these issues accurately and his solutions are straightforward. He says the problem is everybody’s problem and it is exactly what it is. If we do not work together to solve this problem by means of a positive attitude and improved values, HIV/AIDS will get the better of our offspring and us” (HH, translated from the original Afrikaans).

- “He seems rather adamant to resolve the whole matter. Infection can only be stopped by our own lifestyles and sexual behavioural patterns. Taking hands in South Africa includes every South African: medical research, caring for orphans, to remove the stigma that goes with being HIV positive, mobilisation of resources etc.” (PV).

- “We as a nation should stand together and should support our government in the search for funding and we as educators must take the hands of our fellow South Africans in becoming a force against this deadly disease. NOW is the best time to act!” (PV).

It must be noted that HH and PV are of the opinion that the President wants to address this pandemic on a wide front, not only through education but also by involving other role players like the medical profession, feeding schemes etc.

5.4.3 Impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector in South Africa

Question seven addressed the impact of HIV/AIDS on the education sector.

- **Journal Question 7:**

In the introductory section, the Minister lists six reasons why educators can make a meaningful contribution to managing the HIV/AIDS crisis. Summarise these, and comment on/add to them.

I draw on TA's answer that represents the responses of many of the participants who feel that educators have to set the example in the following ways:

- in their sexual behaviour, especially male educators;
- understanding HIV/AIDS and having factual knowledge;
- help and equip young people with survival skills, using the correct information;
- interact with parents and spreading the correct information;
- create an environment of transparency; and
- devise creative caring methods for sick colleagues and learners (based on TA).

In their responses, the in-service educators demonstrated that they are aware of the magnitude of their tasks as HIV/AIDS education educators. It is also interesting to note that these in-service educators are more aware of their own roles in educating learners and are less intent on looking to the government to take the lead.

- “Educators have the enviable task to undertake the main responsibility to share, care and prepare our learners, because of absent, single or ‘don’t care attitude’ parents” (TA).

TA is a male educator who returned to education after twenty years in the private sector. It is interesting to note that for him educators have the *enviable task* to take responsibility to educate learners. His experiences as a medical representative made him appreciate and realise the responsibilities of educators (TA, 2003).

- “Because of their education and the opportunities that educators have to interact with other educators, parents, children and HIV leaders, they can make a meaningful contribution through their example, knowledge and creativity without pushing people away” (HH, translated from the original Afrikaans).
- “Does ‘example’ also refer to morality i.e. by living with a ‘common-law spouse’, surely a teacher is sending out a dangerous message? However, surely it’s the teacher’s right to have the right to privacy?” (JL).

It is clear that the participants understand the impact that an educator can have on learners. It is also interesting to see that JL wants to have the right to privacy in her private life. The question that can be raised, however, is whether an educator can have a private life that is in conflict with the teaching that he/she is performing. This question should be answered for sexuality education as well as education of all other learning areas. For example, should an in-service educator sports coach teach learners to play ‘outside’ the laws of the game to be able to win? In other words, ‘stretch’ the laws of sport to gain an unfair advantage over their opponents?

5.4.4. The cause, nature, spread and effects on the human body of HIV/AIDS

Questions four, six and eight addressed the cause, nature, spread and effects of HIV/AIDS on the human body, and some implications for classroom practice.

- **Journal Question 4:**

Think carefully about this, and then list the TEN most important facts that you will make sure the learners in your class should know about HIV/AIDS. Also make reference to your sources.

It is important to note that the participants are primary school in-service educators. It was interesting to see that they addressed similar issues, with individual behaviour and sexuality education the two prominent issues. It is also important to note that all the participants went into detail on these two issues. I based my summary of the participants' lists on TA's list because it is most representative of the participants' responses. Educators should explain and discuss:

- the two acronyms HIV and AIDS;
- the causes of AIDS and the fact that there is no cure;
- how it affects all South Africans, rich-poor-white-black-male-female-old-young;
- sex, sexuality and values;
- how to deal with someone who is bleeding and how to deal with blood;
- our relationships with HIV positive people and those with AIDS;
- the stigma of HIV/AIDS and how to deal with it;
- the behaviour of men: facts and fallacies;
- rape; and
- the importance of talking with one another about all these issues and our roles as individuals (summary based on TA).

