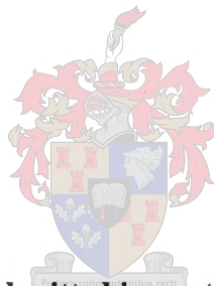


**PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF  
ASSESSMENT IN TWO RURAL SCHOOLS**

**By**

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of the requirements for the degree of  
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**DECLARATION**

**I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this assignment 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.**



## SUMMARY

An outcomes-based education (OBE) approach was introduced into South African schools in 1998 in order to align education with the democratic values of the new government. The transition to OBE has not been an easy process for many stakeholders. Teachers, in particular, have had to review their own philosophies and practices of teaching and learning. This paradigm shift required by OBE was, however, underestimated in teacher training. The recent addition of an inclusive education approach may arguably be seen as a natural, anticipated extension of the transformation of South African education. This is stated because the principles and practices of inclusion are endorsed and actualised by OBE and the Constitution of South Africa. Based on this inference, this research study explores how assessment, an integral part of the teaching and learning process, can contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education.

The research was conducted at two rural mainstream primary schools near Stellenbosch in the Western Cape. The research methodology was based on the principles and beliefs of the qualitative paradigm as this study explored the teachers' constructed realities and experiences of assessment in OBE and inclusive education. A case study research method was employed in order to produce 'thick' descriptions and contextualised interpretations of their constructions. Following Creswell's (1994) dominant-less dominant design model, the data in the study was produced via both qualitative and quantitative research methods. A self-administered questionnaire consisting of closed-ended and open-ended questions was given to all of the teachers at both schools to enable an initial inquiry into the area of research interest. The responses to the closed-ended statements produced the quantitative data in the research study and the responses to the open-ended questions formed part of the qualitative data. Following an analysis of the data produced, two volunteer teachers at each school were then interviewed to gain further insight and clarification. The qualitative and quantitative data produced in each case study were first analysed separately (within case analysis) and then compared and combined in a cross-case study analysis. This approach enabled a thorough understanding of the research question and the production of quality research.

The findings of the research indicate that, although the teachers in the case studies do not see a connection between assessment and inclusion, their assessment practices and principles do contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education. The research found that assessment in OBE has encouraged these teachers to view their learners as individuals with different abilities and needs. Consequently, some of the teachers have adjusted and modified their assessment methods to accommodate these factors. It was also found that not all of the teachers seem to have made a paradigm shift required by OBE. This lack of internalised understanding might contribute towards the confusion, insecurity and skepticism reported by some teachers with regards to assessment and inclusive education. Due to the importance of a paradigm shift in OBE and inclusive education, it is strongly recommended that teachers receive the necessary assistance and training that engenders this transition.



## OPSOMMING

'n Uitkomsgebaseerde onderwys (UGO) benadering is in 1998 in Suid-Afrikaanse skole bekendgestel ten einde onderwys in lyn te bring met die demokratiese waardes van die nuwe regering. Die oorgang na UGO was vir menige rolspelers nie 'n maklike proses nie. Veral onderwysers moes hulle filosofie en praktyke rondom onderrig en leer hersien. Hierdie paradigmaskuif, wat 'n vereiste vir UGO is, word in onderwyseropleidingsprogramme onderskat. Die onlangse toevoeging van 'n inklusiewe onderwys benadering mag moontlik gesien word as 'n natuurlike, geantisipeerde verlenging van die verandering in Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys. Dit word genoem omdat die beginsels en praktyke van inklusiewe onderwys deur UGO en die konstitusie van Suid-Afrika onderskryf en geaktualiseer word. Op grond van hierdie aanname, ondersoek hierdie navorsingsprojek hoe assessering as 'n integrale deel van die onderrig en die leerproses kan bydra tot die bevordering van inklusiewe onderwys.

Die navorsing is by twee landelike, hoofstroom primêre skole naby Stellenbosch in die Wes-Kaap geloods. Die navorsingsmetodologie is gebaseer op die beginsels en praktyke van kwalitatiewe navorsing, aangesien die studie onderwysers se vertolking van die werklikheid en ervarings van assessering in UGO en inklusiewe onderwys ondersoek. 'n Gevallestudie as navorsingsmetode is gebruik om gedetailleerde, presiese beskrywings en gekontekstualiseerde interpretasies van die betrokke onderwysers se belewenisse te lewer. Deur Creswell (1994) se 'dominant-less dominant design model' as riglyn te gebruik is data van hierdie studie op beide 'n kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe navorsingsmetode geproduseer. 'n Vraelys wat geslote- en oop-einde vrae bevat het en self deur alle onderwysers van beide skole voltooi is, is gebruik om die aanvanklike navorsingsbelange te identifiseer. Kwalitatiewe navorsingsdata is verkry deur die response wat gelewer is op oop-einde vrae en kwantitatiewe data is geproduseer deur middle van die geslote-einde vrae. Na 'n analise van die data is onderhoude met twee vrywillige onderwysers van beide skole gevoer om meer inligting en duidelikheid te verkry. Die kwalitatiewe en kwantitatiewe data wat geproduseer is, is eers afsonderlik geïnterpreteer en daarna in 'n kruis-gevallestudie analise vergelyk en gekombineer. Hierdie benadering het tot deeglik, deurdagte insigte rakende die navorsingsvraag en die daarstel van kwaliteit navorsing, gelei.

Die navorsingsbevindinge het getoon dat, alhoewel die onderwysers wat betrokke was by die gevallestudies nie 'n verband kon sien tussen assessering en inklusiewe onderwys nie, het hulle assesseringspraktyke en -beginsels wel 'n bydrae gelewer tot die bevordering van inklusiewe onderwys. Die navorsing het bevind dat assessering in UGO die onderwysers aangemoedig het om hulle leerders as individue met unieke vermoëns en behoeftes te sien. Gevolglik het sommige onderwysers aanpassings en veranderings in hulle assesseringsmetodes gemaak om hierdie faktore te akkommodeer. Daar is ook bevind dat nie al die onderwysers die paradigmaskuif wat UGO vereis, gemaak het nie. 'n Onvermoë om die beginsels van UGO te internaliseer mag moontlik bydra tot die verwarring, onsekerheid en skeptisisme oor assessering en inklusiewe onderwys wat deur sommige van die onderwysers gerapporteer is. Weens die belangrikheid van 'n paradigmaskuif in UGO en inklusiewe onderwys, word daar ten sterkste aanbeveel dat onderwysers die nodige ondersteuning en opleiding ontvang om hierdie oorgang te bewerkstellig.



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## CHAPTER 1

### CONTEXTUALIZATION AND ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The change to a democratic government in 1994 has resulted in the transformation of many sectors of South African society (Pretorius, 1998a: v). The Constitution of South Africa (1996) which reflects and legitimizes the ideologies of the new democratic government may be viewed as playing the most influential role in the transitions as it forms "...the basis of public policy formation, adoption and implementation" (Enslin, 1984: 39; Sedibe, 1998: 4). In the transformation of education, the democratic values of liberty, equity, human rights and appreciation of diversity outlined in the Constitution have guided the process and are reflected in the policies and changes introduced.

The Constitution states that all children have the right to education, to equal access to quality education and that education needs to be transformed and democratised (RSA, 1996: 13; Wyk & Mothatha, 1998: 3). This has resulted in the introduction of Outcomes-based education (OBE) and the formation of Curriculum 2005. This educational approach and supporting curriculum provide quality education and endorse and promote the principles of the Constitution (Green, 2001: 11). These principles of democracy, equity, non-discrimination and human rights also clearly indicate that South African society should be organised on the principle of inclusion (RSA, 1996: Section 1a). This perspective is supported by the Department of Education (2001: 11) that states: "These values summon all of us to take up the responsibility and challenge of building a humane and caring society, not for the few, but for all South Africans". Therefore, one can view the advocacy for inclusion and inclusive education as a natural progression in the transformation of education in South Africa.

In inclusive education the educational approach is restructured and adapted to include learners with special needs (Engelbrecht, 1999: 8). In this regard the classroom, teaching techniques, curriculum, assessment methods *etc.* are adapted to meet the individual needs of ALL learners



(Department of Education, 2001: 17). It is important to note that the meaning of 'special needs' is extended beyond physical and cognitive disabilities to individual needs that arise due to influences such as socio-economic environments, ethnic or cultural marginalisation and family circumstances. This broader understanding of special needs is one of the guiding principles of the framework outlined in the Salamanca Statement and Framework For Action on Special Needs Education (Unesco, 1994: 6), a key document in the development of inclusion and inclusive education.

According to Naicker (1999a: 13), the underlining principles and beliefs of OBE and inclusive education are mutually supportive. The principles of an OBE approach include that: all learners can perform successfully but not necessarily at the same pace, successful learning can result in more successful learning experiences and that schools are pivotal in creating the conditions and possibilities for success (Naicker, 1999b: 21). Spady (1994: 2) explains that OBE is concerned with establishing the conditions and opportunities within the education system that enable and encourage all learners to achieve the essential outcomes. From this perspective Naicker (1999a: 13) argues that, "...it is OBE that will allow inclusive education to succeed since OBE is inclusive in nature. It is able to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning, including those who manifest gifted behaviours". Therefore, if teachers embrace the principles and practices of OBE they will naturally promote inclusive education in their classrooms.

Based on this deduction, assessment, which is an integral part of the teaching and learning process (Coetzee, 2002: 144), can contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education. The Department of Education (2002b: 4) is supportive of this inference and advocates that assessment should be based on principles that endorse the beliefs and values of OBE and inclusive education. These principles consist of Design Down, Clarity of Focus, High Expectations and Expanded Opportunities. The Design Down principle proposes that, assessment activities should be adapted and modified to accommodate the needs of learners who experience barriers to learning. The Clarity of Focus principle states that learners should be informed as to assessment criteria before the task is given and the principle of High Expectations proposes that learners be encouraged to meet their full potential by measuring their progress against previous achievements and not against those of other learners. The



Expanded Opportunities principle requires teachers to provide multiple ways of exposing learners to learning opportunities that will enable them to demonstrate their full potential (Department of Education, 2002b: 5). Assessment practices that adhere to these principles will assist learners who experience barriers to learning to be supported and included within regular classes.

It is argued though that in order to effectively adopt the principles and practices of OBE and to promote inclusive education, teachers need to experience a paradigm shift (Pretorius, 1998a: v; Singh & Manser, 2000: 110; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 6). As Naicker (1999a: 15) states, "...we are looking at a paradigm shift from exclusionary and authoritarian education based on discriminatory and racist assumptions to an inclusive and learner-sensitive education based on human rights as established in the Constitution of South Africa". Many academics and researchers (Naicker, 1999a: 45; Pahad, 1999: 247; Zollers, Ramanathan & Yu, 1999: 165) highlight that a paradigm shift in teachers' values, understandings and belief systems is required to ensure that teaching and assessment practices support and are supportive of the principles of OBE and inclusive education. This, according to Naicker (1999a: 45), is one of the major challenges facing educationists in South Africa.

## **1.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Mouton (1996: 173) scientific research does not take place in a vacuum; it forms part of a particular theoretical framework. The theoretical framework is the outermost frame of the research, it is "...the body of literature, the disciplinary orientation that you draw upon to situate your study" (Merriam, 1998: 47). This study will use the framework of an integration of the eco-systemic theory and the constructivist learning theory in which to situate the constructed realities and experiences of some teachers with regards to assessment and inclusive education within their particular contexts.

Jordaan and Jordaan (1989: 42) state: "A context is a prerequisite for the understanding of experience, behaviour, problems and phenomena". With the recent transitions within South Africa's educational context, and society at large, the eco-systemic theory is frequently



employed by contemporary researchers and academics as a framework by which to comprehend and gain insight into the various issues and complexities (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 1997: 34-39; Engelbrecht, 1999: 3-5; Green, 2001: 7-8). For as Green (2001: 7) states: “theory does not provide recipes or prescriptions, but a set of organised principles that, together with contextual knowledge, can generate insights into particular situations”.

The eco-systemic theory elucidated by current academics is derived from an interpretation of Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) eco-systemic model of human development and Jordaan and Jordaan’s (1998) principles of contextual analysis and synthesis outlined in a systemic thinking model. According to Donald *et al.* (1997: 34) the eco-systemic theory has evolved out of an integration of the ecological and systems theory. “Its main concern is to show how individual people and groups at different levels of the social context are linked in dynamic, interdependent, and interacting relationships”. From this perspective, “...any individual person or situation can be thought of as being simultaneously both a discrete entity (a bounded system) and part of a number of different systems...” (Green, 2001: 8). These various systems constitute levels within the broader system of human society. Due to the interdependent and inter-related nature of systems and sub-systems within the social context, they interact in a reciprocal manner with a change in one area having a rippling effect on another. According to Donald *et al.* (1999: 39) systems are seen to be in a “...continuous process of dynamic balance, tension, and interplay” as they influence and are influenced by one another. Therefore, although systems tend to perpetuate themselves, they may also be seen as being fluid and in a constant state of change (Green, 2001: 8).

Accordingly, the eco-systemic theory propounds that although an individual may experience a similar range of contexts with his or her peers; “...the interactions of individual characteristics, time, contexts and chance...” will result in different consequences for each person (Green, 2001: 8). From this perspective individuals and phenomena are seen to consist of multiple interacting systems and therefore should not be viewed in a reductionist, isolated way but rather in totality, in their interdependent contexts (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1998: 31). With regards to this research Engelbrecht (1999: 5) states, “...an understanding of the context is the first step towards understanding new developments in education and the movement towards inclusive education”.



The Constructivist learning theory, which is another key element of the theoretical framework of this study, views learning as an active act of making meaning (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2002: 100). From this perspective, people use their prior knowledge, experiences and personal understandings to build on and make meaning of new concepts or ideas that challenge or differ from their current understanding. Learning is meaningful, relevant and empowering as it occurs within a context, it is authentic, relative to 'real life' and actively constructive. In the constructivist learning theory, meaning is viewed as a dynamic process that is subjectively constructed from interactions with others in an ever-changing socio-cultural environment (Larochelle & Bednarz, 1998: 12).

The social constructivism stance extends the psychological focus on how individuals construct knowledge to that of how public bodies of knowledge are constructed - that is our general, accepted understandings of the world - and how these understandings are conveyed to new members of the sociocultural group. According to Phillips (1998: 154), "...social and political processes play an important role in the construction of these bodies of knowledge and understandings". Knowledge, values and ways of understanding are therefore, shaped, constructed and reconstructed in different social contexts and at different times. These discourses result in understandings that are particular to a social context (Donald *et al.*, 2002: 100).

The ideology of the constructivist theory concurs with and functions within the broader ecosystemic perspective. As Donald *et al.* (1997: 34) state, "A common and fundamental thread running through them is that people are seen as shaped by – and as active shapers of – their social context". In other words, knowledge and meaning is actively constructed and reconstructed during interactions wherein people share their thoughts and experiences that have been socially constructed and shaped within their ever-changing systemic contexts.

This integrated theoretical perspective not only supports the philosophy of inclusion but it also promotes a framework for the practice of inclusive education. Phillips (1998: 190) states that, "...because knowledge construction takes place in sociocultural settings, we would be advised to ensure that these settings are *inclusive* and *open* – open to people of diverse backgrounds, and open to the honest exchange of views (and particularly to criticism)".

Therefore, an integration of the eco-systemic and constructivist learning theory is seen to be an enabling framework within which to situate an inquiry into the constructed realities and experiences that some teachers have had within their contexts with regards to assessment and inclusive education.

### **1.3 THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

In support of the argument that the principles of OBE and inclusive education are mutually supportive (Naicker, 1999a: 13), this research study explored how assessment, an integral part of the teaching and learning process (Coetzee, 2002: 144), contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education. The following research question was therefore posed:

#### **How does assessment contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education?**

The following sub-questions, as related variables, were also explored in the two case studies:

- What are the teachers' constructed realities, experiences and practices of assessment in OBE in their school contexts?
- Have these teachers experienced a paradigm shift in their understanding of the teaching and learning process?
- Do they see a connection between assessment in OBE and the promotion of inclusive education?

### **1.4 THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST**

Educational psychologists have an important role to play in supporting schools to promote inclusive, healthy environments (De Jong, 2000: 349). According to De Jong (2000: 351) educational psychologists should be actively involved in building a supportive psychosocial



learning environment, developing critical thinking skills and contributing to staff development. This perspective is supported by Engelbrecht (2001: 22) who states that professions should be involved in "...building a positive teaching and learning environment and a responsive curriculum to minimise and address barriers to learning and development and promote the well-being of all learners". In this way the educational psychologist contributes towards the development of a health-promoting school. The World Health Organisation defines a health-promoting school as one which aims at achieving healthy lifestyles for the whole school by developing supportive environments conducive to physical, psychological, social, environmental, economic and spiritual well-being (Engelbrecht 2001: 22; Lazarus, Davidoff & Daniels, 2000: 2). De Jong (2000: 354) stresses that the development and support of the school staff is important as they may be seen as the primary driving force of change.

It is with these statements in mind that this research within the field of Educational Psychology is embarked. This broader, more systemic perspective of the role of the educational psychologist (De Jong, 2000: 349) diminishes any doubt that this study, which explores how assessment can contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education, should be placed within other fields of study. Engelbrecht (2001: 27) particularly notes that the involvement of educational psychologists, school counsellors and learning support specialists within school contexts enables and encourages them to, "...contribute towards the development of a healthy teaching and learning environment, a culture of curriculum development and a culture of tolerance and inclusion".

## **1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The overarching objective of this research was to explore how assessment contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education. This involved exploring and describing the teachers' constructed realities, experiences and practice of assessment and inclusive education. To enable the reader and the researcher to gain a thorough, eco-systemic insight as to the various influences and factors that contribute towards and shape the construction of these realities a case study method was employed. Merriam (1998: 41) states: "The case study offers a means



of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon. Anchored in real-life situations, the case study results in a rich and holistic account of a phenomenon”.

Two rural schools near Stellenbosch in the Western Cape were chosen as case studies for this study. Previously, as a student learning support facilitator I had worked and interacted with these teachers. My experience of their teaching and learning contexts had enriched and broadened my perspective and understanding of the challenges of education within South Africa. It had also made me particularly curious and interested in a paradigm shift required of teachers to effectively implement OBE and how this insight, or lack thereof, might impact on learners.

Through their recent involvement in an Inclusive School Development Project with the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University the teachers at both case studies had expressed a need for assistance with regards to assessment in OBE. On hearing this request I wondered about the progress these teachers had made with the transition to OBE since my previous encounter with them and, in particular, how it has impacted on the development and well-being of the learners.

As mentioned previously (1.1), the principles of OBE and inclusive education are argued to be mutually supportive (Naicker, 1999a: 13). With the imminent introduction of inclusive education to South African schools, as outlined in Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education (Department of Education, 2001), research into the mutually supportive, compatible nature of OBE and inclusive education was deemed to be of value.

The Salamanca Statement and Framework For Action on Special Needs Education (Unesco, 1994: ix), highlights the role of mainstream schools in helping to foster the local and wider benefits of inclusive education:

Regular schools with this inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an



effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire education system.

The case studies explored in this research are rural mainstream schools. As described in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, the majority of learners in these schools come from low socio-economic environments where adult illiteracy, domestic violence and abuse are prevalent. These circumstances create barriers to learning. Therefore, although this study does not intend to produce generalisations for other mainstream rural schools, these case studies may provide some valuable insight as to how assessment can be used to contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education in mainstream schools.

According to Coetzee (2002: 144) assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. This research study was therefore seen as an opportunity to gain insight into these teachers' understandings of assessment in OBE and inclusive education, and subsequently, how assessment contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education. Another objective of the study was to gain insight into the current needs, practices and understanding of the teachers with regards to assessment in OBE so that the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University is able to effectively respond to their requests. The knowledge gained from the research process enabled me as an educational psychologist to be informed as how to best collaborate with these teachers to assist them with assessment in OBE and, concurrently, promote a healthy inclusive learning environment (De Jong, 200: 349). Engelbrecht (2001: 22) states, "The role of collaborator is at the heart of a more preventative, health-promotive and developmental approach to professional education support". Through collaborative teaming knowledge and skills can be shared amongst all stakeholders and an environment of mutual respect and trust can be created. This collaborative approach was attempted in a workshop on assessment offered to the schools, however only School 'A' accepted the offer.

Another consequential objective of the study was that the research process may influence and shape the participants. For, during interactions between the participants and myself meanings and understandings were directly and indirectly shared and co-constructed. This dynamic process may encourage some of the teachers to review, adjust or add to their constructed realities. For example, the statements and questions asked in the questionnaire in this study might have played another, covert role alongside producing data. The participants may,



through the completion of the questionnaire, be encouraged to construct new or different thoughts. From this perspective the questionnaire might also be viewed as a learning instrument. Therefore, although the main objective of this study was to explore and describe the research phenomenon, it may have also kindled a process of reflection and change within both the participants and researcher.

The long-term objective of this research was to add the opinions and experiences of the teachers involved to the ongoing literature and research into OBE, assessment and inclusive education. Their practical, reality based comments have added a valuable and necessary dimension to the discussion and debate of the research phenomena. As Merriam (1998: 19) states: “Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research”.

## 1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

### 1.6.1 Research methodology

According to Gough (2000: 3) research methodology is “...the *reasoning* that informs particular ways of doing research, or the *principles* that inform the organisation of research activity”. He continues to state that “ ...some researchers refer to their methodology as the conceptual framework or the assumptions that guide their research”. Research methodology “...provides a rationale for the way a researcher proceeds” Gough (2000: 4). Harding (1987: 2) refers to research methodology as a theory and analysis of how research should proceed and research method as the use of techniques or a way of proceeding in gathering information or evidence. She states that research methodology provides reasons for the use of research methods and techniques.

Gough (2000: 6) claims that the reasoning or principles that guide the research and provide rationale for the process of the study are based on the researcher's understanding of the world, his or her worldview. Gough (2000: 6) refers to this as a personalisation of methodology. This results in similarities and differences among researchers with regards to methodological



approaches and guiding principles. According to Gough (2000: 6), the personalisation of methodology helps researchers to understand what type of researcher they are and, "by reflecting on what guides your actions it is possible to determine what methodology will most likely guide your research activity". My personal worldview is derived from personal experiences, reflections, values and principles and it is constantly under review. The theoretical framework of this study discussed in 1.4 forms part of this perspective. My worldview has shaped this research and reciprocally, has been shaped by this research.

As this study explores the constructed realities and experiences of particular teachers with regards to assessment and inclusive education, the research methodology drew upon principles of the qualitative paradigm. Qualitative research views reality as that which is constructed by individuals interacting within their social contexts (Creswell, 1994: 4). According to Merriam (1998: 6) "Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world". Therefore, data production methods that involve interactions and observations are used to understand and describe the participants' constructed realities and experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 53).

However, following Creswell's dominant-less dominant design model, both qualitative and quantitative research methods will be used to produce data in this study. "In this design the researcher presents the study within a single, dominant paradigm with one small component of the overall study drawn from the alternative paradigm" (Creswell, 1994: 177). The less dominant paradigm is typically used in the data production phase of the research (Creswell, 1994: 189). Accordingly, in this study the qualitative paradigm was the dominant, overarching paradigm and one of the methods of data production was derived from the less dominant, alternative paradigm. This approach enabled the study to be consistently and cohesively housed within the dominant, qualitative paradigm whilst the use of research methods from both of the qualitative and quantitative paradigms enabled me to better understand the concepts being explored (Creswell, 1994: 177; Mouton, 1990: 39).



### **1.6.2 Research method**

Concurring with the principles of the qualitative paradigm, a case study research method was used in this study to gain an in-depth understanding of the constructed meanings and experiences of the teachers at the two schools (Merriam, 1998: 19). "A qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" within a bounded or delimited system (Merriam, 1998: 27). This resulted in the production of thick descriptions and a case study enabled "interpretation in context" (Cronbach, 1975: 123 cited in Merriam, 1998: 29). Therefore, this research method supported the theoretical framework and qualitative worldview of this study.

### **1.6.3 Sampling**

In accordance with the principles of qualitative research nonprobability sampling was used to select the participants for this study (Merriam, 1998: 60). In this regard statistical generalisations to other individuals and contexts were not intended and the sample was purposefully chosen. Merriam (1998: 64) states that there are two levels of sampling in case studies. On the first level the case or bounded system needs must be selected. In this study prior interactions with the schools and their involvement in a larger study with the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University and the objectives of the research outlined in 1.5 substantiated selection on this level.

On the second level, unless all people, activities or documents within the case are studied, sampling within the case needs to occur. Although all of the teachers at both schools were initially participate in the research, a smaller sample was selected for further study in the format of an interview. A probability orientated stratified sampling technique was used to identify these participants. "Stratified sampling is used in contexts where the population consists of subgroups of interest. The population is then divided into these subgroups (known as strata) on the sampling frame, and simple random samples are drawn from each of the strata" (van Vuuren & Maree, 1999: 278). This method of sampling enabled one teacher from the Foundation Phase and one teacher from the Intermediate Phase at each school to be randomly selected to participate in an interview. The number of participants chosen for this

study was influenced by pragmatic considerations such as available time, financial constraints, assistance, *etc.* (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 287).

#### **1.6.4 Researcher as instrument**

In qualitative research the researcher plays an instrumental, subjective role in the production and analysis of data because being human, " ...all observations and analyses are filtered through that human's worldview, values, and perspective" (Merriam, 1998: 22). The insightful researcher therefore acknowledges that multiple interpretations of reality exist and that through the research process the researcher's construction of reality interacts with other people's constructions or interpretations of the research phenomenon (Stake, 1995: 9; Merriam, 1998: 22-23). This requires the researcher to be sensitive to the research context and to constantly reflect upon any personal biases and subjective perspectives that may influence the research process and findings (Merriam, 1998: 21-23).

Therefore, I attempted to be continuously aware of and reflect on the possible impact and the influence my thoughts, actions and words may have had in all aspects of this study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 66).

#### **1.6.5 Methods of data production**

The following qualitative research methods were used to produce qualitative data: a review of related literature, a description of the case studies, interviews with teachers from the Foundation Phase and the Intermediate Phase, field notes, a workshop and open-ended questions in a questionnaire. The quantitative research method used in this study to produce quantitative data consisted of closed-ended questions in a questionnaire.

Before the production of data commences, permission to conduct this research was sought from the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).



- **A review of related literature**

A review of related literature was undertaken to enable me to gain a comprehensive and extensive understanding of the various issues relating to the research question. This information, with its socio-historical perspective, assisted me with the interpretation and understanding of the research context and in the construction of a questionnaire. The insight also played a supportive, scaffolding role when interpreting, analysing and describing the data produced.

- **A description of the case studies**

A detailed description of each of the schools enabled both the reader and myself to gain valuable insight into the research phenomenon and related variables within the unique contexts of the two schools. As Babbie and Mouton (1999: 282) state: “The surrounding “ecology” or “environment”, with its notions of multiple, interacting contextualized systems, helps conceptualize the contexts in which the unit of analysis is embedded”. The understanding gained from this description also enabled greater insight and meaning to be deduced from the research findings.

- **Interviews with teachers from the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase**

Two teachers at each school were interviewed, one from the Foundation Phase and one from the Intermediate Phase. These interviews occurred after the data produced in the questionnaire had been analysed as the questions asked were inductively derived from an interpretation of responses to the questionnaire, observations and a review of related literature. The purpose of these interviews was to gain further insight and elaboration as to the constructed realities and experiences of the teachers with regards to the research question and related variables.

As the researcher’s mother tongue is different to that of the participants, the more structured interview schedule format was employed in an attempt to reduce any possible affects of language difference and translation. This interview format enabled the participants to read the interview schedule before the interview started and to question and resolve any language

confusion or misunderstanding of the questions. According to Merriam (1998: 82): "working from an interview schedule allows the new researcher to gain the experience and confidence needed to conduct more open-ended questioning".

- **Field notes**

Field notes were taken during the data production phase of the research. These consisted of observations and reflections and they formed part of the qualitative data that was analysed.

- **A Workshop**

A workshop was offered to both of the schools. The workshop fulfilled two purposes namely: to collaborate with the teachers to address their needs with regards to assessment in OBE and to share and reflect upon the findings of the research with the participants. This event enabled the participants to check and verify the data produced and any new, additional data to be added to the study.

- **A Questionnaire**

A self-administered questionnaire consisting of open-ended and closed-ended questions was constructed. This research method therefore produced both qualitative and quantitative data. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gain an initial understanding of the teachers' constructed realities and experiences of assessment in OBE and inclusive education. All of the teachers at both of the schools were asked to respond to the questionnaire and they were encouraged to complete as many of the questions as possible. They were informed that their responses would be confidential and anonymous.

The closed-ended statements in the questionnaire required the participants to respond using the Likert rating scale. The open-ended questions asked the participants to provide their own written responses to the questions. The contents of the statements and questions asked in the questionnaire were comprised of the possible variables related to the research question. This knowledge and understanding were derived from a review of related literature. A copy of the



questionnaire was sent to various independent academic experts within the relevant fields to verify the questionnaire construct and content.

### **1.6.6 The research procedure**

With the permission of the WCED the research commenced with a meeting with each of the principals of both schools. In this time their consent and participation was sort and the aim, purpose, nature and duration of the study was outlined. A workshop was offered to the schools as a response to their request for assistance with assessment in OBE as well as to share the findings of the research. Appointments for future meetings with the principals and teachers was also arranged during this time.

I then met with the staff of each school to introduce myself and the nature, purpose and duration of the study and to outline the role they will play in the research. I then gave each teacher a copy of the questionnaire. I paged through the questionnaire with them to ensure that all of the participants had the relevant pages and that they understand what is required of them. I then answered any concerns or questions and clarified any misconceptions. I assured the teachers that their responses would be confidential and anonymous. I then informed the teachers that I would collect the questionnaire within one week.

During this meeting I also asked for one teacher from the Foundation Phase and one teacher from the Intermediate phase to volunteer to participate in a thirty-minute individual interview. It was explained to the teachers that the interview would be private and confidential. To alleviate any fears it was explained to the teachers that they would be asked to share their individual thoughts, opinions and experiences during the interview. Once the volunteers had been identified I then requested permission from the volunteers to use a tape-recorder to enable me to accurately record the interview and to assist with translation. A convenient date and time for the interview was then arranged with the teachers for two weeks after the collection of the questionnaire.



To enable me to gain detailed insight as to the contexts of the case studies I arranged to meet with each of the principals. During this time I asked them questions regarding the history, context and characteristics of the school, learners and teachers.

At the end of the data production and analysis phase of the research process I contacted the schools with regards to my offer to present a workshop on assessment in OBE to their staff members. On acceptance of my offer a convenient day and time was arranged with the school.

