

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS

OF

THE TEACHING OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION

IN

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

IN

THE PINETOWN DISTRICT

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
THE TEACHING OF SEXUALITY EDUCATION
IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT**

by:

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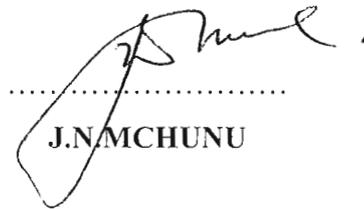
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DEDICATION

**TO MY MOTHER NTOMBAZANYANA MCHUNU AND MY DEAREST
DAUGHTERS NOMTHANAZO, THEMBELIHLE AND ABONGILE, AS WELL
AS MY GRANDSON S'BUYESIHLE .**

DECLARATION

I, **Namisile Joyce Mchunu**, hereby declare that this is my own work both in conception and execution, and that all the sources I have referred to or quoted have been acknowledged and indicated by means of complete references.



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J.N.MCHUNU

ABSTRACT

This study examines the way in which ten teachers in two schools in the Pinetown District view sexuality education. Sexuality education is part of the Life Orientation curriculum and teachers thus have an obligation to teach it. Teacher's perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools are significant because in secondary schools are found learners who have reached adolescence and are likely to be sexually active and curious.

The secondary literature on sexuality education indicates that there are numerous difficulties associated with teaching it, despite pressing reasons that it be well taught to all school learners. High rates of teenage pregnancy and HIV infection in young learners, particularly in South Africa, indicate the need for sexuality education. Difficulties in delivering successful sexuality education include parental resistance, conservative cultural and religious education, poor policy and inadequately trained or poorly motivated teachers.

Learners need sexuality education to enable them to make informed decisions about their sexual health and to assist them with developing their sexual identities. Sexuality is deeply gendered and this means that sexuality education should be informed by a knowledge of gender and a commitment to gender equality (which includes being sensitive to issues of sexual orientation).

Under apartheid the schooling system was divided along racial lines and schools were inequitably resourced. This has meant that today the schools formerly designed to provide education solely to Africans remain poorly resourced and ill-equipped to deliver sexuality education.

Ten educators of grade 8 to 12 learners in two Hammarsdale schools, five male and five female and all African, isiZulu speakers, were involved in this study as respondents. They completed a questionnaire and participated in a focus group interview.

It was found that no sexuality education was given in Grades 11 and 12 but some sexuality education was given to the junior grades, particularly Grade 9. 30% of the teachers had no training and only 20% had tertiary training for delivering sexuality education. Half were trained via Departmental workshops but as far as the teachers were concerned, this training was not adequate and left them feeling uncomfortable teaching certain topics.

90% of the sample felt that their school does not have sufficient resources to assist in the teaching of sexuality education and only a third of respondents indicated that the school management supported them in teaching sexuality education. 80% of the educators said that sexuality education was not included in the timetable while only 10% of educators maintained that they received support from parents.

The teachers said that the impact of sexuality education was undermined by parent resistance, conservative cultural and religious values and by the fact that some teachers had covert sexual relationships with learners. The teachers noted that it was the learners who were most at risk who somehow were not included in or reached by the messages in sexuality education

Female educators, in general, were more positive confident about the beneficial effects of sexuality education for boys and girls.

It is obviously necessary that steps be taken to improve the delivery of sexuality education and such steps should include working with parents, improving sexuality education training and promoting peer education.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on teacher's perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools. Sexuality plays a very significant role in the lives of both boys and girls. It is therefore considered important for schools to recognize and accept sexuality as part of the development process of the child. Children are sexualized human beings and it is important for them to understand the sexual nature of their bodies. Prof. Kader Asmal in (Department of Education, 2001) suggests that the earlier the school begins to teach them about sexuality, the better, because they can be easily misled by their peers should proper guidance regarding their sexuality not be given. The view that teaching children about sexuality might involve corrupting an innocent mind needs to be challenged, because reality indicates that children are exposed to a great deal of material or media which educators and parents cannot control. If children are not taught about sexuality, these materials may negatively influence them. The problem that is usually experienced in schools is that some educators push sexuality aside as something to be avoided or suppressed in order not to interfere with learning. The sexual interest of learners is suppressed through the use of the hidden curriculum, as if sexuality can be removed from their bodies (Epstein, 2003).

This argument is supported by (Paechter, 2003) who suggests that sexuality is "closeted" in schools, because of the sensitivity of sexual issues. This puts learners at risk because, the more they are ignorant about their sexuality, the more they are in danger (Epstein, 2003).

Sexuality education is a subject that has attracted considerable debate in terms of whether it should be taught in schools or not. It refers to providing learners with the necessary information that will enable them to have a positive perception of their sexuality. It should clarify and teach them about values and skills necessary to make informed decisions relating to sexuality. It should enable learners to develop a positive self-esteem, respect of self and others, understanding of values and how to communicate and express feelings. Vergnani & Frank (1998) further say that sexuality education should be taught in order to encourage learners to postpone having sex until they can make wise and informed decisions.

Many people, including educators, believe that sexuality education is the responsibility of parents. There is also a belief that parents have abdicated this role because of the sensitivity of the topics that have to be dealt with when dealing with sexuality. The challenge to educators is that children seek information about sexuality from other sources such as their peers and the media. They also experiment with this information. This has led to an increase in teenage pregnancies and HIV/AIDS infections. The study conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC, 2005) indicated that the rate of unplanned pregnancy was 15% amongst the youth aged between 15 and 19 years, 53% of youth between 20 and 24 years old, and 33% and 59% respectively for those who reported to have had sexual relations. This is an indication that teenagers do engage in unprotected sex. This was supported by the research that indicated that 42% of teenagers have their first baby by the age of 19 years. These were all young persons attending school.

Almost one third of the South African population is less than fifteen years of age and most of this one third attend school. The World Health Organization (WHO, 1986) says that health is lived by the people within the settings of their everyday life, where they learn, work, play and love. It goes without saying therefore that schools could provide learners with the knowledge and skills they need in order to gain control over their health and also to avoid health problems, as well as to be able to contribute to their communities in the present and in the future. Health problems such as HIV/AIDS, the effects of substance abuse such as tobacco, alcohol and other drugs, can be prevented through school-based interventions. This suggests that the perceptions of educators regarding sexuality education are significant since these will impact on interventions that they have to provide.

The previous Minister of Education Prof. Kader Asmal (Department of Education, 1999) advocated the teaching of sexuality education in schools. He believed that this role could no longer be left to the sole responsibility of the parent, but instead educators were mandated to implement sexuality education in schools in the whole of South Africa in the year 2002. Policy guidelines (Department of Education, 1999) were formulated and training workshops were undertaken in order to prepare educators to teach sexuality education in schools.

The communities in which we live in South Africa differ widely in many respects, especially in their demographics. As a result, teachers are expected not only to present the curriculum as it is, but they also need to interpret it according to the specific social environment within which they work. This also indicates that the curriculum has to be taught in a manner that suits the context and conditions educators are faced with. But they also need to bear in mind that the outcomes set for this subject should be comprehensively met and not compromised. This poses a further challenge to educators when considering the challenging standards of norms and values, the cultural diversity of our communities, as well as the many different religions that we have. Because of these issues some educators find themselves not adequately equipped to deal with sexuality education. Some of them may not be able to talk comfortably about their own sexuality and may therefore find great difficulty in talking about sexuality issues to other people.

The traditional gender roles in the society have also played a major part in influencing sexuality in that men were made to believe that females had no right to take decisions with regard to sex and should respect the males' decisions regarding sex. Females were viewed as having no power or say in sexual relations (Mulenga, 2000). Traditionally, females are made to believe that saying "No" to sex could cause them to lose their husbands. This is an indication that if sexuality education is well taught, it could assist in enhancing the quality of relationships as well as develop young peoples' ability to make decisions over their entire lifetime and assist them to break away from the devastating traditional beliefs that maintain females as subordinate and inferior to men and whose sexuality should be controlled, whilst that of men is expressed as well as dominating. In line with this view, different sexual roles for men and women do not only remain different but are unequal. Women are socialized to believe that they should be passive recipients when it comes to sexual issues, whilst men are seen to dictate and dominate (Mulenga, 2000). Such inequality makes it difficult for girls and women to negotiate sex as well as protecting themselves from sexually transmitted infections and HIV / AIDS.

This social construction of sexuality has led to learners engaging in risky behaviors. Schools therefore have a role to play in reducing risk behaviors among the youth.

Educators furthermore need to educate learners about their sexuality during their different developmental stages. The challenge is that although most people agree that sexuality education should be taught in schools, there is still a great deal of controversy around the topics that should be dealt with. As an example, the distribution of condoms and issues around contraceptives form a large part of these controversies. Those people who believe that condoms and contraceptives encourage learners to engage in sex advocate abstinence as a key element in sexuality education. It is suggested that children should abstain until they get married. These abstinence-only programs, therefore do not discuss the utilization of condoms and contraceptives. This results in learners contracting sexually transmitted infections and also an increase in teenage pregnancies. The implication is that if learners become pregnant, even though they are exposed to the abstinence-only programs, the programs have not helped them to delay sexual activities. If we promote abstinence-only in order to protect the innocence of our children, we are actually promoting their ignorance. This could therefore pose a threat in their lives. Silence about and denial of the fact that some children are sexually active actually condemns them and forces them to make uninformed decisions.

The kind of skills that learners should develop as part of sexuality education should therefore include the ability to communicate, listen, negotiate, ask for help and advice, and apply good decision-making skills and assertiveness. They should also be able to identify negative pressures from other people and be able to resist them. They should be able to differentiate accurate from inaccurate information, including the identification of cultural attitudes.

In order to understand sexuality education, one needs to understand what sexuality means. Traditionally sexuality meant the transmission of knowledge regarding the reproduction process. Gender roles in relation to male or female relationships were also discussed. The issues contributing to the construction of femininity and masculinity also formed part of this process. But Vergnani & Frank (1998) gives a broader meaning to sexuality. Here, sexuality is seen as the way in which we view ourselves as either males or females. It includes our bodies, feelings, beliefs and values, fantasies, the way we behave and respond, the way we dress, the decisions we

make, our inherited characteristics and our relationships with others. (Vergnani & Frank, 1998).

Reality indicates that some teenagers engage in sexual intercourse at a very early age. Most of these teenagers do not use any contraception when they engage in intercourse. The situation is aggravated by the fact that most parents do not give any sexuality education and they expect schools to do that on their behalf. As a result of this, Vergnani & Frank (1998) say that 330 out of every 1000 pregnant women in South Africa are teenagers. Every year significant numbers of these teenagers contract sexually transmitted infections and HIV is among these infections and is rapidly increasing every year. Rape incidents are also the biggest threat since South Africa has the highest rape incidence in the world (Itano, 2003). This means that learners need to know how to behave themselves in their sexual relationships. Vergnani and Frank (1998) further argue that most teenagers are not in a position to make informed decisions, therefore, to save our youth from all this, educators need to teach Sexuality Education in schools.

Should educators ignore this critical task, the outcome carries with it the potential for lifelong consequences for each and every learner, their families, communities and the nation as a whole. The economically disadvantaged communities, especially people living in rural areas, townships and informal settlements, often bear the heaviest burden of lack of sexual knowledge. It is therefore important to recognize the responsibilities that individuals and communities have in providing sexuality education to the young learners. It is understandable that issues around sexuality may be difficult to discuss because they are personal and there is a great diversity in how they are perceived and approached, yet they do impact greatly on our communities. Sexuality is a fundamental aspect of human life and it also fulfils a number of personal and social needs. In order to avoid negative consequences, it is important for learners to have a supportive environment in order to enable them to behave responsibly, to understand and weigh up the risks, responsibilities and consequences of their actions. While sexuality education may be difficult for some, and there may be different views and beliefs regarding it, we cannot afford the consequences of ignorance. Silence about it can have devastating results throughout a lifespan. It is

therefore necessary that teachers' perceptions of sexuality education improve in order to promote good behavior from learners (Milton, 2001).

1.1. Background of the Study

In 1994 South Africa became a democratic country. For nearly forty years prior to this, the country operated under the policies of apartheid. The apartheid era saw education characterized by racial segregation. This resulted in the Province of KwaZulu-Natal for example, having five education departments. These were:-

- The Natal Education Department (NED) for White students.
- The House of Representative (HOR) for Coloureds
- The House of Delicates (HOD) for Indians.
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) for Black African students and
- The KwaZulu Department of Education for Black African students.