LS added, “HOPE”, because as a primary school educator she felt that it is important to empower our learners with knowledge and hope. For LS, it is also vital that we teach our learners, especially girls, to be assertive. According to her, when a girl is in a compromising situation it is easy to say NO, but the girl must also be taught to be assertive enough and to persist in saying NO so that the other person gets the message that NO really means NO. For LS, it is important that girls are taught not to ‘give in’ to pressure that boys might put on them. For her, it is important that children, especially girls, are taught not to give in to the persuasion or peer pressure of others (LS, 2003).

▪ **Journal Question 6:**

What are the reasons why girls under the age of 15 become the victims of HIV/AIDS?

BS’s summary is representative of the participants’ responses:

- experimentation;
- peer pressure/coercion;
- moral values poorly developed;
- pressurised to engage in unprotected sex;
- communication – conflicting messages about sex;
- belief in various myths;
- not aware/informed of personal risks;
- lack of access to health services;

- girls seen as objects to men;
- fear of abandonment;
- preventative theory – sleep with a not yet sexually active girl; and
- cleansing theory – sex with a child (BS).

All the participants raised the fact that girls are not respected and are seen as inferior to boys in some South African cultures and SR's answer summarises the issue:

- “Communication on sexual matters is taboo in some cultures which results in people ignoring the issues that are vital to the survival of these young females. In addition, ignorance, poverty and peer pressure are added causes for these 15 year olds to fall victim to HIV-AIDS. Some cultures believe that having sexual intercourse with a virgin female will cure AIDS infected males. Poverty stricken people find sexual experiences as pleasurable and entertaining experiences. Normal social experiences are not available to these people because of their economic circumstances” (SR).

The participants mentioned the lack of openness between children and parents. Some of the participants felt that the parents do not have the necessary knowledge and are reluctant to discuss sexual issues with their children. The parents would rather leave this to the ‘knowledgeable’ educators.

- **Journal Question 8:**

Many people think that dealing with sexual education in an HIV/AIDS programme encourages children to experiment with sex. What does the booklet say about this issue? How do you feel about it?

It is interesting to note that the educators addressed various factors that have an influence on children's behaviour patterns. They included the role and influence of parents, children's perception of acceptable behaviour, the role of educators and speakers, and cultural and social expectations.

- “The booklet says that it is the parent's responsibility to teach their children the difference between right and wrong. Educators have a moral obligation to save the lives of their learners, especially when we have the knowledge to do so. Learners will not become promiscuous because educators talk about sex; through sexual education we can teach learners to have respect for themselves and their bodies and to make the correct decisions” (GM).
- “To me sexual education in a structured programme is only to the benefit of those who are introduced to it. The speakers and all chosen materials should be of a high standard and of people with experience to make an impact to the children rather than seeing it as a joke. Children should be able to relate to material which is on their level of development/growth and such a programme should ‘grow’ with them on their way to adulthood” (PV).
- “I think that sex is not immoral. Immorality becomes an issue when respect and self-restraint are ignored or when sex becomes a commodity, something

that is cheap and unsacred. By suggesting that talking about sex to children will make them more immoral has an opposite effect; it mystifies sex resulting in children being more interested in it but in a very covert and clandestine manner” (SR).

Participants’ responses to the question have shown that they have differentiated between sex information and sexuality education. They understand that sex indicates whether a person is male or female, and it can also refer to the act of intercourse. Sexuality is the total of a person’s inherited characteristics, knowledge, attitudes, experience and behaviour. They acknowledge the parent’s involvement and responsibilities, and these educators realise that they have to support parent participation. They however also acknowledge that some parents fail to accept this responsibility and that educators should accept some responsibility in such cases. For most of them, sexual education means a sharing of information in a *responsible* manner by a suitably ‘qualified’ person. PV makes the important point that the programme should ‘grow’ with the child. According to her, children should be exposed to high quality material and top speakers at age appropriate intervals. For SR, the importance of the correct education is tied to morality and respect. He feels that informed children might refrain from experimentation.

5.4.5 HIV/AIDS and the Education Policy

Education Policy issues were addressed during the various readings and covered by various questions.

5.4.6 The educator, HIV/AIDS and the curriculum

Questions five, eight and ten dealt with the educator, HIV/AIDS and the curriculum.

- **Journal Question 5:**

In the paper, Coombe lists three areas where HIV/AIDS will hit our community the hardest. Which one of these, in your opinion, presents the biggest threat to the supply of quality education, and why?

- PV summarised it as follows:

1. Demographic Impact: Reducing Growth Rate
2. Economic Impact: Declining Productivity
3. Social Consequences: Poverty, HIV/Aids and Children

“The above-mentioned aspects are so closely linked that they cannot be separated from each other. The one flows into the other which causes a vicious circle and without getting to the core (which I feel is the young people who are being affected socially) the whole AIDS epidemic will continue with its snowball effect” (PV).