### **1.6.7 Data analysis**

In this research study both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods were used for the respective data. As this study consists of two case studies, each case was analysed and explored separately (within-case analysis) and then compared and combined in cross-case analysis (Merriam, 1998: 194-5).

The qualitative data produced in the interviews, open-ended questions in the questionnaire, field notes and the workshop was analysed using the Constant Comparative Method as elucidated by Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 126 – 149), Merriam (1998: 178-193) as well as Lincoln and Guba (1985: 339-344). This inductive method of analysis involved identifying and categorising individual units of meaning. In a progressively emergent manner, the properties of each category were then compared and refined to generate propositional statements. These propositional statements contributed towards an understanding of the research question (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 143).

Descriptive statistics was used to analyse and interpret the quantitative data produced in the close-ended statements of the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics involves organising and summarising the data to make it more comprehensible (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 458; Mouton, 1990: 163). The data analysis in this study involved a tally of the frequency distribution of the different responses to the statements in the questionnaire. The frequency distribution of data provides a general 'picture' of the research data and it is easily graphically represented (Durrheim, 1999: 101; Mouton, 1996: 164). The data was then converted into percentages to enable easy analysis and presented in the form of percentage tables.



## **1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

To ensure clarity within this study the following terms are defined:

### **1.7.1 Outcomes-based education (OBE)**

OBE is both a theory and practice of education (van Niekerk & Killen, 2000: 93) and it forms the foundation of the curriculum in South Africa (Department of Education, 2002: 1). As can be derived from its namesake OBE focuses on the outcomes or end results of the learning process (van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 6). Spady (1994: 18) defines outcomes as “high-quality, culminating demonstrations of significant learning in context”. The outcomes are considered to be essential for all learners to successfully achieve by the end of the learning experience. In this regard all aspects of education such as the curriculum, instruction and assessment are planned and organised to ensure that the learners will achieve the outcomes (Spady, 1994: 1). OBE is therefore a learner-centred, results-orientated approach to learning (van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 6).

### **1.7.2 Curriculum 2005**

Curriculum 2005 is a national curriculum for South African schools, the General Education and Training Band for Grades R-9. It is connected to and reinforced by the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) which is monitored by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) (Spady & Schlebusch, 1999: 55). Curriculum 2005 consists of critical and developmental cross-field outcomes that were inspired by the Constitution and which depict the vision and means of a transformed society (Department of Education, 2002b: 1). It also outlines the learning areas and assessment standards for Grades R-9.

### **1.7.3 Inclusion and inclusive education**

Although the concepts of inclusion and inclusive education are interdependent and mutually supportive they are individually defined to ensure clarity. The complex, evolving nature of inclusion and inclusive education has resulted in various definitions. Dyson (2001: 11) claims,



however, that three commonalities can be found within the various definitions of *inclusion*, namely: (a) a commitment to building a more just society; (b) a commitment to building a more equitable education system; and (c) a conviction that extending the responsiveness of mainstream schools to learner diversity will assist with the actualisation of these commitments.

According to Green (2001: 4) "*Inclusive education* is the term used to describe educational policies and practices that uphold the right of learners with disabilities to belong and learn in mainstream education". The Salamanca Statement and Framework For Action on Special Needs Education (Unesco, 1994: 6) emphasizes that inclusive education does not only refer to learners who experience physical and cognitive disabilities but implies that ALL learners must be included within the learning environment. Inclusive education plays an extremely important role in supporting and introducing the broader concept of inclusion. For not only does inclusive education seek to understand the barriers learners experience with learning, it attempts to remove them, and to meet the needs of all learners within a mainstream school; it is also part of a wider movement towards a more just society for all citizens (Engelbrecht, 1999: 8; Unesco, 2001:18).

#### **1.7.4 Barriers to learning**

The NCSNET/NCESS (Department of Education, 1997b: 12) defines barriers to learning and development as factors within the learner or the system that "...prevent the learner from being able to engage in or sustain an ideal process of learning". These factors "...lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision...".

The Department of Education (2002b: 6) identifies four categories of barriers to learning and development, namely: systemic, societal, inappropriate pedagogy or physiological. The systemic barriers include a lack of basic and appropriate learning support materials, inadequate facilities at schools, overcrowded classrooms, *etc.* Societal barriers are derived from severe poverty, late enrolment at schools, illiterate parents, *etc.* Barriers to learning created by inappropriate pedagogy include inappropriate and unfair assessment methods,



insufficient support of the teacher, *etc.* Physiological barriers to learning that are located within the learner may be derived from neurological, physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities (Department of Education, 2002b: 6).

#### **1.7.5 Assessment and assessment in OBE**

When defining *assessment* Dreyer (2000: 268) states that, "In an educational context, it refers to the process of observing learning, describing, collecting, recording, scoring and interpreting information about a learner's learning". It is important to note that the term assessment refers to the process of gathering information and not the instrument used to gather it. The choice of instrument used in the information gathering process is related to the purpose of assessment and the type of learner performance that one wants to assess (Nitko, 1997: 28). The information gathered via assessment is used to make judgements and decisions (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 3).

The Department of Education (2002b: 9) states that "*Assessment in OBE* is a process of gathering valid and reliable information about the performance (evidence) of the learner, on an on-going basis (CASS), against clearly defined criteria, using a variety of methods, tools, and techniques in different contexts".

Nitko (1997: 27), however, describes a broader purpose and role of assessment. He states: "assessment is the process of gathering information for purposes of making decisions about educational policy, about curriculum and educational programs, or about individual students' learning". When relevant to the discussion, this study employs both the specific and broader definition of the term assessment.

#### **1.7.6 A Paradigm**

Numerous writers, such as Popper (1974) and Lincoln and Guba (1985) have shared their exposition of the term paradigm. Arjun (1998: 21) argues, however, that " ...no discussion on paradigms can be considered complete without some reference to his [Kuhn's] pronouncements". Kuhn (1970: viii) defines paradigms as, "universally recognised scientific



achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners". Arjun (1998: 21) operationalises Kuhn's conception stating: "a paradigm is a philosophical scheme of thought or a theoretical formulation on a subject which relates to the set of concepts, categories, relationships, values and methods which are generally accepted by a community of practitioners at any given period of time".

## **1.8 STRUCTURE OF PRESENTATION**

This study proceeds in Chapter 2 with a review of related literature in which factors and issues considered to provide contextual insight and understanding for the focus of the research are discussed. Chapter 3 deals with the research method and methodology and the findings of the data are presented in Chapter 4. The final chapter discusses the findings and outlines the related recommendations and limitations of the study.

## **1.9 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the research study is introduced and conceptualised. The supporting theoretical framework is outlined and the orientation of the study within the field of educational psychology is discussed. The proposed research methodology and method of the study is presented and relevant concepts and terms are defined. This chapter concludes with a brief introduction to the contents of the forthcoming chapters.

## CHAPTER 2

### A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Outcomes-based education (OBE) has been implemented in many countries throughout the world, such as England, parts of the USA, New Zealand, Australia and now South Africa (Steyn & Wilkinson, 1998: 203). As to be expected with a change in fundamental beliefs and practices, the transition towards an Outcomes-based education philosophy and practice has not been an easy journey for most of these countries. South Africa is no exception. As with all countries, South Africa has its unique, influencing characteristics, contexts and history. These factors, among many others, have impacted the transition, adoption and implementation of OBE in South African schools.

The introduction of inclusive education in South Africa is another major contributor to the transition of South African education. Naicker (1999a: 13) argues, however, that the philosophies and beliefs underpinning OBE and inclusive education are mutually supportive. Assessment plays an integral role in the process of learning and teaching (Coetzee, 2002: 144) and may therefore be viewed as a mechanism by which to support and promote OBE and concurrently promote inclusive education. Many researchers (Department of Education, 2000: 7; Pretorius, 1998a: v; Singh & Manser, 2000: 10; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 6) argue, however, that a paradigm shift is required to ensure education transformation.

As this research is an explorative study, it is necessary to explore some of the influencing factors in the transition towards OBE in South Africa. This will enable the reader and researcher to gain socio-historical insight into the various issues related to the research question. The literature review is structured in a thematic way. The main themes that are explored include:

- A brief overview of South Africa's educational history.



- Outcomes-based Education (OBE)
- Curriculum 2005
- Inclusion and inclusive Education
- Assessment
- OBE, inclusive education and assessment
- A paradigm shift debate
- The role of teachers within a paradigm shift

## **2.2 A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE HISTORY OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICA**

Since the end of the apartheid era and the change to a democratic government in 1994, South Africans have experienced change in many areas of their lives (Pretorius, 1998a: v). Education has played a leading and influential role in the transformation. Enslin (1984: 39) claims that education is not a neutral process as its supporting policies and theories reflect and perpetuate the political ideology of the current authors. According to Van Niekerk (1998: 65) cited in Waghid (2000:5) South Africa's educational transformation involves reviewing and redressing past inequalities created by the system of apartheid in order to move towards a "more just and equitable society".

For many years, under the apartheid government, South Africa had a dominant educational policy that did not tolerate dispute, namely Fundamental Pedagogics. This policy was based on the ruling ideology of Christian National Education, which was supported and scientifically verified by the educational theory of Fundamental Pedagogics (Enslin, 1984: 141). Schreuder (1999: 4) states that this resulted in a value free, structuralist educational approach where prescribed knowledge was attained through an inflexible curriculum, people were controlled by superiority and there was little participation among people.

The Department of Education (1998: 5) states: "The old education system catered for passive learners, was driven by examinations, often entailing learning parrot-fashion, and was characterised by a syllabus that was content-based and broken down into convenient



compartments or subjects". Van Wyk and Mothata (1998: 1) further elaborate these characteristics:

Moreover, this approach to learning took place against a backdrop of inflexible timeframes, and learners and the public at large were not encouraged to comment or contribute to the process of curriculum development. In other words, the elements critical to a successful, modern education system - equity, access, redress and quality assurance - were completely absent from the agenda. Therefore, it was not only the radically based departments of education which had to be changed but also the way people thought about learning.

Numerous papers and acts were passed to ensure this change and to cement the African National Congress' (ANC) democratic ideologies. The most influential document was the new Constitution of South Africa as it formed, "...the basis of public policy formation, adoption and implementation" (Sedibe, 1998: 4). As reported by van Wyk and Mothata (1998: 3) this keystone document in education stated that all children have the basic right to education, equal access to quality education and that education needs to be transformed and democratised.

Subsequently, the Education White Paper 1 on Education and Training was gazetted in February 1995 to promote the restructuring of the education system in line with the Constitution. Based on this White Paper and another that followed, the South African Schools Act was passed by parliament in November 1996. According to Sedibe (1998: 4-5) this Act enforced many of the ideologies and asserted the rights of all learners to equal access to basic and quality education. Discussions of an integration system of education and training in South Africa occurred in the early 1990's, however, it was the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act passed in 1995 that ensured the development and implementation of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) that crystallized the envisioned integration (Kraak, 1999: 39).

With regards to learners with special needs, Du Toit (1996: 7) states that the development of specialised education in South Africa has generally followed a similar course to that of other countries. This is the involvement of religious organisation in the beginning, followed by increasing involvement of the state and the formulation of new types of schools to meet the



different disabilities. And, more recently, the growing awareness that learners with disabilities should not be isolated but included within the mainstream of education.

However, during the apartheid years special educational schools were reserved for 'white' learners and even then, access to these schools had a further cognitive disability entrance requirement (Du Toit, 1996: 9). Donald and Hlongwane (1989), cited in Engelbrecht, Naicker and Engelbrecht (1998: 97), found that during this time there was no special education for 'black' learners and that they were mainstreamed by default. This resulted in a wide discrepancy in the quality and quantity of specialised education provision received by learners from different racial groups (Du Toit, 1996: 11).

As stated previously, inclusion and inclusive education is supported by and supportive of the democratic values of liberty, equality, human rights and appreciation of diversity outlined in the Constitution. These principles were legitimised by the South African Schools Act of 1996 asserting the rights of all learners to equal access to basic and quality education and the introduction of a new curriculum (Curriculum 2005) based on the principles of OBE. Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education (Department of Education, 2001) outlines and proposes a framework whereby an inclusive education and training system can be established in South Africa thereby continuing and reinforcing the envisaged transformation of education.

### **2.3 OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION (OBE)**

The introduction of a new outcomes-based educational philosophy in South Africa has resulted in many debates, studies and comments from within and between the educational, political and socio-economic arenas. For the first time in many years teachers were encouraged to reflect on their teaching practice, philosophy and purpose. The public, tentatively watching the changes being introduced by the new democratic government, played a more active role than the past and was encouraged to comment on the proposed educational policies. The freedom to comment has resulted in a flood of stakeholders and interested



parties stating their opinions and concerns regarding Outcomes-based education and its introduction to the South African context.

### 2.3.1 What is OBE?

Van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 93) claim: "OBE can be viewed as a theory of education or as a systemic structure for education, or as classroom practice". Malan (1997: 10) argues: "...outcomes should form the basis of all educational activity...". In South Africa OBE plays a role in all of these aspects. The beliefs and assumptions of OBE have formed the philosophical basis of South Africa's education transformation. These beliefs have, in turn, formed the basis for the systematic and structured development of a new national curriculum, namely, Curriculum 2005. This has resulted in the introduction of OBE classroom practice in schools that is steered by the guidelines stated in Curriculum 2005.

It is possibly the multiple roles of OBE in South African education that has led to the confusion amongst teachers and the public as to the difference between OBE and Curriculum 2005, as reported by the Curriculum 2005 Review Committee (Department of Education, 2000: 5). To prevent confusion I will discuss OBE and Curriculum 2005 separately, however, one must take cognizance of their close, often intertwined nature.

In OBE the outcomes of the learning experience are clearly stated at the beginning so that both the learners and teachers are aware of the goals and expectations (Spady & Schlebusch, 1999: 26). These outcomes, which guide the teaching, learning and assessment process, describe the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that learners must acquire. Van Rensburg (1998a: 27) elaborates further: "These outcomes provide a means of assuring the quality of education at the end of the phases and form the basis for criterion-referenced assessment".

OBE is a learner-centred, result orientated approach to learning which, according to Spady and Schlebusch (1999: 29), is based on the following beliefs:

- What and whether learners learn successfully is more important than exactly when, how, and from whom they learn it.



- Schools exist to ensure that all their learners are equipped with the knowledge, competence and qualities needed to be successful after they exit the education system.
- Schools should be organised, structured, and operated so that all their learners can achieve these life performance outcomes.
- All learners can learn and succeed, but not on the same day in the same way.
- Successful learning promotes more successful learning, just as poor learning fosters more poor learning.
- Schools control key conditions and opportunities that directly affect successful school learning.

### **2.3.2 OBE for education transformation**

Although Outcomes-based education is a relatively new concept in South African education, it has a history internationally. OBE has been implemented (not without problems) in many countries such as Australia, New Zealand, parts of the United States, Wales and Scotland (Steyn & Wilkinson, 1998: 203). According to van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 6):

Outcomes-Based Education is usually attractive to politicians, policy-makers administrators during times of educational reform which follows socio-political reform (as is the case in South Africa after the change in government). The reason is that OBE provides policy makers and administrators with some level of control over the outcomes of education, and at the same time provides teachers with a degree of freedom to select the content and methods through which the learners will achieve those outcomes.

There are many possibilities as to why OBE was chosen as the replacement to the education approach of the apartheid era. It is important to note that Outcomes-based education was not the only educational discourse that the ANC reviewed in discussions prior to the change in government. Kraak (1999: 21) states that the Outcomes-based Education and Training policy was favoured over the Systemic discourse due to its inclusion of the pedagogic principles of the 'People's Education' movement (learner-centredness and a critical thinking curriculum) and the adoption of overseas models. Some critics such as Jansen (1998: 321) and Killen (1999), cited in van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 93), argue that OBE is primarily a political response to apartheid schooling than one concerned with the modalities of change at the classroom level.



According to Pretorius (1998a: vi-vii) education transformation has also been experienced in other countries as a response to the emergence of the global economy, technological inventions and major changes in the organisation of work. These factors, amongst others, have also influenced the choice, development and implementation of Outcomes-based education in South Africa. As Furman (1995: 32-33), cited in Pretorius (1998b: 99-100), states: "OBE models vary depending on the contexts in which they are implemented...making it almost impossible to generalize from one OBE model to another". This has resulted in there being no single, authoritative model for outcomes-based education (McNeir, 1994: 30, cited in Pretorius, 1998b: 99-100).

The South African OBE approach is said to be based on the most recent form of OBE, namely the transformational outcomes-based approach. According to Pretorius (1998a: x):

Transformational outcomes-based education is the highest evolution of the outcomes-based concept. It moves away not only from the existing curriculum but also from the given structures of schooling. No existing features of the school's instruction are considered untouchable. All curriculum design, strategic planning and resource allocations reflect the scope and nature of the outcomes. The curriculum is designed from future-driven exit outcomes. The goal is to equip all students with the knowledge, competence and orientation needed for success after they leave school.

In this way, the outcomes are the driving forces of the education system.

## **2.4 CURRICULUM 2005**

Curriculum 2005 was introduced into South African schools in 1998. A curriculum framework may be seen as a set of principles and guidelines, which provides both a philosophical base and an organisational structure for curriculum development initiatives at all levels (Department of Education, 1997a: 2). These principles, derived from the White Paper on Education and Training (1995) are: participation and ownership, accountability and transparency, affordability, sustainability and capacity building, and coherence within the context of the NQF. Reflecting on Curriculum 2005 the Review Committee of Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, 2000: 1) states:



Curriculum 2005 is probably the most significant curriculum reform in South African education of the last century. Deliberately intended to simultaneously overturn the legacy of apartheid education and catapult South Africa into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it was an innovation both bold and revolutionary in the magnitude of its conception.

Malcolm (2001: 322), expands on this view point stating: “With its combination of learner-centred, outcomes-based education, its particular set of critical and specific outcomes and its absence of strong accountability measures, Curriculum 2005 is arguably one of the most liberal and adventurous education framework in the world”.

The Review Committee of Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, 2000: 17) identified three distinctive sources that have contributed towards the formation and design of Curriculum 2005, namely: a philosophy of learner-centred education, outcomes-based education and an approach to the integration and non-disciplinary division of knowledge.

Curriculum 2005 has wider goals of social justice, equity and development alongside those of intellectual abilities, critical faculties and social values. In order to achieve these goals it promotes the use of methodologies such as learner-centredness, teachers as facilitators, relevance, contextualised knowledge and co operative learning” (Department of Education, 2000: 1, 6).

## **2.5 A CRITIQUE OF OBE AND CURRICULUM 2005**

Outcomes-based education was introduced into South African schools through the structure of Curriculum 2005. Although these concepts have been explored separately, they function together. They are reciprocal and sustaining in nature, therefore, a critique of one concept is relevant to the other.

OBE was introduced into South African education under great scrutiny. Many educationalists, researchers and other interested stakeholders have critiqued the appropriateness and implementation of OBE in South Africa. Some of these comments will be briefly explored,



especially those that regard the perceptions and roles of teachers in the adoption and implementation of OBE.

OBE has been criticised by Kruss (1998: 101) as being a method by which to promote the political aims of the government rather than a response to the need for education improvement. Jansen (1998: 323) claims that OBE will fail in South Africa as it is "...driven by political imperatives which have little to do with the realities of classroom life".

Sedibe (1998: 6) claims that in the urgency for the government to initiate the transformation of education, policies were hastily drawn up and implemented. He argues that the then Minister of Education, Professor Bengu, set unrealistic goals for teachers with his proposal to implement Curriculum 2005 in all grades by 2005. As reported by Mona (1997: 2), Gardner (1997: 8) and Pampallis (2000: 13) the implementation date caused anxiety, questioning and resulted in lack of faith and support by teachers and the public as to the authorities acknowledgement and understanding of the realities of a South African classroom. Even William Spady, the 'father' of OBE commented that the government's proposal to phase in the process over five years was "ambitious" (Ngcai, 1997a: 3).

This criticism was later acknowledged by the Review Committee of Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, 2000: 3) who state: "Implementation was not always carefully thought through, properly piloted or resourced and enormous stresses and strains were consequently placed on already over-burdened principals and teachers in widely-divergent educational contexts".

The method of implementation, using the cascade model, was also criticised. Grey (1998: 6) reported the cascade model to be flawed, stating that: "such 'hand-me-down' methods often result in information getting mislaid as it is transferred down the line...".

Jansen (1998: 325) argues that OBE is based on "...flawed assumptions about what happens inside schools, how classrooms are organised and what kinds of teachers exist within the system". He stated in *The Cape Times* (Lund, 1997: 1): "The new system underestimates the workload that is involved and the conditions under which teachers are teaching". Jayiya



(1999: 8) supports this finding reporting that the training received by teachers was inappropriate and that it lacked discussion around issues experienced in classrooms. Malcolm (2001: 221) states that there was insufficient teacher training and that workshops that were held focused more on the jargon of the policy than on the underlying concepts and methods.

Following much criticism from various stakeholders, (Jansen, 1998: 325; Jones, 2001: 9; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 16) the current Minister of Education, Kader Asmal conceded that language used was vaguely worded, user-unfriendly and jargon dominated (Pillay, 1999: 1). Pampallis (2000: 13) states that the obtuse and confusing jargon used to explain OBE distances the teacher, as previously familiar terms are renamed and the methodology is described in a cryptic, intangible fashion.

Meerkotter (1998: 56) claims that former white schools, with a history of stability, well-trained teachers, sufficient resources and a supportive parent community, will find the new curriculum easy to cope with whereas for poorer, mostly black schools, the new curriculum would be an extra burden. Eighteen months after implementation of OBE Kader Asmal was reported by Johns and SAPA (1999: 3) to state that: "...the nature and impact of the new curriculum had not been adequately communicated to poorer schools". He also added that poor schools do not have sufficient teaching resources. After interviewing teachers at various schools in the Western Cape, Ngcai (1997b: 19) reports: "Teachers say the Government did not spend enough time preparing them for the daunting task, providing them with the necessary resources and infrastructure, or addressing bulging classes, lack of material and staff shortages. Neither did they prepare the parents".

Kruss (1998: 106-108) found that teachers were not represented in key phases of the policy development due to their responsibility towards the needs of their classrooms and poor participation in representative teacher organisations. She argues that the role of teachers in the process was further undermined by the finality given to the 'blueprint' that they received before the curriculum was piloted. Teachers were left with the implementation of a *fait accompli* where they were expected to respond predictably to the initiatives. This resulted in a poor sense of teachers' ownership and a high reliance on in-service training. CASE (1993) cited in D'Alonzo, Giordano and Cross (1996: 311) commenting on change in education state:



"Past experience with changes in education systems has often left teachers exhausted and frustrated because they did not have an understanding of the changes before they occurred".

From the public point of view OBE represented change which was perceived positively by some and not so by others. Bradley (1998: 5) reports: "The overwhelming negative perception the public had about Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) was probably the greatest threat to education in this country". Some of these views may be based on the financial cost of OBE. It can be argued that in an economically unstable country the cost incurred by the public, via the government, for the research, implementation and training, needs to be justified by tangible dividends through effective transformation. Collings (2000: 8) claims OBE requires, "...high teacher training costs because of its sophisticated theoretical base". Kraak (1999: 49) and Meerkotter (1998: 58) state that some of the public scepticism may be based on concerns as to the appropriateness of OBE for the South African context. South Africa does not match the resources, teacher training, and stability of countries such as Australia and England from whose 'outcomes' models our policy has been developed.

Another debate revolves around the theoretical base of OBE. Steyn and Wilkinson (1998: 203) state that every education model has a theoretical basis and that in many cases, the education model may be based on more than one underlying philosophy. From their analysis of the official documents they claim that the South African OBE model is based on four main theoretical philosophies. These are behaviourism, social reconstructivism, critical theory and pragmatism.

After exploring each approach Geyser (2000: 35-36) claims that although each of these philosophies differ in focus they are all in agreement against a content-based approach to education. She also state that the philosophies all promote the replacement of the central role of the teacher by the learners and that they are also in agreement against the old evaluation system that is based mainly on rote learning, written work and content. They also all agree that learning can occur by using any chosen learning content and that it does not have to be prescribed.



However the philosophies disagree on the product or the process orientation towards learning. As Steyn and Wilkinson (1998: 206) state:

On the one hand, behaviourism and pragmatism are essentially product-oriented approaches which desire that learners should achieve certain learning behaviours as well as become able to perform specific useful actions. On the other hand, social reconstructionism and critical theory are essentially process-oriented approaches which aim at sensitising and emancipating learners and assisting them in constructing their own meanings, knowledge, critical attitudes and critical abilities.

This has resulted in much confusion amongst teachers and educators. Kraak (1999: 46) claims the heavy reliance on behavioural principals to be the most fundamental criticism of OBE in South Africa.

Geysers (2000: 38) recommends that this tension, amongst others such as between control and consultation, external and internal abilities and between competition and co-operation should, with the assistance of training, be addressed in the classroom. Steyn and Wilkinson (1998: 207) suggest, for example, that teachers must be trained to balance process and product approaches in order to curb useless time-consuming activities. From this comment alone, one can see that this is not an easy task, even for a well trained, experienced teacher in a supportive school environment.

In response to criticism the Department of Education (The Teacher, 1997: 7) states:

Critics of outcomes-based education who breed policy cynicism among educators need to be asked what they are really against and what alternatives they have. We all have a stake in the success of our schools: as South Africans, we need to ask ourselves how as civil society partners – non-government organisations, policy units, unions and so on- we can turn ours into a winning nation. Then, our critique will become a liberating rather than liberal exercise.

## **2.6 A CURRICULUM FOR THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY – CURRICULUM 21**

In 2000 a Review Committee on Curriculum 2005 was established to investigate the effectiveness and implementation of Curriculum 2005 and to make recommendations regarding some of the difficulties that had been experienced (Department of Education, 2000: 10-13). The Review Committee proposed a revised and streamlined curriculum within a broad outcomes-based framework to be implemented within manageable time-frames. As reported in *The Star* (2000: 2 June): "The new simpler, streamlined education system, to be called Curriculum 21, will put renewed emphasis on textbooks, testing and content – while maintaining the basic principle of outcomes-based education".

The Revised National Curriculum Statement Grade R-9 (Schools) released in 2002 consists of eight Learning Area Statements, each with an outline of the main Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards that will enable the Learning Outcomes. The policy provides guidelines on each Learning Area Statement, which underpin the Learning Programmes. The Learning Areas outline the concepts, skills and values that need to be achieved on a grade by grade basis whereas the Learning Programmes, which occur within the Learning Areas, specify the scope of learning and assessment activities for each phase. Work schedules, providing the pace and sequence of the activities for each year are also provided, as well as lesson plan examples (Department of Education, 2002a: 2-3). The Revised Curriculum gives teachers much more guidance as to the requirements of the curriculum, assessment criteria and the language is more accessible.

## **2.7 INCLUSION AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Both nationally and internationally, the trend towards inclusion has grown not only from the more current socio political ideologies of democracy, appreciation of diversity and a criticism of inequality but it has also developed as a response to the ineffectiveness and isolating nature of the previous mainstreaming and integration approach (Engelbrecht, 1999: 8). Both of these



approaches required the learners to 'fit' into the mainstream learning environment and curriculum (Department of Education, 2001: 17).

In inclusive education, on the other hand, all aspects of the education system are restructured and adapted to include all learners (Department of Education, 2001: 17). According to the Salamanca Statement and Framework For Action on Special Needs Education (Unesco, 1994: 6):

...schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups.

South Africa is in the process of transition from the medical deficit model where educational difficulties are explained solely in terms of learner deficits to a focus on addressing the barriers to learning and participation (Engelbrecht, 2001: 18-20). These barriers were identified in the findings of the report from the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET) and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) (Muthukrishna, 2001: 46). Progressing from this insight the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education (Department of Education, 2001) outlines a framework by which to establish an inclusive education and training system for South Africa. The strategies suggested are based on the principles of: human rights and social justice for all learners; participation and social integration; equal access to a single, inclusive education system; access to the curriculum, equity and redress, community responsiveness; and cost-effectiveness. (Department of Education, 2001: 5). These principles exemplify that aim of inclusive education is more than the inclusion of all learners within a learning context; it is a means by which to create and promote an inclusive society (Engelbrecht, 1999: 8).

## **2.8 ASSESSMENT**

The introduction of Outcomes-based education has changed many aspects of curriculum practice. As assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process (Coetzee,



2002: 144; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 173) it too has changed in nature, purpose and practice. According to van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 168) the role and views of assessment have moved away from formal, norm-referenced assessment to that which is more integral to teaching and learning.

### **2.8.1 Different types of assessment**

There are four main terms used to describe assessment, namely summative, formative, norm referenced and criterion referenced. These kinds of assessments are described below.

- **Summative Assessment**

This type of assessment usually takes place at the end of a learning experience, and is almost always norm referenced (Marneweck & Rouhani, 2000: 280). It usually consists of one main test or examination and the aim of the assessment is to determine how much of the subject's content the learners know (Dreyer, 2000: 269; Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 4).

- **Formative Assessment**

Formative assessment is conducted during the learning process and is used to influence or inform the learning process (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 4). In this form of assessment both teachers and learners receive information, via formal and informal manners, regarding the learning experience (Coetzee, 2002: 139). This information helps the teachers to adapt teaching strategies and methods to improve understanding and learning and therefore may be seen as having a 'teaching' function (Department of Education, 2002b: 9; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 171). According to Kotzé (1999: 31) as well as Nakabugo and Siebörger (1999: 188) the use of formative assessment plays an integral role in the shift towards OBE.

- **Norm Referenced**

In norm referenced assessment the competence or ability of a learner is determined by comparing him or her to the competence of other learners or with pass marks. "Norm-



referenced assessment reflects little about what the learner has mastered or understood" (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 4). As mentioned earlier, summative assessment is almost always norm referenced.

- **Criterion Referenced**

This form of assessment uses criteria as reference points against which other things can be assessed. These criteria are specified in advance and the learner is only assessed according to the criteria (Marneweck & Rouhani, 2000: 280). In OBE the criteria are nationally agreed upon, registered with the National Qualifications Framework (van Rensburg, 1998b: 82).

### **2.8.2 The traditional approach to assessment**

In the past the learning and teaching process was focused on particular content that learners were expected to memorise in each subject area. In this way learners' competence was judged on the end product, their ability to recall inputs made by authorities such as teachers and textbooks (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 4-5). This ability was measured in terms of symbols and percentages. Hughes (1996: 59) states that traditional assessment methods were mainly used for the purpose of selection with stress placed on summative assessment and, in particular, the once-off, final examination.