These ex-departments were not equally funded and there were discrepancies in their resources. This included staffing and meant that some schools had good sexuality education programs developed for them, whilst others had none. As an example, the researcher was a teacher in the ex KwaZulu Department of Education schools and it was disheartening to know that NED, HOR and HOD schools provided comprehensive sexuality education and life skills programs for which educators were trained; yet that was not the case with our schools. It is also known that even though teachers were given training in the implementation of sexuality and life skills in those schools, the training periods were too short and they lasted only about one to three days. Teachers always felt that their training was insufficient as well as too short. Secondly, teachers always felt that they were not comfortable in dealing with sexuality-related issues. The short training that was provided did not help them to develop confidence in dealing with these sexuality-related issues.

On the school timetable, sexuality education was provided during the guidance period. However, guidance was a non-examinable subject and many teachers used this period for covering the syllabus for the examinable subjects. This meant that sexuality education was often neglected.

Colleagues, who taught in the other ex-education departments, indicated that because of cultural issues, some schools decided to focus on nutrition and physiology and neglected sexuality-related issues. Colleagues have indicated that the worst problems arose in the selection of teachers who were supposed to teach sexuality in HOD schools. It was always felt that guidance was allocated to junior staff members who were often inexperienced and looked down upon by other educators. This resulted in this subject being very unpopular and teachers having a very negative attitude towards teaching the subject. This was aggravated by the lack of support from other staff members and management of the school, some of whom viewed sexuality education as a waste of time. Some schools opted to occasionally inviting Department of Health officials to provide occasional talks and discussions with the learners.

It is generally known that the schools in DET and KwaZulu Department of Education were poorly funded and resourced. The shortage of teachers and the greater teacher-pupil ratio resulted in sexuality education being taught by school nurses when they occasionally visited schools. Teachers confined themselves to health education, nutrition and hygiene. However, when HIV / AIDS started to threaten the community and the schools, some teachers started to deal with some sexuality issues. But their efforts were sometimes threatened by gender issues, conflicting attitudes and beliefs regarding the appropriateness and content of sexuality education.

According to a study conducted by Varga & Shongwe (1999), sexuality education in KwaZulu Natal was negatively affected by a number of issues including:

- Unequal allocation of resources between the ex-Education Departments.
- Lack of support from management of the schools and other staff members.
- Insufficient training for teachers.
- Subject viewed as unimportant since it was not examinable.
- Stigmatization of sexuality education teachers.
- Reliance of the education system on NGO's and other external agencies.

In order to overcome these challenges that hampered the teaching of sexuality education in schools, the National Department launched a nationwide life skills teacher-training program which focused on sexuality and reproductive health issues. But this did not resolve the problems which were faced earlier on because teachers

tended to focus on HIV / AIDS information, rather than on sexuality education. The overemphasis on HIV / AIDS still compromises sexuality education. This has contributed to the increase in teenage pregnancies. According to the World Health Organization (1995) forty to fifty percent of all live births are associated with teenage mothers. Boult & Cunningham (1991), indicate that teenage pregnancy amongst black women ranges between 11.4 percent and 49 percent. This indicates that teenagers do engage in unprotected sex and hence become pregnant as a result of this activity. Some of them have also dropped out of schools.

The implication of this is that learners need more sexuality education so that they can avoid risky behaviour. Teachers are the best resources to provide such education since learners do spend most of their time at school. This does not mean that parents need not assist in sexuality education, but they do need to be involved in this process to ensure the continuity of the program that is provided at school.

This program is however challenged by cultural issues. According to the (Reproductive Health Matters, 1995), educators need to consider the cultural diversity when dealing with sexuality education. This is particularly so because different cultures and societies view sexuality education in different ways. For example, in African cultures, the man makes all decisions regarding sexual matters. Some sensitive topics like abortion are challenged by some cultures, whereas others embrace it. This situation causes confusion for the teacher who has to deal with different cultures within the same classroom. The learners' age gaps also become a problem because some learners are more knowledgeable than others and are at different levels of sexual maturity.

The Department of Education Policy Document: Implementation plan for Tirisano (1999) indicates that Sexuality Education must be implemented as early as six years of age before learners are sexually active in order to create HIV / AIDS awareness. Although the researcher agrees with this, sexuality should not only be taught in order to create HIV / AIDS awareness but to convey the principle that sexuality is a life skill that covers all areas of life and should empower learners for life-long education.

Epstein (1998) argues that open approaches to sexuality are more likely to contribute to reducing the rate of accelerated teenage pregnancies than those emphasizing morality. She further suggests that youngsters who are not open to discussing sexuality issues with adults are more likely to engage in sexual encounters than those who openly discuss the topic.

This means that our schools need to teach learners about sexuality in order to help them to make informed decisions and particularly to fight against HIV / AIDS. Learners are sexualized beings and their bodies talk to them and they should know how to respond to them appropriately since one cannot divorce the body from the person. This also implies that schools should not shy away from talking about learners' bodies and how they can impact upon their lives. As much as schools focus on learners' minds, they should also focus on their bodies and the issues related to them.

However, in dealing with these issues the problem facing educators in doing this is that there are many concerns that may hinder them from performing this task effectively. This was confirmed in a study conducted by Milton (2003) in Australia. He discovered that educators were concerned about what the parents might think about the teaching of sexuality education. A further concern was that educators did not know how far they should go into sexuality education topics, as well as how to manage individual maturity, knowledge and comfort among the learners. The same study indicated that although some teachers felt that they were experienced in teaching the subject, others expressed their feeling of inexperience and a lack of special training, geared towards the teaching of sexuality education.

A further problem is associated with whether boys and girls should be taught in the same class or they be separated when sexuality education is conducted. Literature such as Lenderyou & Ray, (1997) and Hilton, (2001), supports the view that girls and boys should be taught separately when it comes to sexuality education, so that they can explore the effects of sexuality in a more comfortable environment. A further research study conducted by Halstead & Waite (2001) supports the single sex approach when dealing with certain parts of the program. Some people believe that girls may feel embarrassed to discuss some topics with boys and would feel much

more comfortable discussing these topics with only girls and vice versa. This factor can affect the way educators perceive sexuality education, but the reality in our schools is that it is not always possible to put girls and boys into separate classrooms when sexuality is discussed, because the timetable may restrict them in doing so. In some schools the staff may either be male or female dominated, hence making it even more difficult to split the groups for the purposes of sexuality education.

Whilst staff perceive many difficulties in this field, the sensitivity of the topics dealt with in sexuality education also give rise to a need for partnerships with the parents. Parents need to be aware of what the syllabus contains and why is it important that some topics are dealt with. This is significant because parents can assist educators by talking to their children about these topics. This is particularly important because, although some educators may be generally comfortable teaching about sexuality, some, particularly those who are new in teaching as well as those who are conservative, may feel uncomfortable when dealing with some aspects especially when answering some of the questions the learners may ask.

These questions could be related to specific topics like female and male body parts, wet dreams and masturbation. These may cause embarrassment to some educators. The greatest concern could be how to determine boundaries when dealing with such topics. If the learners ask questions that are outside the lesson plan, how does an educator respond? Does the educator respond at all or is the question shelved for a later stage? Does the educator tell the learners to see him / her later when he / she can explain about that outside the classroom? Is that not going to cause great concern from other staff members or parents when educators discuss such topics in private with the learners? If learners want to know the educators' opinion about certain sexuality issues, does the educator give that opinion or just stick to what he / she is supposed to teach according to the curriculum? If the educator decides to give his / her opinion on a certain issue, will that not constitute an imposition of his own values on sexuality issues? What if the questions go beyond what the educator is supposed to teach with regards to that grade's curriculum? What if answering such questions could cause some damage to other learners since their experience and knowledge is not the same and some may not be ready to listen to such information? Do educators have

some training on how to manage different maturity levels and experiences that learners may have?

Furthermore, our schools represent a wide diversity of cultures. Some information may seem to challenge the values of some cultures that hold particular values in high esteem. This could place some educators in a very difficult situation when it comes to teaching about values. Culture has a profound effect in maintaining gender inequalities and can create barriers to the effective teaching of sexuality education. This has the potential of increasing the vulnerability of boys and girls to dangers that are sex-related especially where it represents sex and sexuality as a taboo subject.

Further cultural problems could occur because some people still believe that it is unacceptable to be a lesbian or gay person, yet there are homosexual families within our communities. The concern is on how do teachers deal with questions related to homosexuality. Do they say that it is good or bad or do they talk about it at all? How do they avoid their own values when it comes to such sensitive topics? When discussing relationships educators can be faced with so many different attitudes and value judgments, but the issues of diversity have to be embraced at the same time. It seems as if this is a very challenging task for educators since they have to put aside their own values and give accurate information, although they are conscious of what parents might think. According to Logan (1991) teachers may be reluctant to be seen to challenge values that may be held within some learners' families.

According to Bell (1981), sexual orientation is usually determined by adolescence and there is no valid scientific evidence that sexual orientation can be changed. Nevertheless, some cultures still stigmatize homosexual behavior, identity and relationships. These attitudes according to Ross (1985) and Ross (1990) are associated with psychological distress for homosexual persons and may have a negative impact on mental health, including a greater incidence of depression and suicide, lower self-acceptance and a greater likelihood of hiding one's sexual orientation. In some cases, this negative attitude may lead to anti-gay / lesbian violence or hate crimes.

The works of Kehily (2003) offer definitions of what it is to be male and how this is defined in relation to what it is to be female and vice versa. In this regard, gender

identities in terms of femininity and masculinity have a direct bearing on sexuality and sexual identity, and sexual desires go hand in hand with these identities. This means that through sexuality education, schools can become appropriate sites for constructing the sexual identities of learners. If sexuality is not taught, some problems may arise with the construction of femininity identity and masculinity identity of learners.

Rich (1980) as cited by Kehily (2003) argues that schools should guard against the policing of sexual desire which makes same sex relationships marginal or taboo hence promoting compulsory heterosexuality and treating all other forms of sexual relationships as 'deviant and abnormal'.

From the socio-historical perspectives of the study of sexuality, Kehily (2003) argues that the works of Weeks (1997, 1981, 1985, 1986) have been significant with regard to the ways in which sexuality can be viewed and studied. This places sex as a natural force that occurs between members of the opposite sex. Weeks (1986) looks at sexuality in the context of two different discourses; one discourse that says "sex is dangerous and needs to be challenged by the society", and the other discourse that says "sex is healthy and good, but repressed and distorted by society". One school of thought according to Weeks (1986) says that learners are sexually innocent and in need of protection while the other says that sexuality manifests in peer relations and exchanges between educators and learners. Bearing this in mind, one wonders which of these two discourses might educators follow at schools. Do they see sexuality as something that needs to be repressed or something that has to be taught?

Psychoanalytic theory suggests that desires are there regardless of "taboo or prohibitions"(Kehily, 2003). The Freudian framework according to Kehily (2003) suggests that one's knowledge of sexuality can be empowering for individuals.

Yet such empowerment is also associated with issues around sexuality that produce social anxieties and tensions, and these may be treated with secrecy, silence and taboo. Traditionally, African societies ensured that during puberty, young boys and girls got all the information they needed concerning sexuality. This included the rites of passage and formal instructions in sexual and gender matters. This was done with

the understanding that the sexual decision that the young people made affected the health and well-being of their societies. This meant that the cultural context has a major impact on sexuality and sexuality education.

Such a cultural concept has undergone considerable change. Very few communities still provide sexuality education and rites of passage as it was done in the past. Therefore, there is a need for a more appropriate approach to be developed for sexuality education for the youth. Although some people object to sexuality education as they believe that it promotes promiscuity, others state that it is a human right and the youth has a right to information and knowledge. If sexuality education is well done, it can prevent youth from becoming prey to unfounded concepts about sexuality and further, from engaging in unsafe behaviors that could affect their lives and well-being.

Although the primary source for sexuality education should be the parents, it is generally known that more parents tend to focus on the avoidance of sexual behavior, using religion, social consequences or the unwanted pregnancies and HIV as deterrents. This is so because sexuality education is often confused with the morality of the society as it prescribes what is wrong or right. Some societies, particularly African societies, believe that sex outside marriage is wrong. This has led to some girls being forced to undergo virginity testing. Virginity Testing is used as a means to enforce abstinence. Instead of teaching about sexuality, sex is portrayed as something 'wrong.' Virginity testing is practiced despite the fact that it has not been proven to work successfully. But several studies have indicated that comprehensive sexuality education can delay sexual activity until marriage. This means that marriage is the only yardstick that determines whether one can engage in sex or not. This is very difficult and very few teenagers can live up to this standard of controlling human sexual activity.