- “My personal opinion is that there will be a reduction in the supply of quality education due to the large percentage of infected teachers to date. If education

is the core of all society then the threat of a decrease in supply and standard of education will be reflected in the community and society as a whole” (BS).

- “I think that the economy will be greatly affected and this threatens quality education in the following areas, educator absenteeism, retirement due to ill-health, changing conditions of service of educators, weakened management structures and shortage of money to train educators” (BA).

The participants linked quality education to an economic impact, with a decline in the quality of education having a resultant decline in economic prosperity. An argument can be made that if formal education is negatively affected, informal education could take its place and be as successful.

- **Journal Question 8:**

Many people think that dealing with sexual education in an HIV/AIDS programme encourages children to experiment with sex. What does the booklet say about this issue? How do you feel about it?

- “As much as I support these statements, it is easier said than done, for, as close as one gets with one’s class, there would always be a very natural hesitance on both sides, to discuss intimate issues” (JL).

This comment by JL is a good example of a very open and honest response, something the journal seems to encourage.

- “According to the booklet it is incorrect of some cultures and religions who suggest that teaching young people about sex and sexuality makes them more promiscuous or immoral. Sexuality education that gives knowledge and teaches respect for themselves and others will help them to make wiser decisions about whether or how to have sex, and keep safe” (SR).

- “What an HIV programme will not do is stop children from indulging in sex but rather help them consider the consequences and help them to protect themselves” (BS).

- “Research shows the contrary. More information and more teaching and more practising of life skills will reduce fear and ignorance and make people into more conscious, acceptable, responsible and moral people where, if they do engage in sex, it will be with more awareness and safe practice there of” (LS).

It was interesting to note that the participating educators have agreed that children should be educated about sex and sexuality, but that they saw it as the parents’ responsibility. The experienced (older?) educators and educators of the more senior classes, grades 5 to 7, were hesitant to discuss matters regarding sex and sexuality in classes that included boys and girls. They were less intimidated and more at ease in single sex classes. The younger educators and educators of the junior classes, grades 1 to 3, were more prepared to discuss sexuality issues with the learners. The fact that junior learners normally do not ask ‘difficult’ sexual questions and that they are more inclined to accept what the educator tell them might explain this.

- **Journal Question 10:**

With reference to a specific learning area, name the best idea for a learning activity on HIV/AIDS education that you have come across in this section. Also tell us where you found it.

The responses to this question were indicative of the development of practical knowledge. It was evident from the responses that the educators consulted various websites in their efforts to find suitable ideas for learning programme development. The variety of LAs that were covered emphasised the fact that HIV/AIDS can be addressed throughout the curriculum and should not be kept separate, taught only during LO periods. It was also interesting that most of the educators wanted to involve the learners in these activities actively.

- “I prefer activities where the learner can get more involved, preferably meeting people who are HIV positive, doctors and other health personnel dealing with HIV and AIDS patients, visiting hospitals. Lecturing may not always change attitudes or behaviour.” Website, <http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/Class/est572/Fall96/vancura.html> (TA).
- LK identified Life Orientation, which teaches about the human body, specifically how to take care of it.
 1. Tuning in: Becoming aware of the problem of caring for your body.

2. Exploring: Looking at possible stumbling blocks when trying to care for your body properly.
 3. Taking Action: Where can I improve on current ways?
 4. Reporting on: Sharing knowledge and providing others, possibly friends, with information, which they can use to avoid for example contracting diseases like AIDS” (LK).
- “The best ideas that I have come across would be in the mathematics learning area, where you could design a lesson using AIDS statistics and teach learners how to plot these on different graphs.” Website, <http://www.edhelper.com/cat.htm> (GM).
 - “The best idea for learning activities on HIV/AIDS would definitely be where the learners are involved in four different levels namely assessment of background info, research, problem solving and communication. In the social sciences learning area an important topic such as rural/urban migration within a country/city/town can really be used” (BS).
 - Learning area: Languages

Learning activity: “Report on” – story writing

“Learners are asked to write a story about the life of a young person who at a young age discovers that he/she is HIV positive due to experimenting with

sex. All consequences, follow-ups, tests etc. need to be described as well as future life styles and then choice of ending” (BA).

- LS suggest a module that she has developed covering the LAs LO, Languages and Arts & Culture. The module is based on four ideas/activities.