In the traditional approach learners' achievements were compared to that of other learners (norm referenced) and it led to excessive competition. Teachers tended to 'exam teach' at the expense of broader educational objectives and learners experienced a lack of control of their learning. They tried to match their performance to the perceived expectations of the authoritarian teacher (Dreyer, 2000: 267,273).

"Traditionally, this assessment and reporting has also ignored the reality that it is dominated by the teacher's (assessor's) interpretation of the 'object of knowledge' and of the evidence that the learner has produced to demonstrate their learning" (van Niekerk & Killen, 2000: 98). As Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 5) state: "This form of assessment is not concerned with



learners' other skills, attributes and levels of competence that they can develop during their learning processes".

### **2.8.3 Assessment in an OBE approach**

According to Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 3) assessment practices and methods reflect and support the understanding of the teaching and learning process. Accordingly, OBE which is based on a different understanding of the teaching and learning process, requires a different form of assessment.

In outcomes-based education knowledge is not seen as being transferred from the all-knowledgeable teacher to the learner. Instead, knowledge is seen as a process of construction that occurs in the learner's mind. Learners are viewed as being unique, each with their own potential. This view of learning acknowledges the prior knowledge and experiences that each learner brings to the learning situation. "Learners make sense of the new knowledge in the context of their own knowledge and then develop their original concepts as learning takes place" (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 6). This view of learning is based on the principles of the Constructivist learning theory as propounded in 1.2. According to Archer, Rossouw, Lomofsky and Oliver (1999: 103) "The new approach to assessment may be described as being rooted in the ecosystemic model and having clear constructivist features. It is multidimensional, dynamic and holistic in scope and requires that every teacher becomes a skilled assessor".

In OBE learners are required to explain why (knowledge); to demonstrate something (skills); want to make a positive difference (values) and want to do it well (attitude) (Coetzee, 2002: 137). Assessment of these abilities occurs continuously. According to Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 11) continuous assessment involves, "...the assessment of the whole learner on an ongoing basis over a period of time where cumulative judgements of the learner's abilities in specific areas are made in order to facilitate further positive learning". Continuous assessment involves more than teaching and testing for the purpose of assigning a mark. Not only does it provide feedback on attainment of learning outcomes, it helps to identify the learners'



strengths and weaknesses and it also provides valuable information regarding teaching methods, the relevance of learning outcomes and resources (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 10).

Coetzee (2002: 144) states that assessment within an OBE approach is purposeful, transparent and supports the desire to learn. It is also continuous, multidimensional, varied and age-appropriate. "Outcomes-based assessment is criterion-referenced in that it gathers and interprets information about a learner's competence and then measures this against nationally agreed standards" (Coetzee, 2002: 144; Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 9). Nakabugo and Siebörger (1999: 188) state that the principles of criterion referenced assessment facilitates the use of on-going, formative assessment.

The Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (Schools) (Department of Education, 2002a: 93) describes assessment as:

...a continuous, planned process of gathering information about the performance of learners measured against the Assessment Standards of the Learning Outcomes. It requires clearly-defined criteria and a variety of appropriate strategies to enable teachers to give constructive feedback to learners and to report to parents and other interested parties.

It also states that:

assessment should provide indications of learner achievement in the most effective and efficient manner, and ensure that learners integrate and apply skills. Assessment should also help students to make judgements about their own performance, set goals for progress and provoke further learning.

This view of assessment is supported by Coetzee (2002: 144) who states: "Assessment should be viewed as a developmental tool within the learning process. It encourages an environment in which a learner's progress and improvement are valued and encouraged". Pahad (1999: 249) comments that the term continuous assessment has been used to emphasise the shift from a judgemental approach to a developmental approach in which teacher and learners work together to improve performance.



Both summative and formative assessment methods can be used in an OBE approach although they usually occur at different periods of time in the learning process (Kotzé, 1999: 32). "But it is not the *form* of the assessment which determines whether or not it is formative or summative (or both), but the *use* to which it is put" (Pahad, 1999: 251). Although Kotzé (1999: 32) states that continuous assessment can be the accumulation of formative or summative assessment techniques, Le Grange and Reddy (1998: 10) state that continuous assessment tends to be more formative than summative. Formative assessment is a relatively new and challenging concept in education. Nakabugo and Siebörger (1999: 294) found in their research that many teachers struggle with formative assessment. They state: "Formative assessment appears to require a shift from regarding teaching as the transmission of knowledge, to viewing teaching as an interactive activity in which both teacher and learner participate in the teaching and learning process".

According to van Rensburg, (1998b: 83): "Outcomes-based assessment largely implies individual assessment based on the teacher's observation of authentic tasks performed by the learner". Authentic assessment involves the evaluation of complex performances and higher order thinking skills in real-life contexts. In authentic assessment tasks learners are required to demonstrate complex tasks rather than to practice individual skills in isolation. This requires a comprehensive and holistic assessment approach (van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 168; Coetzee, 2002: 136).

Constructivism and OBE both stress the importance of *active* learning (Kotzé, 1999: 32). However, much of the construction of knowledge occurs within the mind of the learners and it cannot be directly observed. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2002: 120) therefore stress the important role performance-based assessment plays within an OBE approach. Performance-based assessment evaluates the effectiveness of the learning process and learners' understanding based on observations of what the learners can *do*. Donald *et al.* (2002: 120) claim that, if used effectively, performance-based assessment, "...could help to shift the past domination of normative assessment in education".



Coetzee (2002: 145-6) states that in order for assessment to be effective:

- The purpose must be explicit – criterion referenced.
- It must be authentic, continuous, multidimensional, varied and balanced.
- It must be ongoing and an integral part of the learning process.
- It must be accurate, objective, valid, fair, manageable and time efficient.
- It must take many forms, gather information from several contexts, and use varied methods.
- The methods and techniques used must be appropriate to knowledge, skills or attitudes to be assessed and at the age and developmental level of the learner.
- It must be bias-free and sensitive to gender, race, cultural backgrounds and abilities.
- The results must be communicated clearly, accurately, timeously and meaningfully.
- Progress must be linked to achievement of specific outcomes and not be rigidly time bound.

#### **2.8.4 The purposes of assessment**

Pahad (1999: 250) states: "Assessment must be aligned to a clearly defined purpose". Van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 173) claim that the ultimate purpose of assessment is to measure learning outcomes and that additional purposes are for the improvement of teaching, the curriculum and conditions for learners' learning. In other words, that assessment is no longer viewed as solely a mechanism by which to gauge how much learners know but that it is also seen as a learning tool, as an evaluation mechanism of teaching strategies, and as a manner by which to identify and support the developmental process of each learner. It is important to note the purpose of the assessment as it will dictate the most appropriate assessment to be used (Dreyer, 2000: 271).

Coetzee (2002: 144), in keeping with the principles of the National Qualifications Framework, outlines the following reasons for assessment:

- To place a learner at the appropriate level in the learning programme.
- To monitor learner progress and identify problems.
- To ensure progress to the next level and to credit the achieved level.
- To recognise prior learning.
- To report to the role players as to their level of achievement, consequently building a profile of the learner's achievements.

- To provide information for evaluation and review of the learning programme in classroom.
- To maximise learners' access to knowledge, skills, attitudes and values defined in Curriculum 2005.

Pahad (1999: 259) outlines a general principle regarding assessment stating, "...no educator or learner should assess anything at all unless they are certain that they can explain *what* they are assessing, *why* they are assessing it and *how* they will do it effectively and fairly". Dreyer (2000: 279) recommends the use of a wide variety of assessment methods to provide learners with a range of processes through which they are able to demonstrate their respective strengths and weaknesses. She claims: "The greater the diversity in methods of assessment, the fairer assessment is to students". Lubisi, Parker and Wedekind (1998: 20) support this perspective and add that some methods applied in the past can still be used as long as they are reliable and appropriately assess the stated outcomes of learning.

## 2.9 OBE, INCLUSION AND ASSESSMENT

This section will argue that OBE, inclusion and assessment are intrinsically linked and mutually supportive in both their principles and practices. This discussion draws upon the findings and literature explored so far and highlights the concurrency of these aspects of education. This perspective forms the foundation of this research study.

Naicker (1999a: 13) advocates of the supportive association between OBE and inclusive education. He argues that, "...it is OBE that will allow inclusive education to succeed since OBE is inclusive in nature. It is able to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning, including those who manifest gifted behaviours". Naicker (1999a: 87) states that: "OBE is a system of learning and teaching that is learner-centred and is based on the understanding that all learners can learn". According to the Department of Education (2001: 16) inclusive education also acknowledges that all learners can learn and, due to their individuality, learners have different learning needs which are equally valued.



Spady (1994: 2) claims that the most important feature of OBE is that it is concerned with, "...establishing the conditions and opportunities within the system that enable and encourage all students to achieve those essential outcomes". Naicker (1999a: 115) comments that the flexibility of the OBE framework, with its principles of expanded opportunities and high expectations, enables all learners to achieve success relative to their own pace and style of learning.

The expanded opportunity principle is based on the understanding that not all learners learn equally fast or in the same way. Therefore, OBE teachers must do everything possible to keep opportunities for continued learning and improvement open to learners (Spady & Schlebusch, 1999: 34). From this perspective time is viewed as being flexible and is adjusted to accommodate faster and slower learners. This is achieved through direct support in teaching time, the allocation of extra time to master curriculum concepts when difficulties are experienced and a greater flexibility in the amount of learning time allocated to meet the outcome (Naicker, 1999a: 63).

As OBE also acknowledges and supports different learning modalities such as linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial *etc.*, teachers must provide opportunities for learners to learn in a way that suits their preferred style of learning. The NCSNET/NCESS document (Department of Education, 1997b: 121) encourages the customisation of learning programmes and materials to accommodate "...differences in sensory modalities, learning styles and rates of learning as well as appropriate teaching and support services to cater for diverse needs". With the high expectations principle not only are learners made aware of the learning outcomes and requirements of the learning experience but an environment of high expectations and belief in the ability of all learners is created (Naicker, 1999a: 63; Spady & Schlebusch, 1999: 33).

If one looks at the six key statements of OBE outlined by Spady and Schlebusch (1999: 29) (see 2.3.1) one can see how these principles promote and support inclusive education. Naicker (1999a: 92), in support of his argument as to the implicit nature of inclusive education in OBE outlines seven similarities:



- A clear set of expectations or learning outcomes for a single system of education that accommodates the needs of all learners – this is found in all components and at all levels of the education system.
- Conditions and opportunities within the system which enable and encourage all learners to achieve essential outcomes – this includes support services for inclusion, clear and flexible assessment criteria, flexible time allowance for each learner to demonstrate the required outcomes and the recognition of a variety of learning modalities.
- Ensuring that all learners are equipped with the knowledge, competence, and qualities needed for success after exit from the education system.
- An assumption that all learners can learn and succeed, but not necessarily at the same pace and on the same day.
- Structuring and operating schools so that all learners can demonstrate the outcomes.
- Successful learning promotes even more successful learning.
- Schools control the conditions that directly affect successful school learning – Those who implement OBE and inclusive education are capable of changing how they operate to allow and encourage all students to be successful learners.

Accordingly, assessment an essential element of OBE can be viewed as a mechanism by which to support and promote an inclusive education. This proposition is supported by comments of van Rensburg (1998b: 89-90) which state:

"Effective and informative assessment practice involves teachers using a variety of assessment strategies that gives learners multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to the learning programme outcome". And, "Effective and informative assessment practice acknowledges that learners are individuals who develop differently. All learners must be given appropriate opportunities to demonstrate achievement".

Assessment in OBE focuses on the development of learners' skills, values and knowledge. Consequently, learner differences and individuality are supported as the learning experience acknowledges a wider scope of learning and is not just content driven (Naicker, 1999a: 111). In OBE the choice of outcomes (combining knowledge, skills and values) depends on the context and developmental level of the learner. In this way, differences in learning pace and prior knowledge is acknowledged and supported (van Rensburg, 1998a: 39-40). Assessment in OBE is also structured to accommodate differences in learner's styles as well as responses given in different modalities (writing, speaking, drawing, *etc*) (Naicker, 1999a: 112). In OBE assessment occurs continuously throughout the year (Le Grange & Reddy, 1998: 11). Both the products and processes of learning are valued and a variety of assessment methods are



used to match the purpose of the assessment. Subsequently, learners are provided with numerous opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding. Assessment in OBE is therefore more flexible than in the past and teachers are encouraged to take into account the individual needs and abilities of all learners (van Rensburg, 1998b: 86).

These assessment practices and approaches contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education. As Smith and Lin Goodwin (1997: 117) state:

“When children and all the cultural knowledge that they bring with them are respected and valued, the classroom becomes a safe place that embraces rather than rejects the lives they lead in their own communities. . . . In such an environment, assessment is a means to find out what children know, can do, and care about; it is not used to categorise, label, or define them as incapable”.

Therefore, "We must develop and propagate a wider understanding of the effect of assessment on teaching and learning for assessment does not stand outside teaching and learning but stands in dynamic interaction with it" (Dryer, 2000: 271).

## **2.10 A PARADIGM SHIFT DEBATE**

Currently, the term 'paradigm shift' is frequently used in critical debates and research regarding the adoption of an OBE approach and the implementation of Curriculum 2005 (Singh & Manser, 2000: 110), the advocacy for inclusive education (Naicker, 1999a: 13) and the role of assessment as an intricate part of OBE (Pahad, 1999: 247).

Pretorius (1998a: v) states: “The new curriculum for South African schools is a watershed: its outcomes based education approach represents a new paradigm in education”. Singh and Manser (2000: 110) comment that: "In order to support the State's proposed curriculum change to OBE, existing paradigms may need to be shifted”. However, a paradigm shift requires an entirely different worldview, a complete change in philosophy and perception (Naicker, 1999a: 46). It involves changes in systems of thinking and behaviour, the functioning of major social and organisational functions and the roles and responsibilities people assume.



A change in "...one's beliefs system, values and understanding of the world..." (Naicker, 1999a: 45) is no easy feat. Van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 6) note, "A shift in orientation (also called a paradigm shift) brings with it some soul searching and a resistance to change". With regards to the South African context Naicker (1999a: 14) notes:

"The complexity of the shift is increased by the concurrent shift away from apartheid to OBE. Both apartheid education and special education were characterised by particular theories, assumptions, models and practices. In order to move towards OBE, which is inclusive and which has a different set of human rights based theories, assumptions, models and practices, one has to understand these aspects of the old and the new to avoid repeating the old within the new framework".

According to Swart and Pettipher (2001: 41), "Educators' assumptions, beliefs and attitudes are directly translated into actions and teaching practices and inform their decision making". Consequently, Naicker (1999a: 94) claims that in order to move into a new paradigm that supports the implementation of OBE as an inclusive system of education in South Africa theoretical frameworks, methodology and teaching practices will have to change. This perspective is supported by Zollers, Ramanathan and Yu (1999: 165) who state: "Teachers in inclusive classrooms are required to move from a traditional teaching paradigm into a new paradigm which not only demands different teaching methods but an adjustment in teachers' values and reward systems". With regards to assessment, Pahad (1999: 247) claims: "...a paradigm shift in assessment is required in order to ensure that assessment practices guide, support and underpin our transformative outcomes-based model for education and training". Reinforcing this comment and underlining the important role of assessment in the transformation to OBE van Rensburg (1998b: 82) states: "Unless assessment is properly aligned with curriculum reform and teaching practices, the desired change will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to implement".

## **2.11 THE ROLE OF TEACHERS IN A PARADIGM SHIFT**

Teachers' perceptions, experiences and attitudes towards the implementation of OBE and Curriculum 2005 have been extensively researched (Ngcai, 1997b: 19; Pretorius, 1997: 9;



Williams, 1999: 2). A common finding is that most teachers do not have a good understanding of OBE (Williams, 1999: 362; Jayiya, 1999: 8). With reference to the work of Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) Green (2001: 12) states: "Recent research suggests that the new curriculum is supported in principle by most teachers, but that significant difficulties and misunderstandings exist with regard to its implementation".

Change is usually difficult and a shift in orientation often results in questioning and resistance (van der Horst & McDonald, 1997: 6). Van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 91) have found that teachers "...prefer not to explore and discover new meanings that might threaten long cherished notions about teaching and instead opt for the safety of repetition and predictability". Subsequently, they - van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 99) - argue that an understanding of attitudes, values systems and ideologies regarding change and resistance to change is necessary in the broader comprehension of educational change.

There are many factors within the South African context that may have made the transition towards OBE particularly challenging, such as an unequal distribution of resources, poorly qualified teachers, large teacher to learner ratio, a history of adhering to a prescriptive curriculum, *etc* (Ngcai, 1997b: 19; Pretorius, 1997: 9). In particular, Naicker (1999a: 47) claims that: "The enormity of the necessary paradigm shift was underestimated by trainers of teachers and consequently by teachers: the true nature and extend of change that was required in thinking and practice became apparent as the debates unfolded".

## **2.12 CONCLUSION**

This chapter has given some insight as to the various concepts and contexts of contemporary education in South Africa. In order to understand the current context and developments, the history of education in South Africa was briefly explored. Outcomes-based education and its supporting curriculum, Curriculum 2005, was then outlined and critiqued. The purpose of this was to gain a greater understanding of the complexity of the transformation and teachers' experiences of this process.

The recent advocacy for the principles and practices of inclusion was then outlined and described as playing a mutually supportive role of both OBE and the Constitution of South Africa. Continuing the argument, assessment as an integral part of the process of learning and teaching was discussed and the transformation in the nature and purpose of assessment in OBE was outlined. It was then clearly argued how the principles of OBE support inclusive education, and how the effective use of assessment can reinforce and perpetuate these principles and practices.

The importance of a paradigm shift, as an enabling mechanism in the contribution of assessment towards an inclusive education was then discussed. It was highlighted that this transition needs to be encouraged within teachers, the driving force of change, to ensure the effective implementation and practice of OBE, assessment and inclusion.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHOD**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter gives a detailed description of the research methodology and methods chosen to explore the research question. This includes an outline of the research procedure and a description of the data production and analysis methods. The thorough presentation of the research process promotes the trustworthiness of the study and enables the reader to follow the development of the research.

#### **3.2 THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND PURPOSE**

In the attempt to gain insight into how assessment contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education I have drawn upon research methods from both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. However, the qualitative paradigm plays a dominant, overarching role in the research, as this study occurs within two schools as case studies and is interested in interpreting the constructed realities of the teachers who work within these contexts. The incorporation of quantitative research methods enabled the production of data that: is more objective in nature, can be gained from a larger sample group, can be easily analysed and can be triangulated with the data produced via qualitative research methods. In accordance concurring with the dominant qualitative nature of this research, the objective of the study is not to make generalisations to a wide population, but to rather explore, within the 'thick' descriptions of the case studies, these teachers' constructed realities and experiences with assessment and inclusive education. In other words, this study attempts to understand the research question from the perspective of the participants (Mertens, 1998: 6). In this regard the case study method of this research may be seen as having an interpretative, descriptive and constructive approach.

People live and interact within micro and macro systems or contexts, and their interpretations and constructed realities shape, and are shaped by the broader political, social and cultural contexts of both the past and present (Engelbrecht, 1999: 4; Green, 2001: 8). Education transformation and inclusive education in South Africa has been accompanied by much political, social and economic change (Pretorius, 1998a: v). Throughout this research process, and especially in the data analysis and interpretation phases, cognizance must be taken of these influences and the multiple constructions of reality.

### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Gough (2000: 3) describes research methodology as "...the *reasoning* that informs particular ways of doing research, or the *principles* that inform the organisation of research activity". Harding (1987: 2) commenting on the confusion often experienced with the terms 'methodology' and 'method', describes research method as the use of techniques (or a way of proceeding) in gathering information or evidence. She refers to research methodology as a theory and analysis of how research should proceed.

Babbie and Mouton (1998: 49), however, argue that research methods and techniques are dependent on and underpinned by various assumptions and values such as the objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being studied and the theory or expectations of the researcher. Therefore, they propose the term 'methodological paradigm' to include both the methods and techniques that are used by the researcher, as well as the underlying principles and assumptions regarding their use. They identify three broad methodological paradigms namely, the quantitative, qualitative and participatory action paradigms. The first two of these paradigms are relevant to this study.

#### 3.3.1 The qualitative and quantitative paradigms

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994: 107): "A paradigm may be viewed as a set of *basic beliefs* (or metaphysics) that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a *worldview* that defines, for its holder, the nature of the "world," the individual's place in it, and the range



of possible relationships to that world and its parts...". Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 92) define a paradigm as a set of overarching and interconnected assumptions about the nature of reality. They also state that a paradigm provides the largest framework within which research takes place.

- **The Qualitative Paradigm**

Although there are different types and methods of research that stem from the qualitative paradigm, they all have a common worldview which is the desire to, "...understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption to the natural setting as possible" (Merriam, 1998: 5-6). As qualitative research views reality as that which is constructed by individuals (Creswell, 1994: 4), it aims to understand and interpret the constructed realities of the participants in the study and the influential social contexts within which they live and interact. As Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 126) state: "The qualitative researcher attempts to capture what people say and do, that is, the products of how people interpret the world". This is achieved via methods that examine the participants' words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways, and that try to represent the situation as closely as they experienced it (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 53; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 89).

- **The Quantitative Paradigm**

Quantitative research is based on a positivist position in which research is primarily concerned with the explanation and the prediction of observable events (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 90). In quantitative research reality is viewed as being "objective" and independent of the researcher, something that can be measured objectively, using a questionnaire or instrument (Creswell, 1994: 4). These observations are converted into discrete units that can be compared to other units by using statistical analysis (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 89). From this comparison a pattern or relationship is explored between the different units and a possible cause for a social phenomena is sort (Marcinkowski, 1993: 43).



- **Combining the Qualitative and Quantitative Paradigms**

As stated previously, I have employed research methods from both the qualitative and quantitative paradigms in this research. However, the qualitative paradigm or worldview is dominant in this study as it supports and concurs with the research question. For, in order to gain insight into how assessment can contribute towards the promotion of inclusive education, one has to attain a comprehensive and holistic understanding of the constructed realities held by particular individuals. The principles and nature of a qualitative paradigm also match my worldview, which according to Gough (2000: 6), is the driving force of the research.

The incorporation of data production methods from the quantitative paradigm in this research enabled me to gain valuable insight as an initial exploration of the research question. This understanding was then used to channel the research to further explore certain aspects of the research phenomenon. The use of a quantitative method enabled me to gain responses from all of the participants in the two case studies, and to use their responses not only for within and cross-case study analysis, but to also compare and triangulate the finding with those produced via qualitative methods. The more objective nature of the quantitative method (closed-ended statements in a questionnaire) also enabled me to compare data findings with those that may have been influenced by the nature of the research method (semi-structured interviews), the presence of the researcher and other related variables (Mouton, 1990: 148-155).

Therefore, this study follows the dominant-less dominant design model as described by Creswell (1994: 177): "In this design the researcher presents the study within a single, dominant paradigm with one small component of the overall study drawn from the alternative paradigm". The less dominant paradigm is typically used in the data production phase of the research (Creswell, 1994: 189). In this research the qualitative paradigm is the dominant paradigm, my overarching worldview and research methods from both the qualitative and quantitative paradigm are used to explore certain aspects of the research and to add scope and breadth to the study.

The advantage of the dominant-less dominant design is that all areas of the research are consistently housed in the dominant paradigm yet I am also able to draw upon a variety of



methods to gather information and to explore, in detail, certain aspects of the study (Creswell, 1994: 177). Creswell (1994: 177) notes, however, that qualitative and quantitative purists would not favour this approach, as they would be concerned as to the match between the underlying assumptions of the relative paradigms and the methods used. However, he argues that: "It is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested or explored" (Creswell, 1994: 177).

Mouton (1990: 39) supports the use of multiple methods and techniques as, according to him, it improves the quality of research. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999: 7) state that the simultaneous existence of different paradigms enables researchers to draw on more than one paradigm, depending on the kind of research. Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989), cited in Creswell (1994: 175), identify five purposes for combining methods in a single study:

- Triangulation in the classic sense of seeking convergence of results.
- Complimentary, in that overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge.
- Developmentally, wherein the first method is used sequentially to help inform the second method.
- Initiation, wherein contradictions and fresh perspectives emerge.
- Expansion, wherein the mixed methods add scope and breadth to a study.

This study benefited from all of the above mentioned purposes of combining the qualitative and quantitative paradigms. The triangulation of the qualitative and quantitative data produced promoted the trustworthiness of the study (see 3.5.1). The various research methods in the different paradigms were used developmentally as the initial data produced, using mainly a quantitative method, informed and guided later research (see 3.4.4.6). And, as discussed in Chapter 5, the data produced using both qualitative and quantitative methods was complimentary as similar findings emerged yet it also resulted in the initiation and expansion of new concepts. This briefly outlines the benefits of combining the qualitative and quantitative paradigms in this research.



### 3.4 RESEARCH METHOD

As previously stated, Harding (1987: 2) describes research method as the use of techniques (or a way of proceeding) in gathering information or evidence. The method is complimentary to and supportive of the methodology as it is based on the same worldview and principles (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 49).

#### 3.4.1 A case study

A case study method of research can be used in either the qualitative or quantitative paradigms or a combination of the two (Stake, 1988: 256). Merriam (1998: 19) states that from a qualitative perspective, a case study method of research is used to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and the meaning it holds for the participants.

There are various definitions as to what constitutes a case study (Merriam, 1998: 27). Some researchers (Yin, 1984: 23) focus on the process of the research, some (Stake, 1988: 258) the unit of analysis and others (Merriam, 1988: 27) the end product. However, the single most defining characteristic of a case study is the delimitation of the object of study, Smith's (1978) notion of the case as a *bounded system*. It is this feature and the use of intensive descriptions that differentiates case studies from other methods of qualitative research (Merriam, 1998: 19, 27).

This research may be regarded as using a qualitative case study method as the participants of the study constitute a bounded system – all of the teachers at the two schools participated in the study. This study can also be considered to have an interpretative and constructive focus as it places emphasis on how individuals construct reality and interpret their worlds. It also incorporates the context in which the participants live and work, and it aims to accurately reflect the complexity of these interpretations. A detailed description of the characteristics and contexts of the two case studies is presented in Chapter 4.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 18) state that the products of how people interpret their world are what they say and do. This case study may also be considered to be descriptive as it uses



words to convey meanings, to understand the constructed realities and observed worlds of both the participants and researcher, to describe the process and to produce data (Merriam, 1998: 8).

Stake (1995: 3-4) identifies three types of case study methods according to the purpose of the study, namely: intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies. The case studies in this research are considered to be both instrumental and collective. The case studies are classified as instrumental as the purpose of the case is to understand something, to gain insight (Stake, 1995: 3). The case itself is of secondary interest and plays a supportive role. The case studies may also be termed collective, as there is more than one case (school). However, Stake (1994: 238) does point out that things are not so clear cut in practice and suggest that these categories are more heuristic than functional.

### **3.4.2 Sampling**

Van Vuuren and Maree (1999: 274) define sampling as "...the process used to select cases for inclusion in a research study". Merriam (1998: 60-61) describes two basic types of sampling, namely: probability and nonprobability. According to Merriam (1998: 60) nonprobability sampling is used most frequently in qualitative research since generalisation in a statistical sense is not a goal of qualitative research. It is not my intention for the findings of this research to be generalised to the greater population, as the sample is not representative. However, as all of the staff members in each case study participated in part of the data production, generalisations from that particular aspect of the study could be derived for these schools. The overall research process and findings could also be used in some way for further research and intervention.

Within nonprobability sampling the purposeful or purposive form is most common. As Merriam (1998: 61) states: "Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned".



Merriam (1998: 64) distinguishes sampling in case studies stating that two levels of sampling are usually necessary in qualitative case studies. On the first level the case or bounded system must be selected. On the second level, unless all people, activities or documents within the case are studied, sampling within the case needs to occur.

On the first level, sometimes the case is given, other times criteria needs to be established to assist with the case(s) selection. In this study, due to past and current working relationships between the Department of Educational Psychology at Stellenbosch University and two rural schools near Stellenbosch, and the fact that this research is part of a larger study titled 'Assessment: Transforming Inclusive Policy into Practice', the cases were given. This study was also seen as being relevant and beneficial to the two particular schools as some of the teachers had informally requested Stellenbosch University to offer some assistance and support with regards to assessment in OBE. Thus the two schools were chosen as case studies.

In this study all of the teachers in both case studies were initially studied and then a smaller sample was selected for further research. Merriam (1998: 65) states that: "A sample within the case needs to be selected either before the data collection begins or while the data are being gathered...". Merriam (1998: 65) recommends random sampling to be used within the case as this strategy can contribute towards validity. I used a probability orientated stratified sampling technique for identify within case participants. As van Vuuren and Maree (1999: 278) comment: "Stratified sampling is used in contexts where the population consists of subgroups of interest. The population is then divided into these subgroups (known as strata) on the sampling frame, and simple random samples are drawn from each of the strata". When selecting two teachers from each school to interview (within case study sampling), I identified the different Learning Phases as different strata and from this ensured that I interviewed one teacher from the Foundation Phase and one from the Intermediate Phase. I decided to stratify the samples as the teachers in the Foundation Phase had, due to the use of a cascade model to introduce OBE, been practicing OBE for a longer duration than the Intermediate Phase. Similarly I also decided not to interview teachers from the Senior Phase. Once I had demarcated these subgroups I asked for volunteers to participate in the interview, therefore, drawing a simple random sample of participants from each strata.



Merriam (1998: 66) states: "The size of the sample within the case is determined by a number of factors relevant to the study's purpose". Babbie and Mouton (1998: 287) comment that pragmatics such as available time, financial constraints, assistance *etc.* also influence the number of participants chosen for the study. These pragmatic considerations influenced the number of participants I chose for this study.

### **3.4.3 Researcher as instrument**

In qualitative research, the researcher plays a pivotal role as the primary instrument for producing and analysing data (Merriam, 1998: 20; Mouton, 1990: 148). Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 135) offer comment on this statement: "...the human instrument is the only data collection instrument which is multifaceted enough and complex enough to capture the important elements of a human person or activity". There are, however, both advantages and disadvantages from this personal involvement. Merriam (1998: 20) claims that the participation of the researcher enables flexibility in the study, as one is able to respond to the situation and maximise the opportunities for producing meaningful data. But, the researcher is also limited by being human as mistakes are made, opportunities are missed and personal biases may interfere. Due to the instrumental role I as researcher play within this study, I have attempted to be continuously aware of and reflect on the possible impact and influence my thoughts, actions and words may have in all aspects of this study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 66).