Even in the church, people find it difficult to handle sex and sexuality-related issues. This is particularly so because some churches regard sex and sexuality as belonging to the devil. It is something that is associated with darkness, evil and wickedness, and as a result it remains a taboo subject. Because of this perception, African culture continues to treat it as 'taboo'. Christians sometimes quote Paul's words in

1Thessalonians 4: 3-5 which says “For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you abstain from fornication, that you know how to control your own body in holiness and honour, not with lustful passions, like the gentiles who do not know God”. This indicates that some Christians may believe that sexuality limits loyalty to God.

The impact of HIV / AIDS further promotes secrecy and silence about sex and sexuality. Silence and secrecy inhibits free and open discussions on sexuality. Even those people who are already infected or affected by HIV / AIDS find it difficult to disclose their status because of the fear of being judged.

WHO (1993) and WHO (1995) indicated that two-thirds of sexually transmitted infections in Sub Saharan Africa are found amongst young people. This is primarily because of the sexual practices that young people engage in. This implies that young boys and girls are at a high risk of contracting HIV / AIDS. If that is so, it suggests that a large number of young people have died or may die of HIV / AIDS related diseases. If they do not contract these fatal diseases, the rate of pregnancies among youngsters will increase.

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to look at some educators’ perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in selected secondary schools. The study hoped to uncover what is easy or difficult about teaching the subject, what is working or not working in this field and how this could influence how sexuality is taught.

This study was also intended to give educators an opportunity to clarify and talk about their own experiences in the teaching of sexuality education. It was hoped that educators would also get a chance to learn from each other in terms of what works well and what does not work well in sexuality education. It was also hoped that the results of the study will help the Department of Education to identify the gaps that still exist in the training and support given to those educators who teach sexuality education.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the factors that affects and influences the teaching of Sexuality Education.
- To encourage teachers to teach Sexuality Education.
- To investigate about the challenges and difficulties in teaching about sexuality so that these may be addressed later.
- To investigate what methods work best in teaching about sexuality.

1.4. Research Questions

1. What are teachers' perceptions about the teaching of sexuality in schools?
2. Which aspects of sexuality are easy to teach?
3. Which aspects of sexuality are not easy to teach and why is this so?
4. What challenges or difficulties do teachers encounter in teaching sexuality?
5. What strategies or approaches are effective in teaching sexuality and why?

1.5. Theoretical Location of the Study

This study is located within the social constructionist and psychoanalytic approaches which, in turn, respectively, utilize socio-historical and Freudian frameworks in their approaches to sexuality. This work draws from the works of Kehily (2003) which shows how the relationship between males and females are social constructed and how such relationships are made and lived. In this regard, gender identities in terms of femininity and masculinity have a direct bearing on sexuality and sexual identity and sexual desires therefore go hand in hand with these identities. This means that through sexuality education schools can become appropriate sites for constructing the sexual identities of learners and, if sexuality is not taught, some problems in the constructions of femininity or masculinity of learners could arise. Rich (1980) as noted by Kehily (2003) argues that schools should guard against the policing of sexual desire which makes same sex relationships marginal or even taboo, hence promoting compulsory heterosexuality and treating all other forms of sexual relationships as 'deviant and abnormal'.

From the socio-historical perspective of the study of sexuality, Kehily (2003) argues that the works of Weeks (1997; 1981; 1985; 1986) has been significant in the manner in which sexuality can be viewed and studied. This perspective regards sex as a natural force that takes places between members of the opposite sex.

1.6. Research Methods

The research methods used for this study included both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The two methods complemented each other because when used together, they can produce a more complete message that is necessary to theory and practice, and they can further add insights and understanding that might be missed when only a single method is used. The methodology will be described in detail in Chapter Three.

1.7. Participants

The participants consisted of ten (10) educators of grade 8 to 12 learners, both male and female. Two schools were selected and five educators from each school were selected i.e. one educator per grade from grade 8 to 12, of the two schools.

1.8. Presentation of contents

A broad overview of the study was provided in chapter one. This included the introduction, background of the study, purpose of the study, theoretical location of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, research methods and the participants. These were only briefly introduced. The other sections of this study will be divided into the following chapters:

Chapter Two consists of a literature review.

Chapter Three details the research methodology of the study.

Chapter Four provides the analysis and discussion of the results of the study.

Chapter Five discusses the main findings, conclusions and recommendations drawn from the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Human sexuality is considered to be an integral part of human life. Sexuality plays a major role in influencing an individuals' personality and behavioural characteristics. It further influences how we see ourselves, how we view others and how they view us as well as how we relate to one another, and includes sexuality. This means that sexuality education should amongst other things deal with sexual feelings. According to Rocheron & Whyld (1983), children are curious by nature and sexual curiosity is awakened very early in the child's life. This is in the line with the view that sexual development is a perfectly normal aspect of one's total development and it continues on whether it is planned or not (Harilal, 1993).

It is very unfortunate that whilst children have this natural sexual curiosity, HIV and AIDS also hover like a black cloud over young lives. HIV and AIDS is influencing and affecting everybody in all spheres of life. More and more children are affected and infected on a daily basis. That is why the World Health Organization (1994) has indicated that in order to prevent the spread of HIV and AIDS, it is essential to teach children before they are sexually active.

According to Petropokies (1983) as cited in Harilal (1993), modern society is characterized by children who mature physically and sexually much earlier than previously and Kneller (1971) states that activities such as dating are common amongst teenagers, although they are less prepared for the consequences of this behaviour. It is common knowledge that some teenagers who date engage in sexual intercourse that could lead to unplanned pregnancies. This suggests that the need for sexuality education cannot be overemphasized.

Godow (1982) further suggests that sex education encourages greater responsibility in sexual decision- making. This means that sexuality education needs to address sexual desires. This should not be presented in an authoritarian way which presents sex as something bad that should not be engaged in.

This further poses the question in an individual's mind as to whether educators are able to deal with such topics. One also wonders if such topics do not place educators in a vulnerable position with regard to their personal and professional values. The researcher seeks to understand whether educators feel confident and comfortable teaching sexuality as this may demand that they explore their own personal and ethical values.

Many educators come to sexuality education with their own set of values. They have values and beliefs of what is right and wrong for them. This includes what they believe is right or wrong for other persons as well. There is no doubt that these values will be reflected in what they do or say either inside or outside the classroom. Their perception of sexuality education can therefore considerably influence the effect of such education either positively or negatively.

Teacher's perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools is viewed as significant because secondary schools are where most learners have reached in the adolescent stage, and it is important to understand how educators perceive the teaching of sexuality in secondary schools where they interact with teenagers at this stage of their lives. Gallagher & Harris (1976) suggest that adolescent sexual desires are at the highest point in their life span at this stage. Gerdes, et al (1988) and Green, et al (1977) further add by indicating that sexuality overlaps and integrates the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of the individual. Postman (1983) further suggests that the biological and social developments that occur at this stage stimulate interest in sexuality for adolescents. At this point they start raising questions about making love and also the basic need to form intimate relationships with persons of the opposite sex develops at this stage (Baruch, 1953). According to Howell (1973) sexual desire is the dominant and basic emotional need of adolescence because the overall sex hormonal system is activated at this point. This results in males and females having different sexual needs and desires although they all have the potential for sexual arousal (Godow, 1982). Kelly (1976) argues that being male or female suggests a renewed interest in one's biological sexuality where learners begin to establish their social role as either male or female. It is for this reason that teenagers have to be assisted and given guidance in understanding their sexuality as well as to realize their potential as fully- developed

persons. Ingersoll (1989) says that it is necessary that one incorporates a set of culturally determined values about one's own sexual behaviour. This will help one to have a clear sex identity, gender identity as well as an appropriate sex role.

In the light of these factors, it is necessary to clarify the meaning of these terms.

2.1. Definition of Terms

2.1.1. Sex role

This refers to the pattern of behaviour of males and females which is generally accepted and determined by the society in one's own culture (Douvan, 1979; Hurlock 1978; Landy, 1984). This form of behaviour is learned from how males and females function in their society (Sullivan et al, 1980). At this stage adolescents start forming heterosexual relationships and engage in dating which further contributes towards developing appropriate sex- role concepts (Douvan, 1979). This makes the task of teaching about sexuality even more important because without proper guidance, learners may develop inappropriate behaviour. Without this guidance, learners may sometimes develop a confused gender identity.

2.1.2. Gender Identity

This refers to the conception an individual has of himself or herself as being male or female. Rapid body changes help form a gender identity and the individuals recognition of himself as a sexual being (Gerdes et al, 1988 as cited by Harilal, 1993). This gender identity may be closely linked with sex identity.

2.1.3. Sex Identity

According to Gagnon & Simon (1973) as cited by Douvan (1979) sex identity covers all aspects of the self with regard to sexual behaviour and one's attitude towards sex. This sexual identity forms an integral part of an individual's self-concept. In order to understand sexuality, educators need to distinguish between sexuality education, sex information and Life-skills.

2.1.4. Sexuality

The Planned Parenthood Association of South Africa (PPASA) (1992) cites Llewellyn Jones (1985) in defining sexuality "as the sum of a person's inherited make-up,

knowledge, attitudes, experience and behaviour as they relate to being man or woman. It includes those ways of behaving which enrich the personality and increase the love between people” (PPASA, 1992: 104).

This definition defines sexuality as a way in which an individual behaves as a man or as a woman in relation others. The whole personality is examined in the light of the individuals’ gender, sex and sexual relationships. It is about who we are, how we see ourselves and how we express ourselves in relationships.

2.1.5. Sexuality Education.

A broad definition of sexuality education is that “it is an institution to develop an understanding of the physical, mental, emotional, social, economic, and physical aspects of interpersonal relationships, the physiological and cultural foundations of human development, sexual reproduction at various stages of growth, as well as the opportunity for pupils to acquire knowledge about sexuality education which will support the development of responsible sexual behaviour” (Stronch, 1988: 88). Through this process, the learners’ own family life is strengthened and a contribution is made to the enrichment of the community.

SIECUS in Vergnani & Palmer (1984) concurs with this definition and suggests that sexuality education is the lifelong process of acquiring information and forming attitudes beliefs and values. It encompasses sexual development, reproductive health interpersonal relationships, offertory intimacy, body images and gender roles.

The Department of Education (1999) states that “sexuality education, is mainly a matter of education (guiding the child to responsible adulthood) and is always accompanied by the teaching of values and norms.” (Department of Education, 1999:44). Vergnani & Palmer (1998) suggests that education and moulding are the primary aims to achieve this purpose.

AVERT (2005) states that sexuality education is about developing young people’s skills so that they may make informed choices about their behaviour and feel confident and competent about acting on these choices. Sexuality education does not just dump information onto the learner but, helps learners to develop a positive self-

esteem, which permits them to view themselves as worthwhile beings, to accept and appreciate their bodies, to create their own values which will enable them to engage and maintain healthy relationships. The choices they make will be responsible, wise and informed choices. According to Vergnani & Palmer (1998), sexuality education is a process that is started by the parents at home and should be continued by educators at school. The core elements of sexuality education according to Vergnani & Palmer (1998) are information, values and skills. This includes verbal and non-verbal messages from people around the child including parents, relatives, friends, educators and the media. In essence, the function of sexuality education is to encourage the development of pride in every learner in his or her chosen lifestyle.

Sexuality education therefore seeks to promote behaviours that help individuals to achieve positive results and avoid negative outcomes. This can be achieved through open dialogue or discussion that respects the beliefs of individuals. However, sexuality education embraces and includes sex information.

2.1.6. Sex Information

In contrast to sexuality education, sex information involves merely transmitting information without the guiding, educating and moulding of the character of the children and assisting them to make wise and responsible choices. Values and norms that form a major part of sexuality education are absent here. This kind of information can be dangerous and may lead to permissiveness and promiscuity (Vergnani & Palmer, 1998).

It is generally known that children are inquisitive by nature; therefore they will always try to get information about issues that affect them. It does not mean that if parents and educators decide to withhold any information from them they would not obtain it from friends, peers or other sources. Instead, they want to know more about the information that is withheld from them. Certain sources may be dangerous for learners because they may provide incorrect information. It is important that the information that is given the learner is correct and age appropriate. The learners then need life skills in order for them to be able to use that information effectively as it relates to everyday experience.