DISCUSSIONS

About SELF and RESPECT. The aim is to help learners to be more ASSERTIVE and to be more confident and in CONTROL.

ROLE PLAY

Creating situations where learners have to say NO to people they KNOW and LIKE, for example, uncle – niece abuse.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

Detailed information about the human body and the virus so that learners are FACTUALLY informed.

ORALS

LS claims that children are often SILENT learners and should be given the opportunity to SPEAK about what they know as the more they talk the less fearful they might become and be more in control. (LS’s capital letters)

These experienced educators demonstrated/emphasised the importance of learning through participation by using hands-on activities based on everyday situations.

Involving the community and maintaining balanced developmental programmes were also important factors that were incorporated. The fact that they have used different LAs emphasises the importance that *all* primary school educators should be trained to teach learners about HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS education should not be reserved for LO lessons.

5.4.7 Assessing personal development

- **Journal Question 11:**

In conclusion: what are your thoughts after working through this module? How do you rate this experience in your professional development programme?

In retrospect, the responses to this question probably offered the most abundant opportunities for assessing both the weaknesses and biggest advantages of the module, generating a wealth of information on both participants' growth in professionalism and on aspects of the module that required reworking or redesign. During the evaluating of responses to question one, I got the impression that participants tried to give the 'correct' or the more 'acceptable' answer. Comparing the responses to question one with those to question eleven, I found that the participants expressed their personal viewpoints and *how they feel* more easily in question eleven than in question one. In his response, BS attributed his development to the fact that he was continually prompted to adjust his thoughts and was stimulated to make deductions using relevant information. The exposure to information that this learning experience offered participants might have contributed to their development.

The following responses indicate how some of the participants experienced and related to their personal development. I would like to point out that the participants responded positively to the learning experience. They enjoyed the volume of information that they encountered and they enjoyed the opportunity that this module gave them to extend their personal knowledge/information base.

- “Working through this module has been an important learning experience for me. It certainly has provided valuable in-depth information and has helped me gain insight into this major pandemic” (IS).

- “Personally, working through this module has been an enriching and enlightening experience. I was exposed to a wide range of informative topics allowing for introspection to be done – assessing my feelings and responses and understanding. Apart from the basic knowledge of generally known info, a vast amount of knowledge was gleaned relating to policies etc., which affect the individual, community and schools. I was continually prompted to divert my thought processes in different directions and then make meaningful deductions. I would also liked to have been exposed to a short course/document etc on counselling techniques which I feel is going to become vitally important if we are to ‘listen’ and react to situations which will occur in our classrooms” (BS).

- “Although I have attended a number of seminars, workshops and training sessions on HIV/AIDS, this programme encourages you to think about your role and your responsibility. What are you doing as a role model and as an

educator? Or are you waiting for the government or someone else to take the initiative. I believe I may think and act more pro-actively after going through this module. Thank you for the opportunity. May this module change lives and save lives” (TA).

- “I was totally surprised at the fact that there were so many issues surrounding this epidemic that I would never have thought about otherwise. What had the most impact was the fact that I never realised that there was so much I can do as a educator, I never realised or even considered how much of a impact I can have and how far I am able to spread the word in the community by just talking about it” (GM).

- “The module has enlightened me on the important issues of HIV-AIDS. I therefore have become aware of the role I must play in demystifying the issues of sexuality” (SR).

All the in-service educators indicated that they experienced a positive learning experience, and that they feel more empowered to incorporate this new knowledge in their daily education programmes. It is also important to note that these educators indicated that they feel more equipped to deal with this complex and sensitive issue.

By analysing the responses, evidence was found that the course succeeds in creating opportunities for the construction of understanding and new knowledge. I interpreted this as an indication of the development of emancipatory knowledge, which subscribes to some of the principles of critical pedagogy. This also supports Rogers’

(2001:40-43) argument (see paragraph 3.4.2) that adults too learn by *doing*. While completing the module, the participants felt the need to do introspection and to assess their feelings, their responses and their understanding of the course material continually. Based on prior knowledge and because they were under no time pressure to perform, it was possible for *new* knowledge to be constructed.

The positive remarks made by most of the participants could be because the module was offered on-line. The module was flexible, journal questions were randomly available and accessible, and participants could sign on at any time. It was effective and convenient as participants could determine their own pace and working hours, and they could choose in which order they wanted to perform the journal questions. E-learning offered the participants the opportunity to take responsibility for their own training.