Merriam (1998: 20) states that the qualitative researcher must have enormous tolerance for ambiguity, as the nature of qualitative research is evolving, unpredictable and flexible. The qualitative researcher must also be able to adeptly interpret the situation for, as Stake (1995: 8) outlines, this is a complex undertaking where one needs to objectively record what is happening and, at the same time, examine its meaning and redirect observations to redefine or substantiate those meanings. This is something that I found particularly challenging whilst interviewing participants.

In order to produce accurate and comprehensive interpretations the researcher must be sensitive to the research context and all the variables within it, such as the people, overt and



covert agendas, physical settings *etc*, especially during the data production and analysis phases of the research (Merriam, 1998: 21-22). This sensitivity should also include awareness of the possible impact the researcher's worldview, actions and verbal and non-verbal messages may have on the research context and variables within it. Merriam (1998: 22) offers an explanation for this: "because the primary instrument in qualitative research is human, all observations and analyses are filtered through that human's worldview, values, and perspective". Stake (1995: 9) and Merriam (1998: 22-23) state that the sophisticated researcher acknowledges that multiple interpretations of reality exist and that through the research process the researcher's construction of reality interacts with other people's constructions or interpretations of the research phenomenon. "Sensitivity thus extends to understanding how biases or subjectivity shape the investigation and its findings" (Merriam, 1998: 23).

According to Merriam (1998: 23-24) sensitivity towards and interpretation of different worldviews and constructions of reality can be achieved by good communication and listening skills. Not only do these skills influence the accuracy of the data produced but also nature of the research environment and researcher-participant relationship. Effective communication and listening skills are especially important when interviewing participants as, "the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind" (Patton, 1990: 278 cited in Merriam, 1998: 23). This is something that I attempted to be particularly sensitive towards as the participants and I spoke different first languages. However, my expressed concern at the beginning of the interview about the possible language difficulties the participants might experience and my obvious caring intent actually enhanced an empathetic rapport and enabled the participants to feel more relaxed resulting in an effective, if somewhat different, communicative environment.

#### **3.4.4 Methods of data production**

In accordance with Creswell's (1994: 184) dominant-less dominant design, the majority of methods of data production in this study are derived from the dominant paradigm, the qualitative paradigm, with a small segment relating to the less-dominant, quantitative paradigm.



This study employed the following qualitative research methods to produce data: a review of related literature, a description of the case studies, interviews with teachers from the Foundation and Intermediate Phases, field notes and a workshop. I also designed and used a questionnaire, which constituted the quantitative element of this research. There was, however, also a qualitative section in the questionnaire.

#### **3.4.4.1 A review of related literature**

A review of related literature (as discussed in Chapter 2) enabled me to gain an extensive and thorough understanding of the various issues relating to the research question. This information, with its socio-historical perspective, also assisted with the interpretation and understanding of the research context and the various variables within it. I particularly drew from this understanding and knowledge when constructing the questionnaire and when interviewing the participants. The literature review also played a supportive, scaffolding role when interpreting, analysing and describing the data produced.

#### **3.4.4.2 A description of the case studies**

The information gathered to describe the case studies helped to demarcate and outline the bounded systems. It also enabled both the reader and myself to gain valuable insight into the unique context and related variables of each school. As Stake (1995: 39) argues: "Qualitative research tries to establish an empathetic understanding for the reader, through description, sometimes thick description, conveying to the reader what experience itself would convey". The identification and differentiation of the case studies is important for this study for, although the research question may be asked in many different contexts, this study only looks at the phenomenon within the particular context of these two schools. Yin (1984: 67) supports the importance of providing an overview of the cases as well as the conceptual framework. A detailed description of the two schools is presented in Chapter 4.



#### **3.4.4.3 Interviews with teachers from the Foundation Phase and Intermediate Phase**

According to Stake (1995: 64) the case study method of research is primarily used to obtain the descriptions and interpretations of others. This may be effectively achieved by the use of interviews as, "the interview is the main road to multiple realities" (Stake, 1995: 64). Interviews also enables certain areas or concepts to be further explored and elaborated upon (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 81). As this study is concerned with the realities and understandings constructed by the participants with regards to assessment and inclusive education, interviews were held with some of the teachers to gain insight as to their interpretations. This study consists of four individual interviews with two volunteer teachers from the Foundation Phase and two volunteer teachers from the Intermediate Phase. The participants come from two different schools (the case studies) with one teacher from each phase per school.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 81-83) have identified three different types of interviewing formats, namely: the unstructured interview, the interview guide and the interview schedule. Each type of interviewing format has a greater or lesser degree of structure; with the interview schedule having the most structure and the unstructured interview the least. The structure refers to the extent to which the interview questions were developed prior to the interview. The interviews in this study follow the interview schedule format which Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 83) described as: "...consisting of a detailed set of questions and probes...". A copy of the interview questions may be found in Appendix B.

The open-ended questions asked in the interviews in this study were inductively derived from an initial interpretation of responses received from the questionnaire, observations and a review of related literature. I chose the interview schedule format in an attempt to reduce the possible affects of differences in language and translation. The structure in this type of interview format enabled the participants to read the interview schedule before the interview started and to question and resolve any language confusion or misunderstanding of the questions. Merriam (1998: 82) comments on the benefits of the structure of an interview schedule for inexperienced researchers: "working from an interview schedule allows the new



researcher to gain the experience and confidence needed to conduct more open-ended questioning".

Stake (1995: 66) states that the interviewer influences both the focus and process of the interview. Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 83), however, include the influence of the interviewee in the dynamic process: "In the actual interview situations, the skilled researcher will discover what is important to the interviewees, within the broad boundaries of the interview topics and questions, and pursue these new discoveries in the interview". No matter which way one looks at it, the interviewer-respondent interaction is complex. Merriam (1998: 87) offers comment on this statement: "both parties bring biases, predispositions, attitudes, and physical characteristics that colour the interaction and the data elicited". These factors need to be considered and included in the analysis of the data produced.

#### **3.4.4.4 Field notes**

Fieldwork involves the researcher going to the setting of the research to record observations and to make field notes of the phenomenon being researched (Merriam, 1998: 111). In this study field notes based on observations made during visits to the schools and during interactions with the principals and teachers were recorded. These observations, in particular, assisted with the collection of case study material and with the formation of the workshop. Merriam (1998: 111) supports the use of observations in qualitative research to produce data: "It offers a firsthand account of the situation under study and, when combined with interviewing and documenting analysis, allows for a holistic interpretation of the phenomenon being investigated".

#### **3.4.4.5 A Workshop**

A workshop on assessment in OBE was offered to the two schools. The workshop had two objectives: to share and reflect upon the findings of the research with the participants and to address a need within the schools. As mentioned previously, the participants both prior to the study and through their responses during the data production phase voiced this need. Only one school accepted the offer for a workshop.



The workshop enabled the research data to be checked and verified by the participants as well as for new additional data to be added to the study. The data produced in the workshop provided a richer, thicker case study description and it enabled me to gain greater insight as to the research question and context of the study.

#### **3.4.4.6 A Questionnaire**

The quantitative method of research in this study was the use of a self-administered questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended and open-ended questions, which resulted in the production of quantitative and qualitative data respectively. A copy of the questionnaire may be found in Appendix A. Babbie and Mouton (1998: 232) state that a questionnaire, which is a component of survey research, may be used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes. In this study the questionnaire was used for descriptive and exploratory purposes as it was constructed to gain initial insight as to the teachers' understanding and interpretation of assessment in OBE and inclusive education. The same questionnaire was used at both school and all of the teachers, including management staff, participated in the study. All of the participants responded to some, if not all of the questions in the questionnaire.

There are both advantages and disadvantages of using a questionnaire in research (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 262). A questionnaire is a convenient method to use, as many people may participate. In this study it enabled all of the staff members to participate in the research. A self-administered questionnaire is a valuable instrument as it enables the participants to respond to questions in a confidential and anonymous manner. This is particularly useful at schools where staff members feel restricted or unable to voice their opinions. Participants are also able to respond in their own time, allowing for personal reflection and convenience as to when it is completed. The use of both open-ended and closed-ended questions enables the participants to have a variety of means by which to respond, accommodating for differences in style and approach. Due to the standardised nature of a questionnaire it also enables the researcher to easily compare and analyses the responses of the participants. A questionnaire also enables the researcher to ask many questions regarding the research question, which provides flexibility in the analysis (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 263).



However, the disadvantages of using a questionnaire are that they are often rigid in their response options, preventing participants to fully express their opinions and thoughts. A questionnaire is not always able to capture and accommodate the social context within which the research is occurring and questionnaires "...cannot measure social action they can only collect self-reports of recalled past action or of prospective or hypothetical action" (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 263). In this study the multiple and varied use of research methods, both quantitative and qualitative, reduced the impact of these disadvantages.

The closed-ended statements in the questionnaire constitute the quantitative segment of this research. Closed-ended statements were used in the questionnaire as they provided a greater uniformity of responses that can more easily compared and analysed (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 233). They also enabled more questions pertaining to the research question to be asked in a confidential and anonymous manner. Creswell (1994: 4) states that a questionnaire with closed-ended questions is a more objective instrument than qualitative methods such as interviews.

The closed-ended statements required the participants to select a response from the options provided (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 233). The response options were based on a Likert rating scale. This scale was chosen as it gives five possible responses, ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, including a neutral position. These response options encouraged the participants to evaluate and gauge the degree or intensity of their response (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 154). For example, when giving an affirmative response the participants had to decide whether they agreed or strongly agreed. It was hoped that the variety of options provided by the Likert rating scale would enable the participants to comfortably indicate their responses. The inclusion of a neutral response can create possible difficulties, however, as some participants may frequently give neutral responses making it difficult to establish their position.

The open-ended questions in the questionnaire asked the participant to provide his or her own answer to the questions, which was then interpreted qualitatively. The open-ended, qualitative questions gave the participants a greater freedom of response (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 233). The freedom does, however, often result in a wide discrepancy in the detail and length of the



responses given by the participants. Some of the responses given may also be irrelevant to the researcher's intent (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 233). This impacts on the analysis, interpretation and validation of the responses. The researcher's interpretation of the responses also opens up the possibility of misunderstanding and researcher bias (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 233).

The participants' interpretation of both the open-ended and closed-ended questions, and their subsequent responses, might also be influenced by factors such as the participants' personal bias or worldview, the perceived role of research (i.e. the desire to give the 'correct' answer), their comprehension of the question and translation errors. As Babbie and Mouton (1998: 238) comment, it is difficult to anticipate the possible biasing effect of particular wording.

The content of the statements and questions asked in the questionnaire was guided by the possible variables related to the research question. This understanding was based on the knowledge and insight I gained from a review of related literature. The questionnaire was also reviewed and commented on by academics in the relevant fields, to assist with the verification of the questionnaire construct and content.

The questionnaire was constructed in English and then it was translated into Afrikaans, the language of the participants. Two independent translators were used to ensure that any bias and inaccuracy that may have occurred due to the translation was eliminated. The translators were also familiar with the participants of the study and were able to ensure that the language used was appropriate and familiar to the participants. These translators were used in all necessary aspects of the study.

### **3.4.5 The research procedure**

Once permission for the research was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department I met with the principal from each school to gain their consent for the study. During this meeting the aim, purpose, nature and duration of the study was outlined and the role of the school was discussed. I shared some of my personal background as a researcher and former teacher in order to foster and promote an effective, transparent and empathetic working relationship with the schools. I also offered to hold a workshop with the teachers of each



school at the end of the study to discuss some of the research findings with them and to explore assessment in OBE. Once I gained permission to complete the study at their school I arranged another meeting with the principals to discuss the history and characteristics of their schools and their contexts. This occurred after my meeting with the staff.

I then met with the staff of each school in order to introduce the research study and myself as researcher. Once again I outlined the aim, nature and duration of the study and the role they would play. I then handed a copy of the questionnaire to each of the participants, stressing to them that their responses would be anonymous and confidential. I paged through the questionnaire with them to ensure that they had all of the pages and I verbalised the written instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. I stressed the importance of completing as many of the questions as possible and in an honest, open manner. I informed the participants that I would return to collect the questionnaires within one week and I asked them to place it in the envelopes provided. I then answered any questions the participants had and clarified any confusion or concern.

During this meeting I also asked for one volunteer from the Foundation Phase and one from the Intermediate Phase to participate in a thirty-minute individual interview. I arranged an interview date and time after school hours with these participants and asked their permission to use a tape-recorder to record the interview. The interview dates were arranged for two weeks after the collection of the questionnaires, to give me sufficient time to interpret and analyse the responses, from which I based the interview questions. I informed the participants that I would call to remind them of the interview date.

Once the questionnaires had been collected the responses were translated, interpreted and analysed. Themes were identified and response rates examined. From this understanding interview questions were designed to further explore issues and topics. Like the questionnaire, the interview questions were translated into Afrikaans (Appendix B).

As pre-arranged, on another occasion I met independently with each principal in order to gain material for the case study. During the meeting we discussed the history, characteristics and contexts of the school. A copy of the questions posed in a semi-formal interview with the



principals may be found in Appendix C. The schools did not have many materials, articles or records pertaining to its history and development. Due to time constraints most of the material came from field notes made from the meetings with the principals, observations and interactions with the staff members.

The interview participants were phoned the day before the scheduled interview date to remind them of the appointment. The participants were given the choice as to the location of the interview, although it was asked to be quiet and private. Some of the interviews were held in the participants' classroom, others in the empty staff room. At the beginning of the interview the participants were thanked for their participation, with both the questionnaire and the interview, and were reminded that the interview would be confidential. Once again permission was requested for the use of the tape-recorder. It was explained that its purpose was to gain verbatim responses for later use with translation of the interview and to ensure that the correct meaning of the responses is attained. The process of the thirty-minute interview was then outlined and the participants were given a chance to read through the proposed questions. Any confusion regarding the questions was clarified and the participants were encouraged to give honest responses, in Afrikaans or English, and in the manner by which they normally converse. As mentioned previously, my concern regarding the language difference was discussed, along with the nervousness of both the researcher and participant, subsequently creating an atmosphere of empathetic understanding.

During the interview I focused on attaining a correct understanding of the responses for, as Stake (1995: 66) states, "getting the exact words of the respondent is usually not very important, it is what they mean that is important". Stake (1995: 66) continues to claim that a good interviewer can reconstruct the account and give it to the participant for review and comment. Due to time constraints I did not do this, however, during the interview I frequently checked my understanding of the participants responses by rephrasing their comments. This technique was used to reduce possible misunderstandings created by translation.

The interviews were then transcribed verbatim and translated by two independent translators (See Appendix D). After the analysis and interpretation of all of the questionnaires and interviews I contacted the principals with regards to the workshop I had offered in the initial



meeting. One of the schools accepted the offer and the other declined. The workshop was designed to encourage interaction amongst the staff members and to ignite discussion and exploration of the nature, purpose and role of assessment, education and inclusion at large. This broad, more theoretical and philosophical approach attempted to encourage the teachers to explore and compare their present paradigms about teaching, assessment and inclusion to the assumptions and beliefs of the past and those that form the foundation of OBE. This workshop attempted to assist with the paradigm shift required in OBE, as discussed in Chapter 2.

### **3.4.6 Data analysis**

Data analysis is the process of making meaning from the data produced. It involves consolidating, reducing and interpreting what the participants have said and what the researcher has seen and read (Merriam, 1998: 178). From this process the researcher seeks to understand the phenomenon being studied.

Qualitative data analysis is essentially "...a nonmathematical analytical procedure that involves examining the meaning of people's words and actions" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 121). It involves the development of propositions or statements, which are inductively derived from a rigorous and systematic analysis of the data produced during the research process (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 126). From this analysis patterns of unanticipated as well as expected relationships regarding the research question are sort (Stake, 1995: 41).

Quantitative data analysis, on the other hand, seeks out a relationship between a small number of variables regarding the research question (Stake, 1995: 41). It involves a deductive approach whereby hypotheses are generated prior to the beginning of the study and the resulting data is mathematically analyzed to determine if the hypotheses have been confirmed or not (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 126). In this study descriptive statistics are used as a method of quantitative data analysis. The qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods used in this research will be discussed separately.

This study consists of two case studies. The qualitative and quantitative data analysis produced in each case was first analysed and explored independently. Merriam (1998: 194-5)



refers to this as *within-case analysis*. The cases were then compared and combined, enabling *cross-case analysis*. According to Merriam (1998: 195) “A qualitative, inductive, multicase study seeks to build abstractions across cases”. Yin (1994:112) concurs that the researcher attempts “to build a general explanation that fits each of the individual cases, even though the cases will vary in their details”. This inductive process requires continual reflection, questioning and awareness of possible subjective interpretation and bias to ensure that the propositions made accurately reflected the participants' feelings, thoughts and actions (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 126).

- **Qualitative data analysis**

There are various methods by which to inductively analyse qualitative data (Bryman & Burgess, 1994: 3-6; Merriam, 1998: 155–161; Poggenpoel, 1998: 337-345). The process of data analysis may involve a presentation of the data without any analysis, an accurate description of the phenomenon or the development of a theory (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 122; Merriam, 1998: 196). However, with case studies in qualitative research the process of data analysis has a slightly different focus. As Merriam (1998: 193) explains: “...a case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit. Conveying an understanding of the case is the paramount consideration in analysing the data”. Therefore case studies may have a greater proportion of description than other forms of qualitative research.

I decided to use the Constant Comparative Method of data analysis in this study as elucidated by Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 126 – 149), Merriam (1998: 178-193) as well as Lincoln and Guba (1985: 339-344). The Constant Comparative Method is a continuous process of inductive analysis where the findings of the research are not hypothesised in advance but rather emerge from the data due to inductive reasoning (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 127). These findings or units of meaning are coded, categorised and simultaneously compared. The result of this method of data analysis is a ‘reasonable’ reconstruction of the data produced (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 134). There are four stages to the process: comparing units applicable to each category, integrating categories and their properties, delimiting the construction and writing the construction (Fouché, 1998: 339). The characteristics of each of



these stages are outlined below as I describe how I applied the Constant Comparative Method to the data produced in this study.

Firstly, as recommended by Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 127), the data on the audiotapes were transcribed verbatim, translated into English and two copies were made of each transcription. All of the other qualitative data produced in this study, namely, the written responses from the questionnaire and field notes derived from observations during site visits and the workshop were also copied and added to the data bank. This method assisted with the coding of the data.

Then according to the first stage of the Constant Comparative Method, I proceeded to identify units of meaning within all of the data. A unit is any meaningful, relevant and individual piece of data. It can be as small as a word or as large as several pages (Merriam, 1998: 179). Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 128) explain this further: "the process of qualitative data analysis is one of culling for meaning from the words and actions of the participants in the study, framed by the researcher's focus of inquiry". These relevant units of meaning form the basis for defining categories (Fouché, 1998: 339).

In this study the units or data fragments were cut out from the data produced, coded and pasted onto cards. The units of meaning were then placed under corresponding categories or themes. This process involved constant refinement, adaptation and reflection as each unit of analysis was compared to each other and the meaning attached to each category reviewed to ensure that the unit of analysis was placed in the correct position. To gain an overall, holistic picture of the data and emerging categories, all of the cards were pasted on a large piece of paper, under the title of their corresponding category.

Hammersley and Atkinson (1983), cited in Bryman and Burgess (1994: 6), recommend:

...immersing oneself in the data and then searching out patterns, identifying possibly surprising phenomena, and being sensitive to inconsistencies, such as divergent views offered by different groups of individuals. They recognize that sometimes the researcher will end up generating new concepts, but on other occasions will be relating his or her observations to pre-existing notions.



I heeded this recommendation, reading and rereading the verbatim transcripts from the interviews, responses to the questionnaires and field notes.

The second stage in the Constant Comparative Method involves integrating the categories and their properties. This involves progressing from comparing units of meaning with other units placed in the same category, to comparing units with the properties describing the category. "It is this dynamic comparison that gives the researcher confidence that he is generating a stable and meaningful category set" (Fouché, 1998: 339). This defining also helps with the integration of the categories and relationships or patterns within the data become more evident. By looking at the properties of each category propositional statements can be made. These propositional statements contribute towards an understanding of the research question (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 143).

The delimiting stage occurs during the construction, as fewer modifications are required as more data is processed. In this stage the categories become more defined, integrated and saturated (Fouché, 1998: 340).

The last stage comprises the writing up of the report or construction. This involves recording the findings of the analysis in a narrative form to make sense of the research phenomena. The report reflects what the participants have shared with the researcher (Fouché, 1998: 340). Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 145) argue that the reporting stage is part of the analytic process as, "Pondering the substance and sequence of the report requires a rethinking of the data, often yielding new insights and understanding". This stage of the data analysis in this study is presented in Chapter 4.

Due to the emergent nature of qualitative research, Merriam (1998: 155) recommends that the production and analysis of the data should be a simultaneous process. In this study, the data analysis commenced during the data production phase as the data received from the questionnaires was analysed and the categories or themes that emerged created the framework for further research during the interviews. During this time some of the themes were further explored, enabling a more refined and detailed understanding of the phenomena and the context of the participants.



- **Quantitative data analysis**

In this study the quantitative data produced with the closed-ended statements in the questionnaire was analysed and interpreted using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics involves organising and summarising the data to make it more comprehensible (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 458; Mouton, 1990: 163). From this method of data analysis a clear picture is gained and the information can be graphically presented via graphs, percentage tables and frequency charts. In this study the descriptive statistics added another dimension to the case study description and it assists the reader and researcher to gain a quick, clear insight into aspects of the cases (Mouton, 1990: 163). This understanding also assisted with the formation of the interview questions.

Descriptive statistics is used with nominal or ordinal data measurement as well as with data from interval and ratio scales (Mouton, 1990: 167). The quantitative data produced in this study is ordinal as the use of the Likert rating scale in the questionnaire creates clear response options or categories. One must keep in mind that from this data a rank order can be inferred but not the cause of the order (Denscombe, 1998: 178).

The quantitative data analysis process in this study commenced with a tally of the frequency distribution of the responses in the questionnaire. This method produces the shape of a distribution of the responses and it provides a general 'picture' of the research data (Durrheim, 1999: 101; Mouton, 1996: 164). A frequency distribution involves calculating the number or frequency of participants who responded to the same response option for each statement in the questionnaire. In this study the data was converted into percentages to enable easy analysis and later presented in the form of percentage tables. Not only is a frequency distribution easily graphically represented but it also assists to describe the shape, variability and central tendency of a distribution. These three features of distribution enable the researcher to calculate where a participant lies relative to others on a distribution of scores (Durrheim, 1999: 103).

After an initial analysis of the percentages of frequency distribution within each statement, statements of similar meaning were then grouped together under a heading to form relevant



categories. As previously stated, the contents of the closed-ended statements are based on a review of related literature and are subsequently hypotheses of possible variables related to the research question. The statements were compared to each other in order to establish whether or not there were associations or differences between them. The percentages of the frequency distribution of the statements with similar meaning were then examined and compared. Not only is the comparison of responses from statements of similar meaning a form of verification but it also serves as a mechanism to strengthen and confirm deductions made of the properties of the category (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 283). These categories also assist with the comparison and triangulation of all the various forms of data produced in the study, both qualitative and quantitative.

### 3.5 DATA VERIFICATION

In research the data produced must be verified to ensure that it is trustworthy. This involves accounting for the validity and reliability of the study. Firestone (1987: 19), cited in Merriam (1998: 199), explains how quantitative and qualitative researchers use different rhetoric to persuade readers of their trustworthiness:

“The quantitative study must convince the reader that procedures have been followed faithfully because very little concrete description of what anyone does is provided. The qualitative study provides the reader with a depiction in enough detail to show that the author’s conclusion ‘makes sense’”. Further, “the quantitative study portrays a world of variables and static states ... By contrast the qualitative study describes people acting in events”.

With regards to the verification of data produced in case studies Kemmis (1983: 103) cited in Merriam (1998: 200) comments:

“What makes case study work ‘scientific’ is the observer’s critical presence in the context of occurrence of phenomena, observation, hypothesis-testing (by confrontation and disconfrontation), triangulation of participants’ perceptions, interpretations and so on”.

The verification of this qualitative dominant study is based on the principles of trustworthiness as elucidated by Lincoln and Guba's (1985: 289-331). The trustworthiness of



the data is established in terms of its credibility, its transferability, its dependability and its confirmability (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 276-278; Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 289-331). The quantitative data produced in this study is verified by accounting for its validity and reliability.

### 3.5.1 Credibility

Establishing the credibility of study involves determining if the data produced is true or valid, if there is "...compatibility between the constructed realities that exist in the minds of the respondents and those that are attributed to them" (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 277). In this study the credibility of the research findings was established using the following procedures: multiple data sources, triangulation, referential adequacy (accurate data capturing), member checks, peer debriefing and consultation with experienced academics (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 277; Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 301-316).

The *multiple data sources* in this study include a review of related literature, the responses from a questionnaire, individual interviews and contextual information gained from observations and meetings with the principals and staff of the schools and from a workshop. These diverse and numerous sources of data regarding the research question enabled a process of triangulation.

*Triangulation* is the combination of multiple researchers, research methods or data sources so as to eradicate any deficiencies, bias or errors that may arise from the researcher or research process (Creswell, 1994: 174). According to De Vos (1998: 359) the method of triangulation can be used between methodologies, paradigms, methods and researchers. Triangulation is particularly relevant to the verification of this study for not only are multiple sources of data produced, but both qualitative and quantitative research methods are also used. Thus triangulation is used to combine, compare and confirm the various qualitative and quantitative data produced. Triangulation is also considered to be one of the best ways to enhance the validity and reliability in qualitative research (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 275).

With regards to case studies, Babbie and Mouton (1998: 282) recommend the use of multiple sources of data to ensure replication and convergence in the research. The replication of



findings amongst various research methods and data sources promotes the reliability of the study. Convergence can be achieved by asking about the same phenomenon across cases. These multiple sources can be triangulated and form aspects of the thick description found in case study reports (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 283).

*Referential adequacy* was established in the study via the written responses to the questionnaire and the audio taping and verbatim transcribing of the responses given in the interviews. All of the data produced in the research process was presented and discussed during a workshop held at one of the schools. This provided an opportunity for *member checks* as I was able to verify and confirm the findings with some of the participants. I was also able to incorporate any additional data produced during the workshop.

The research process, method and emerging data was frequently discussed with a peer. In this *peer debriefing* process my research method, perceptions and hypotheses were debated and explored. Five *independent academics* at different universities who work within the field of assessment and inclusive education were consulted with regards to the contents of the questionnaire and the nature of the proposed research. Their comments and suggestions shaped the construction of the questionnaire and assisted with reflection as to the research procedure and approach.

### **3.5.2 Transferability**

According to Babbie and Mouton (1998: 277) transferability refers to "...the extent to which the findings can be applied in other contexts or with other respondents". In this qualitative dominant study detailed or 'thick' descriptions of the research design and context are provided to enable the transferability or extension of the study to a similar context and/or situation (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 277; Lincoln & Guba, 1985: 316). Lincoln and Guba (1985: 316) support this approach stating that the responsibility of the qualitative researcher is, "...to provide the data base that makes transferability judgements possible on the part of potential appliers".

In Chapter 4 of this study 'thick' descriptions have been given of: the school location, history, the context of the learners, parental involvement, local and greater community involvement



and characteristics of the principal and teachers. Due consideration was given, however, to the extent to which these descriptions could reveal the identification of the participating schools and impinge on the ethical considerations of this study.

### **3.5.3 Dependability**

Dependability, which is similar to the quantitative concept of reliability, is the extent to which the reported research process provides evidence and guidance to enable the findings of the research to be replicated, should the study be repeated with the same or similar participants and context (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 278). Lincoln and Guba (1985: 316) propose an inquiry audit to review and authenticate the research process and product. The original data in this study consisting of the completed questionnaires, audiotapes, verbatim transcripts, field notes and evidence of the Constant Comparative coding process used to analyse and interpret is preserved. This data, together with the detailed description of the research process enables other researchers to follow the path I have chosen, to evaluate the trustworthiness of the outcomes and to replicate the study (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994: 146).

### **3.5.4 Confirmability**

The confirmability of a study refers to the degree to which the findings of the research are derived from the investigation and not from the biases of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 1989: 278). In order to examine the trustworthiness of the research Lincoln and Guba (1985: 318-327) propose an audit trail, similar to that discussed above, which enables the auditor to determine if the findings and interpretations can be traced to their original sources and are internally coherent. In this study a detailed account has been given of all aspects of the research process and the links between the data production, analysis and the discussion and conclusions have been made explicit. The possible influence of the researcher's worldview and biases has also been acknowledged throughout the study and every attempt has been made to reduce this impact.



### 3.5.5 The validity and reliability of the quantitative data

The validity and reliability of the quantitative data produced in this study is established by examining the properties of the measuring instrument, the questionnaire. A valid measuring instrument is one that: does what it has been described to do, measures what it is supposed to and the measurements are accurate (De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 83). These aspects or validities of an instrument are referred to as the content, face, criterion and construct validity. Each of these validities will be explained and applied to the questionnaire used in this study, thus establishing the validity of the quantitative data produced.

*Content validity* is concerned with the extent to which the content of the measuring instrument is representative or reflective of a specific domain or phenomena (Durrheim, 1999: 85; De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 84). Hudson (1981: 105), cited in De Vos and Fouché (1998: 84), states that the assessment of the accuracy and thoroughness of the content of an instrument is a judgemental process. This can be undertaken either by the researcher or with the assistance of others. In this study the questionnaire was given to various academics who work within the fields of assessment, OBE and inclusion. Their feedback and comments helped to establish the content validity of the questionnaire.

An instrument is considered to have *face validity* if it appears, at a surface level, to be a relevant measure of the research question (De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 84). The questionnaire used in this study has face validity, as it appears significant and applicable to the study. *Criterion or criterion-related validity* is based on comparing responses from the instrument with external criterion known or believed to measure the concept being researched (De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 84). This may be difficult to establish due to the nature or focus of the research (Durrheim, 1999: 84). The criterion validity of the questionnaire was established by comparing the responses of the participants to the findings of other related research and literature. The concurrence of responses ensures the criterion validity of the questionnaire.

*Construct validity* is difficult to establish as it involves "...determining the degree to which an instrument successfully measures a theoretical construct" (De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 85). Babbie and Mouton (1998: 123) explain that construct validity is based on the logical



relationships among the research variables. This involves validating not only the measuring instrument but also the theory underlying it. This is a difficult and lengthy procedure. Babbie and Mouton (1998: 123) argue that it is more important to understand the common logic of validation in criterion and construct validity than to distinguish between the two types: "If we have been successful in measuring some variable, then our measures should relate in some logical fashion to other measures".