2.1.7. Life Skills

Sex information needs to be further linked to life-skills. Unless learners are given life skills, the information that they learn cannot be applied in a useful, wise and responsible way. Life skills are therefore necessary for successful living and learning (Vergnani & Palmer, 1998). As learners develop life-skills, they are able to deal with challenges and problems and even prevent certain problems from occurring. These life skills include being able communicate effectively, to handle emotions and to find personal meaning to life. According to Vergnani & Palmer (1998), these skills may include believing in ourselves, taking control of our lives, coping with life, feeling in charge of what is happening around us, feeling motivated, feeling confident to face life challenges and achieving the best that we are able to. This means that life skills are viewed as a key component of sexuality education. The information that learners have cannot be implemented unless they have the skills to do so. For example, if the learner has to tell her partner that she does not want to engage in sex, she needs to know how to say “no” to sex even if the partner is persuasive and the conditions are conducive to such an activity. She must be able to stick to her decision and not be enticed into doing something she does not wish to.

The Department of Education (1999) identified the following skills as central to sexuality education:

- communication (including listening skills)
- self awareness
- finding information (resource and help)
- creative thinking
- conflict resolution
- safety awareness
- refusal skills
- value clarification
- identifying one’s values
- building self esteem
- goal setting
- critical thinking
- decision making

- handling emotions
- assertiveness
- negotiation
- identifying one's emotional needs
- delaying gratification (in order to meet long term objectives) (Department of Education, 1999:74).

These skills do not apply only to sexuality education, but also to a number of other issues that one encounters in daily living.

2.2. Values and sexuality education

Life- skills are closely related to the values individuals have about life. Different persons have different views about the teaching of values in sexuality education. According to Vergnani & Frank (1998) the first view of sexuality should be value free. This suggests that educators should never teach values in sexuality education. Instead they should present facts in as neutral and unbiased a manner as possible. In this view, they should not take a stand about any issues regarding sexuality and therefore permit learners to work out their own values.

Another view argues that the educator should inform learners of what is right or wrong and should not allow learners to present their opinions. This is called the “moralistic” standpoint. This means that if the educator believes that issues such as masturbation and abortion are wrong and should never be engaged in, he would say the same to the learners without allowing them to express their views or feelings (Vergnani & Frank, 1998).

A third view argues that teachers should teach values and that this could help to guide learners in terms of what is right or wrong. In this instance, educators do not impose their views on the learners, but guide them to develop their own values of what is considered right or wrong. This does not mean that the educator cannot tell them about certain matters which are generally believed by society to be unacceptable and non-negotiable regarding sexuality. These issues may include matters such as

exploitation, hurting others or discriminating against people who have different beliefs (Vergnani & Frank, 1998) .

A fourth view about values argues that even in very sensitive topics such as abortion, education should help learners to identify what they believe in and why. The educator could also help them to understand the consequences of their beliefs. This means that the educator must encourage learners to explore their own values, what they have been taught by their parents, their religious and cultural practices and beliefs and what they have learned from the media as well as their peers. In this process, the educator helps the learners to discuss, interpret and understand the messages and values that they have learned from home as well as the community (Vergnani & Frank, 1998). This viewpoint encourages the educator to allow the learners to critically examine where their views come from. But it is also important that the educators understand their own values as these will influence the way they presents ideas and information to the learners.

If learners are to freely discuss their views in the classroom, it is important that the educator creates a classroom atmosphere that is learner-friendly. Learners should feel safe and secure. This could enable them to express and to exchange their views. They will be able to feel that their views are respected and in turn, they may respect and tolerate other people's views. Even when it comes to asking difficult questions, they will not be afraid to be open.

Should an educator discuss sexuality positively and be open to questions, model tolerance and respect towards each learner in the classroom and have a sense of humour and like learners in the class, he will then create the right atmosphere for teaching about sexuality (Vergnani & Frank, 1998).

Certain issues such as sexual orientation may affect the learners' self- esteem if they are not dealt with in a positive way. It is generally known that sexual orientation is usually determined by adolescence, if not earlier (Bell, 1981). It is not clear if sexual orientation can be changed once it has developed (Haldeman, 1993). For homosexual persons, these negative attitudes may lead to depression and suicide, low self -esteem and a resolution to hide one's sexual orientation (Gonsiorek, 1982; Ross, 1985; Ross,

1990; Greene, 1997; Remafedi, 1998). In their extreme form, these negative attitudes may lead to anti-gay violence. This demonstrates the importance of how the educator expresses and holds his values towards certain sexuality topics. It should also be noted that educators are depicted as role- models to learners. Their behaviour towards sexuality issues may affect the learners either positively or negatively.

2.3. Sexuality and Culture

Values are transmitted through the culture of a society. People believe that what is culturally acceptable is right. The same could apply to virginity testing. Some people believe that virginity testing is right because it is culturally acceptable. Virginity testing is a cultural way of policing the sexuality of girls. This policing is said to keep the sexualised bodies of young girls in check. It is believed that virginity testing can delay them engaging in sexual activity. However, this researcher views it as merely an extension of gender inequality.

Virginity testing is also highly moralistic since girls are made to believe that this is a good value and to be a virgin implies being “pure”. Girls who are tested in this manner are expected to accept whatever the older women say. This is similar to the patriarchal modes of communication where learners are expected to heed the wisdom of the all- knowing patriarch (Morrell et al, 2002).

Another cultural institution that taught sexual behaviour to the youth was the initiation schools. Boys and girls had separate initiation schools. In these schools, young men and women were taught how to prepare for adult life and also how to relate to people of the opposite sex (Khathide, 2003) as cited by Dube (2003). In all these initiation, schools penetration was totally forbidden until after marriage.

Because of the moralistic approach of culture towards sexuality, this has fostered a conspiracy of silence. In most African cultures, talking about sex in public is considered as a taboo. Those people who talk about it are usually called names (Khathide, 2003). In the light of the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the silence about human sexuality needs to be faced and challenged by educators and society. Parents must feel free to talk about sex to their children and allow them to ask questions (Khathide, 2003).

According to Khathide (2003), parents have neglected their responsibility to give sexuality education to their children. They expect educators to do it for them. Khathide (2003) further says that “the reason parents are ashamed to talk about sex to their children is because marital partners themselves are ashamed to talk about sex to one another. In marriages, many people are afraid to talk about their sexual problems openly because they do not want to hurt the other partner. Some secretly resolve to be involved extra-martially. If nothing helps, they may end up divorcing their partners. Often, after the divorce, people talk about the real reason why they separated from their partner. We need to look sex in the eye and stop regarding it as an idol of some kind” (Lewis, 1976) as cited by Khathide (2003: 3).

2.4. Why Should Sexuality Education be taught?

The Department of Education (2001) in the opening address made by Professor Kader Asmal at a Conference on sexuality education in 2001 stated that “on a daily basis, young people are faced with a host of issues that are of physiological, emotional, cultural and psychological nature. Very often they feel confused and have no idea as to how to deal with the issues. One of the most challenging and complex of these is sexuality” (Department of Education, 2001: 2).

The Department of Education (2001) quotes Asmal who further states that “rather than seeking to capture our children’s hearts and minds and to imprison them in a set mould, we should be seeking to liberate them from the tyranny of authoritarianism, from the tyranny of oppression, the tyranny of superstition and the tyranny of peer pressure. We want our children and particularly girls, to feel free from the threat of rape and the scourge of sexual harassment and abuse. We must not capture anyone. We should protect their innocence, and this can only happen when we teach our children through precept and more importantly through example to respect and value others, regardless of race or gender or creed” (Department of Education, 2001: 3).

This challenges the cultural attitudes towards gender and the gender imbalances that are perpetuated by culture. It also indicates that sexuality education can be the answer to solving the daily challenges that learners face everyday. Sexuality education can serve to liberate their minds and hearts from a number of different pressures. Hence,

the importance of sexuality education in acquiring information and forming attitudes, beliefs and values about identity, relationships and intimacy, should not be played down in any way.

The aims and objectives of sexuality education as prescribed by the Department of Education in (1999) in the guidelines for teachers are:

- to make young people like and respect themselves
- to help learners see sexuality as a natural and positive part of life
- to teach skills to make informed and responsible decisions
- to explore different values and attitudes
- to help learners act in accordance with their values
- to teach understanding, tolerance and respect for different sexual needs, orientations and values
- to teach learners to protect themselves from exploitation and not to exploit others
- to teach learners how to use health services and how to find information they need.

These aims and objectives of sexuality education indicate that teachers should assist in setting learners free from exploitation and the cultural attitudes that discriminate against the girl child and promote gender inequalities need to be challenged. Learners need to be given information and not be deprived in the name of protecting their innocence. In most cases, when adults try to protect this “innocence”, they actually protect and perpetuate ignorance.

It is known that most parents deceive themselves by denying the fact that their children are sexually active. This denial comes from a wish that most parents hold, that their children are not sexually active, and a belief that they should not be sexually active. According to Daria & Campbell (2004), the findings made by Love Life in their study represent this parental wish as a myth. The study discovered that:

- one third of 12-17 year old South African children have had sexual intercourse.
- One fifth of that representative sample reported having their first sexual encounter at the age of 12 or younger.

- Most of the teenagers said that they learn about sex from their friends and their peer group and that coercion plays a significant role in adolescent sexual behaviour.
- 22 percent of sexually active teenagers said that they had sex because they were afraid of what their friends would say if they didn't.
- Almost 4 in 10 of sexually experienced teenage girls said that they had been forced to have sex when they did not want to;
- 28 percent of the sample indicated that they knew people of their age who had sex for money and
- 16 percent of sexually active young girls indicated that they had sex for money, food, drink or other gifts
- Only about 55 percent of the sexually active teenagers said that they always use a condom when having sex (www.sexualhealth.org).

These alarming statistics suggest that both educators and parents need to ensure that their children should be able to make wise decisions about their sexuality. They must be helped in this process so that they can resist pressure and respond appropriately when faced with risky situation. This may be done through sexuality education. According to Daria & Campbell (2004) school-based sexuality education programmes must continue to receive high priority for a number of reasons. Firstly, it will enable the youth to get accurate information and explore their own values about sexuality in an environment that is both supportive and non- threatening. Secondly learners will learn to practice relationship refusal skills that enable them to avoid being coerced into sexual activity. Thirdly, they learn to practice safer sex in order to prevent HIV and STI as well as the role that safe sex and abstinence can play in the prevention of these diseases. Finally, sexuality education should encourage young people to become wise, sexually healthy adults (Donovan, 1998).

2.5. Parents and Sexuality Education

Another reason for placing part of the responsibility for sexuality education on educators is because some parents do feel uncomfortable talking to their children about sexuality (Price et al, 2003). Other parents do not only feel uncomfortable talking about sexuality, but they also do not have enough specific factual information

about sexual issues (King et al, 1993). This indicates that sexuality education involves very sensitive topics and that it also demands that both parents and educators should have an understanding of themselves as sexual beings i.e. their experiences, relationships, values and beliefs. This also means that teachers need to explore their own personal values if they are to successfully feel confident and comfortable in teaching the subject. However, it should also be noted that teachers should not impose their values onto learners.

When considering parental views on sexuality, Rule (1979) says that “as a society we are so fearful of sexual initiation we pretend that by ignoring it, it will not take place. What we really want is not to know when or how it does. We no longer frighten our children with threats of insanity and death as a result of masturbation. It is instead, clumped with picking one’s nose, belching, farting – something not to be done in public, by implication not to be done in public, by implication not to be done by nice people at all – but we give our children enough privacy so that the guilty pleasure can be discovered and practiced not only alone but in the company of other unsupervised children” (Rule, 1979:1).

What is apparent is that parents would rather threaten their children than openly discuss some sexuality issues with their children. Rule (1979) further says that parents have so little trust in what they have to teach and they not only abdicate their responsibility, but label as a criminal any adult who attempts to instruct them. In doing this, parents often seem to forget that children are at their mercy, and they are at each other’s mercy as well. Hence, Rule (1979) says “it makes about as much sense to leave children’s sexual nourishment to their peers as it would to assume that the mud pies they make for each other are an adequate lunch” (Rule, 1979: 2). It suggests that adult silence about sexuality does not mean that children will not experiment or teach each other about it, but that the results could be very dangerous.