5.4.8 Participant comments

Negative

- **On screen reading**

GM commented, “[I]t is however very difficult to work off the Internet as reading off a computer screen is very tiring” (GM).

- **Technology ‘failure’?**

While working on their journals, some of JH's and HS's responses were 'lost' after they had been saved, and they had to re-do some questions. This was a frustrating experience for them because of the time that was lost (JH and HS).

- **Preference for paper-based information**

LS expressed a preference for paper-based information. She prefers to work from a document where she can make notes on the script. Once her access expired, she could not go back to re-read information she wanted to use for lesson purposes.

Positive

- **Flexibility of the programme**

The fact that she could go back to any information at any given time was a very positive experience for JL (JL, BS and HH).

- **Availability of information**

The availability and variety of web sites were appreciated, and this encouraged some participants to do more reading than expected/necessary (BS, TA and JH).

- **Accessibility**

All the participants were in agreement that a positive aspect of the participation was that they could work in their own time at their own pace at any preferred venue.

5.5 EDUCATOR AND STUDENT RESPONSE VARIATIONS

In paragraph 3.3, it was explained why an online *HIV/AIDS and Education* module was developed for pre-service educators (students). On completion of the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module, participants are not expected to write an examination or formal test or to perform a formal assessment task. Participants are, however, required to complete a journal. These completed journals were scrutinised to evaluate individual progress. No grade or mark was allocated. The journal activities afforded participants the opportunity to monitor their own progress. At the same time, it afforded the course developer and I the opportunity to assess participant development. The in-service educators participated voluntarily and received no benefits other than the self satisfaction of learning more about HIV/AIDS, participating in a project that helped me personally and might help in future educator training. The students, on the other hand, had to complete the compulsory module to earn two credits towards their qualification. The intention was never to develop a module to identify differences between pre-service educators (students) and in-service educators. The pilot group of in-service educators was not big enough to establish statistical tendencies and yet there seem to be general differences in the responses of the two groups.

While ‘assessing’ the journals, it was evident that some participants went to great lengths to answer the questions whereas others covered the minimum reading necessary to complete the questions. The responses of the students and in-service educators showed some differences in how and to what extent the information was produced. I found some of the students to be very honest, possibly naïve, and open in their answers. It might be that because of their perceived lack of life-experiences that the students based their answers on ‘lesser’ experiences. Some of the students did

however share very sensitive personal information. The in-service educators seemed more reserved, sharing less of their personal experiences and anticipated possible problems, especially where sensitive issues were involved.

Some of the reasons for the differences might be that the students *as educators in training* were exposed to and trained in an OBE system where learners are encouraged to question, discuss, debate, differ from others and expected to have and formulate their own opinions. It might also be that they are naïve about the educational context and because of their inexperience they do not really know how twelve- to fourteen-year-old learners, especially in mixed sex classes, might react when sensitive sexual issues are discussed.

The educational background of in-service educators, which involved a very different approach where information was handed out to be studied and facts recited, with limited if any discussion or debate, might explain their reserve. Our political context and history might have been a factor, because these educators wanted to give the politically ‘correct’ answer when sensitive issues were raised. A further possibility is that the educators are set in their ways and are hesitant or even adamant not to change. It is debatable whether experienced educators will ‘know’ how learners will react when sensitive sexual issues are discussed, but from the responses it is clear that some of these educators expect some difficulties.

It was never my intention to compare student and educator journal responses, but it was nonetheless interesting to find these differences. The question should be asked whether the different tendencies were a coincidence or whether the age difference

between the groups of participants played a role. One could also ask whether these differences are to be expected, or whether they are indicative of a new learner/student coming through a new education system.

Knowles (1983) argue that adults respond less readily to external sanctions for learning than to internal motivation (in Edwards *et al.*, 1996:95). I found that the thirteen educators, who completed the module out of the original fifteen, participated because they wanted to learn/know more about HIV/AIDS. In their already full schedules they organised their time to be able to complete the journal questions. Some of these educators, on completion of the module, asked permission to go back into the programme and browse on the web to visit various HIV/AIDS sites. Some of these educators engaged me in lengthy discussions about HIV/AIDS and especially about sex, sexuality and sexuality education. Discussions centred on whom should be allowed to teach, when and at what level sexuality education, including HIV/AIDS education, should be allowed. Interesting discussions were held about who should be entrusted with the responsibility to educate learners. Various issues were raised, including the age, sex and the lifestyle of the educator. I found it interesting talking and sharing opinions about these rather sensitive issues. Some educators used these opportunities to share personal experiences. These discussions convinced me that once educators have a working knowledge of HIV/AIDS, discussions with learners might also become easier.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In 1999, the then Deputy President Thabo Mbeki said: “HIV/AIDS is among us, it is real. We can only win against HIV/AIDS if we join hands to save our nation. For too long we have closed our eyes as a nation, hoping the truth was not so real” (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:ii). In the foreword of the *Resource Guide: HIV/AIDS Education* for educators, Van der Merwe writes that it is crucial to reach children before they become sexually active and, because HIV/AIDS is spread mainly through sexual contact, HIV/AIDS education should always be presented in the context of sexuality education (Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:iv).