The *reliability* of an instrument is based on the accuracy and precision of its measurement, in that if it, or a similar instrument was repeatedly applied to the same object the same or similar results would be gained (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 119; De Vos & Fouché, 1998: 85). Reliability is not concerned with what is being measured but how well it is being measured. In social research, however, reliability is not always easy to establish due to the influence of both the researcher and participants in the research process (Mouton, 1990: 144-145). Factors that affect the reliability of data produced are the characteristics of the researcher, the researcher's worldview, the research context, the participants' characteristics and the participants' worldviews. Therefore the reliability of the questionnaire in this study was established by sharing the findings with the participants to confirm that their responses are accurately captured and described.

### **3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

According to Mertens (1998: 23), "Ethics in research should be an integral part of the planning and implementation process, not viewed as an afterthought or a burden". She continues to highlight that ethical dilemmas in qualitative research usually relate to the data production and analysis phases of the research process. With the researcher-participant relationship playing a critical role in both of these phases (Merriam, 1998: 213), issues such as trust and responsibility towards the research participants are important ethical issues (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 520-525; Burgess, 1989: 2; Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999: 65; Mertens, 1998: 23).

Strydom (1998: 24) notes that different authors identify different ethical issues. The ethical considerations in this research study are based on those outlined in many recent texts on research methods. The ethical issues considered are: informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality and anonymity, freedom from harm and actions of researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 520-525; Burgess, 1989: 1-6; Durrheim & Wassenaar, 1999: 66-70; Strydom, 1998: 23-36).

### **3.6.1 Informed consent**

In response to a request the Western Cape Education Department granted permission for this study to occur within the specified schools. Informed consent for the study was also gained from the principal of each school, and later from all of the staff members. During these meetings the purpose, aim and duration of the research were clearly presented (Strydom, 1998: 25). The principals and staff members then gave their verbal consent for the study. The purpose of the study was also reiterated in a written form in the covering letter that was attached to each of the questionnaires given to the participants.

The issue of informed consent was revisited during the individual interviews where the purpose of the research was restated. Verbal permission was obtained from each participant for the audio recording of the interview.

### **3.6.2 Voluntary participation**

The confidential and anonymous nature of the questionnaire enabled the participants to choose whether they wanted to participate or not. Seventeen questionnaires were handed out, one to each staff member and principal at each school, and the same amount of questionnaires was received when collected. Voluntary participants were requested for the individual interviews to ensure that no coercion was placed on the teachers. At one of the schools, however, the principal requested a particular teacher to participate when no further volunteers were forthcoming.



### **3.6.3 Confidentiality and anonymity**

The participants in the questionnaire were informed that their anonymity would be assured, as the data would be interpreted collectively and that there is no means by which to identify them to their responses (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 523). They were also assured, as with the interview participants, that their confidentiality would be respected in that their names would not be used in any part of the research process. The confidentiality of the research site was less easy to assure, however, due to the detailed description of the case study.

### **3.6.4 Freedom from harm**

It is important that the research process should not harm the participants involved in the study, whether they volunteered or not (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 522). It was speculated in this study that the individuals that could be potentially harmed by the research process were the teachers and possibly the reputation of the schools.

It was therefore imperative that I informed the schools and participants as to the research process and to discuss the possible repercussions of the study (Strydom, 1998: 25). This was discussed during the various meetings held at the schools as a researcher-participant relationship of trust, care and respect was forged.

### **3.6.5 Actions of researcher**

In acknowledgement of the importance of the researcher-participant relationship in qualitative research, I as researcher attempted to be thoughtful, respectful, empathetic, competent and accurate throughout the research process, especially during the data production and analysis phase. Strydom (1998: 30) confirms this perspective: "Researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation". This involves refraining from value judgements and being sensitively aware of the values, norms and climate that exist in the community within which the research occurs.

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter gives a comprehensive description of the research process undertaken to explore the role of assessment in the promotion of inclusive education. A detailed account has been given of the particular qualitative and quantitative methods used to produce data as well as the theoretical principles underlying these techniques. The distinct characteristics of case study research have been included in the description of the research process and the manner by which the data is analysed and interpreted has been outlined. The trustworthiness and ethical issues regarding this research have also been explored, promoting the value and ethnicity of the study.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the findings derived from analysis of the data produced in the research are presented. The chapter commences with a detailed, ‘thick’ description of the two case studies. This contextualisation of the findings provides insights and elucidates meaning that expands the reader’s understanding (Merriam, 1998: 41). Both qualitative and quantitative findings resulting from within-case analysis of each case study are then presented. Lastly, the findings from each of the case studies are compared and combined in a cross case-study analysis. This enables some generalisation between the two case studies to be made regarding the research question.

#### **4.2 DESCRIPTION OF THE CASE STUDIES**

Babbie and Mouton (1999: 282) recommend that as the unit of analysis or research phenomenon in case study research is embedded within and affected by surrounding dynamic and constantly changing contexts, it is necessary for the researcher to describe the context in detail. This ‘thick’ description also assists with the identification of contextual variables that influence the unit of analysis.

In this study the criteria used to select relevant and informative data for the description of the schools was influenced by time constraints, available material and convenience factors. Most of the data produced to describe the schools was attained from an interview with the principal of each school, interactions with the participants, personal observations and experiences and brochures from School ‘A’ produced by a non-governmental organisation. A copy of the questions posed in a semi-formal interview with the principals may be found in Appendix C.

In a discussion as to the merits of case study research Merriam (1998: 41) argues: "the case study offers a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon". However, case study research is also a complex and lengthy procedure. The researcher must ensure that the case study is not oversimplified or exaggerated as it might lead to erroneous conclusions. Thus, the case study is limited by the sensitivity and integrity of the researcher (Merriam, 1998: 42).

Guba and Lincoln (1981), cited in Merriam (1998: 42), discuss ethical issues related to case study research and they stress that, "both the reader of case studies and the authors themselves need to be aware of biases that can affect the final product". These factors have shaped and guided both my description of the schools in this research and presentation of findings as I have attempted to be though yet concise and, in particular, aware of the influential role of personal bias.

#### **4.2.1 School 'A'**

- **Location**

School 'A' is a rural or farm school located approximately 15 kilometers south of the town of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape of South Africa. The school consists of 324 learners and nine staff members. There is also a pre-primary school on the premises consisting of 36 learners and one teacher and a crèche with one teacher.

- **History**

As may be deduced by its name, Scottish speaking people living in South Africa in the late 1880's formed and named School 'A'. The school was an initiative of the Presbyterian Church and serves the children of the surrounding farm worker families.

In 1999 School 'A' became part of the Sustainability Institute project and new school premises were built on the opposite side of the railway line from the original site. This non-profit company, called Lynedoch Development Company, intends to develop a Lynedoch



Eco-Village within which the school will play a major role. This project has been supported and partially sponsored by Spier, a neighbouring wine estate. The principal of School 'A' stated that the financing of the building was initially set at R 1 000 000 and has grown to R 6 000 000. The Main Building, which houses the primary school and the Sustainability Institute, was completed at the beginning of 2002 in time for the new school year.

The year 2002 also marked the amalgamation of another primary school (referred to as School 'V' in this study to ensure confidentiality) with School 'A'. School 'V' was situated five kilometers away from School 'A' and at the time of the amalgamation had 82 learners and three staff members. In the words of the principal, School 'V' was seen to be, "dying". School 'V' had no extra murals and few resources whereas School 'A' had new premises. School 'A' felt that it was their duty to invite School 'V' to join them in the new building. The principal stated that the School Governing Bodies from both schools were unanimous in their support of the amalgamation. The principal of School 'V' became the Deputy Principal of School 'A', with School 'A' retaining its principal as the head of the school. The transition was reported to be "easy", with few difficulties. The principal felt that this ease was due to the fact that each school had something to contribute: School 'V' contributed three very good teachers to the staff and School 'A' was able to provide the necessary resources for the school. He also felt that the prospect of both schools starting afresh, as they entered the new school premises together, strengthened the amalgamation.

- **The context of the learners**

The principal described the learners at School 'A' as having little self-esteem and poor social skills. He feels that this is due to their poor home circumstances. Domestic violence, alcoholism and poor social-economic standards are highly prevalent amongst the parents. The high rate of alcoholism may be due to the "dop system" that was introduced in their area in the past by the wine estate owners. This system involves substituting part of the payment of farm workers' wages with alcohol. Many of the learners are exposed to and experience the domestic violence that occurs within the families. Subsequently, they come to school with related needs that have to be addressed.



Some of the learners have to walk a far distance to the school, resulting in a high rate of absenteeism during the rainy, winter months. Other learners are transported to school by the farm owners. The WCED supplies a bus to transport learners who were previously at School 'V' to School 'A'.

- **Parental involvement**

The principal and teachers stated that the learners receive little support from their family. Some of the parents of the learners are illiterate and are therefore unable to assist their children. However, the principal feels that parental involvement is improving with the younger parents who appear to be more interested in their child's schooling. He stated that this might be because the younger parents seem to be better educated, with more parents gaining a matriculation. Two of the goals of the Sustainability Institute is to provide adult education at the school for the farm workers and to introduce measures to reduce domestic violence.

- **Local and greater community involvement**

The parents of the learners at the school work on the surrounding 19 farms. The principal claims that about 60 percent of the farmer owners are very supportive of the school, offering financial help and involvement such as transporting the parents to school meetings. The principal stated that before the new school was built the support was not as good as it currently is. However, he does feel that over the past six years the farmers' attitudes towards the school have changed.

Spier wine estate is a neighbouring farm that is particularly involved with the school, playing both a financial and supportive role. For example, Spier delivers excess bread rolls and food to the school on a regular basis. The school is also part of a feeding scheme offered by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED).

The principal feels that the greater community has also become more aware of the school due to the marketing and development of the new school building. The University of Stellenbosch



has been involved with the school over the past three to four years with the introduction of student teachers, learning support facilitators and psychological services.

- **The principal**

The principal has been at School 'A' since 1990. He feels that his positive attitude towards his work is very important and that it has helped with the development of the school. He stated that over the past few years there has been an increase in communication with people outside the school that has resulted in the school becoming more accessible. Part of this success he attributes to his proactive efforts and visits to neighbouring farmers.

When visiting the school it is noticeable that the principal's positive attitude and determination dominates and steers the school. The principal appears to play quite a domineering and authoritarian role yet he also displays empathy and some insight as to needs and nature of the staff working at the school.

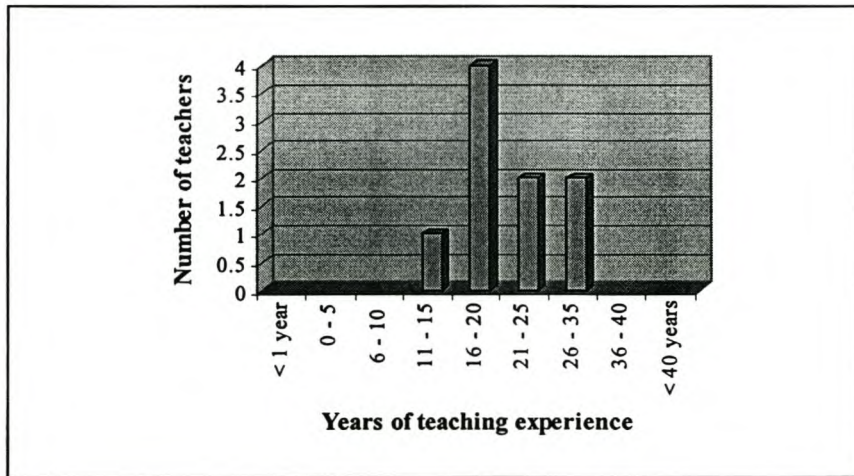
I noticed during our interview that he gave a very positive account of the background of the school, the parents and the learners. He did not stress the home circumstances of many of the learners and how it may affect their schooling and development. He also did not discuss how the staff members deal with the repercussions of domestic violence, alcoholism and poor socio-economic circumstances in the school environment. It appeared as though the principal did not frequently teach the learners and that he played more of a managerial role in the school. This might have an impact his relationship with and support of the learners and staff at the school.

- **The teachers**

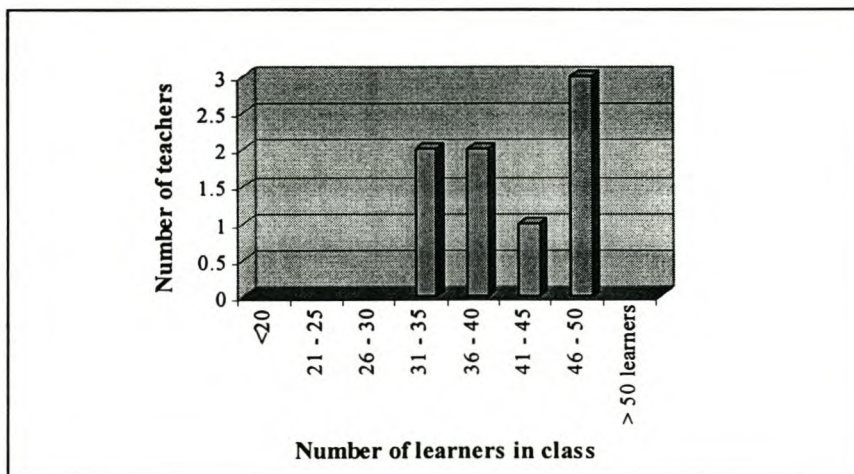
There are three male teachers and six female teachers at School 'A'. Their ages range from approximately 35 to 59 years of age. There are three teachers in the Foundation Phase, four in the Intermediate Phase and one in the Senior Phase. The staff at School 'A' consists of one Principal, two Heads of Department, one Subject Head and five teachers. The majority of teachers described their teaching qualification as consisting of a Teaching Diploma plus

further qualifications. Their teaching experience ranges from 11 to 35 years (see Figure 4.1 below). The teachers at School 'A' have many learners in their classes, with numbers ranging from 31 to 50 learners (see Figure 4.2 below). The principal reported that the minimum amount of time the teachers have taught at the school is between eight and nine years (excluding the teachers from School 'V') and that some of the staff members have been at the school for up to 20 years.

**FIGURE 4.1: SCHOOL 'A' - NUMBER OF YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE**



**FIGURE 4.2: SCHOOL 'A' - NUMBER OF LEARNERS IN CLASS**





The principal reported that the teachers were working well together although the change of premises and amalgamation had set them back at times. In his opinion the teachers were making good progress with the academic year. The principal stated that the school had gained three very good teachers from School 'V' who are assisting the other staff members. In return, School 'A' is able to provide good resources. It was noted during visits to the school that School 'A' has three photocopying machines and a computer. During 2002 the school grounds have been extensively developed, in particular the gardens. The school is also in the process of getting a library.

- **Awareness of and training in OBE**

All of the teachers reported that they were first informed about Outcomes Based Education (OBE) and Curriculum 2005 when they were invited to attend a workshop. Many of the teachers also learned about OBE when they read the policy document and through correspondence with unions and from education newsletters. The media also played a role in informing them as to the characteristics of OBE.

With regards to their training in OBE and Curriculum 2005, all of the teachers attended three workshops of a few hours each. These workshops were presented to School 'A' and their neighbouring schools by the WCED. The staff has also gained support and information from additional meetings held with neighbouring schools and via union and education newsletters. Some of the teachers reported that they obtained support and training through universities and other organisations. The management sector of the school has been on three weekend courses with regards to OBE and Curriculum 2005. The principal feels, however, that the school staff has not received sufficient OBE training. The materials the school owns pertaining to OBE and Curriculum 2005 were obtained at the workshops or were purchased by the school.

The teachers reported that OBE is not easily applicable to rural schools. They feel that they are not able to implement some of the OBE lessons as suggested to them due to the disadvantaged context of the learners and lack of involvement and illiteracy of the learner's parents. For example, when requested to bring materials and objects from home to contribute



towards the lesson many of the learners are unable to do so. They stated that the large number of learners within their classes also hampers the application of OBE.

- **Response of the teachers to the research study**

In my opinion the majority of the staff responded positively to the proposed research study and, in particular, to the possibility of a workshop on assessment. However, it was observed that the principal drove much of the enthusiasm. His energetic, motivated and determined attitude towards his school is very evident in both meetings with him and in the manner by which he interacts with the staff. Although, it was observed that not all of the teachers were comfortable to differ with him or to share their opinion. What was particularly noticeable was that the principal did not propose my offer of a workshop to the teachers but rather they were informed that it would be held and that they must attend.

Overall, the staff appeared to be comfortable with the questionnaire given to them, especially after any uncertainties and questions had been answered. They were, however, very hesitant in volunteering to participate in a 30 minute interview. The reluctance appeared to possibly be due to: (a) a requirement to stay after school to participate, (b) an uncertainty as to what they would be asked in the interview and (c) their ability to answer the questions. My impression was that some of the teachers possibly perceived the experience as a test of their knowledge, that there was a need to 'please' the researcher or to get the answers 'correct'. These thoughts also went through my mind when I was analysing the responses to the open-ended questions in the questionnaire. This perception might be due to the limited freedom of speech amongst the staff and the principal or possibly due to past training and experience in education where teachers were controlled by a prescribed syllabus and a fear of inspection and assessment as to one's ability. After I attempted to correct these possible misperceptions by explaining the nature and requirement of the interview in more detail two teachers volunteered. These participants were encouraged and nominated by their peers and the principal. During the interview I discovered that both of the participants previously taught at School 'V'. No staff from School 'A' volunteered to participate which might be due to their view of themselves. They, like their principal, might see themselves as being less skilled as the teachers who were previously at School 'V'. From this perspective, it is questionable as to how amiably the staff



viewed the amalgamation between the two schools and the present interpersonal dynamics between the teachers. The coercion from the principal might also have been driven by a desire for the research study to present the school in a positive light.

#### **4.2.2 School 'B'**

- **Location**

School 'B' is a rural or farm school located approximately 10 kilometers west of the town of Stellenbosch in the Western Cape of South Africa. The school consists of 254 learners, eight staff members, a secretary and a general foreman.

- **History**

A local farmer Mr PJ Carinus built School 'B' in 1943. The school was initially classified as a farm school but in 1994 it became a state school. Currently the school buildings belong to the WCED but the grounds still belong to Mr PJ Carinus.

- **The context of the learners**

The principal described the learners at the school as having relatively fewer problems than those at other schools as there is little influence of gangsterism and drugs at the school. He also feels that the learners still have respect for authority. He reported that there were a few learners at the school with fetal alcohol syndrome and that some learners have experienced physical and sexual abuse. The principal claimed that from his perspective the greatest barrier the learners experience with regards to their learning is the lack of involvement of their parents with their school work and with the school in general.

- **Parental involvement**

The principal reported that about 95 percent of the parents of learners at School 'B' are farm workers. They work on the surrounding farms, the majority of which produce wine and the

others, fruit. He stated that the teachers often have to take on a parental role for the learners, as most of their parents tend to be poor role models. He commented that some of the parents drink too much and a few take drugs (dagga).

The principal has found the literacy level of the parents in general to be very poor and that they are unable to assist their children with their schoolwork. This, he feels, is something that the teachers at the school have to take into consideration when interacting with and teaching the learners. He did state, however, that he felt that the parents' attitude had changed since he became principal and that they are becoming more involved with the school. This increased involvement has been noticeable in the manner by which the parents inform him if a child is absent. They now send an excuse note. The principal reported that both he and the staff would like the parents to become more involved with the school and to take ownership of it, especially with regards to fund raising and the organisation and running of functions at the school. He feels that the staff has to do everything for the school and he thinks that they should rather be focused on their teaching.

- **Local and greater community involvement**

According to the principal, the school has a good relationship with the neighbouring farm owners and that they help to pay the salary for an extra teacher at the school. This is a School Governing Body post. He also reported that if the school requires something the farm owners usually helped them to acquire it. They also help to lift some of the children to and from the school. Most learners live within a five kilometer radius of the school and there is not a bus to assist with transportation.

The principal reported that the school is not really involved with the greater community and that they tend to interact with and focus on their immediate community. This includes the learners' families and neighbouring schools. The principal stated that the local church is seldom involved with the school and they with the church. He described the relationship as being more of an organisational one in which facilities are shared. The chairman of the School Governing Body of School 'B' is a church leader.



The University of Stellenbosch has been involved with the school since 1999 with the regular engagement of students of Occupational Therapy, Learning Support as well as Speech and Hearing Therapy. The Matie Community Service has also run a "dop stop" programme in the valley. However, from research they have found that the valley was not party to the "dop system" of the past and that alcoholism in the area is not related to it.

- **The principal**

Like many principals, the principal at School 'B' plays an influential role in the development of the school, the management of the staff and the progress of the learners. The principal at School 'B' plays both an educator and managerial role in the school. He finds this particularly draining and he reported that he often feels overloaded and unable to address the demands of each role. This was evident during visits to the school. He appeared in particular to struggle with the administration demands, as he had not informed his staff as to a workshop being held by the WCED in two days time that required their attendance. I wonder if the staff at the school was often uninformed as to events or support opportunities that could assist and enrich them due to the disorganisation of the principal.

The principal at School 'B' also appeared somewhat authoritarian and rigid in his leadership approach and perspective. This was evident in my observations of his interactions with learners and also when I offered to hold a workshop with the teachers to explore areas of difficulty that they were experiencing with assessment in OBE. Although it was encouraged, he did not discuss this opportunity with his staff members and declined the offer stating that he felt that the teachers would be more eager to get home. When, during an interview, one of the teachers expressed her eagerness as to the workshop I had offered. She seemed disappointed and frustrated when she heard that the principal had already declined the offer. This incident seemed to be indicative of the poor communication and low morale amongst the staff.

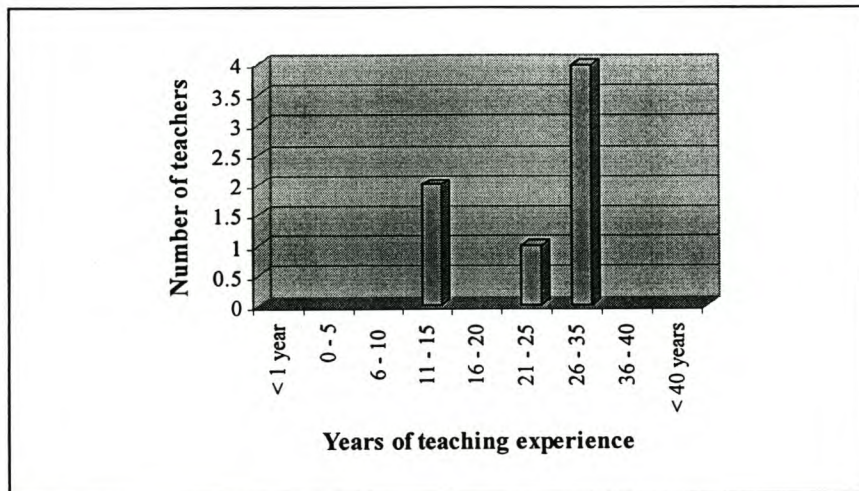
The principal did note, however, that he is aware that the teachers at School 'B' teach learners who receive little support and interest at home. He added that although there are some 'good' learners who do extra work and seem more interested in their learning, he acknowledged that

the lack of parental support can be frustrating for the teachers. For example, he stated that he knows that the teachers cannot send a letter home to the learner's parents, as they cannot read.

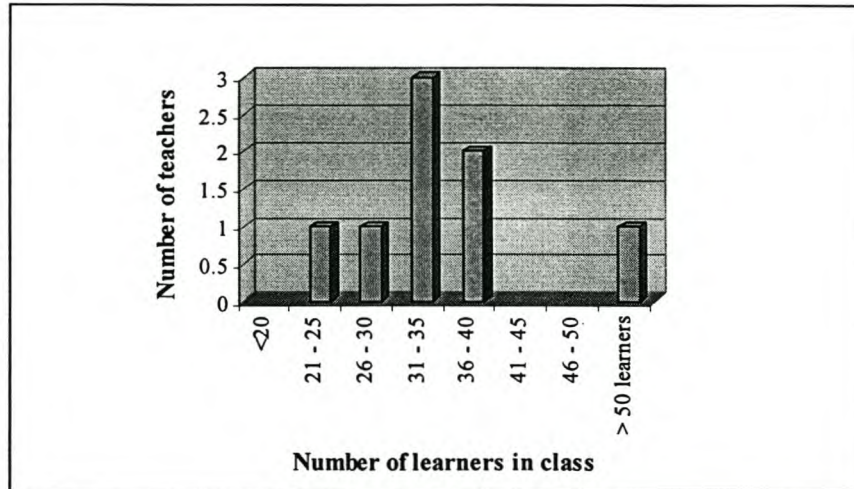
- **The teachers**

There are three male teachers and five female teachers at School 'B'. Their ages range from approximately 30 to 49 years of age. There are three teachers in the Foundation Phase, three in the Intermediate Phase and one in the Senior Phase. The principal teaches within both the Intermediate and Senior Phase. The staff at School 'B' consists of one Principal, one Head of Department, and six teachers. All of the teachers described their teaching qualification as consisting of a Teaching Diploma. Their teaching experience ranges from 11 to 35 years (see Figure 4.3 below). Some of the teachers at School 'B' have many learners in their classes, with numbers ranging from 21 to more than 50 learners (see Figure 4.4 page 93).

**FIGURE 4.3: SCHOOL 'B' - NUMBER OF YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE**





**FIGURE 4.4: SCHOOL 'B' - NUMBER OF LEARNERS IN CLASS**

The principal at School 'B' stated that there was little turn over of staff members at the school as the least amount of time a staff member had spent at the school is 12 years. Although he is concerned that this may lead to stagnation, he is also aware that teaching positions are scarce. He reported that they might be looking into the option of swapping some of the teachers with those of neighbouring schools so that there is a change of staff.

It was noted during visits to the school that School 'B' had received previous exposure to educational concepts such as inclusion and OBE. This was evident via information leaflets displayed on the staff notice board. The staff overall appeared rather demoralised and disinterested. This might possibly be due to an inability to freely express oneself amongst colleagues and superiors or due the recent demands and change required of teachers with the introduction of OBE and Curriculum 2005. In comparison to School 'A' this school seems to have fewer resources as they only have one photocopying machine and no hall or library. The school grounds are also not as elaborate as School 'A'.

- **Awareness of and training in OBE**

There were mixed responses from the teachers as to how they first became aware of OBE and Curriculum 2005. The majority of teachers were informed via a workshop, others through the



media, or by reading the policy document. Three of the teachers reported that they were initially informed about OBE by the principal.

The majority of teachers' training in OBE and Curriculum 2005 consisted of workshops offered by the WCED. The workshops focused on the learning areas, with three days being spent on each Learning Area. These workshops were attended with other schools in their cluster. The teachers at School 'B' continue to communicate with other teachers. They reported that these interactions assist with their understanding and implementation of OBE as they share experiences, applications and successes.

Currently the school is informed by the WCED as to follow-up workshops that are offered. The principal reported that there are review workshops on offer that explore the changes made to Curriculum 2005. He stated that the teachers find it very frustrating that they have to change their approaches and methods. He also feels that they have not had enough training on assessment and OBE. In particular, that they struggle with the implementation of assessment techniques.

The principal reported that the school is unable to get resource materials regarding OBE and Curriculum 2005 from the WCED and that they have to acquire it from other places such as non-government organisations.

The teachers reported that the poor socio-economic and environmental context of both their learners and the school, influence the manner by which they are able to implement and apply OBE. The teachers reported that the school has few resources to use when both preparing and applying their lessons. Many of the learners are also unable to bring materials needed for a lesson from home. The teachers stated that this lack of involvement limits some of their lessons and application of OBE. They also have many learners within their classes and gain little assistance from parents.

Some of the teachers are concerned that OBE does not have sufficient guidelines so ensure that all learners learn similar concepts. The teachers stated that their learners frequently change schools as their parents move when they find better work on different farms.



Consequently, the teachers find that some learners have not been exposed to concepts that other learners in the class have mastered. Many of the learners at School 'B' also have learning problems and some of the learners in the Intermediate Phase are unable to read or write. The teachers feel that the contextual factors mentioned above make the implementation and application of OBE difficult and that the training they received was not always congruent with their teaching context.

- **Response of the teachers to the research study**

Based on observations, not all of the staff at School 'B' seemed entirely enthusiastic and supportive of the research study. When the proposed study was put forward to them they were less responsive and more passive than the participants at School 'A'. Their attitude might have been influenced by the domineering, non-negotiable manner by which the principal introduced the study or perhaps it exemplified the teachers' frustration with regards to OBE and the various changes and demands that have been placed on them since its introduction.

The staff appeared to be comfortable with the questionnaire given to them although in comparison to School 'A' fewer questions were asked. The apathy of the staff was most noticeable, however, when two volunteers were requested to participate in an interview. When there was no response, the principal nominated two teachers who then agreed to participate in the interviews. Apart from making me question the willingness of the participants and how this would impact on the study, this interaction indicated to me that there were most likely poor dynamics and communication between the staff members and management personnel at School 'B'. As mentioned previously these dynamics also impacted on the offer of a workshop, which was declined by the principal without the involvement and consent of the staff.



### 4.3 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The research findings are derived from analysis of the data produced in the study. As discussed previously, the findings of each case study are presented separately and then they are compared and combined in a cross case-study analysis.

In each case study both qualitative and quantitative data were produced. As discussed in 3.4.6, the qualitative data was analysed using the Constant Comparative Method described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994: 126 – 149), Merriam (1998: 178-193) as well as Lincoln and Guba (1985: 339-344) and the quantitative data was analysed and interpreted with descriptive statistics. These findings are presented separately.

Concurring with the principles of the Constant Comparative Method, the qualitative findings are presented and structured according to the categories and sub-categories that emerged through data analysis. These categories fall within three main themes that relate the research question, namely: OBE, assessment, and inclusive education and the contribution of assessment. For the purposes of clarification and referencing, a summary of the main themes, categories and sub-categories for each case study is given in tables 4.1 and 4.2.

Various qualitative research methods such interviews, open-ended questions in a questionnaire and field notes have been used in this study to produce the qualitative data. A detailed description of these methods is outlined in 3.4.4. These units of data have been combined and placed into the categories that have emerged using the Constant Comparative Method of data analysis (see 3.4.6). As mentioned previously the data produced in the interviews have been transcribed verbatim and translated. The written responses from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were also translated. Due to possible language confusion the participants' verbatim responses have not been quoted in the presentation of the findings. Instead a detailed, 'thick' description combining all relevant units of data is presented in each category.