Scholz as cited by Cassell & Wilson (1989) states that sexuality education actually begins at birth. As the child grows, parents communicate their sexual values to their children during their daily interactions. This makes the parent the best person to assist the child to make informed decisions about sex. This viewpoint is confirmed by several authors (Bailie, 1991; Etsne, 1997; Van Rooyen, 1997; Van Rooyen & Louw

1994; Watteton in Seydel, 1992). Parents who discuss sexuality with their children develop a good relationship with them. A similar standpoint is confirmed by Hlalele (1998) who argues that discussions about sexuality have the potential of strengthening the relationship between the child and the parent. On the other hand McCable, as cited by Makanya (1993), says that the openness of the parent about sexuality could be mistaken for permission or even encouragement to have sex.

In the speech made by Judge Kate O'Reagan at the Conference on Sexuality Education in August 2001 (Department of Education, 2001) she said that "there are two simple challenges facing South African educators who are concerned about sexuality education. Learners need to be informed about sexuality so that the choices they make are wise choices, and they need to be empowered personally so that in complex inter-personal relationships they can make a wise choice and stick with it" (Department of Education, 2001:13).

O'Reagan further says that many people are in denial about sexuality while many young people are sexually active. She further says that "the denials can flow from and wish that young people were not sexually active, a religious or moral belief that young people should not be sexually active or an ideological commitment to a conception of childhood which includes sexuality. Whatever its source many of us are in denial about sexuality of young people and we respond to that denial by remaining silent about sexuality" (Department of Education, 2001:14).

Silence becomes the easiest way to deal with sexuality. By that silence "we condemn our children to being forced to make choices in complex personal situations, without adequate information, without the thoughtful and wise counsel of an older person, without the advantage of a role model who affirms the marvel and delights of human sexuality on the one hand but insists on the responsibilities and risks that accompany it. Protecting the right to innocence, then, should be about empowering young people make wise and responsible choices" (Department of Education, 2001: 14).

2.6. The Sexuality Educator

According to Daria & Campbell (2004) "a thriving sexuality education programme rests on the expertise of the teachers. Their knowledge, skills and attitudes determine

whether or not adolescents will take the issue of sexuality education seriously. Teaching about sexuality can be difficult because the personal nature of the topic can arouse anxiety or create embarrassment. For this reason, a sexuality educator must possess several key characteristics, including enthusiasm for and comfort with the subject matter, a thorough knowledge of human sexuality, respect for adolescents, clarity about his/her own personal values, the ability to accept the values and beliefs of others, and good group facilitation skills” (Daria & Campbell, 2004: 2).

Greenberg (1989) says that good sexuality educators should possess the ability to lead discussions without being judgemental and moralistic. The educator should be able to create an environment that encourages open communication so as to avoid judgemental and moralistic viewpoints.

In support of this idea, Milton (2001) contends that teachers should be adequately trained and given adequate resources so that sexuality education can be properly implemented.

According to Whyld (1983) “sex education should be taught in small groups with time allocated for single-sex group discussion. It should be developed from an interdisciplinary approach with teachers from several subjects contributing, either within their own subject time, or within the context of a health and social education programme designed to run over several years (Whyld, 1983: 267).

Haignere & Culhane (1996), suggest that success of sexuality education depends on the expertise of the educators. Their knowledge, skills and attitudes determine whether or not adolescents will take the issue of sexuality seriously. They also believe that teaching about sexuality can be difficult because of the personal nature of the topic which sometimes gives rise to anxiety and embarrassment. This means that the educator of sexuality education must have a thorough knowledge of the subject, be comfortable with the subject matter, show respect for learners, and have clarity about his or her own personal values and the ability to accept other peoples beliefs and values (Manley, 1986).

As sexuality plays such a very important part in the lives of both boys and girls, it is important for schools to recognize and accept sexuality as part of the development process of the learner.

2.7. Why Sexuality is closeted in Schools

According to Paechter (2003) sexuality education needs an informal teaching for it to be successful. Schools often marginalize such teaching because it threatens the good order of the school. Educators have to change their formal status when teaching sex education and become more informal so that the learners can open up and feel free to discuss sensitive topics. Such an informal nature of teaching may threaten the status of teachers and result in a decision not to teach it. Surprisingly, the quietness found in classrooms during the teaching of other subjects such as Mathematics is not the same when sexuality is discussed since learners start to giggle and sometimes become excited and noisy. Therefore, to maintain the dignity of the school, sexuality education is often marginalized.

Paechter (2003) also suggests that sexuality education tends to locate the focus of learning in the school on the body rather than the academic subjects which focus on the development of the mind. The reason why teachers shy away from talking about the body and sex is that, traditionally, sex was seen as something that is sacred and not the subject of discussion. If schools want to say anything about sexuality, they would rather limit their discussions of sexuality to the 'biological health' aspects.

Allred et al (2003) suggests that though many educators are committed to teaching about sexuality, they report considerable anxieties about sexuality as a subject and its perceived low status in the school curriculum. He suggests that educators are faced with immense difficulties in the teaching of the subject because sexuality is an unwelcome topic to some and that those who teach it are not trained and often feel uncomfortable with the content and the pedagogical style. He also says that other educators view it as extracurricular. Therefore finding time to teach this topic is viewed as a problem.

In a study that Allred et al (2003) conducted in faith schools (as in a Roman Catholic school), he found that sexuality was taught by the Religious Education staff who often

upheld pastoral issues. This study confirmed the concerns that arose earlier on, that in some schools in England teachers felt that sexuality education has a low subject status and was undervalued since it is not examined or assessed (Alldred et al, 2003). The teaching of this subject was delegated to junior members of staff. This study also indicated that because sexuality is taught without any form of training, it tended to reflect and reinforce its low status amongst staff and learners.

Notwithstanding the argument above, van Rooyen & Louw (1994) argue that the education system has an important task and responsibility in regard to sexuality education since it is involved in the total education of the child. They further state that if the school does not provide this subject, it is more directly involved in the negative results of broken marriages, unhappy families, sexual activities of young people, teenage pregnancy etc. These problem situations according to Van Rooyen & Louw (1994), result in irregular behaviours in learners and this affects their ability to fully benefit from teaching. This makes it impossible for them to realize their full potential in education.

Van Rooyen & Louw (1994), emphasize that children should be given enough opportunities to experience their own sexuality as male or female in order to develop a positive self- esteem as well as a positive image about their bodies.

In support of this view, Whyld (1983) suggests that if we want young men and women to have control over their fertility, we should allow them to explore their femininity and masculinity. He further states that educators must give enough information to learners so that they do not get into trouble. They should be made aware that sexuality concerns oneself in relation to others, and power relations may affect these. This is supported by Llewellyn-Jones (1985) who states that if the above information is not given to learners, they may find themselves in situations that could result in casual sexual behaviour which many have profound effects on their lives and on those of their families.

In addition to this view, Thorogood (2000) as cited by Gabb (2004) argues that learners have a right to be educated about sex in order to allow them to make socially desirable decisions regarding their sexual and reproductive relationships. The

challenge of educators is to facilitate this process and not to limit their teaching to what they believe to be right or wrong, because this prevents learners from establishing their own value-systems. This implies that educators need to be aware of their own values and beliefs, but should try not to project those beliefs and values onto others, allowing learners to make their own responsible decisions. Milton (2001) as cited by Gannon (2004) concurs with the above view and adds that the personal qualities of the educator are critical to the effectiveness of any sexuality education programme. Milton says that educators need to be non-judgmental, trustworthy, open, honest, able to listen, have sense of humour, rapport, respect and flexibility and be comfortable with their own sexuality.

In addition to these aspects, schools should realize that the most dramatic of all developmental areas in adolescence, is the increase of sexual desire coupled with mysterious feelings and thoughts. This is associated with much anxiety and conflict which educators need to reduce by assisting learners to understand and accept their sexuality. Gannon (2004) further says that because of the devastating effects teen sex can have, many parents and educators use fear to discourage sexual activity by highlighting only the negative consequences. They do this with the hope that it will extinguish curiosity and the natural desire to experiment with sex. Unfortunately, fear usually encourages them to pursue this activity. It is therefore important that sexual information be presented in a more 'balanced manner' which highlights the positive and negative effects since this may assist learners to think about values as well as beliefs and be able to act in accordance with them. This will ensure that even if they feel sexually aroused at a certain point in time, they will know about the alternate ways of satisfying sexual desires.

The other problem associated with sexuality education is that societies expect educators to inculcate heterosexuality into the learners' minds. Certain forms of sexuality e.g. homosexuality are not accepted and seen as promiscuous and sinful. This teaching discriminates other learners who end up being labelled as immoral and sick. Educators who do not want to marginalize homosexuals, therefore refrain from this topic as the best solution. Those educators who are willing to take sexuality out of the closet are being criticized as being corrupt and immoral and are said to be corrupting the learners' 'innocent minds'. This clearly undermines the thinking of

liberal educators who argue that young people should be given all the appropriate information so that they are able to make informed decisions. The idea that sexuality is dangerous and corrupts the innocent minds is supported by Epstein & Sears (1999) as cited by Paechter (2003) who says that sexuality does not only connote the loss of innocence but it also gives rise to fears about the corruption of the young.

In many schools, there is no time allocated on the timetable for sexuality education. This ensures that sexuality remains closeted and educators claim that they want to finish the syllabus for the entire examination-oriented subjects. This is the view of Paechter (2003) who suggests that if the teaching style within the subject is to be more weakly framed than is the case in the rest of the school, it must of necessity be marginalized. This is done in order to protect the so-called more academic subjects and to avoid the danger of polluting high status knowledge. If educators need to cover the syllabus, sexuality education is likely to be pushed out of the way to make space for other priorities. In some cases, the facts that educators are obligated by law to report any form of child abuse that has been disclosed or reported to them causes them to avoid talking about sexuality since it makes learners aware of their rights and hence report the issues that affects them. This is a situation which the educators avoid since they may be expected to act as witnesses in any follow up case as the information was first disclosed to them. Educators feel that this places their lives at risk, particularly if they have to become court witnesses in child abuse cases.

In order to ensure the teaching of sexuality education in schools, the National Department of Education has introduced the inclusion of sexuality programs into the Life Orientation Learning Area. But language sometimes become a barrier when sexuality topics are discussed particularly for learners who are Zulu speaking. This is because it does not allow learners to express themselves in isiZulu during these discussions. Many fear participation because of the possibility of making mistakes in the English language. When second languages such as English are avoided in order to allow everybody to participate, isiZulu also becomes a problem because certain isiZulu words are labelled as vulgar, again creating a barrier since both learners and educators are not free to use them. To avoid this dilemma, the topic is therefore pushed aside.

2.8. Exclusion of the Body

Descartes argued that the mind was distinct from the body and that humanness was located in the mind and not the body. Critiquing this idea Paechter (2003) argues that in schooling the education of bodies is consequently marginalized. This implies that the school sees itself as mainly concerned with the development of the minds. To ensure that the body is excluded, the school uses policing processes to keep it under control. Paechter (2003) suggests that the timetable is viewed as part of the tools used to police the body. It determines where children are and when. The uniform is another way of regulating the body to do what it is told. It restricts the learner's freedom of expression because it does not allow them to choose what they want to wear.

Markus (1996) as cited by Paechter (2003), says that even in the classroom, the learners are directed where to sit, how and with whom. Paechter (2003) says that this restricts their freedom to choose with whom they wish to sit and work. In the classrooms learners are also forced to sit still for a long time. She further says that all this policing of the learner's bodies is done to render them docile to the point that they disappear. The body is forced to 'disappear' so that it does not disturb sound learning. She further suggests that the aim of producing docile bodies is to give an impression that the body has disappeared completely and therefore cannot interfere with academic schooling.

Such a view suggests that the body is forced to 'disappear' because it is associated with sex that and that there is no place sex in a school. In this way the same body that is expected to be at school is being refused to be fully and completely at school. The schools tend to focus only on the sound mind in the sound body. That same body, which has to be healthy, is controlled by people other than itself. In other words, the mind is taught but the body is removed from itself. This writer concurs with Paechter (2003) when he states that this is like disciplining the body to the point of its disappearance. How does the school claim to develop the whole personality of the learner when they actually remove the body from its personality?

Harrison (2000) says that women's identities are seen to be tied explicitly to their bodies. These are viewed as both a site of pleasure and something unclean and alien. That is why they have to learn to discipline their bodies. At school, addresses on

topics are sometimes made during assembly. This usually addresses issues related to girls. Even the length of their uniform is prescribed so as to keep them in check and discipline their 'bodily unruliness'. Even menstruation is said to be stressful and needs to be hidden. This is viewed as an embarrassment for girls and boys are not given a chance to understand more about the girl's bodies.