There is evidence, see paragraph 5.4.4 that the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module helped educators to understand the concept of sexuality and to differentiate between *sex* and *sexuality*. This is an important issue in addressing this pandemic.

I learnt about sex from the street. Believe me that is not a good place to learn it. Talk to me early and often and tell me what I need to know (Teens speak out in Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:59).

Sex information is transmitted for the sake of imparting information but without having education and moulding as an aim, values and norms are absent. Sexuality education is a lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about identity, relationships and intimacy. It is therefore a guiding process accompanied by values and norms (SIECUS, 1991 in Van der Merwe *et al.*, 2002:64).

HIV/AIDS changed the rules of sex and sexuality education. It is important that learners be equipped with survival strategies as this growing pandemic is killing thousands of people around the world. Learners are constantly exposed to information, not always the correct information or in the correct context, from the media via radio, television and in print. It is also important that *all* educators should be trained to differentiate between sexuality education and sex information. Most of the learners know about sex and what goes with it and because it is not easy or natural for educators to discuss these issues, educators have to be trained to handle these situations. Very few learners have however been informed about sexuality and the norms and values that go with it.

The responses from the participants, by journal and discussions, are that the module added value to their personal development and growth. They have enjoyed the opportunity to work in their own time and to have the opportunity to visit various websites. E-learning as a delivery method option presented some of the in-service educators with minor difficulties. Initially, some of them expressed their preference to receive information in printed form. I found that this was because some of the educators were not computer literate enough and some of the educators had difficulties reading information on the screen. Support in the use of the programme was given to participants and the more time they spent on reading from the screen, the more they have adapted to this form of reading.

The question whether politics should be taken out of the HIV/AIDS debate is interesting because politics cannot be removed from critical social pedagogy. In the past, different educational provisions were available for each race group, which plays

a major part in our differentiated educational background. The spread of HIV/AIDS might also be linked to the segregation laws that forced some black families to live apart from each other because of the Group Areas Act. Politics are interwoven in our daily lives and should be addressed in our education of young learners.

The module *HIV/AIDS and Education* was never intended as a product to train the masses or that it could replace or serve as an alternative for other training products or programmes. This module offers an extra option for professional development; an option that is accessible and financially viable. There seems to be sufficient evidence to show that this module, offered by a higher education institution, can succeed in doing what we believed should be done, namely that every opportunity and resource should be exploited in the drive to educate our educators to deal with HIV/AIDS in schools.

In addition, in analysing the responses using the assessment framework described in paragraph 4.8, I felt comfortable that various knowledge interests were served. There were ample illustrations of the development of technical knowledge (what HIV/AIDS is, how it is transmitted). The constructions of practical knowledge (how to develop curricula and learning programmes focusing on HIV and AIDS in a number of learning areas) were abundantly demonstrated. Lastly, many teachers showed clear indications of emancipation and empowerment in their responses, and a readiness to participate in political discourse and to become involved in social issues. In my opinion, this serves to confirm that pedagogical richness need not be compromised in e-learning situations.

CHAPTER 6

REFLECTIVE PERSPECTIVES

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Elias reminds us that on completion of their education all learners will live in a world that will place demands on them beyond intellectual skills. Learners need to be prepared academically, socially, emotionally, politically, economically and ethically. Schools need to be places of welcome, safety, acceptance, growth and learning so that every learner will be equipped to meet the challenges of personal, vocational and civic life with a strong ethical and moral compass (Elias, 2002:47-55). The current crisis with HIV/AIDS and its implications for education add new dimensions to these views.

According to UNAIDS 2002 reports, all South Africans will in the near future either be affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS. This will have multiple impacts on education, as children of school going age might have to leave school to either earn an income or to assist in caring for sick family members or the orphaned young. Education might therefore counteract the effects of HIV/AIDS, as educated people might be in a position to make informed choices about lifestyle preferences.