The quantitative data in this study is derived from the responses to the closed-ended statements in the questionnaire. The analysis involved a tally of the frequency distribution of



the responses to the statements (see 3.4.6). The frequency distributions of the responses were then converted into a percentage format. Similar to the method used to analyse the qualitative data, statements of similar meaning were grouped together to form categories. The frequency distributions of the responses to the statements within the categories, are presented in percentage tables. This method of presentation enables the reader to gain both a global overview of the quantitative findings within each category, as well as closer look at the frequency distribution within and between each statement.

#### 4.3.1. School 'A' – Qualitative data findings

**TABLE 4.1: THEMES, CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES THAT EMERGED THROUGH DATA ANALYSIS**

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORIES
OBE	Attitude towards OBE	
	Understanding of OBE	
	Experience of change to OBE	
	Role of the government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why OBE was chosen</li> </ul>
	Past education versus OBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flexibility</li> <li>• Contents</li> <li>• Knowledge of the learner</li> <li>• Teaching methods</li> </ul>
	Difficulties with OBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Terminology</li> <li>• Vagueness</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Inadequate training</li> <li>• Applicability of OBE to school context</li> </ul>
	Influence of OBE on the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View of self as teacher</li> <li>• Personal goal as teacher</li> <li>• View of education</li> </ul>
ASSESSMENT	Purpose and aim of assessment	
	Method and use of assessment	
	Attitude towards assessment	
	Assessment in the past versus assessment in OBE	
	Influence of OBE on assessment	
	Difficulties with assessment	
	Assistance needed	
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT	Attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education	
	How assessment contributes towards inclusive education	

<b>THEME: OBE</b>
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#### **4.3.1.1 Attitude towards OBE**

The majority of participants reported a **positive attitude** towards OBE. One of the participants interviewed stated that although OBE seemed daunting at first, she feels that she is making progress and that OBE is working for her. She stated that in time she believes that teachers will be successful with OBE. She said that she likes the teaching methods of OBE, especially group work. She commented that although she applies some teaching methods of the past, she would not like to go back to the previous approach to education. She extended this perspective to other teachers by stating that although the transition to OBE has been difficult, she thinks that teachers do not want to go back to the ways of the past. One teacher noted that the **learners also enjoy OBE** because their learning is based on their experiences.

Some of the teachers, however, disagreed with her perspective. They reported that they **do not like OBE** as they feel that the standard of education has dropped since it has been introduced. One of the teachers stated that with the introduction of OBE learners do not know how to learn. The teacher also reported that teachers do not agree with the policy of learners only being able to repeat a grade once per phase. Another teacher reported that there are very few positive outcomes from the introduction of OBE. This teacher feels that in OBE learners are expected to do irrelevant tasks.

#### **4.3.1.2 Understanding of OBE**

All of the teachers reported that they have gained a **greater understanding of OBE** since it was introduced. The teachers did report, however, that they want to understand OBE even better and that they want to improve their understanding. One of the teachers interviewed had only just started with OBE and commented that she had noticed how much her colleagues had learnt over the past few years. This teacher reported that when she reads books on OBE she becomes a bit confused and worried. She added, however, that she views this reaction as normal.



#### 4.3.1.3 Experience of change to OBE

Most of the teachers reported that they have found it **difficult to change to OBE** and that since it's introduction they have felt unsure of their teaching practices. A teacher reported that since the change to OBE she has **felt very uncertain** and when she applies OBE to her lessons she wonders about the effectiveness of it.

Another teacher reported that in the transition to OBE the **expectations** that have been placed on teachers have been too great and that teachers are seen as machines. This teacher stated that he feels that the changes are not appropriate for their school context with: more than 50 learners in a class, learners from poor home circumstances, overworked teachers, learners with fetal alcohol syndrome etc. This teacher reported that in his opinion OBE will result in previously poor people becoming even poorer.

On the other hand, when discussing the transition to OBE one of the teachers who was interviewed stated that although it was a big change, **she has enjoyed it**. She has been teaching for 18 years and she said it was a big adjustment and she was used to how things were. However, she also added that she does not want to go back to ways of the past. She said that she puts everything into her teaching to make OBE successful.

Many teachers reported that access to **resources and information such as books and workshops have helped** with transition to OBE. One of the teachers reported that she does not find the workshops useful, as she feels more confused after they have been given.

#### 4.3.1.4 Role of the government

The teachers at School 'A' seem to view the government and Western Cape Education Department (WCED) as authoritarian, law creating entities who introduce changes that the school must follow. The teachers at this school **do not seem to feel that they have voice within the decision-making process**.

One of the teachers who was interviewed stated that the school **did not have a choice** as to whether or not they would like to implement OBE. She said that the WCED made that decision. If the school had a choice, she felt that they would have chosen not to change to OBE. Another teacher referred to the changes introduced by the WCED as rules from 'above'. One teacher commented that sometimes a person needs 24 hours to complete all of the requirements of the WCED.

- **Why OBE was chosen**

Some of the teachers viewed the change to OBE as a **political move** of the new African National Congress (ANC) government. One of the teachers interviewed said that in her opinion OBE was introduced to create **equality** so that previously disadvantaged learners are able to have equal access to and opportunity at school. She said that she thinks that the new policy that only allows learners to repeat a grade once per learning phase is means by which to promote equality.

She also views the change to OBE as a **response to the demands of the future and the economy**. She stated that one must decide what type of citizen you want in the future and that we must adapt to changes. In her opinion the progress of technology has played an important role. She commented how children today know of other countries and are aware of places overseas. She is also aware of globalisation as she explained that we need to adapt to changes within our country and around the world. She added that in her opinion the previous approach to education was not entirely deficient as she and I are both products of it.

#### 4.3.1.5 **Past education versus OBE**

- **Flexibility**

The teachers seem to enjoy the **greater flexibility and freedom of OBE**. One teacher noted that in the past one had to follow the prescribed syllabus and do what was said but now with OBE they have a choice as to what they want to teach. She added that the flexibility of OBE enables the learners to share a different, unexpected insights with each other. Another teacher



agreed with this comment and elaborated further by saying that sometimes she may have planned a lesson but the learners lead her to something else and when she followed them she was often surprised by the outcome. One teacher commented that OBE gives the learners more space to develop.

A teacher commented that in the past you knew exactly what each learner must know at each grade. OBE, on the other hand, is wider and **at times too loose**. She stated that in the past you used to know what you must do, on what and when. However, in the past teachers did not have time for slow learners. She commented that teachers need to be comfortable and skilled with OBE and that they must wait for the learner to discover.

- **Contents**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that the learners are **exposed to more concepts** than in the past. She said that in the past it was rigid and set but now with OBE the learners can explore everything. Another teacher stated that in comparison to the past, in OBE there are more aspects or information in the learning areas that must be shared with and learnt by the learners.

- **Knowledge of the learner**

Many of the teachers commented that with the introduction of OBE there is a **difference in their understanding of the learners**. One teacher commented that she likes it that she is able to get to know the learners whereas in the past she did not. With OBE she is able to ‘see’ the child. A teacher commented that she now **works on each child’s ability level** whereas in the past each learner was treated the same. Another teacher commented that with OBE she **knows each of her learners individually** and what level they are each at. This teacher particularly likes that each learner is able to work on their own level and that the focus is no longer that they must be able to do the work correctly. She likes the idea that the learners are able to use their own method by which to solve mathematical problems. She stated that with OBE she no longer has to prescribe – “you must do it or you can’t” – the learning experience is open to the learners.

- **Teaching methods**

Although many of the teachers favour the freedom of OBE, some of the teachers stated that **not all of the teaching methods and approaches of the past are ineffective**. In particular, they still value and use drill work when appropriate.

#### 4.3.1.6 Difficulties with OBE

- **Terminology**

Many of the teachers reported that they struggled to adapt to and cope with all of the **new terminology** used in OBE. Some of them stated that the terminology blocked or inhibited their understanding. However, after using an OBE approach for a few years many of the teachers have come to realise that some of the new terminology is merely a replacement of old terminology and that the concept is the same.

- **Vagueness**

Many of the teachers reported a feeling of **insecurity and uncertainty with regards to their teaching** since the introduction of OBE. For some teachers the **vagueness and lack of guidelines** has led to these feelings. One teacher reported that she is concerned that she is not implementing OBE correctly and that she might be doing an injustice to the children. Another teacher stated that some days she does not know if she is doing the correct thing. During the workshop held at the school some of the teachers commented that they are uncertain and concerned as to the correct use of rating scales in assessment rubrics and report cards.

One of the teachers who was interviewed said that OBE is a headache for her because so many things are 'loose'. She added that if she had the financial means she would like to study further in order to gain further insight and understanding of OBE. She does not like the sense of uncertainty she has with regards to her teaching and she would like to feel more confident of her abilities.



- **Administration**

Many of the teachers expressed **frustration with and dislike of the administrative tasks of OBE**. One teacher stated that she likes her job and enjoys teaching but that she really struggles with the administration required. It makes her feel like a failure. She would prefer to teaching without having to complete all of the administration tasks.

Another teacher commented that **OBE requires a lot of planning** and that it is an important aspect of OBE. She added that it requires a lot of preparation, which is very time consuming.

- **Inadequate training**

Many of the teachers stated that their **training in OBE was inadequate**. The teachers noted that they only went on a few workshops. One of the teachers added that the training given was **not directed towards their needs and that it is not always applicable to their learning context**. Another commented that he often felt more confused after a workshop. Some of the teachers stated that the lack of intensive training has contributed towards them feeling inadequate and uncertain as to their teaching practices.

One of the teachers noted that although they were given lots of information and books regarding OBE, they were **not given sufficient practical training**. She found that the people who presented the workshops did not appear well trained or experienced in OBE. She would have preferred more demonstrations regarding the practical application of OBE. Another teacher commented that she has gained all of her knowledge and understanding of Curriculum 2005 and OBE from books and newspapers.

- **Applicability of OBE to school context**

Some of the teachers commented that it is sometimes difficult to apply OBE to their teaching and learning context. In particular the teachers struggle with lessons that require learners to bring objects from home. One of the teachers stated that their learners are different to those in

town (Stellenbosch) and due to their **poor socio-economic status** they are not always able to bring things from home when requested to.

The teacher also reported that they struggle with the **lack of involvement and support from the learners' parents**. Many of the parents are unable to assist their children as they are illiterate. She said that these factors often require her to change her lessons. She commented that she feels that if parents were more involved and supported her then it would not be as difficult.

The teachers stated that they also struggle to address the needs of the learners in their class, as their **classes are so large**. They stated that if they had fewer learners in their class they would be able to address each child individually. In this way they would be able to apply the principles of OBE more easily and effectively.

#### 4.3.1.7 **Influence of OBE on the teacher**

- **View of self as teacher**

In an interview one of the teachers stated that she always views herself as a teacher. She reported that she feels that she has a challenging task to educate children. She commented that in her opinion her role as a teacher has not changed since the introduction of OBE and that only some of the names of concepts have changed. She did, however, state that she feels that she **has become more free and open** since the introduction of OBE. In particular she has noticed that she **communicates more effectively** with her colleagues. She noticed this change, in particular, during a conflict resolution session with the staff during which she was able to verbalise her thoughts. She stated that she also had the confidence to ask the principal not to talk so loudly as it frightens her. This teacher feels that OBE requires one to communicate more and she said that this freedom has resulted in a **broader understanding of herself as a teacher**.

The other teacher interviewed stated that she now views herself as a **facilitator**. She commented that OBE has encouraged her to be **more relaxed** in her classroom as she is a



strict teacher. In particular, she has had to get used to the noise that group work creates. She has also found that she **listens more closely to what the learners are saying**. She commented that she enjoys OBE as sometimes the learners' questions surprise her and she may have to research the answer. In this way she said that she is learning with the learners.

- **Personal goal as teacher**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that her personal goal as a teacher is to **give of her best to her learners so that each one of them is successful**, no matter their ability level. Her aim is to prepare each learner for the next grade. She feels that the next teacher must continue to work with the learner where she has left off, even if the learner is struggling with the demands of the grade. She believes that **each learner must be accommodated and included within the learning environment**.

The other teacher who was interviewed stated that her personal goal is for the learners to **retain and remember what she has taught them** during the year. She also hopes that the learners **enjoy the year** they spend with her. In particular, she is concerned about correctly applying OBE in her teaching, as it is the first year that OBE has been introduced into her grade. **Her goal is to understand and apply OBE correctly so that her learners can benefit**.

To assist herself with the transition she has decided to initially only apply a few of the OBE methods and techniques. She feels that it is too overwhelming to use all of them at once. She reported that she uses and combines various resources when planning her lessons and that she sometimes applies concepts that she thinks are relevant to the learners although they may not be found in a resource book.

- **View of education**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that she has found that with the introduction of OBE education is **no longer viewed as only occurring in the classroom. It now occurs outside**

too. From this perspective she feels that teachers have to be more active and extend their learning and teaching to beyond the classroom.

<b>THEME: ASSESSMENT</b>
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#### 4.3.1.8 Purpose and aim of assessment

Most of the teachers view assessment as a means by which to **gauge what the learners know and if they have understood the concepts** that have been taught. One teacher stated that assessment results enable teachers to **determine the level of the learners' abilities**. Many of the teachers stated that assessment methods are also used to **identify which learners need more attention and assistance** with their learning or those who are not doing their work.

A few of the teachers reported that they also use assessment to establish whether they have **attained the specific outcomes of the lesson**. One of the teachers stated that assessment is a **measuring instrument for oneself as a teacher**. She commented that assessment should be used to determine if the teacher has been effective or if the teacher must change his or her teaching methods and techniques. Another teacher supported this statement by saying that assessment results can assist teachers to know whether or not they must use different teaching strategies to explain a concept.

#### 4.3.1.9 Method and use of assessment

The teachers reported that in OBE learners are **assessed individually, in groups and as a class**. Some of the teachers stated that they are comfortable in using the recommended five-point rating scale when evaluating learners. One of the teachers reported that she struggles to observe all of the learners in her class. She commented that it is easier when they are in groups. Another teacher shared that she uses a notebook to write down observations of the learners as she walks around the classroom. She also uses assessment forms and requests the learners to do **self-assessment**. One teacher commented that the **learners are given more responsibility** in OBE with regards to the assessment of their work and therefore learners



learn to pay greater attention and to be more critical of their work. Many of the teachers stated that assessment is something that **occurs daily and continuously**.

#### **4.3.1.10 Attitude towards assessment**

One of the teachers stated that assessment is her **greatest headache in OBE**. Another teacher commented that she is unable to use all of the different assessment methods and techniques as they are too confusing, so each term she tries a different technique.

#### **4.3.1.11 Assessment in the past versus assessment in OBE**

One teacher reported that in the past, before OBE and Curriculum 2005, assessment worked very well for everyone. Some teachers support this perspective by stating that they feel learners were properly assessed in the past and that they preferred it when the learners were not shown the assessment criteria before hand. A teacher commented that in his opinion **learners were more disciplined, ordered and focused in the past**. He feels that this lack of focus will result in a slackening in education. Another teacher commented that **teachers were more focused in the past and they knew precisely what and how to teach and assess**.

One of the teachers interviewed feels that **both assessment in the past and in OBE have their place within learning**. She enjoys the variety of methods that one is able to use with OBE. She has found that **assessment in OBE has resulted in better planning of lessons** and it has **encouraged teachers to share ideas and practices**. Another teacher noted that assessment in OBE is **democratic** and that although it is difficult with so many learners in her class she finds that it works well in groups. The other teacher who was interviewed added that OBE allows one to be more relaxed as one is **not so focused on examinations**. She said that although in the past you knew exactly how well you were progressing as a teacher, **you did not follow the learners, you were examining them**.

#### 4.3.1.12 Influence of OBE on assessment

One teacher commented that assessment in OBE requires her to be **more aware of her aims for each individual learner**. She has found that she has also become more aware of the individual needs of the learners. This perspective is shared by many of the teachers who find that assessment in OBE has encouraged them to see their learners as individuals.

Another teacher reported that OBE requires her to **plan her daily activities and the assessment techniques**. She has helped her to follow the progress of her teaching. One teacher stated that with OBE she **assesses more frequently** than in the past. Another teacher commented that she enjoys the freedom of OBE, as she is able to choose what to teach and assess. One teacher, on the other hand, felt that there has **not been a great change in her assessment methods** since the introduction of OBE and that she continues to assess in the same manner as the past but with a few OBE principles.

#### 4.3.1.13 Difficulties with assessment

Many of the teachers reported that the **administration demands** of OBE and the large number of the learners in their classes prevents them from assessing the learners when they want to. Some of the teachers feel **uncertain** as how to assess the learners correctly in OBE. A teacher stated that some of the OBE **assessment methods have shortcomings** in that they can be interpreted differently by teachers.

#### 4.3.1.14 Assistance needed

Many of the teachers stated that they would like more assistance with regards to **assessment in OBE**. They requested **more specific guidelines and training**. They would also like **practical demonstrations** on how to implement and apply assessment to large class sizes. They also requested assistance with the **administrative demands of assessment** in OBE.



**THEME: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT****4.3.1.15 Attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education**

One of the teachers stated that **she believes that inclusion can be implemented** if the teachers at their school had fewer learners in their classes, if they received better training and if the WCED was more sympathetic to their situation and school context. She feels that due to circumstances (which she did not name) **rural schools do not have a choice** whether or not to provide inclusive education. She stated that **teachers are expected to identify and accommodate the needs of the learners** even though they do not have the necessary knowledge and there are many learners in their classes. She noted that this is very difficult.

**4.3.1.16 How assessment contributes towards inclusive education**

One of the teachers who was interviewed stated that assessment in OBE enables teachers to get to **know the learners as individuals**. She stated that assessment gives them insight as to what the learners know, what their abilities and their needs are. Subsequently, they are able to get to know the learners better. She feels that this knowledge enables teachers to **assess the learners on their ability levels**. One teacher commented that assessment in OBE enables **learners to be described in totality** and that the focus is not only on their intellect. Many of the teachers commented that assessment helps them to **identify which of the learners need more attention and extra support**. One of the teachers stated that she uses assessment to establish whether or not the learners have understood the work and **if she must use other teaching strategies to assist them to understand**. She has also found that with the introduction of OBE teachers are **able to concentrate on the weaker learners**. The other teacher interviewed commented that OBE **enables her to have more time to do one-on-one activities with the learners** as it involves evaluating and continuous assessment and it is not as strict as the examinations of the past.

One teacher felt, however, that the **previous assessment methods** such as testing and evaluations should be used to promote inclusive education as he feels that they produce quality learners with strong academic qualities.

#### 4.3.2 School 'A' – Quantitative data findings

**TABLE 4.2: VIEW OF CURRICULUM 2005 AND OBE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
7. Effectiveness of Curriculum 2005.	25%	12.5%	50%	12.5%	0%
8. OBE has promoted good changes.	12.5%	25%	50%	12.5%	0%
6. OBE improved teaching.	20%	60%	0%	20%	0%

**TABLE 4.3: VIEW OF ASSESSMENT IN OBE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
25. Your teaching has improved via use of assessment.	14%	14%	29%	43%	0%
28. Assessment practices more effective.	0%	50%	50%	0%	0%
5. Your assessment techniques have not changed since OBE.	0%	40%	20%	20%	20%
29. Assessment in OBE is what you have been doing all along.	0%	12.5%	50%	25%	12.5%
27. Assessment in OBE gives you more options and is more flexible.	0%	37.5%	0%	50%	12.5%
15. Assessment in OBE is meaningful and relevant to the learner.	0%	33%	11%	45%	11%
26. Assessment encouraged learners to develop their skills and knowledge more effectively.	12.5%	25%	12.5%	50%	0%



**TABLE 4.4: TRAINING RECEIVED AND DESIRED IN OBE AND ASSESSMENT**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
2. Sufficient support and training.	37.5%	50%	0%	12.5%	0%
3. Practice of OBE easy to understand.	14%	58%	14%	14%	0%
1. Curriculum 2005 policy provides clear guidelines for implementation.	0%	100%	0%	0%	0%
4. Difference between past and assessment in OBE outlined in training.	0%	28%	58%	0%	14%
30. You are not sure how to effectively use new assessment approaches.	11%	33%	0%	56%	0%
9. You need support and guidance with assessment in OBE.	11%	0%	11%	33%	45%
10. Useful if staff discussed used of OBE and assessment at your school.	0%	0%	0%	33%	67%

**TABLE 4.5: ASSESSMENT – METHOD, PURPOSE AND USE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
11. Involves use of variety of assessment techniques to gain holistic picture.	0%	12.5%	0%	75%	12.5%
13. Assess continuously, in all learning areas, throughout the year.	0%	0%	0%	78%	22%
14. Involves observation of authentic tasks.	0%	0%	0%	89%	11%
23. Use variety of assessment strategies that give learners multiple opportunities to demonstrate what know and can do.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
12. Involves comparing learners against national criteria, not each other.	0%	25%	25%	50%	0%
16. Purpose is to give results and marks to learners' work.	12.5%	50%	12.5%	25%	0%
17. We assess learners to find out if they have understood the lessons.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
24. Tests are the most accurate form of assessment.	0%	62.5%	12.5%	25%	0%
18. Assessment is an important part of teaching and learning.	0%	0%	0%	89%	11%
19. Through use of assessment both learners and teachers can monitor and gain guidance as to the learning process.	0%	0%	0%	75%	25%
21. Assessment is a useful tool for teachers to inform them as to the necessary adjustments required in their teaching.	0%	0%	0%	78%	22%



**TABLE 4.6: THE INFLUENCE OF ASSESSMENT ON LEARNERS**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
20. Assessment should have a positive, motivational impact on learners learning.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
33. By comparing learners against each other some learners are always seen as inferior, weak and scholastically poor.	0%	11%	0%	78%	11%
37. Comparing learners test scores against each other in class is recommended as a motivational device.	0%	50%	25%	25%	0%
36. Learners' abilities that are not related to academic activities should not be included in assessment records.	0%	62.5%	25%	12.5%	0%

**TABLE 4.7: THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT TO THE PROMOTION OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
22. Assessment results should include information on strengths and weaknesses.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
39. Authentic assessment methods promote inclusive education.	0%	0%	17%	83%	0%
38. All learners must be given opportunities to demonstrate achievements.	0%	0%	12.5%	87.5%	0%
32. Effective assessment practices acknowledge that learners are individuals.	0%	0%	0%	78%	22%
34. Good assessment techniques value each learner as an individual.	0%	0%	0%	89%	11%
42. Assessing in a manner that includes all individual learners satisfying for teachers.	0%	0%	37.5%	62.5%	0%



**TABLE 4.8: VIEW OF INCLUSION**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
43. Your attitude towards learners affects how they perceive themselves and, subsequently, their performance.	0%	11%	0%	56%	33%
45. You are willing to support learners with special needs in your classroom.	0%	33%	11%	45%	11%
35. Learners from disadvantage backgrounds may be viewed as learners with special needs.	0%	11%	22%	56%	11%
41. It is feasible to teach learners who are gifted, normal and mentally challenged in the same class.	0%	89%	11%	0%	0%
44. Learners with learning difficulties should be in regular classrooms.	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
40. All learners should have the right to be in regular mainstream classrooms.	0%	67%	0%	22%	11%
46. Inclusion is a desirable educational practice.	0%	29%	14%	57%	0%

### 4.3.3 School 'B' – Qualitative data findings

**TABLE 4.9: THEMES, CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES THAT EMERGED THROUGH DATA ANALYSIS**

THEME	CATEGORY	SUB-CATEGORIES
<b>OBE</b>	Attitude towards OBE	
	Understanding of OBE	
	Change to OBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attitude towards change</li> <li>• Experience of change</li> </ul>
	Role of the government	
	Past education versus OBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the learner</li> </ul>
	Difficulties with OBE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of guidelines</li> <li>• Uncertainty</li> <li>• Administration</li> <li>• Inadequate training</li> <li>• Applicability of OBE to school context</li> </ul>
	Influence of OBE on the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View of self as teacher</li> <li>• Personal goal as teacher</li> <li>• View of education</li> </ul>
<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	Purpose and aim of assessment	
	Method and use of assessment	
	Attitude towards assessment	
	Assessment in the past versus assessment in OBE	
	Influence of OBE on assessment	
	Training in assessment	
	Difficulties with assessment	
	Assistance needed	
<b>INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT</b>	Attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education	
	How assessment contributes towards inclusive education	

**THEME: OBE**

#### 4.3.3.1 Attitude towards OBE

One of the teachers interviewed stated that she is “**mad**” about OBE and that she is a supporter of OBE. She said that in the beginning it was like a new toy that she had been given. She said that she **enjoys the flexibility and openness of OBE**. She finds that the **lessons are more playful, meaningful and enjoyable for the learners** because they are able



to manipulate and make things, or work with objects brought from home. She also **enjoys being able to teach both inside and outside the classroom.**

Another teacher commented that she thinks that the learners enjoy OBE as they no longer have to sit still in class and listen to what the teacher says. They are now able to participate in their learning. She commented that the learners often think they are playing yet they are unaware of what they are learning. For example, with money in Mathematics the learners make their own or work with the real thing. They enjoy the lessons.

#### **4.3.3.2 Understanding of OBE**

All of the teachers reported that they have gained a **greater understanding of OBE**. One teacher commented that at the moment the teachers feel a bit more relaxed about OBE but she noted that there are still many concepts that they need to work out. Another teacher stated that she thinks that teachers have a greater understanding of OBE but she added that there is **still more to learn**. She feels that teachers have not really learnt enough to be able to fully help the learners. A teacher commented that it has been three years since she started with OBE and that every year it gets better. She said that each year she grows with the learners. She reported that in the beginning it was very confusing as the teachers did not know what to use and what of the past to discard. She said that eventually the staff sat down by themselves and that with time, they have learnt what to do.

#### **4.3.3.3 Change to OBE**

- **Attitude**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that she thinks that the **change to OBE is a good thing** as now the learners who learn more slowly are also give a chance to participate and to share their abilities. Another teacher who commented that OBE has encouraged teachers to also give attention to learners who learn slowly and not to only teach to the clever learners. A teacher commented that although it is **difficult to change to a new teaching approach and curriculum**, she feels that **OBE is better for the learners.**

- **Experience of change**

One teacher commented that she thinks that **teachers are uncertain as to their teaching practices** since the introduction of OBE. Another teacher reported that she thinks it is **very demanding and nerve wrecking** to give teachers a new educational approach and curriculum and then tell them to get on with it. She reported that she had sleepless nights. A teacher did comment that it has been very **difficult to change** to Curriculum 2005 as she had been teaching the previous curriculum for so long.

Some of the teachers have noticed, however, that the change to OBE has **encouraged teachers to talk to each other**. One teacher stated that teachers talk a lot to each other about the change to OBE, they share how to do things and they compare what works at some schools and not at others. She feels that this has helped the teachers' attitude towards the change.

Most of the teachers reported that the **workshops they had attended helped them with the transition**. In particular they enjoyed a course that they attended at the beginning of the introduction to OBE, which they attended with other teachers. They commented that they learnt from each other. One teacher stated that **access to information and time has helped her** with the change to OBE. She said that the principal had bought the school two books on assessment, which has also helped.

#### **4.3.3.4 Role of the government**

One of the teachers at School 'B' commented that the government only gave the teachers a **week of training in OBE** and then expected them to implement it.

#### **4.3.3.5 Past education versus OBE**

The following differences were noted:



- **Knowledge of the learner**

One of the teachers commented that OBE has given her more insight into the learners than in the past and that it has “opened her eyes”. One of the teachers who was interviewed stated that because OBE is more flexible and open she has been able to get to know the **learners as unique individuals**. This has made her aware that **although learners do not learn at the same pace, they all can learn**. This has resulted in the **learners who learn slowly getting more support and concern**. The other teacher interviewed stated that OBE has **exposed her to new and surprising aspects and abilities of the learners**. Subsequently she knows the learners better and she is **aware of what is meaningful to them**.

Another teacher reported that with the introduction of OBE she has found that her **relationship with the learners have changed**. She noted how in the past the teacher did everything, spoke all of the time, decorated the classroom, *etc.* Now the learners do these things and she has found that the learners feel proud of their work hanging on the wall. She also thinks that because the **learners do more things for themselves in OBE, they remember it and the task is more meaningful to them**. She has also found that the **learners have become more independent and outspoken since the introduction of OBE**. She noted that now they are free to share their opinions and to feel that their contribution is important whereas in the past the learners had to listen. She stated that **OBE makes all of the learners feel important and that they also have something to say**.

One teacher has found that when she groups weaker learners with stronger learners **they bloom as they feel that they are part of a group**. She finds that **co-operative learning** encourages learners to do more than if they were with learners of a similar ability.

#### 4.3.3.6 Difficulties with OBE

- **Lack of guidelines**

One of the teachers stated that she would prefer it if prescribed guidelines regarding OBE were given. She stated that she could then add the rest. Another teacher commented that

teachers need **guidelines to support them** and to ensure that they are on the right path. Not all teachers agree with these comments, however, as a teacher stated that she does not want things to be prescribed as she feels that teachers can flesh things out by themselves.

- **Uncertainty**

One of the teachers commented that at times she feels **uncertain as to her teaching**. She said that in OBE you are alone, free and you have your own thoughts and the learners are able to learn what they want to. She enjoys this. However, at times she feels uncertain and frustrated because she also wants to work with a prescribed guideline.

- **Administration**

Many of the teachers reported that they **struggle with the administration and paper work of OBE**. They find that a lot of paper work is required. One teacher commented that she **struggles to transfer her observations** onto the required administration records. Another teacher commented that OBE requires a lot of planning and application.

- **Inadequate training**

One of the teachers who was interviewed felt that the teachers did **not receive sufficient training** in OBE. She commented that the teachers in their school cluster were grouped together for three days, were given information and they had to work it out by themselves. She added that she feels that the teachers were not adequately trained and informed as to the administrative and paper work demands of OBE. Another teacher reported that the **training in OBE was very short and confusing at times**. She said that they were only given books, which were hastily worked through. A teacher described their training in OBE as “hasty talk” and reported that the teachers had to learn by themselves. One teacher stated that it had cost him four years of studying to become a teacher and the government only gave them one week of training in OBE and expected him to implement it.



- **Applicability of OBE to school context**

One of the teachers reported that she struggles to apply some of the OBE lessons to their school context, as **they do not have the support and participation of the parents**. For example, if she wants to do a project with the learners she has to bring all of the information and materials. She commented that she feels that a **school needs finances and money to implement OBE**. She stated that when the teachers at School 'B' looked at videos of other schools implementing OBE they noticed that their ideas are similar but they are often unable to practically implement the lessons due to the context of the school and their learners.