In these ways, the school emphasizes that sexuality education is something that should be hidden. If they teach it, they do it in conflict with themselves and they determine what learners should learn and when, and in a manner that says that the body has to be denied its desire. Peachter (2003) further argues that the disciplining of the body within sex education is highly problematic because sex education by its very nature deals with the undisciplined body, a body replete with, urges and desires.

2.9. Sexuality and the Hidden Curriculum

Sexuality education often becomes a role-player in the hidden curriculum. According to Kehily (1998), learners through participation in school rules and routines learn to conform or resist the official culture of the school. In line with this view, the hidden curriculum can also be seen in terms of regulating sex-gender categories. In our schools, the school uniform is a significant mechanism for social control. Girls are forced to wear skirts or dresses in cold weather. This aims at inhibiting a sense of freedom of expression and choosing what you wear. The girl's body is forced into a form of discipline and control even in cold weather.

Paechter (2003) argues that in primary schools, children are grouped at different tables according to their ability. This is done in order to restrict their freedom to choose whom they want to sit or work with. It is worse for children under eight years of age who, according to Paechter (2003) are made to sit squashed together cross-legged on the carpet without fidgeting.

The single sex school forms part of such a the hidden curriculum because it is viewed as a strategy used by both parents and educators to ensure that boys and girls are being policed and any sexual interest in the opposite sex just cannot develop at all because they are all the same sex at school. During sports, girls are excluded from boy's sports. This is done as a policing technique to ensure that the sexual urges of

children are suppressed so that these cannot be expressed at school. This writer wonders whether it is possible for the schooling body to leave its sex drive at home.

The hidden curriculum of the school implies that female desire and pleasure is viewed as not important. Male desire is seen as dangerous to girls and needs to be controlled. Furthermore, according to Fin (1998) as quoted by Epstein & Johnson (1998) “the authorized sexual discourses define what is safe, what is taboo and what will be silenced. The discourse of sexuality miseducates adolescent women. What results is a discourse of sexuality based on the male in search of desire and the female in search of protection” (Epstein & Johnson, 1998: 178).

This ‘protection’ of girls, which is not written anywhere, manifests itself in the activities of boys and girls and the manner in which they tend to express their sexuality towards one another. When girls play netball, for example, they would intentionally flip their skirts when jumping. This is an intentional call for attention from the opposite sex.

Thus the aim of the hidden curriculum is to control the desires of the body. This is similar to forcing learners to run away from themselves, something which is viewed as impossible. Paechter (2003) says that learners are made to control their bodies by being forced to sit still, be quiet, to deny bodily urges and needs until the appropriate time. Further, learners could not even think about eating in class no matter how hungry they were. Such is the hidden curriculum that teaches the body to deny its urges. Standing in line is another example of the hidden curriculum in action.

2.10. Classroom control and sexuality

According to Wolpe (1988), male teachers use their sexuality in order to obtain cooperation of girls. They make girls view them as their dream husbands who may take them down the altar of marriage one day. Female teachers on the other hand use their femininity to control boys who are violent. The gratification of being in a beautiful woman’s class makes the aggressive boys behave. She controls the class using her physical attractiveness and sexuality. It is however, also known that boys may get more out of control in response to a young woman teacher.

According to Wolpe (1988), flirting between male teachers and older girls is good for both of them. It keeps the girls interested in school and prevents them from going wild in the course of seeking pleasure outside the school. On the other hand, girls tend to control overly strict educators by sitting in front in short skirts. This is intentionally done to draw the teacher's attention to them. Classmates even instruct such girls to sexually arouse the educator so as to soften him up. The plan is that, when the teacher sees the panties under the short skirt, he will be aroused and thus be tamed. This suggests that both boys and girls use body language to gain control in the classroom in the same way as the teachers do.

Wolpe (1988) suggests that this process emphasizes society's notion that females could obtain whatever they want from males through being charming, smiling, speaking carefully and presenting themselves as pleasing people, in a gender appropriate behavior. The school situation thus gives the girls the stage for such rehearsal. Girls in the unfolding adolescent years practice and reinforce such typical behavior. Similarly, boys may become protective of their female teachers. Both boys and girls learn the appropriate behavior and how to achieve this in heterosexual relations.

Sometimes girls become victims of boys in heterosexual encounters where gender inequalities allow boys to conduct the relationship on their own terms. The society then tends to blame girls for this victimization and the boy's aggression, saying that they asked for it as they led them on. If boys sexually harass girls, society says "boys are just being boys", that is, having some excitement and a bit of fun, but girls are viewed as the provocateurs. Boys are not reprimanded for this behavior as it is viewed as more acceptable, even if it is considered unfair.

2.11. Conclusion

The responsibility of the school in sexuality education as a major focus of behavior modification, the need to give learners understanding and control of their bodies is of utmost importance. Epstein (1998) argue that the open approaches to sexuality are more likely to contribute to reducing the rate of accelerated teenage pregnancies than those emphasizing morality or abstinence. She further says that youngsters, who are not able to discuss sexuality issues with adults, are more likely to engage in sexual

encounters than those who can openly discuss sexual topics. This implies that our schools need to teach sexuality in order to help learners to make informed decisions and especially in the fight against HIV / AIDS. The rate of infections statistically indicates that efforts to reduce HIV transmission have not yet been successful. This suggests that the more sexuality is closeted in schools, the more our children are exposed to danger, which many conservatives think they are protecting them from.

Educators and parents should know that the children's bodies talk to them and they should know how to respond to this appropriately. One cannot control or remove the body from itself. But one needs to take charge of one's body without being controlled by other people outside of the body. The hidden curriculum impacts on learners' lives either negatively or positively and learners and educators need to be aware of that and deal with such a situation appropriately.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter concentrates on the methods that were used in this study. This was done mainly through the use of two instruments, namely focus group interviews and questionnaires. These instruments sought to obtain answers to the research questions that were outlined earlier on in chapter one. Through the use of these instruments, data was collected and it was then analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively.

3.1. The selection of schools for the study

The study was conducted in two selected secondary schools in the Hammarsdale area. Hammarsdale falls within the Pinetown district in the eThekweni Region. This area is about fifty-nine (59) kilometers from Durban and forty (40) kilometers from Pietermaritzburg. The population of this area lives in rural areas, semi-rural areas, township and informal settlements and they are from different socio-economic backgrounds and religious beliefs. This area is primarily populated by African people, with a few Whites and Indians who are found near the industrial area. One school was selected from the township, and the other from the rural area. These schools were selected because of the following factors:

- Practical convenience and economy: the schools are not far from where the researcher lives and this meant that they were easily accessible and the study could be cost effective
- The area was very well known to the researcher. It could also reflect the rural as well as the township influence on the teaching of sexuality.

The area in which the township school was situated was more heavily populated than the area in which the rural school was situated. These schools provided a good geographical coverage of the Pinetown Education District since the largest number of schools in the Pinetown district lie in both rural and township schools.

3.2. Sampling

In this study, a non- probability sampling was used. Non -probability sampling according to Mouton & van Schaik (1996) is a process of selecting a sample that

represents the target population. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of the participants. According to Cohen et al (2000), purposive sampling allows the researcher to handpick the cases to be included in the sample on the basis of their judgement as well as their typicality. Marlow (1998) further says that purposive sampling includes in the sample those elements of special interest to the researcher. For the purpose of this study, the participants that were selected were ten (10) Life Orientation educators of grade eight (8) to twelve (12) learners, both male and female. All were African, isiZulu first language speakers. They ranged in age from 29 to 54 years. Five educators were male and five were female.

The sample that was selected possessed characteristics that could inform this study. According to Mason (1996), purposive sampling allows the researcher to select participants that will enable him or her to make meaningful comparisons in relation to the research questions, theory and the type of explanation that the researcher wishes to develop. In purposive sampling, the researcher uses common sense as well as the best judgement in choosing the right subjects for the purpose of the study. However, the limitation with purposive sampling, as with other non -probability methods, is the lack of ability to generalize from the samples. But its strength lies in the fact that it can ensure that the collection of information is directly relevant to the subjects being investigated.

3.3. Gaining entry

Permission to conduct the study was requested first from the School Governing Bodies and principals of the selected schools, and then from the educators themselves. A further letter requesting permission to conduct the study was sent to the research unit of the Department of education at Head Office in Pietermaritzburg. After all the parties had granted permission for the study to be conducted, the dates for the interviews were then set with the individual schools. Educators were required to indicate the time slots that were most suitable for them to participate.

3.4. Pilot testing of the research tools

Pilot testing of the research tools was undertaken in one of the schools that was not involved in this. The results were then not included in the study. Five Life Orientation educators from grade 8 to 12 were selected for pilot testing of the research tools.

According to Polit & Hungler as cited in Makhanya (1993), a pilot study is a trial run that is undertaken in order to prepare for the major study. This concurs with Black & Champion (1976) who state that the pilot study helps to uncover potential weaknesses and flaws in the construction and content of the measuring instrument. This is undertaken using participants who have similar characteristics to those who will be used in the major study. It also helps in determining whether the research tools measure what they ought to measure.

According to Black & Champion (1976) a pilot study has the following advantages:

- It introduces the researcher to the respondents who thereby gains experience in developing better approaches to the target population;
- helps the researcher to determine whether a more substantial investigation of the same phenomenon is warranted;
- helps the researcher to develop meaningful methods of categorizing and recording data; and
- minimizes time and intrusions into the school day (Black & Champion, 1976:114).

The ten educators were requested to respond to both the questionnaire as well as participate in the focus group interview. During the interview, some of the interview questions were close-ended, but most of them were open-ended questions. Patton (2002) argues that responses to open-ended questions permit one to understand the world as it is seen by the respondents. This enables the researchers to understand and capture the points of view of other persons. These questions were asked in order to obtain the perceptions of educators about the teaching of sexuality education. Patton (2002) further says that respondents in groups are an excellent way of getting peoples perspectives. He suggests that “groups are not just a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of their members, they give rise synergistically to insights to solutions that would not come about without them” (Patton, 2002:16).

Focus group interviews give insights into the individual and personal experiences of the interviewees. Patton (2002) argues that group interviews add depth, detail, and

meaning at a very personal level of experience and the depth of the participants' feelings are very often then revealed.

After careful consideration of the responses, some questions were modified by making them clearer and more straightforward. They were then ready for utilization in the target population for this study.

3.5. Research Tools

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in order to obtain in-depth information from the participants. The questions aimed at obtaining information relating to teacher's perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools. The questionnaire format was selected because it makes it easy to reach a number of people at the same time. This makes conducting the study economical. Questionnaires also allow people to remain anonymous since they can respond without specifying who they are (Mason & Bramble, 1989). The use of questionnaires also allows the researcher to generalize data obtained during the research. Mason & Bramble further states that it is assumed that subjects are more willing to respond openly and honestly to the questionnaire because they remain anonymous.

According to Ary et al (1979) and Walker (1975) as cited in Harilal (1994: 178), the most important features of questionnaires are:

- they are simple to read and quick to respond to;
- they demand little effort and a minimum of the respondent's time as they are quick to fill in , and may be completed at any convenient time;
- standard instructions are given to all the subjects and the appearance, mood or conduct of the investigator does not influence the results;
- a broad spectrum of views can be obtained for large samples and these can be reached easily;
- the administration, scoring and analysis of questionnaires is relatively easy and simple. Large amounts of data are gathered cheaply and quickly and they are also quantifiable;
- it is far easier to elicit responses on controversial issues via questionnaires;
- they facilitate the systematic organization and description of data; and

- where confidentiality is guaranteed, more truthful responses are elicited from the respondents.

The questionnaires were self-administered. This assisted the researcher to give a short introduction explaining the purpose of the study as was indicated in the letters that had requested educators to participate in the study. It was also possible to clarify the meaning of each of the questions. In doing so, the items were read one by one and so clarified. After this explanation was given, the respondents were left alone to answer the questionnaire. The researcher remained in another room until all respondents finished answering the questionnaire. Since two schools were involved, only two days were used to administer the questionnaires, and this was not time-consuming and it also ensured that the return rate was one hundred percent.

The first part of the questionnaire was aimed at eliciting simple and factual information about the educators in respect of their number of years teaching, the number of years teaching sexuality education, the number of hours spent in sexuality education per week, as well as whether educators had received training or not for teaching sexuality education. In the second part of the questionnaire, educators had to indicate their response in terms of the five-point Likert scale as to whether they strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree or strongly disagree with the statements. There were a total of thirty statements to which they had to respond.