In the Western Cape the WCED accepted this responsibility and embarked on educator training, focusing on training one educator for each grade in all WCED governed schools. I agree with Dugmore who is concerned that the response to HIV/AIDS has not been guided by a comprehensive approach in the Western Cape.

He has committed education to ensure that prevention is given renewed impetus (2004:11). In this section I will reflect on the developed programmes and processes that are related to HIV education. I will also reflect on the particular process of my study in this regard.

6.2 NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION INITIATIVES (NDoE)

In South Africa, the National Department of Education (NDoE) took various initiatives to see to it that our learners are prepared for the challenges of HIV/AIDS. In this thesis, I discussed two reasons why in the current context these initiatives can be regarded as insufficient.

- Firstly, from a pedagogical point of view, the NDoE's approach to educator training may be found wanting. Reasons for this might be a growing distrust on the part of educators of WCED training sessions and training material and the "top down" approaches to material production and delivery of material (Schreuder, 2004a:1-2; Jansen 2004:8). In conjunction with this, educators increasingly distrust the capabilities of some of the facilitators and in many cases feel an escalating resentment towards the compulsory attendance of training sessions and towards the perceived incompetence of some of the facilitators. Lamb (1995) found that two major limitations to successful educator training are that training does not take situational factors into consideration and that educators do not have opportunities to talk about the difficulties they experience (in Atay, 2004:146).

- The sheer extent and magnitude of the HIV/AIDS crisis presents a second reason why the NDoE's teacher training initiatives in response to the HIV/AIDS crisis may be insufficient. Schreuder claims, "nothing has changed over the past five years to change or soften the impacts of a terrible pandemic on our education system" (2004a:1; Jansen, 2004:8). These circumstances certainly warrant a much wider and more concerted effort than the provision of in-service training for Life Skills teachers only by officials of education departments.

6.3 VALUE OF THIS STUDY

My concern about the relative lack of impact of the PD initiatives by the authorities stimulated an investigation of alternative PD programmes to help educators face HIV and AIDS as a reality, and encouraged a dynamic focus for learning programme development. As an experienced educator and school manager, I recognised the potential of a WebCT module developed for pre-service educators and made arrangements for a number of practising educators to participate in it.

All educators working through the module were sensitised to HIV and the magnitude of the pandemic. In the light of the urgency of the challenge to education to respond to the AIDS pandemic, I am convinced that efforts should be made to expose educational decision makers to alternative PD programmes like this, in that way perhaps encouraging a change in attitude in respect of PD and especially HIV PD. As the WCED granted me permission to pilot the study in schools under their jurisdiction, I am obligated to supply the WCED with a copy of my thesis. I will be requesting feedback from them.

The reality of HIV is with us and the following information clearly shows to what extent it hampers society. In a report, based on a joint initiative between the City of Cape Town, the Medical Research Council, the public health units of the University of the Western Cape (UWC) and the University of Cape Town (UCT) and the Metropolitan Health Information Group, *Cause of death and premature mortality in Cape Town (2001)*, HIV/AIDS emerged as the second highest cause of premature death amongst young Capetonians. According to the report, HIV/AIDS accounts for 12% of these premature deaths and according to these researchers the pattern is not confined to Cape Town (Caelers & Johns, 2003:1).

The rate at which HIV/AIDS is growing amongst educators in South Africa and the possibility that it could lead to a collapse of the education system within the next six to eight years could, according to Spamer of the Faculty of Educational Sciences at the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus, have a negative impact on education provision (Du Preez, 2004:10). The possible collapse of the education system could then lead to the collapse of other important systems that depend on human resources.

From the above it is clear that the education system and other systems in society that are dependent on human resources are at risk because of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This study opened up some possibilities to add value to HIV PD.

6.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the limitations of this study is the small number of educators who participated and the fact that only four schools, three model C schools and one from the former