As mentioned previously, the learners in their school context **frequently move** when their parents find work. One teacher has found that when learners come from other schools there are concepts they are not familiar with. She feels that although it is important that each teacher presents OBE lessons in her own way, the outer framework of the curriculum should be the same for all schools to ensure that all learners learn the same concepts.

#### 4.3.3.7 **Influence of OBE on the teacher**

- **View of self as teacher**

One of the teachers interviewed commented that she does **not feel that her task as an educator has really changed since the introduction of OBE**. She feels that many of her aims, for the learners to discover for themselves and to help themselves, have remained the same. However, she feels that **OBE has made her more aware of them and this has encouraged her to put more effort into her work**. She has also found that OBE has encouraged her to be **more free and relaxed with her teaching** and that consequently her learners are more relaxed. She also stated that although she struggled initially with the noise produced in co-operative OBE lessons, she has become used to it. She has also found that OBE has **changed her view of learners who learn more slowly** and has become more understanding of their needs.

Another teacher commented that OBE has **broadened her teaching practice and changed her thoughts**. She stated that she enjoys the freedom and the new discoveries that occur within the teaching and learning process. She has noticed that she has done some things with her learners that she never knew she could do.

One teacher feels that **teachers should be life long learners** to ensure that they remain up to date with the workings and reality of education. Another teacher felt that it is of utmost importance that **teachers support one another** and that they should have the freedom to question that which they do not understand.

- **Personal goal as teacher**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that **in the past her goal was to teach learners to read and write**. She explained that if by June of that year a learner could read and write she was very happy. If the learner could not, however, she would be a bit worried and would give that learner some more attention. She stated that now her goal in Grade 1 is to **assist her learners to progress and to ensure that they gain enough understanding** so that when they go to Grade 2 they are **able to think independently**. She said that teachers must **facilitate learners to be responsible, independent thinkers, that they must be able to discover by themselves and be able to help themselves**. She added that her ultimate goal as a teacher is to prepare her learners to become **good citizens of South Africa**. She feels that it is important to integrate values, skills and knowledge with the critical outcomes and to apply it to her teaching.

The other teacher interviewed reported that her goal for the learners in her class is **for all of them to be able to read**. She would also like the learners to have **a sense of pride in their work and what they do**.

- **View of education**

One of the teachers interviewed stated that **OBE has made her think differently about the education of the learners**. She commented that when **planning a lesson** she now begins with



the learners in mind and relates the lesson to their needs and context. She commented that she is **more aware of the learners' environment and this has resulted in a better understanding of their needs.**

<b>THEME: ASSESSMENT</b>
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#### **4.3.3.8 Purpose and aim of assessment**

Most of the teachers reported that purpose of assessment is to **gain information as to the progress of the learners.** Assessment is also seen as a means by which to find out **what the learners know, understand and can do.** Many of the teachers stated that assessment helps them to establish if the learners have understood the work that has been presented. One teacher said that assessment results help **teachers to identify what must be done in class to assist** the learners. Another teacher commented that assessment enables her to find out if the lesson was presented satisfactorily for all levels of ability in the class. She agreed that one can use assessment results to **measure the effectiveness of ones teaching.** One teacher noted that teachers can use assessment results **to improve their lesson planning.**

#### **4.3.3.9 Method and use of assessment**

Many of the teachers commented that assessment in OBE occurs **continuously in all learning areas** and that it consists of **different assessment methods and techniques** such as: tests, exams, self and peer assessments, projects *etc.* One teacher stated that assessment in OBE, in particular, involves the **observation of the learners.** Another teacher explained that she has an assessment book that she keeps next to her in which she writes down observations and both positive and negative comments. One of the teachers noted that in OBE assessment involves the **combination of the results of different activities and tests completed throughout the year.** These result in a thorough record of the learners' progress.

One teacher reported that in the past memory tests were used to assess the learners but with OBE the **learners' knowledge, skills and values are assessed.** Another teacher reported that

in OBE the learners' values, skills and knowledge are individually monitored and that the learners participate continuously in the process.

#### 4.3.3.10 Attitude towards assessment

One of the teachers who was interviewed commented that she thinks that **assessment in OBE is a good thing**. She also approves of the requirements of the WCED for comments to be written after each assessment. She feels that this reminds the teachers to pay attention to each learner. She commented that the requirements of assessment in OBE to state what contribution the teacher has made to assist the learner is good as it has resulted in more learners gaining attention and support. She feels that in the past these learners would have left the school. She commented that although she struggles with some aspects of assessment in OBE she thinks that it contributes towards effective learning and teaching. Another teacher reported that she thinks that **assessment in OBE has improved her teaching**.

Some teachers, on the other hand, reported a negative attitude towards assessment in OBE. A teacher stated that the **learners are not able to assess themselves** as some of them cannot read or write.

#### 4.3.3.11 Assessment in the past versus assessment in OBE

One of the teachers commented that in the **past only the teacher assessed the learners** whereas now with OBE the learners have a chance to **assess themselves and fellow learners**. A teacher added that in the past teachers were the only ones that spoke and **learners were passive and had to listen**. The learners were then **tested to see if they could remember** what the teacher said. Another teacher noted that in the past there was a **prescribed syllabus** that had to be completed. She added that **tests and examination** were the main instruments used to establish if the learners knew their work or not whereas in OBE many **different assessment techniques** such as self assessment and peer assessment are used.



#### 4.3.3.12 Influence of OBE on assessment

One teacher commented that OBE has made him realised that there were **many different types of assessment**, such as: formative, continuous, summative, holistic, subjective *etc.* Another teacher commented that in OBE **learners are informed at the beginning of a lesson as to what they will be assessed on and why**. This, according to a teacher, requires a lot of planning, as teachers have to decide on their assessment criteria at the beginning of the lesson. Another teacher commented that in OBE **learners are able to assess themselves** and that this results in them **being more involved in** and taking **more responsibility for their learning**. One teacher said that in OBE assessment has a **positive influence on the learners** as it informs teachers about the adjustments they must make in their teaching.

#### 4.3.3.13 Training in assessment

One teacher commented that she finds the WCED guidelines and training in OBE **vague**. In particular, she feels that she does not have clarity with regards to what and how one must assess. Another teacher stated that the workshops they attended on assessment were vague and that teachers are still uncertain about assessment.

#### 4.3.3.14 Difficulties with assessment

Many of the teachers reported that they **struggle to transfer their observations and assessment results onto paper**. They reported that they find the **record keeping very challenging**. One teacher commented that she feels that teachers still need to work on recording learners' orals and practical demonstrations. She added they do not have the correct forms to record the assessment. Another teacher finds it **frustrating trying to collate** assessment forms and to rewrite all of the marks and comments.

Another teacher commented that he does **not like the methods of self-assessment**, as he believes that the learners do not assess themselves correctly. He also does not like peer-assessment, as he believes that the learners will not accurately assess one another due to friendship loyalties. He often finds that there is a large discrepancy between the marks the



learners give themselves and he as their teacher gives them. Another teacher feels that learners are not able to assess themselves correctly, as they do not have an accurate understanding of their abilities.

#### 4.3.3.15 Assistance needed

Many of the teachers reported that **assessment is a common problem for teachers**. All of the teachers stated that they would like some **support, information and training**. Some teachers stated that they would like a workshop on how to deal with and collate all of the **paper work** in assessment. The teachers commented that they feel very uncertain as how to do this. One teacher stated that she would like more **clarification as to what she should or should not assess**. Another teacher reported that she would like some guidance on **how to assess values and skills**. A teacher would like to know **how to use peer assessment and self assessment** in a fair and accurate manner. Many teachers state that they feel uncertain as **how to apply the assessment methods in the classroom**. They requested a workshop with **demonstrations and guidelines** on how to record assessments and how to implement assessment methods such as portfolios and control lists. They also requested **examples of assessment forms**. One teacher commented that she has some assessment forms but she is not sure whether they are appropriate or not.

<b>THEME: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT</b>
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#### 4.3.3.16 Attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education

One of the teachers commented that she feels that at the moment teachers do **not have a choice with regards to inclusion**. She thinks, however, that a person should be **open-minded to the implementation of inclusive education**. She added that it is important that the **teachers' needs** must also be taken into consideration, such as: fewer learners within a class, the necessary teacher training and school facilities. Another teacher added that the **accessibility of the classroom and the whole school** must be taken into consideration. She



feels that **learners with serious problems should be taken out of the classroom** from time to time to receive extra support.

#### 4.3.3.17 How assessment contributes towards inclusive education

One of the teachers interviewed reported that in OBE you are able to **adjust your assessment to meet the standard of your learners**. She explained that in town (Stellenbosch) or in model 'C' schools the teachers might have a higher standard for their learners. She stated that in OBE assessment levels are adjusted to the environment and context of the learners. She commented that in OBE teachers also do **not assess learners on concepts they are not familiar with**. Another teacher reported that **OBE encourages teachers to change their assessment methods and techniques to match the needs of the learners**. As an example she stated that some of the learners in her class cannot read or write so then she does the task orally with them.

A teacher noted that assessment in OBE looks holistically at the learners and that the **learners' learning ability are no longer solely assessed**.

#### 4.3.2. School 'B' – Quantitative data findings

**TABLE 4.10: VIEW OF CURRICULUM 2005 AND OBE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
7. Effectiveness of Curriculum 2005.	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
8. OBE has promoted good changes.	0%	37.5%	25%	37.5%	0%
6. OBE improved teaching.	0%	14%	72%	14%	0%

**TABLE 4.11: VIEW OF ASSESSMENT IN OBE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
25. Your teaching has improved via use of assessment.	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%	0%
28. Assessment practices more effective.	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%
5. Your assessment techniques have not changed since OBE.	0%	43%	43%	14%	0%
29. Assessment in OBE is what you have been doing all along.	0%	0%	72%	28%	0%
27. Assessment in OBE gives you more options and is more flexible.	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%
15. Assessment in OBE is meaningful and relevant to the learner.	0%	0%	12.5%	87.5%	0%
26. Assessment encouraged learners to develop their skills and knowledge more effectively.	0%	0%	37.5%	62.5%	0%

**TABLE 4.12: TRAINING RECEIVED AND DESIRED IN OBE AND ASSESSMENT**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
2. Sufficient support and training.	14%	72%	14%	0%	0%
3. Practice of OBE easy to understand.	12.5%	37.5%	50%	0%	0%
1. Curriculum 2005 policy provides clear guidelines for implementation.	0%	14%	86%	0%	0%
4. Difference between past and assessment in OBE outlined in training.	14%	58%	14%	14%	0%
30. You are not sure how to effectively use new assessment approaches.	0%	25%	12.5%	50%	12.5%
9. You need support and guidance with assessment in OBE.	0%	0%	0%	50%	50%
10. Useful if staff discussed used of OBE and assessment at your school.	0%	0%	12.5%	50%	37.5%



**TABLE 4.13: ASSESSMENT – METHOD, PURPOSE AND USE**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
11. Involves use of variety of assessment techniques to gain holistic picture.	0%	0%	25%	62.5%	12.5%
13. Assess continuously, in all learning areas, throughout the year.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
14. Involves observation of authentic tasks.	0%	12.5%	0%	87.5%	0%
23. Use variety of assessment strategies that give learners multiple opportunities to demonstrate what know and can do.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
12. Involves comparing learners against national criterions, not each other.	0%	0%	25%	75%	0%
16. Purpose is to give results and marks to learners' work.	12.5%	75%	0%	12.5%	0%
17. We assess learners to find out if they have understood the lessons.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
24. Tests are the most accurate form of assessment.	0%	43%	57%	0%	0%
18. Assessment is an important part of teaching and learning.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
19. Through use of assessment both learners and teachers can monitor and gain guidance as to the learning process.	0%	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%
21. Assessment is a useful tool for teachers to inform them as to the necessary adjustments required in their teaching.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%

**TABLE 4.14: THE INFLUENCE OF ASSESSMENT ON LEARNERS**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
20. Assessment should have a positive, motivational impact on learners learning.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
33. By comparing learners against each other some learners are always seen as inferior, weak and scholastically poor.	0%	0%	0%	87.5%	12.5%
37. Comparing learners test scores against each other in class is recommended as a motivational device.	0%	62.5%	25%	12.5%	0%
36. Learners' abilities that are not related to academic activities should not be included in assessment records.	0%	62.5%	25%	12.5%	0%



**TABLE 4.15: THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT TO THE PROMOTION AN INCLUSIVE EDUCATION**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
22. Assessment results should include information on strengths and weaknesses.	0%	0%	12.5%	75%	12.5%
39. Authentic assessment methods promote inclusive education.	0%	0%	62.5%	37.5%	0%
38. All learners must be given opportunities to demonstrate achievements.	0%	0%	12.5%	87.5%	0%
32. Effective assessment practices acknowledge that learners are individuals.	0%	0%	0%	62.5%	37.5%
34. Good assessment techniques value each learner as an individual.	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%
42. Assessing in a manner that includes all individual learners satisfying for teachers.	0%	0%	75%	25%	0%

**TABLE 4.16: VIEW OF INCLUSION**

Summary of statements	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
43. Your attitude towards learners affects how they perceive themselves and, subsequently, their performance.	0%	12.5%	0%	50%	37.5%
45. You are willing to support learners with special needs in your classroom.	0%	12.5%	12.5%	75%	0%
35. Learners from disadvantage backgrounds may be viewed as learners with special needs.	0%	62.5%	25%	12.5%	0%
41. It is feasible to teach learners who are gifted, normal and mentally challenged in the same class.	12.5%	50%	25%	12.5%	0%
44. Learners with learning difficulties should be in regular classrooms.	0%	62.5%	12.5%	25%	0%
40. All learners should have the right to be in regular mainstream classrooms.	12.5%	25%	25%	37.5%	0%
46. Inclusion is a desirable educational practice.	0%	12.5%	87.5%	0%	0%



#### **4.3.5 Cross case-study analysis – Qualitative data findings**

The findings from the cross case-study analysis are structured and presented according to the same themes and categories that emerged from the individual, intra case study analysis. However, to prevent unnecessary repetition only the essence of the findings in each category of the case studies are compared and combined. This enables the similarities and differences between the findings of the two schools to emerge, and subsequently some generalisations between the schools can be made.

<b>THEME: OBE</b>
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##### **4.3.5.1 Attitude towards OBE**

The majority of teachers in both School ‘A’ and School ‘B’ reported to have a positive attitude towards OBE. In particular, they stated that they enjoyed the methods of teaching in OBE. The teachers at both of the schools also mentioned that the learners seem to enjoy OBE.

There were some teachers, however, in School ‘A’ who reported a negative attitude towards OBE.

##### **4.3.5.2 Understanding of OBE**

All of the teachers in both of the schools reported that they have gained a greater understanding of OBE since it was introduced. They added, however, that they would like to further increase their understanding as they feel that their knowledge is not sufficient yet.

##### **4.3.5.3 Experience of change to OBE**

Most of the teachers in School ‘A’ reported that they found the transition to OBE difficult and demanding and that subsequently they are uncertain as to their teaching practices. Although some of the teachers in School ‘B’ agreed that the transition was difficult and stressful, others added that they thought the change to OBE was beneficial for both the learners and teachers.

The teachers at both of the schools reported that access to resources and attending workshops helped them with the transition to OBE.

#### **4.3.5.4 Role of the government**

The teachers at School 'A' seemed to reported a great sense of frustration with the government and WCED. They commented on their lack of participation in decision-making and they feel that policies are passed down from the 'top' that they have to obey. Some of the teachers view the change to OBE as a political move. One teacher believes that OBE was introduced to create equality and to meet the needs of the future of South Africa.

The teachers at School 'B' seemed to be more frustrated with the inadequate training that the government provided with regards to OBE.

#### **4.3.5.5 Past education versus in OBE**

The teachers at School 'A' reported mixed feelings when OBE is compared to approaches of the past. Although some of the teachers preferred some of the teaching methods and the predictability of the previous approach to education, the majority of teachers viewed the changes implemented by OBE positively. In particular they are able to know the learners as individuals; they enjoy the flexibility and freedom and have found that the learners are exposed to more concepts.

When comparing OBE to the previous approach to education, the teachers at School 'B' only commented on a difference in their knowledge of learner. They reported that OBE has also encouraged them to acknowledge the different abilities and learning pace of the learners. One of the teachers stated that OBE has resulted in a change in her relationship with the learners, as they have become more active, involved and outspoken.



#### **4.3.5.6 Difficulties with OBE**

All of the teachers in the two schools reported difficulties with OBE. Both schools reported that they struggle with the vagueness and the lack of guidelines. They stated that this creates uncertainty and insecurity. The teachers commented that they also have difficulties with the administrative demands of OBE. All of the teachers noted that they do not think that they had sufficient training in OBE. They found the training to be short, not always applicable to their learning context and not practical enough.

Most of the teachers agreed that their teaching and learning context makes it difficult to apply OBE. Many of the teachers stated that they lacked support and participation from the learners' parents. Some of the teachers in School 'A' commented that the large number of learners in their classes makes it difficult to apply OBE. They added that the confusing terminology of OBE hindered their application at first. The teachers in School 'B' reported that the lack of finances and materials in the school inhibits their application of OBE. They also reported to have difficulties with learners frequently changing schools.

#### **4.3.5.7 Influence of OBE on the teacher**

Although some teachers indicated a greater change within themselves and within their teaching than others did, all of the teachers who were interviewed stated that OBE has influenced them in a positive manner.

All of the teachers at both schools commented they are more free, relaxed and open in their teaching. One teacher in School 'A' stated that this freedom has encouraged her to communicate more, especially with her colleagues. A teacher in School 'B' has found that OBE has broadened her thoughts and teaching practice. All of the teachers reported that these changes have impacted positively on the learners. One teacher in School 'A' stated that she listens more to the learners and a teacher in School 'B' commented that she has become more aware of her aims for her learners and this has encouraged her to put more effort into her work.

Although personal aims are individual in nature, there was a general common goal between all of the teachers interviewed at both of the schools. Their goal was to give of their best so that the learners learn and develop sufficiently to progress to the next grade. A teacher at School 'B' reported that her aims were also for the learners to become independent thinkers and good citizens of South Africa. One of the teachers at School 'A' hopes that the learners enjoy the year with her.

<b>THEME:      ASSESSMENT</b>
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#### **4.3.5.8          Purpose and aim of assessment**

Most of the teachers in both of the schools described the purpose of assessment to be to gain insight into the progress of the learners and to see how well the learners have understood the lessons taught. They also reported that assessment enables them to see which learners need more attention and support. Some of the teachers in both of the schools also noted that assessment is a means by which to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching and to ascertain what adjustments need to be made.

#### **4.3.5.9          Method and use of assessment**

All of the teachers in both of the schools were able to identify the different assessment methods and techniques in OBE. They also stated that assessment occurs continuously, throughout the year.

#### **4.3.5.10        Attitude towards assessment**

In School 'A' some of the teachers reported difficulties and frustration with assessment in OBE. In School 'B' one of the teachers stated that she approves of the approach to and methods of assessment that were introduced by OBE. She added, however, that she did find some aspects difficult at times. Some of the other teachers in this school, on the other hand, reported a negative attitude towards assessment in OBE.



#### **4.3.5.11 Assessment in the past versus assessment in OBE**

Overall, the teachers in School 'A' seem to have mixed feelings about assessment in the past and in OBE. Some of the teachers stated that they preferred the methods used in the past and that they found them to be more effective. Other teachers commented that they have enjoyed the freedom from examination pressures, the variety of assessment methods and the benefits that have resulted due to the introduction of OBE.

In School 'B' the teachers stated that in OBE the learners participate more in the assessment process as they assess themselves and peers. They commented that a variety of assessment techniques and methods are used in OBE whereas in the past assessment consisted of tests and examinations.

#### **4.3.5.12 Influence of OBE on assessment**

Many of the teachers in School 'A' reported that OBE has had a positive influence on assessment. The teachers stated that they are more aware of individual aims for the learners, learners are now described in totality and they are assessed more frequently. One teacher did report that there has not been a great change in her assessment methods since the introduction of OBE.

A teacher in School 'B' stated that OBE has made him aware of a wide variety of assessment techniques. The teachers commented that in OBE the learners must be informed as to the assessment criteria before the task is given. Some of the teachers have found that this has made the learners more responsible and involved in their learning. A teacher commented that she feels that assessment in OBE has made a positive influence on learners.

#### **4.3.5.13 Difficulties with assessment**

Most of the teachers at both of the schools reported frustration and difficulty with the administration demands and paper work of assessment in OBE. In particular, the teachers in School 'B' stated that they struggle to transfer their observation results onto paper and to

collate all of the assessment results. A teacher at School 'A' commented that some of the assessment methods have short comings.

#### **4.3.5.14 Assistance needed**

Many of teachers in both of the schools stated that they needed assistance with some aspect of assessment in OBE. Some of the teachers in School 'A' requested more specific guidelines and practical demonstrations on how to implement assessment. The teachers in School 'B' added to these requests stating that they would also like clarification on what to assess, how to use self assessment and peer assessment and to look at examples of assessment forms.

<b>THEME: INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ASSESSMENT</b>
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#### **4.3.5.15 Attitude towards inclusion and inclusive education**

Some of the teachers in both of the schools reported a positive and open attitude towards inclusion. They did feel, however, that for inclusion to be successful that they needed to receive appropriate training, that the number of learners in their classes must be reduced and that their school facilities and context must be taken into consideration. Some of the teachers stated that they feel that they do not have a choice with regards to inclusion. One of the teachers commented that the teachers in her school are already expected to identify and accommodate the needs of the learners even though they do not have the necessary knowledge.

#### **4.3.5.16 How assessment contributes towards inclusive education**

Most of the teachers in both of the schools reported that OBE and assessment has made them more aware of the individuality of learners. In particular, assessment in OBE has made them aware of the needs and abilities of learners who learn more slowly. The teachers in School 'A' gave more detailed comments on how assessment has enabled them to understand and support the individual needs of learners. The teachers in School 'B' focused more on the flexibility of



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the findings of the research are discussed. It is imperative to note that the findings are contextual, pertaining to the two schools as case studies and that generalisation to other schools or contexts is not intended nor implied. The findings are then compared to and supported by those of previous research and literature debate. With this insight, recommendations are made for both of the schools involved in the study as well as for future research. The limitations of this study are then noted and a final conclusion ends this report of the research process.

#### **5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

The findings of both the qualitative and quantitative cross case-study data analysis as well as those of the individual case studies are drawn upon in this discussion. This approach enables an integrated and concise discussion of the findings of the research study, in which both similarities and discrepancies between the findings of the case studies as well as different forms of data are noted.

Due to the dynamic and emergent nature of qualitative research various issues and concepts related to the research question also arose from the research process (Merriam, 1998: 155). However, to ensure the clarity and cohesiveness of this study the discussion focuses on the findings that are relevant to the research question. In other words, findings that indicate how assessment contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education are discussed. These findings are compared to and supported by those of previous research and comments made in literature debate, as outlined in Chapter 2. Subsequently, the discussion explores the findings

pertaining to: assessment in OBE, inclusion and inclusive education, and the contribution of assessment to inclusive education.

### **5.2.1 Assessment in OBE**

Although many of the teachers in both of the case studies reported a good understanding of the purpose and methods of assessment in OBE, they seem to experience difficulties in applying the principles to their teaching contexts and in managing the administrative demands (see 4.3.1.14, 4.3.3.14, 4.3.5.13 and Table 4.20, page 137). This may be due to their inadequate training in OBE and assessment (see 4.3.5.6, 4.3.3.12 and Table 4.19, page 136). Malcolm (2001: 221) reported that there was insufficient teacher training in OBE and that workshops that were held focused more on the jargon of the policy than on the underlying concepts and methods. The teachers' difficulty with assessment may also be due to the numerous administrative demands of assessment in OBE (see 4.3.1.14 and 4.3.3.13).

The teaching and learning contexts of the case studies require the teachers to adapt their lessons and assessment methods to match the needs, interests and abilities of the learners and the materials available. This perspective is supported in the assessment guidelines of the Department of Education (2002b: 5) that state: "Assessment activities should be adapted and refined to accommodate the needs of learners who experience barriers to learning". Not all of the teachers in this study reported that they adjust their lessons and assessment methods to match the needs and abilities of the learners. Some of the teachers from each school noted that OBE enables them to know the learners as individuals and subsequently, they are able to adjust their assessment practices to match the abilities, needs and context of the learners (see 4.3.1.17 and 4.3.3.11). Whereas other teachers reported difficulty in applying exemplar OBE lessons and ideas to their teaching context (see 4.3.5.1; 4.3.3.5; 4.3.3.11 and 4.3.5.6).

The principles of OBE promote and give teachers the flexibility to adapt their teaching and assessment practices to accommodate learners who experience barriers to learning. It is one of the reasons why it was chosen as a new curriculum, yet the majority of the teachers in this study appear to struggle to do this. According to van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 6) OBE was chosen because it: "...provides teachers with a degree of freedom to select the content



and methods through which the learners will achieve those [*sic*] [critical] outcomes". The Department of Education (2001: 20) states: "The most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to make sure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles". It is questionable if all of the teachers realise that they are meant to adjust or modify the lessons shown to them in their training, whilst still maintaining the critical outcomes of OBE, to create an enabling and supportive learning environment. Van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 94) claim that teachers need to adopt and contextualise the principles of OBE to suit their particular situation to ensure the successful implementation of OBE.

Many academics have criticised the adequacy and appropriateness of the teachers' training in OBE (Jansen, 1998: 325; Jayiya, 1999: 8; Malcolm, 2001: 221). Jansen stated in *The Cape Times* (Lund, 1997: 1): "The new system underestimates the workload that is involved and the conditions under which teachers are teaching". Even Kader Asmal, the current Minister of Education, was reported by Johns and SAPA (1999: 3) to state that: "...the nature and impact of the new curriculum had not been adequately communicated to poorer schools". He added that poor schools do not have sufficient teaching resources. The Department of Education (2002b: 5) states, however: "Educator training and orientation to Curriculum 2005 should emphasise responsibility of all educators to accommodate diversity".

Some of the teachers in both of the schools reported some uncertainty and insecurity as to their teaching practices. Not all of the teachers seemed comfortable with the flexibility and freedom that OBE promotes, especially with regards to assessment (see 4.3.5.3; 4.3.5.5; 4.3.5.6). This uncertainty may be due to the prescriptive nature of teaching and assessment that was entrenched in the past or due to OBE's "...absence of strong accountability measures..." (Malcolm, 2001: 322). Some of the teachers seem to prefer and requested guidelines, however most teachers added that they did not want to go back to a prescribed syllabus (see 4.3.5.5 and 4.3.5.11). It was realised during a workshop held with the teachers of School 'B' that they were not informed as to the existence of the Revised Curriculum that had recently been published (Department of Education, 2002a). This publication provides the guidelines that the teachers seek in the form of work schedules and lesson plan examples (Department of Education, 2002a: 2-3). The teachers were also not aware of the document



published by the Department of Education (2002b) titled: 'Curriculum 2005. Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion'. This document provides detailed guidelines as to the purposes and methods of assessment in OBE, and in particular, it informs teachers how to use adaptive methods of assessment so that all learners are included within the learning context.

### **5.2.2 Inclusion and inclusive education**

The teachers at the two schools reported mixed and sometimes contradictory opinions with regards to inclusion and inclusive education. For, although the majority of teachers in both of the schools stated that they are willing to support learners with special needs in their classroom (45% for School 'A' and 75% for School 'B'), the majority of teachers disagreed with the statement that learners with learning difficulties should be in regular classes (75% and 62.5% respectively). See statement 45 and 44 in Table 4.23 on page 139. These findings seem to indicate that the teachers at both of the schools were not entirely certain and informed as to what inclusion and inclusive education is, and what it means for both the learners and themselves as teachers. The teachers' possible lack of understanding or inability to comment was particularly noticeable in the qualitative data produced by the questionnaire. Only 33% of the teachers at School 'A' and 25% of the teachers at School 'B' responded to question number 5, regarding the contribution of assessment to inclusive education.

Although the qualitative data findings that emerged regarding inclusion and inclusive education are similar in both of the schools, there were discrepancies at times between the schools regarding the quantitative data findings. For example, the majority of teachers (56%) at School 'A' agreed that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds might be viewed as learners with special needs (statement 35) where as 62.5% of teachers at School 'B' disagreed with the statement. The differences in the teaching context and barriers to learning at these two schools may have influenced this perspective. The learners at School 'A', as a whole, appear to come from a more disadvantaged background than those at School 'B' (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2).

Another interesting comparison between the responses of the teachers from the two schools is that the majority of teachers at School 'A' (67%) disagreed with the statement that all learners



have the right to be in regular mainstream classrooms (statement 40, page 139). On the other hand, although it is not a strong majority, 37.5% of the teachers at School 'B' agreed with this statement. I wonder if the previous exposure of these teachers to the principles of inclusion might have influenced their responses (see 4.2.2). They did not seem certain as to their perspectives, however, as the majority of teachers at this case study also chose a neutral response to the statement that mentioned inclusion is a desirable educational practice (87.5%). The majority of teachers at School 'B' (57%), on the other hand, agreed with the statement (statement 46).

The teachers' responses from both of the schools indicate contradicting perspectives. This may be indicative of the teachers' understanding of inclusion and inclusive education. This is not surprising, as the teachers have not as yet received any formal training regarding inclusion and the implementation of inclusive education. They appear to have been informed via the media, colleagues and some informal training.

Not all of the teachers in this research appeared to have a negative attitude towards inclusion but they did report that their needs as teachers and the context within which they work must be taken into consideration (see 4.3.5.15). Some of the teachers reported that they feel that they do not have a choice with regards to the implementation of inclusion. In current research (1999) Swart and Pettipher (2001: 40) have found that teachers feel "...overwhelmed, frustrated and helpless, their perception being that decisions have been imposed upon them without their [sic] being consulted and made a part of the decision-making process". However, the findings of this research indicate that their current teaching and assessment methods do promote inclusive education. This indicates that that the teachers do not appear to understand the mutually supportive and interdependent nature of inclusion and inclusive education.

The possible implications of the above findings should be reflected upon by reviewing the comments of Zollers, Ramanathan and Yu (1999: 164):

"School reform measures that are imposed upon the classroom teacher may not be readily adopted. If inclusion is adopted in a school in a hierarchical way, there is the risk that it will not be fully embraced by the staff and student body. Moreover,



if inclusion is imposed on staff who feel powerless, the staff may not wrestle with and solve the difficult issues that arise from school-wise changes in curriculum, staffing, assessment, and instructional practices. Within a democratic and empowering culture, teachers have the opportunity to contribute to the implementation of inclusion, and, thus will be invested in the complex process of making inclusion successful”.