3.6. The qualitative approach

The qualitative research method was chosen for this study because it is considered to be an appropriate methodology for studying what is going on, and then trying to make sense of it by testing out themes and patterns (Edward & Talbot, 1994). According to Yun (1984), the use of the qualitative research method is particularly useful in informing policy. This is particularly so because processes, problems and programmes can be examined so as to bring about an understanding of what could improve practice. Edward & Talbot (1994), Barbie (2004), and Henning (2004) agree with this view in that the advantages of qualitative research method may include the following:

- it allows for in depth data collection,
- it captures complexities, and

- it provides researcher with data that brings research to life.
It should be noted that this does not imply that this method does not have its limitations. When using this method one has to be aware that:
- it requires high quality data collection and this is time consuming;
- the researcher can become so immersed in the participants' cases that it makes data analysis more difficult; and
- it can lead to unwarranted intrusion into the lives of the participants.

A further concern is raised by Edward & Talbot (1994), Babbie (2004) and Henning (2004) who argue that although concerns about reliability, validity, and generalizability are pertinent to all research, qualitative research is often criticized on grounds of soft subjectivity. It was therefore very important for this researcher to keep these points in check during this study.

The use of focus group interviewing allowed the educators from Grade 8 to 12 within each school to come together to discuss their perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education. This saved a greater deal of time because all five educators were interviewed at the same time. According to Marshall & Rossman (1995) focus group interviews encourage discussions and the expression of different opinions and point of view. This allows for the identification of trends in perceptions and opinions expressed. Marshall & Rossman (1995) further says that focus group interviews promote the participants' self-disclosure through the creation of a permissive environment. This researcher is aware of the potential for group dynamic problems to occur in such a focused group interview. Such a problem could be where one subject is able to influence others in evaluating the issues at hand, thus resulting in opinions that are not necessarily true for all subjects. The researcher could limit this possibility by making questions crystal clear and insisting that questions be answered by all participant subjects in which they could be encouraged to give their own viewpoint.

Another advantage of using this method was that the interviews were conducted in the respondents' own schools. It was therefore not difficult to bring them together at a time that was identified by them as the most convenient time to conduct this

interview. The cost of the interview was limited as it took only one trip to each school to conduct such an interview.

It was noted however that the respondents sometimes raised issues that were not relevant to the study. In order to control such a situation, efforts were made to ensure that the focus of the discussion was redirected to the topic under discussion. This was done in line with what is suggested by Henning (2004) when he says that "the interviewer has to control the process in order not to let the speakers deviate from the topic and also to make sure that no leading questions are asked and that there is no contamination of any kind" (Henning, 2004: 53). This helped to ensure that time was not unnecessarily wasted on issues not related to the research questions. In fact, the specific wording of questions and their order was formulated before the interview itself so as to use it as an interview guide as well as to ensure that the purpose of the research was not lost. This interview guide also ensured that all intended areas were covered during the interview. According to Mark (1996), in semi-structured interviews the general nature of the questions is specified in advance in order to keep the research purpose in mind.

All interviews were audio- taped and transcribed for analysis. Educators gave permission to be audio taped. Audio- tapes allowed the researcher to review the interviews and to prepare data for analysis. According to Ely (1991) audio- tapes help the researcher to recall the experience, and they expand the details and provide a fresh perspective on the material. Field notes about the observations regarding the educators' responses towards each others' responses were also written down after the interviews. Data was then analysed through the identification of themes and trend analysis in line with the research questions.

3.7. Data analysis

Marlow (1998) says that the primary aim of analyzing qualitative data is to look for patterns in the data, as well as to note the similarities and differences. The same process was followed after the data was collected. Miles & Huberman (1994) argue that analysis consists of three activities, namely; data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions or verification. Both qualitative and quantitative data were then analysed. This will be elaborated upon in chapter four.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter deals with the analysis of the data. Information was generated through questionnaires and focus group discussions. The data was obtained in order to answer the following critical questions, namely:

1. What are teacher's perceptions about the teaching of sexuality in schools?
2. Which aspects of sexuality are easy to teach?
3. Which aspects of sexuality are not easy to teach and why this is so?
4. What challenges or difficulties do teachers encounter in teaching sexuality?
5. What strategies or approaches are effective in teaching sexuality and why?

The participants gave biographic data and answered the questionnaires. Furthermore, focus group discussions were held after this.

4.1. Analysis of the Data

The data that will be first discussed is data generated from the questionnaire. This was administered to a group of educators and was discussed in chapter three. The aim of the questionnaire was to ascertain educator's perceptions on the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools in the Pinetown District.

The biographic details included gender, age, marital status, number of years teaching, number of years teaching sexuality, numbers of hours teaching about sexuality per week, training received on sexuality education and the number of workshops attended on sexuality education. The second part of the questionnaire included a number of statements to which educators had to indicate whether they strongly agree, agree, are not sure, disagree or strongly disagree with the statements as indicated.

4.2. Responses to the Questionnaire

The sample comprised 50% males and 50% females. The results indicated that the responses of both males and females did not seem to be gender biased. Their responses in some statements were similar and there was no indication of males answering in a particular manner that was different from that of females and vice versa.

The responses demonstrated that of the 10 participants, four of them were married whilst six were not married. Their responses to a number of statements were similar and 90% indicated that they were comfortable to teach sexuality. The issue of being married or not did not influence their perception on the teaching of sexuality.

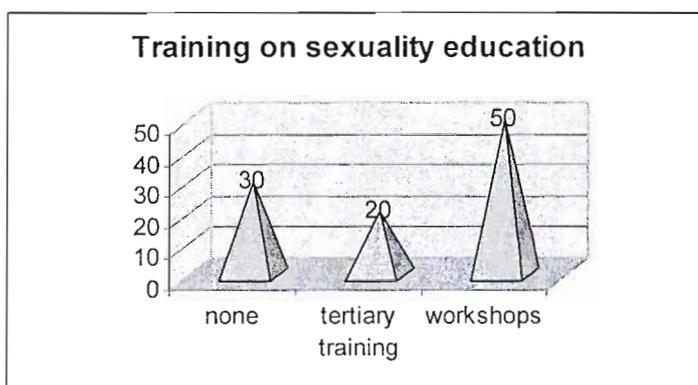
Table 4.2.1. gives a summary of the number of hours spent by educators teaching sexuality education per week in different grade classes.

Table 4.2.1. Number of hours teaching sexuality per week.

Grade	8	9	10	11	12
Hours	2	4	2	Nil	Nil

According to table 4.2.1. most time spent teaching sexuality per week occurs in Grade 9 as compared to Grade 8 and 10. Regrettably, there were no hours spent in teaching sexuality in Grades 11 and 12 at all. This indicated that Grade 11 and 12 learners appear to be excluded left when it comes to the teaching of sexuality. However, the questionnaire did not seek to understand or determine the reasons for this omission. The researcher feels that the non-teaching of sexuality in higher grades does warrant further study and research.

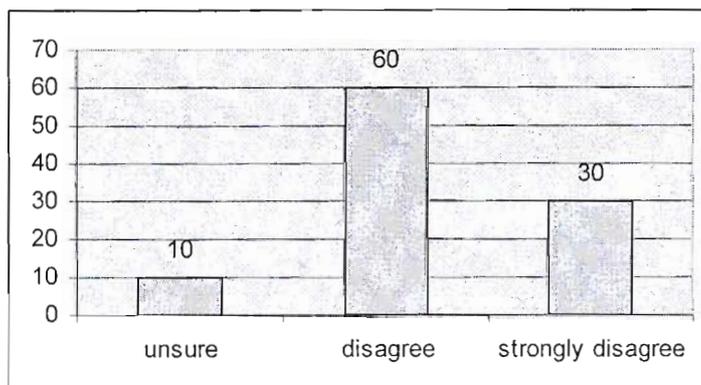
Figure 4.2.2. Types of training received on sexuality education.



With regard to training on sexuality education in schools, figure 4.2.2. indicates that 50% of the sample indicated that they attended workshops on sexuality education,

20% had a tertiary level training, while 30% did not receive any training at all. This suggests that the training of educators need to be attended to in order to equip them to teach this subject. The sensitivity of the topics dealt with in sexuality education demand that educators be given adequate training in the subject in order to enable them to feel competent to teach all the topics. This view is supported by the fact that all of the educators who indicated that they received no training on sexuality, indicated that they are not competent to teach sexuality and are not comfortable to use some of the terminology. This was further supported in that the respondents who indicated that they only attended one or two workshops on sexuality education and had no tertiary training, agreed that they could not teach all the topics on sexuality. All of them said that they could not teach subject matter concerning masturbation. All the educators who received tertiary training on sexuality also indicated that they were competent to teach about sexuality.

Figure 4.2.3. Responses for 10 respondents to the statement that seeks to understand whether schools have sufficient resources to help educators teach about sexuality.



According to figure 4.2.3. ninety percent of the sample felt that their school does not have sufficient resources to assist in the teaching of sexuality education.

The responses of educators regarding the availability of sufficient resources to assist them in teaching sexuality, demonstrated that schools do not have enough resources to assist educators in the teaching of sexuality education.

This suggests that schools do need to provide these resources. Adequate resources could assist educators in feeling comfortable and competent in the teaching of this subject. This view is supported by Milton (2001) who contends that teachers should be adequately trained and be given adequate resources so that sexuality education may be properly implemented.

The non-availability of resources can be further associated with the absence of sexuality education on the timetable, since 80% of the educators suggested that sexuality education is not included in the timetable. Resources are not likely to be provided for a subject that is not even included in the timetable. This suggests that even though 88% of the respondents agree that all educators should teach sexuality, very little attempt is made to ensure that it is actually taught in all the classrooms. This is also confirmed by the fact that it is not taught at all in grades 11 and 12. In response to the number of hours spent in each classroom teaching sexuality education per week no time was spent in grades 11 and 12. The conclusion was that it is not perceived as a priority subject in schools. This was further confirmed by the lack of support from the school management.

Figure 4.2.4. Responses of the 10 respondents to the statement that seeks to understand whether they receive support from the school management.

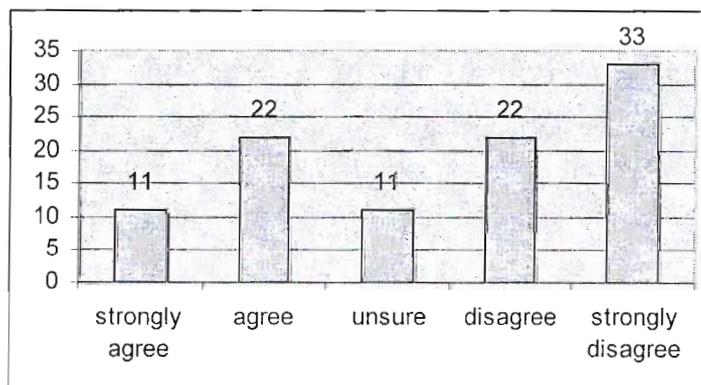
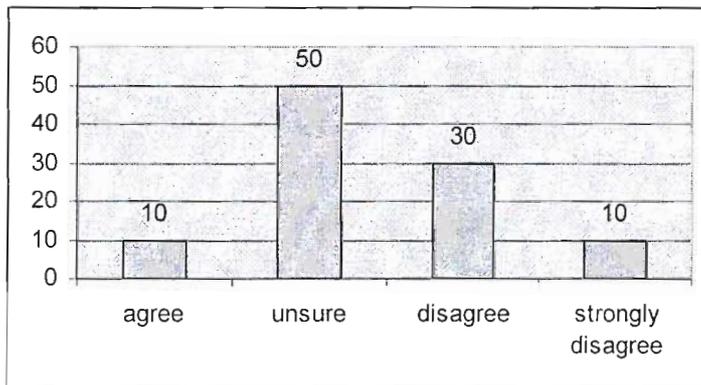


Figure 4.2.4. indicates that only 33% of respondents indicated that the school management supports them in teaching this subject, sexuality education.