House of Representatives, were involved. If schools from the townships (black schools with limited resources) could have been included, it would have added depth and a sense of further representivity to the study. Two schools were interested, but lacked the necessary infrastructure. The WCED and their organisations that supply schools with computers were requested to provide support by means of computers or access to computers to involve those schools that lacked the resources. These requests, however, were unsuccessful. Once permission was granted by the WCED to do the research, it was very difficult to establish any contact with WCED officials. Numerous attempts to contact the HIV/AIDS co-ordinator, Peter Fenton, telephonically proved to be unsuccessful. I then decided to approach him in person. On arriving at his office, he granted me one unscheduled interview. Attempts to involve him further proved futile, he cancelled one scheduled and confirmed appointment at the last moment. Our second scheduled and confirmed appointment also did not take place as he was out of town on that specific day. He never informed me of this. In an informal discussion during a break, a speaker at an HIV/AIDS information session in Somerset West informed me that they would be out of town the next day. I confronted him about our scheduled appointment, but he merely confirmed his unavailability. These unfortunate experiences did not help to build confidence in the commitment of the local education authorities to respond to the crisis with the necessary urgency. The seeming lack of interest and inaccessibility in my opinion denied an opportunity for dialogue that could be forged through this study, and I therefore view this as a limitation and a missed opportunity for collaboration that might have led to a broader implementation process of the WebCT module.

6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The value that the *HIV/AIDS and Education* module and similar modules can add to in-service educators' knowledge base was established in this study. I am aware of the fact that the focus of this study was never to create/adapt an existing module for PD, but on completion of my study I however feel that this module could be used as an effective HIV PD training tool by the WCED.

It is however important to take cognisance of the in-service participants' comments. In the journal activities and during discussions the participants raised several issues. As the participants were "consulting" participants, using Prozesky's classification, the views of the educators participating in this research are important and should be taken into account when adjustments are made if it is decided that the module will be used as a HIV PD training tool, to comply with in-service educator needs (1998:29-30).

These first-hand experiences of participants in the project can provide direction to developers of PD programmes of this kind and will be useful to anyone wishing to implement this particular module.

6.6 FURTHER RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES

A project funded by the WCED and involving a more representative composition of schools, sustained for a longer period, in excess of three years, would produce data that could be used in planning strategies for more effective HIV PD. My suggestion is that educators should be trained and their performances in classrooms, regarding development of material and frequency of educating learners regarding HIV, should

then be assessed and monitored. This process needs to provide opportunities for educator feedback that would inform ongoing development and improvement of the programme to suit various contexts and educator needs. Local education authorities should also engage in research processes to establish suitable HIV and AIDS PD service providers among the higher education institutions in the region, especially concentrating on those who are in a position to utilise ICT and e-learning efficiently and appropriately.

6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

Some social consequences of HIV/AIDS include an increase in poverty, an increase in the crime rates, unsupervised and abandoned children struggling for survival (Coombe, 2001:1-3). While doing my research, it became evident that education and politics could not be separated completely because HIV/AIDS affects all levels of society, and people have different agendas and expectations. Moreover, it seems inevitable that the poorest communities suffer most as the result of HIV/AIDS and in South Africa poverty cannot be dissociated from the political history. Research, according to Pretorius, has shown that higher education levels correlate with a lower infection rate (2002:6). The South African Government realised that it had to respond and I think that the government's HIV/AIDS education initiatives should be augmented. Although educators are already overburdened by workshops, information sessions and training sessions aimed at, amongst others, helping them master the principles and concepts of Curriculum 2005 and the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), HIV/AIDS training should be a priority.

As an education manager, I realise that education should be an important role player in educating children about HIV/AIDS *before* they become sexually active. This implies massive workplace training initiatives, in which all-possible allies and technologies are utilised.

6.8 PERSONAL REFLECTION

An incident in my personal life changed my personal beliefs about people who are infected by HIV/AIDS. This made me as a school based education manager realise that education should be an important role player in educating children about HIV/AIDS. It is important for me to reach children and to teach them the necessary skills to make life saving choices and to teach them to be assertive at an age **before** they become sexually active.

While evaluating the e-learning PD programme, I realised that education and politics could not be separated because HIV/AIDS impacts on all levels of society. As a result of my assessment of the participants' journals, I am convinced that the participants experienced and demonstrated evidence of positive development and personal growth. This to me underlines the importance of research as an agent to enhance understanding of the pandemic as well as to educate with a view to reducing and preventing further infections and the associated consequences.

As I personally learned more about HIV/AIDS, through personal and professional development in this research process, I realised that to help curb or stem the development of this pandemic, both in my individual capacity and as a school manager, I would have to speak up about the potential dangers of HIV/AIDS infection

and help steer, on a managerial level, the incorporation of HIV/AIDS education across the curriculum. This realisation forced me to act and I started to include parents, educators and learners in various information-sharing programmes in my school. As researcher, I can ultimately give evidence of my own personal growth, and empowerment to encourage colleagues to urgently deal with HIV & AIDS in their daily routines of developing learning programmes.

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