### **5.2.3 The contribution of assessment to inclusive education**

Lipsky and Gartner (1997), cited in Zollers, Ramanathan and Yu (1999: 158), state: “An inclusive educational program requires a range of school wide modification from staffing and curriculum to assessment and instructional practices”. The majority of teachers at both of the case studies reported that assessment in OBE has changed the way they view the learners in their classes (see 4.3.5.12). In particular, learners are now viewed as individuals, with different needs and abilities. The majority of teachers have also commented that OBE has enabled and encouraged them to support and value the slower learner. Naicker (1999a: 115) and the Department of Education (2002b: 5) state that the flexibility of the OBE framework with its principles of design down, expanded opportunities and high expectations enables all learners to achieve success relative to their own pace and style of learning.

All of the teachers in both of the case studies also clearly agreed that effective assessment practices support and value learners as individuals (see 4.3.1.13, 4.3.15 and statements 32 and 34 in Table 4.22, page 138). According to van Rensburg (1998b: 89; 90): “Effective and informative assessment practice involves teachers using a variety of assessment strategies that gives learners multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to the learning programme outcome”. The teachers commented that they enjoy and appreciate this change introduced by OBE (see 4.3.1.13, 4.3.1.17 and 4.3.3.16).

Although all of the teachers agreed that their assessment practices in OBE acknowledge, support and value the individual learner, they did not seem to clearly link this educational practice to inclusive education. For although in School ‘A’ a majority of 83% of teachers agreed that authentic assessment methods and techniques promote inclusive education (see statement 39 in Table 4.22, page 138), only 56% agreed that assessment in OBE is



meaningful and relevant to the learner (see statement 15 in Table 4.18, page 136). Whereas in School 'B' the majority (62.5%) of teachers was neutral and 37.5% agreed that assessment promoted inclusive education. The majority of teachers (87.5%), however, agreed that assessment in OBE is meaningful to the learner. These responses seem to indicate that although many of the teachers agreed that assessment contributes towards inclusive education they do not seem entirely clear as to how this occurs and how they, with their teaching and assessment practices, can promote inclusive education.

The teachers' insufficient training in and understanding of the principles of OBE and assessment may hinder this association. For although it was found that all of the teachers have made progress in their understanding and use of OBE and assessment (see 4.3.5.2, 4.3.5.8 and 4.3.5.9), many of them do not seem to have a deep, theoretical understanding of the principles of OBE. The teachers in these schools appeared to be mastering the more practical aspects of assessment, such as implementing methods and recording abilities. Some of the teachers still need to make a paradigm shift to fully understanding the aims of OBE. This would facilitate them to see that OBE and assessment in OBE automatically supports and promotes inclusive education. Pahad (1999: 247) claims that "...a paradigm shift in assessment is required in order to ensure that assessment practices guide, support and underpin our transformative outcomes-based model for education and training". And, as Naicker (1999a: 13) argues, "...it is OBE that will allow inclusive education to succeed since OBE is inclusive in nature".

### **5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS**

Implications of the findings are that the teachers at both of the schools need to fully understand and internalise the underlying principles of OBE; they need to be encouraged to make a paradigm shift. Naicker (1999a: 47) comments that the importance of the paradigm shift was underestimated in the training of teachers. The paradigm shift involves changes in systems of thinking and behaviour, the functioning of major social and organisational functions and the roles and responsibilities people assume (Naicker 1999a: 13).



This deeper understanding of OBE will enable the teachers of this study to be more certain of their teaching and assessment practices. This will encourage them to be more confident to adapt examples of OBE lessons and assessment methods to match the needs and characteristics their teaching contexts and it will make the teachers less weary of and resistant towards the practice of inclusive education. In other words they will be able to see the greater purpose and aim of their teaching and assessment, and ultimately, how assessment in OBE contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for the schools in this case study**

Like many of the rural schools within South Africa, the two schools within this study have many needs. They experience financial constraints, inadequate training of teachers, few resources and materials, large class sizes, illiterate and uninvolved parents, learners from unstable home circumstances and many of the other challenges that arise from being located in a rural, low socio-economic area. Subsequently, there are many recommendations that can be made to support the development of these schools.

However, in keeping with the cohesiveness of this study only the most prominent recommendations that have arisen from reflection on this research study are outlined:

- **A paradigm shift**

As discussed earlier all of the teachers at the two schools would benefit from in-service training that promotes a paradigm shift. A paradigm shift would enable them to internalise and fully understand the principles of OBE and subsequently, they might find the practices of OBE more comprehensible, appealing and attainable (Singh & Manser, 2000: 110). As noted by van der Horst and McDonald (1997: 6), a paradigm shift is a slow, soul searching and often resistant process. Naicker (1999a: 82-84) discusses how a paradigm shift towards inclusive education and OBE cannot take place as a result of one simple decision or a single



workshop. He states that various strategies and structures need to be put into place to support the shift, such as the establishment of partnerships with special schools and collaboration District Support teams.

The staff at these schools would therefore benefit from a variety of training that encourages them to explore, search and question their values, beliefs and practices as teachers. For example, exercises that encourage teachers to acknowledge and evaluate their paradigms could be incorporated in training on educational issues such as assessment, inclusion, adapting and modifying lessons etc. This more theoretical and philosophical approach may promote a paradigm shift.

This approach was attempted in a workshop on assessment in OBE held with the teachers at School 'A' (see 3.4.4.5). It was observed that this more philosophical approach is not necessarily as practical as the teachers would like it to be and that some of the teachers appeared fixed on logistical issues. Not all of the teachers responded to the prompts to explore and compare their principles and beliefs of assessment. As stated earlier, the teachers at these schools would benefit from frequent interactions to encourage a shift in paradigms.

- **Training in the principles and practice of inclusion and inclusive education**

The staff at the two schools would benefit from training and exposure to the principles and practice of inclusion and inclusive education. This should occur within a safe, professional environment "...where attitudes and beliefs about inclusive education can be explored, shared, challenged, restructured and rethought" (Swart & Pettipher, 2001: 41). In particular, the principles of inclusion should initially be explored, along with the Constitution of South Africa and the principles and practices of OBE to enable the teachers to see that the introduction of inclusive education is a natural, progressive extension of the transformation of education in South Africa (Department of Education, 2001: 11). This understanding may promote a positive attitude towards inclusion and subsequently the practical implementation in their school context might not seem as daunting.



- **Increased communication between teachers**

Some of the teachers in School 'B' reported that with the introduction of OBE they have enjoyed and benefitted from the increase in communication and discussion with fellow colleagues (see 4.3.3.3). One of the teachers in School 'A' has noted that she communicates with her colleagues more frequently and openly (see 4.3.1.8). Based on observations, it appears that the teachers at these two schools do not discuss educational issues and challenges frequently with one another. Swart and Pettipher (2001: 35) note that teachers' backgrounds and their familiarity with working alone do not prepare them for collaborative roles.

This observation was shared with the teachers at School 'A' at the workshop. During the workshop they were encouraged to see that they are the 'experts' of their environment and that with mutual support and comfortable discussion and debate, that they are the best people to support one another. They were encouraged to draw upon one another to assist them with the modification and adaptation of OBE lessons and assessment methods as the research findings indicate that some of the teachers have a better understanding than others. The teachers at both schools would benefit from sharing their thoughts and practices. Swart and Pettipher (2001: 34) state that collaborative relationships are viewed as determining factors in the success of inclusion.

To assist with this recommendation it would be beneficial if the principals and management staff at the schools were exposed to some training that encourages this approach and assists them to create an open, communicative and collaborative teaching body. "The principal has been cited as the single most influential individual in creating school culture and climate" (Swart & Pettipher, 2001: 38). Both schools appear to have dominant, authoritarian principals and it is questionable as to how often the teachers' thoughts and needs are heard (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). The principals at these schools should be enlightened as to what an important role they play in creating enthusiastic, inquisitive and creative teachers. Swart and Pettipher (2001: 39-40) state that principals must be dynamic, reflective leaders with a vision for an inclusive school, they must encourage active participation and collaboration and they should celebrate diversity.



- **Empowerment of the teachers**

The teachers' freedom to express their thoughts, opinions and ideas may add to their sense of empowerment, value and ability. One of the teachers in School 'B' reported that introduction of OBE had initiated a change in the learners in her class. She noted that they are able to express themselves more freely and that this freedom has made her learners feel important, that they have something to contribute (see 4.3.3.16). Perhaps this sense of empowerment and value should be extended to the teachers.

When the offer of a workshop was extended to the schools only School 'A' accepted. However, in this discussion both the schools stipulated that they would like to be *taught* how to implement assessment in OBE. They expressed a desire for a structure or recipe, which they could follow. They stated that they did not want to 'work' in the workshop and that the presenter must give them a lesson. The teachers appeared resistant to working together with the guidelines of OBE, to adapt and modify their training to meet the needs of their teaching context.

Van Niekerk and Killen (2000: 91) succinctly explain how change has affected teachers in South Africa:

"The complexity of the education situation makes it very difficult for those involved to form a picture of their situation and to relate their own activities on a micro-level to the context as a whole. Because they find it difficult to establish a holistic perspective, teachers are at a loss to define their own roles in the situation – they are literally at a loss for words".

Therefore, the teachers in these schools need to be encouraged to believe in their ability, to draw upon their experience of teaching in the past and to work together to assist themselves to adapt to the changes introduced by OBE. A paradigm shift and an increase in communication between the teachers would encourage this empowerment, as well as training sessions where the staff are facilitated to work together to address their needs. Swart and Pettipher (2001: 34) state that collegiality is one of the principles and strategies of whole-school development for inclusive education. This refers to a "...strong professional culture characterised by shared,

collective work norms...in which mutual respect, positive emotional and moral support, shared work values, trust, cooperation and purposeful dialogues about teaching and learning are of the utmost importance” (Swart & Pettipher, 2001: 34).

- **Adult education**

As mentioned in the description of School ‘B’, one of the goals of the Sustainability Institute is to provide adult education at the school for the farm workers. All of the parents at both case studies would benefit from adult education and parental support. This would enable the parents to empower themselves, support their children and become more involved with the schools. Therefore, this service would benefit the parents, learners, school and community at large (Houle, 1992: 35).

#### **5.4.2 Recommendations for further research**

As OBE, inclusion and assessment in OBE have been and will continue to be contentious areas of research, comment and debate (Coetzee, 2002; Engelbrecht, 2001; Jansen, 1998; van der Horst & McDonald, 1997; Williams, 1999), it is highly recommended that further research occur within these fields. With regards to this research, the following recommendations are made for further exploration:

- The influence of a paradigm shift in teachers’ application and adoption of OBE and inclusive education.
- The implementation and practice of inclusion in rural schools.
- The impact of the Revised Curriculum on assessment practices.
- A longitudinal study of teachers’ experience of the change to OBE.
- The use of participatory action research in the empowerment of teachers’ abilities and self-worth (Babbie & Mouton, 1998: 58).



- The influence of teachers' inter-personal communications on teaching and learning practices.

## 5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY

The acknowledgement of the limitations of the study enables the reader to appreciate what constraints were imposed on the study and to understand the context of the research findings (Vithal & Jansen, 1997: 35). The following limitations are identified in this study:

- The fact that I, as researcher, speak a different language to that of the participants may have affected the study in various ways. Although efforts were made to prevent this, there may have been misunderstandings and misinterpretations between participants and myself during the data production phase of the research.
- Although volunteer teachers were requested to participate in the interviews, the principals at both schools coerced certain teachers to participate (see 4.2.1 and 4.2.2). This may have resulted in skewed findings as all of these teachers reported a positive attitude towards OBE and to be coping with the transition. However, the findings from the questionnaire assisted to minimize this possible affect.
- The participants in the study may also have given responses that they perceived would 'please' the researcher or paint a positive picture of the school. This may have affected the accuracy of the findings in the study.
- As a total of only 17 teachers participated in the study, the results may not be generalised to other contexts and may only be used in further research within these two schools. The research process of this study may, however, be applied to other context.
- The research question covers three broad and complex concepts, namely: OBE, assessment and inclusion. It may be argued that this focus has resulted in findings that only briefly explore the surface of the concepts and that do not investigate more detailed intricate aspects.



## 5.6 CONCLUSION

This research study has explored how assessment contributes towards the promotion of inclusive education. The theoretical argument for this association was outlined in Chapter 2. Naicker (1999a: 13), in particular, advocates that the philosophies and beliefs underpinning OBE and inclusive education are mutually supportive. And, as assessment is integral to the process of learning and teaching (Coetzee, 2002: 144), it was argued that assessment may be viewed as a mechanism by which to promote OBE and inclusive education.

In this research study it was found that assessment in OBE has encouraged the teachers to view the learners in their classes as individuals, with different needs, interests and abilities. In particular, they reported that OBE has engendered them to support and include the slower learners in the teaching and learning context. Some of the teachers stated that assessment in OBE enables them to adjust and modify their assessment standards to support and include all of the learners. Although the teachers do not seem to see an association between their current assessment practices and the promotion of inclusive education, the findings are indicative of a contribution towards inclusion. As Booth, Ainscow, Black-Hawkins, Vaughan and Shaw (2000: 12) state: "Inclusion involves restructuring the cultures, policies and practices in schools so that they respond to the diversity of students in their locality".

Like many academics (Clough, 1998: 12; Kavale & Forness, 2000: 279; Kochhar, West & Taymans, 2000: 19), it was found that the teachers at the schools have mixed opinions regarding inclusion. However, not all of the responses were negative. In my opinion, if one considers the amount of change, uncertainty and stress that these teachers have experienced over the past eight years, it is not surprising that they reported some resistance and concern regarding the implementation of inclusive education. As Swart and Pettipher (2001: 43) state:

"Changing roles require reflection; rethinking of one's values, beliefs and attitudes towards diversity, education and learning; movement from isolation to collaboration; changing leadership roles and perceptions of leadership; and a focus on new instructional strategies to accommodate diversity".



What is heartening though, is the progress these teachers have made over the years with their understanding and use of OBE. With this in mind one can speculate that with relevant collaborative training, mutual support and time these teachers might, in the future, report that they have made progress with the implementation and practice of inclusive education.

*What lies behind us and what lies before us  
are tiny matters  
compared to what lies within us.*

Oliver Wendell Holmes

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## **APPENDIX A: THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

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University of Stellenbosch  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Private Bag X1  
MATIELAND  
7602

Dear Teachers,

Thank you for agreeing to complete this questionnaire and for participating in my research on Outcomes-based assessment. Your opinions, thoughts and experiences are extremely valuable to me. This research project titled: 'Promoting inclusive education: A case study of assessment in two rural schools', is part of my Masters in Educational Psychology.

Curriculum 2005, which is based on the philosophy of Outcomes-based Education (OBE), was introduced to South African schools in 1998. In order to implement the new curriculum and practice of Outcomes-based education, teachers have had to adjust many of their teaching, learning and assessment approaches. This questionnaire, as part of my research, focuses particularly on teachers' understanding and use of assessment in OBE. The official promotion of inclusion in mainstream schools is also a new policy development. This will be briefly explored in the questionnaire to gauge teachers' initial perspectives.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and the section on biographical information on the pages provided. Should you need any clarification on any matter, don't hesitate to contact me at 021 886 8075. Please answer **all of the questions**, as your responses are valuable to me. Answer the questions frankly and in your own words. There is no right or wrong answer to the questions.

As I am interested in your personal experiences please do not share your responses or complete the questionnaire with your colleagues. You are welcome to discuss some of the issues raised once the questionnaire has been collected. I will collect it after five days, which should hopefully give you enough time to complete all of the questions.

Your responses will be kept completely anonymous. The information received from you is confidential and participation in this research is not compulsory. You are requested to place the completed questionnaire and the section on biographical information in the attached envelope and seal it before handing it over to the principal. I will personally collect it from him.

Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Hamilton (nee Crisp)

Supervisor: Dr. R. Hall  
Tel: 808 2305/6

**SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

In this section I would like to know a little about you so that I can see how different types of people feel about the issues we have been examining.

In the following questions, please mark the appropriate box with an X (cross), or write your answer in the space provided, as requested.

1. Indicate whether you are:

Male	
Female	

2. Which ONE of the following age categories applies to you?

20-25	
26-29	
30-34	
35-39	
40-49	
50-59	
60+	

3. What is your home language?

Afrikaans	
English	
Afrikaans & English	
IsiXhosa	
Other (please specify)	

4. Which of the under mentioned post descriptions applies to your position in the school?

Principal	
Deputy head	
Department Head	
Subject Head	
Teacher	
Other (please specify)	



5. Please indicate your highest level of TEACHING qualifications achieved.

Teaching Diploma	
Teaching Diploma plus further qualification	
Teaching Degree	
Teaching Degree plus postgraduate qualifications	
Degree plus Teaching Diploma	
Degree, Teaching Diploma plus additional postgraduate qualifications	
Other	

6. How many years of teaching experience do you have (completed years):

Less than 1 year	
1-5	
6-10	
11-15	
16-20	
21-25	
26-35	
36-40	
More than 40 years	

7. In which phase do you currently teach?

Foundation Phase	
Intermediate Phase	
Senior Phase	

8. How many learners are currently in your class?

Less than 20	
21-25	
26-30	
31-35	
36-40	
41-45	
46-50	
More than 50	

Please indicate your answer to the following questions by marking an X on the corresponding box. There may be more than one X for your answer.

9. How did you first become aware of Curriculum 2005 and Outcomes-based Education (OBE)?

Informed by Principal	Informed by colleague	
Informed by Head of Department	Invited to attend a workshop	
Read policy document	Through the newspaper, T.V.	
Via union and education newsletters	Other (please specify)	

10. How did you gain training in Curriculum 2005 and OBE?

Workshops given by WCED	Through universities and other organisations	
Meetings with neighbouring schools	Via union and education newsletters	
Informed by principal/ HOD	Other (please specify)	



## SECTION B: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire consists of various sections. Some of the sections consist of open questions where you are asked to write down your response to the questions, using your own words in the space provided. If there is insufficient space for your response please continue on the reverse side of the page. Please reply frankly to the questions. I am very interested in your personal opinions and experiences.

The other sections consist of statements. For each statement given you are expected to mark the appropriate block against the answer which is the closest to your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers.

Please indicate whether you:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
------------------------	---------------	--------------	------------	---------------------

Example: South African television is good.

1	2	3	<del>4</del>	5
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This means that you agree that South African television can be perceived as predominantly good.

## A BRIEF LOOK AT OBE, CURRICULUM 2005 AND ASSESSMENT

1. The Curriculum 2005 policy document provides clear guidelines for implementation in your classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Sufficient support and training was made available to you during the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in your school.	1	2	3	4	5
3. You have found the practice of Outcomes-based education easy to understand.	1	2	3	4	5
4. The difference between the old way of assessing and assessment in outcomes-based education was clearly outlined and discussed in the training you received on OBE.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Your assessment techniques and approaches have not changed since the introduction of OBE.	1	2	3	4	5
6. OBE has improved your teaching.	1	2	3	4	5

Please indicate whether you:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
------------------------	---------------	--------------	------------	---------------------

7. Although it has been difficult adapting to a new curriculum you think that Curriculum 2005 is more effective and relevant for your learners than the old curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5
8. The introduction of an Outcomes-based approach towards education has promoted good changes within South African schools.	1	2	3	4	5
9. You need support and guidance as to how to assess in outcomes-based education.	1	2	3	4	5
10. It would be useful if the staff at your school discussed the use of OBE and assessment in your school context.	1	2	3	4	5

## ASSESSMENT

Please indicate whether you:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
------------------------	---------------	--------------	------------	---------------------

11. Assessment in OBE involves the use of a variety of assessment techniques and methods to gain a holistic, comprehensive picture of a learner.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Assessment in OBE involves comparing learners against nationally agreed upon standards or criteria and not against other learners in the class.	1	2	3	4	5
13. In OBE teachers assess continuously collecting evidence of learners' progress, in all learning areas, throughout the year.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Assessment in OBE involves the teacher's observation of authentic tasks performed by the learner.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Assessment in OBE is meaningful and relevant to the learner.	1	2	3	4	5
16. The most important purpose of assessment is to give results and marks to learners' work.	1	2	3	4	5



Please indicate whether you:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
------------------------	---------------	--------------	------------	---------------------

17. We assess learners to find out if they have understood the lessons.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Assessment is an important part of teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Through the use of assessment both learners and teachers can monitor and gain guidance as to the learning process.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Assessment should have a positive, motivational impact on learners learning.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Assessment is a useful tool for teachers to use to inform them as to the necessary adjustments required in their teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
22. Assessment results should include information on the learner's strengths and weaknesses.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Teachers should use a variety of assessment strategies that give learners multiple opportunities, in varying contexts, to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do in relation to the learning programme outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Tests are the most accurate form of assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
25. Your teaching has improved via the use of assessment in OBE.	1	2	3	4	5
26. You feel that assessment based on the principles of OBE has encouraged your learners to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding more effectively than before this policy was introduced.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Assessment in OBE gives you more options and flexibility for assessment.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Your assessment practices are more effective since the introduction of OBE.	1	2	3	4	5
29. Assessment supporting the principles of OBE is what you have been doing all along.	1	2	3	4	5
30. You are not sure how to effectively use the new assessment approaches in your classroom, such as portfolios and checklists.	1	2	3	4	5
31. The published OBE assessment materials are not relevant for your classroom context and needs.	1	2	3	4	5



**INCLUSION**

Please indicate whether you:

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Neutral 3	Agree 4	Strongly agree 5
------------------------	---------------	--------------	------------	---------------------

32. Effective and informative assessment practices acknowledge that learners are individuals who develop differently.	1	2	3	4	5
33. By comparing learners against each other some learners are always seen as inferior, weak and scholastically poor.	1	2	3	4	5
34. Good assessment techniques value each learner as an individual.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds may be viewed as learners with special needs.	1	2	3	4	5
36. Learners' abilities that are not related to academic activities should not be included in assessment records.	1	2	3	4	5
37. Comparing learners test scores against each other in class is recommended as a motivational device.	1	2	3	4	5
38. All learners must be given appropriate opportunities to demonstrate achievements.	1	2	3	4	5
39. Authentic assessment methods that explore learners' skills within an authentic, relevant context is a method by which to promote inclusive education.	1	2	3	4	5
40. All learners should have the right to be in regular mainstream classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
41. It is feasible to teach learners who are gifted, normal and mentally challenged in the same class.	1	2	3	4	5
42. Assessing in a manner that includes all learners with individual needs is satisfying for teachers.	1	2	3	4	5
43. Your attitude towards the learners in your class affects how they perceive themselves and, subsequently, their performance.	1	2	3	4	5
44. Learners with learning difficulties should be in regular classrooms.	1	2	3	4	5
45. You are willing to support learners with special needs in your classroom.	1	2	3	4	5
46. Inclusion is a desirable educational practice.	1	2	3	4	5











## **APPENDIX B: THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE QUESTIONS**

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1. a) Do you feel that you understand assessment in OBE better than previously?  
b) What do you think has helped this process and/or what has hindered it?
2. In the questionnaire many teachers discussed how assessment helps them to identify what learners have learnt and whether they need support or not.
  - a) Do you think that assessment can also be used to inform teachers as to the effectiveness of their teaching and learning practices?
  - b) Why?
  - c) How could this be done?
3. Do you think there is a change in attitude towards the purposes and methods of assessment in our schools today? If so, how would you describe the change?
4. In the past, education was very prescriptive – there was a syllabus to follow.
  - a) Do you think that some of your concerns and uncertainty about assessment in OBE is due to the flexible, less directive nature of OBE?
  - b) Why do you think a more open, flexible approach to education and assessment has been introduced?
  - c) Are your teaching and assessment practices more flexible since the introduction of OBE? Can you give a few examples?
  - d) How do you think this flexibility affects (i) the learners, and (ii) teachers?
5. Has your attitude or approach towards your learners changed since the introduction of OBE? How would you describe this?
6. What is your personal main goal or outcome as a teacher of the learners in your class?
7. Does OBE support this approach in any way? Describe.
8. Has the introduction of OBE made you question and/or think differently about your understanding of your job as a teacher, what education is all about and what affect your teaching and assessment practices has on the learning process of your learners?  
Could you please share a few of these thoughts with me?



## **APPENDIX C: CASE STUDY BACKGROUND QUESTIONS**

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### **HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL:**

1. When was the school built?
2. By whom was it built?
3. How would you describe the role of the community in the school? (parents, family, church elders etc)
4. What role do the farmers play in the school (if any)?
5. In your opinion, what role or influence does the greater Stellenbosch community play in the school, if any?
6. If any to, please describe the role / history of the school in apartheid times, stating differences to today (if any)?

### **GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION:**

7. What farms and / or industries are close to your school?
8. How do they play a role? E.g. employment for parents, housing for learners.

### **STAFF:**

9. How many staff members do you have?
10. What sort of background do they come from? E.g. training, proximity to school, duration at school.
11. How would you describe their attitude towards the school and the learners?

### **LEARNERS:**

12. How many learners at your school?
13. How would you describe their background / community?
14. What, in your opinion, are the greatest barriers to their learning?
15. How would you describe their attitude / feelings towards school?

### **OBE AND ASSESSMENT:**

16. Please describe the training and exposure that the staff have had regarding the introduction of OBE and Curriculum 2005.
17. Who initiated the training? E.g. from the WCED, workshops with neighbouring schools, Stellenbosch University, organised by principal.
18. In your opinion, how have the staff at the school adapted to OBE, and in particular assessment?
19. What policies are available at the school for the staff and management?
20. How would you describe your communication, involvement and support from WCED?



## **APPENDIX D: AN EXTRACT FROM THE TRANSLATED TRANSCRIPT OF ONE OF THE INTERVIEWS**

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**INTERVIEWER:** Do you feel that you understand assessment in OBE better than previously?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes.

**INTERVIEWER:** What do you think helped this process and/or what has hindered it?

**PARTICIPANT:** The workshops that we had with the Department's representatives helped. We also researched and read by ourselves. All of us teachers also attended a course at WNNR in the initial stages of OBE and we learnt from each other. We sort out each other's help because the training given by the Department was too short. At the moment we are more relaxed with OBE but there are still many things that we must work out. We are struggling with the paper work and the administration work. But apart from that, our understanding of OBE is good at our school.

**INTERVIEWER:** I agree. Was there anything that hindered the process?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. We found that one needs finances and money to be able to apply OBE, especially with the life skills lessons. We also do not get support and co operation from our parents. So unless the teachers brings everything they need for 30 learners, they are not able to give a project or a technology lesson. When we looked at videos on how other schools work, we see that our ideas are the same but we are not able to practically apply them.

**INTERVIEWER:** I understand. It is the reality of your school, isn't it?

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes.

**INTERVIEWER:** Yes.

**PARTICIPANT:** We always have difficulty in applying the life skill lessons in OBE and our learners have to get used to them. They are difficult and a lot of discipline is necessary. But, we also have to make a paradigm shift to get used to the noise, especially when you are busy with certain parts of OBE. But otherwise I enjoy it.

**INTERVIEWER:** I understand. Many teachers stated in the questionnaire that they use assessment to gain insight into what the learners have learnt and to see if they need support. Do you think that assessment can also be used to inform teachers as to the effectiveness of their teaching and learning practises?

**PARTICIPANT:** Are asking if teachers are informed as to their effectiveness?

**INTERVIEWER:** Yes. From the information gained by assessing the learners.

**PARTICIPANT:** Definitely. I get information when I assess. I am able to see what level each learner is on and the information also helps with planning. Not all of the learners have the same ability. Each learner learners on his level. So then I do group work, as there is only one of me.

**INTERVIEWER:** Co-operative learning?

**PARTICIPANT:** Co-operative learning. Is that the correct term? I apply co-operative learning.



**APPENDIX E: EXAMPLES FROM CODED TRANSCRIPTS****CATEGORY AND SUB-CATEGORY CODES:**

OBE-attitude towards (OA)	OBE-difficulties (OD)	Assess-purpose (AP)
OBE-understanding (OU)	- terminology (OD-t)	Assess-method (AM)
OBE-change (OC)	- vagueness (OD-v)	Assess-attitude (AA)
Role of govt (G)	- administration (OD-a)	Assess-past vs. OBE (AvsP)
OBE - vs. past (OvsP)	- inadequate training (OD-train)	Assess-influ. of OBE (AinO)
- flexibility (OvsP-f)	- applicability (OD-app)	Assess-difficulties (AD)
- contents (OvsP-c)	OBE-influence on T (OinT)	Assess-training (AT)
- knowledge of learner (OvsP-l)	- view of self (OinT-s)	Assess-assistance needed (Aass)
- teaching methods (OvsP-t)	- personal goal (OinT-g)	Inclusive-attitude (IA)
	- view of edu. (OinT-e)	Inclusive- assess (Iass)

**INTERVIEWER:** You must change your [assessment] techniques?

**PARTICIPANT:** Methods. Your techniques and methods must change (AinO). There are three learners in my class that I must assess individually because they can't read (Iass). Then there are two that can't write (case descript.). You can't make out what they write but they can do orals (AM). I write on top of their assessment page "ORAL". I do orals with these learners and I write down their answers (Iass).

**INTERVIEWER:** So you use different methods to include all of the learners in your class.

**PARTICIPANT:** Yes. I have found that not everyone is the same (OvsP-l). So I first take the one group. I know the abilities of the learners and I put them in groups. The learners in one of the group can work on their own. The learners in the other group can read and write but they can't work on their own (case descript.). These are learners have already repeated a year in the first phase and have been condoned to the next grade. They struggle with the work so you must use different techniques to accommodate everyone in the class (Iass).

**INTERVIEWER:** Why do you think there has been a change in assessment?

**PARTICIPANT:** If I think about the learners at our school, they aren't very independent (case descript.). Few of them are able to think for themselves. Other people have always thought for them. Now they are more free to share their opinions (OvsP-l). In the past only the teacher spoke. The learners had to listen and do what was said. Today it is not like that. The learner is able to feel that he is important, that he also has something to contribute (OvsP-l). This is what I think.

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## Memorandum

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**To:** Dr. Riana Hall  
**From:** Magdel van der Walt-van Rooyen  
**For attention:** Dr. Riana Hall  
**Date:** 1 August 2003  
**Subject:** Editing of dissertation

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Dear Dr. Hall

Herewith I confirm that I edited the dissertation of Joanne Hamilton in full.

I do editing for the Department of Psychology, which occurs on a private basis. I started my editing career in June of 2000 at the Psychology Department of R.A.U., but have gone into private consultation since the beginning of 2003. I assist the department of Psychology in the editing of dissertations, thesis and academic articles.

Kind Regards

  
Magdel van der Walt-van Rooyen

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