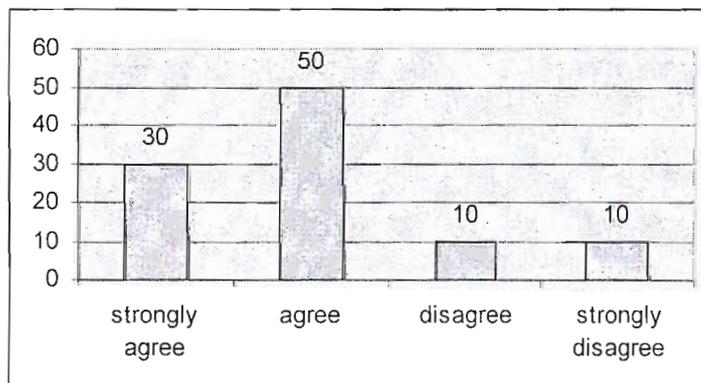
The responses regarding support from parents indicated that educators did not either receive support from the parents. This supports the views of Rule (1979) which suggests that parents have so little trust in what they have to teach and that they do not only abdicate their responsibility, but label as criminal any adult who attempts to teach their learners about sexuality.

Figure 4.2.5. Responses of the 10 respondents to the statement that seeks to understand whether educators receive adequate support from parents.



According to the figure 4.2.5. above, only 10% of educators maintained that they received support from parents. Parents' lack of support for the educators with regard to the teaching of sexuality education may be associated with their opposition to the teaching of sexuality education.

Figure 4.2.6. Responses of the 10 respondents to the statement that seeks to understand whether culture and religion are problematic in teaching sexuality.



Culture and religion was also considered as problematic to the teaching of sexuality education. This was confirmed in figure 4.2.6. by which eighty percent of the respondents responded positively to the fact that both culture and religion is viewed as a huge stumbling block in the teaching of sexuality education.

4.3. Conclusions from Questionnaire Responses

Data received from the questionnaire revealed that although educators are personally willing to teach sexuality education, the challenges they face pose somewhat of an obstacle to their teaching this subject. Educators indicated the various ways in which they were trained to conduct lessons and had attended either workshops or been formally trained to teach sexuality education. Analysis of data revealed that educators felt that all educators should be involved in the teaching of sexuality education. Data further revealed that educators were confident in teaching various topics which included pregnancy, conception and HIV/AIDS. Data also demonstrated that some educators clearly articulated that they were unable to teach all topics thoroughly and were unwilling to teach all topics with which they felt uncomfortable. Educators identified challenges in the teaching of sexuality education. These included a lack of support from school management teams, the unavailability of or even inadequate resources, the role of religion and culture as practiced and preached by communities, as well as the insufficient or even the lack of allocation of time to the teaching of sexuality education.

4.4. Focus Group Discussions

The purpose of the focus group discussions was to obtain the views of educators on the teaching of sexuality education at the GET and FET phases. The analysis of this data is organized into 8 broad themes which emerged from the data. Some of these themes resonate with the design features of the sexuality education curriculum, namely; communication at various levels within the schooling environment, human and material resources which impact on service delivery. There were two groups of educators from two different schools that participated in these focus group discussions concerning sexuality education.

The educators' responses appeared to span and embrace various design principles of the sexuality education curriculum. The themes that emerged from these focus group discussions are categorized as follows:

4.4.1. Communication

In the focus group discussions educators reported that communication posed a challenge at various levels. At the level of parent and learners, respondents revealed that *“there is no communication between the learners and their parents about sexuality. Parents do not talk about it at all and that makes it difficult for us since the topic is treated like a taboo at home.”*

A further similar view was stated by another respondent; *“May be, we need youth organization sessions in which the youth can discuss such issues on their own because you also find that those learners who are too forward, embarrass you by asking if you yourself can live the type of life you are talking about. What do you say to such a learner?”* This suggests that communication between educators and learners is also affected by the expectations from learners that educators should be able to live life that they preach about in the classroom. This optimistic expectation tends to limit what the educators may say or teach. This further indicates that educators should be good role models to the learners and further that their actions should be in line with what they teach in the classroom concerning sexuality education.

4.4.2. Resources

Another aspect of teaching sexuality education that respondents commented on was the availability or non-availability of resources. The issue of resources seemed to be connected to the quality of lessons that they were able to provide. The resource-poor nature of the school contributed significantly to the nature and intensity of the sexuality education curriculum.

4.4.3. Content Appropriateness

Besides the issues of communication and resources, educators at both schools expressed concern about the sexuality education curriculum. Many educators felt strongly that the content was often times inappropriate with regard to the varying age ranges that they had to cater for in single classes. One of the respondents said:

“Moreover, we have different age groups in one class that also gives us a problem, for an example, in Grade 8 you find learners who are 18 years old and others far less than that. How does one talk about issues that embarrass the young ones because only those who are older will be free to talk. Sometimes the case is vice versa, because you find the young ones being amused by certain topics because they don’t take it personal, yet the older ones feel embarrassed. In this case our discussions become ineffective and as a teacher you wonder what method you can use since it is not possible to divide them”.

4.4.4. Religion

The relationship between religion and the teaching of sexuality education was strongly expressed by educators. Many observed a tension that appears to exist between these two. The following comments were typical of their tension; *“We are uncomfortable because there are issues that we can’t discuss openly. Our religion also becomes a barrier because there are things that our churches do not allow us to talk about. Then at school we have to go against the principles of our religion. You know what; learners just look at me with suspicious eyes when I say we can talk about using condoms even though we are Christians. Being Christians also makes it difficult not to preach to the learners yet we know that preaching to them is impractical.*

A further similar view was said by another respondent: *“Sometimes I understand that they are being suspicious because the church tells them something different, but at times I wonder if they are asking themselves if I live what I say to them.*

Another respondent further said that: *“Churches should not be left out. For example, some churches are against the use of condoms that makes it difficult for a teacher who goes to church to talk about condoms at school because he is afraid to go against his own church.”*

4.4.5. Peer Educators

The role and functions of peer educators were also raised by educators at both schools in the focus group discussion. The role of peer educators was sometimes viewed as precarious because of the power relations that exist between the teaching educators and learner peer educators. The issue of sexual relationships between educators and

some learners appeared to pose a major obstacle to the role of peer educators. This became clear when one of them said: *“Though they are active, they are sometimes frustrated by issues like ehh ... there are educators who have sexual relationships with the learners and when peers openly fight against this, their relationships with educators who are involved in this act, become sour.”*

Another respondent added: *“Ehh... a male peer educator can also have a problem. You know what? When he talks openly about sexuality, parents might think that he is exposing their children to pornography. You know, there are books that expose sexual body parts, and if learners discuss about those pictures, they might be interpreted as serving their own interests.”* This suggests that peer educators are faced with some limitations with regard to their role functions. This might negatively affect their effectiveness in sexuality education.

4.4.6. Curriculum

The curriculum emerged as yet another significant issue of concern among educators from both schools in this study. Educators expressed concern about the lack of sexuality education as part of the formal curriculum in the FET phase. Educators further felt strongly that this was a phase where the implementation of sexuality education needs to be taken more seriously. The fact that sexuality education is not taken seriously by educators in the FET phase, might expose learners to risky behavior. The respondents shared the same sentiments and said: *“I do not think that Sexuality Education is given the seriousness it deserves, as we have classes who are not doing Life Orientation. For example, in our school it is only Grade 8 and 9 who are doing Life Orientation yet all learners need to know about these things. The whole school needs to know and I don't think that we are giving it enough time even in those classes like Grade 8 and 9. In fact, when they are still in Grade 8 and 9 most of them are still innocent and are not sexually active. Yet it is amazing that by the time they begin to be sexually active from Grade 10 to 12, no sexuality education is given to them at all. Some of them might have long forgotten what they were told in Grade 8 and 9. From grade 10, there should be more emphasis on sexuality education. In fact this should be done from grade 8 to 12. It is unfortunate that the ones that are ignored are the ones that are active and who need more guidance.”*

A further similar view was stated by another respondent: *“ It is unfortunate that the ones that are ignored are the ones that are active and who need more guidance.”*

When educators were asked about which topics were easier to teach, they indicated that it was easier to teach learners about HIV and AIDS, relationships, hygiene, decision-making and substance abuse than it was about teaching sexually related issues.

One of the respondents said: *“I would say AIDS is easier to teach, at least everybody is somehow concerned about it as it affects almost everybody.”* Another respondent said: *“We can also teach about love because they enjoy it. At least it is easier to talk about how to choose a partner, hygiene, how to love themselves, how to keep their virginity and decision-making.”* Educators felt that talking about these issues does not embarrass anyone. Learners do not complicate the discussions and furthermore do not pose difficult questions when these topics are discussed. Educators further indicated that all topics unrelated to sexual behavior and body parts are not seen as a problem to deal with when teaching sexuality education.

A further similar view was stated by another respondent: *“You know, there are topics which are a no-go area, just like abuse and teenage pregnancy. Some of the learners in the same classroom have children of their own at home; therefore, if you talk about teenage pregnancy, they feel that you are embarrassing them since you as an educator knows that they have children.”*

The same respondent added by saying: *“As a Grade 8 Teacher I think that sexuality education should start at a lower level, at Grade 8 they are 13 and 14year olds, and sometimes you find out that they already know a lot about sexual issues. Let’s say we deal the developmental stages, most of them have already reached some of those stages. If sexuality education were to start from grade 4 to 12, it would be much better because by the time they get to grade 8 it is long overdue.”*

A further response was made by another respondent who said: *“I just take the easiest topic, because the problem with these Grade 8 learners they get excited, when you talk about words like penis, vagina etc. They laugh at you and they become*

uncontrollable, and the lesson is blown out of proportion sometimes, and even if you show them the pictures of the private parts they laugh and laugh, that is the main problem. I think sexuality should be taught by two teachers, male and female, so that the female deals with the girls and the male deals with the boys.”

4.4.7. Language

Educators at both schools voiced concern in the focus group discussions about the use of English in the teaching of sexuality education to Zulu first language learners. They noted that some Zulu language terminologies are viewed as embarrassing for them to use. In such instances they prefer using the English terminology. However, the majority of educators believed that sexuality education should be taught in isiZulu so as to achieve maximum effectiveness, as this would give everyone an opportunity to express their own view when different topics are discussed. It was also noted by the researcher that even though educators felt that it would be better if the mother tongue was used in the teaching of sexuality education, they also raised a concern that some Zulu terminology was very difficult and could be embarrassing to express, and they would prefer to use English than uttering certain specific words. This could be detected in the following expression from a respondent; *“Another barrier is language. There is a problem with language and terminology. As you know that the medium of instruction is English. We teach in English even though we know that some of them may not understand. Why do we not teach them the lesson in isiZulu, because it is pointless to convey a message to people who do not understand, in other words they won't get the point and therefore it is a waste of productive time. But, some terminology is very embarrassing in isiZulu and it is better to say the English word.”*

4.4.8. Gender Stereotyping

Interestingly, educators felt that in teaching certain aspects of sexuality, boys and girls should be separated. In the focus group discussions, educators appeared to support gender division in these classes and drew attention to this in their expressions. They also questioned the impact of sexuality education on the sexual practices of girls.

Somehow, educators appeared to express the view that girls are responsible for their high teenage pregnancy statistics. *“It is sometimes confusing whether to teach about sexuality education or not, because, I remember some years back when we had a high*

rate of teenage pregnancy, we decided to teach them about sexuality and we concentrated our efforts to girls but instead of reducing teenage pregnancy we doubled it. These were the worst years in our school in terms of pregnancies. It seems as if learners wanted to experience what we were guiding them against.”

A further different view was stated by another respondent: *“I think that the teaching of sexuality at school is empowering even though it is not done in detail because some parents are scared to talk to their children about sexuality. They take it as a disgrace. We, as teachers, we have a function of building the nation, and we must re-shape the nations’ sexuality education. Sexuality must be taught without fear of corrupting learners. It must also be given enough time.”*

Another concern amongst educators was that girls should be separated from boys when sexuality is discussed. Respondents further indicated that male teachers should talk to boys and female teachers to girls. Topics such as menstruation are viewed as embarrassing to girls if they are discussed in front of them and girls might end up not participating the manner in which they should. The following response is typical: *“For example if we talk about menstruation, it should be a female that must talk about those issues and only the girls should be addressed. Girls feel embarrassed in front of boys and sometimes boys make jokes about issues relating to girls. In this case you find boys being more talkative than girls. Sometimes for me as a male teacher it is difficult to talk about female issues because I also have feelings. Some of these girls are beautiful and you blush in front of them, so it is better if you talk to boys only.”*

Female educators were however found to have a different opinion concerning the teaching of boys and girls separately. They indicated that it would be beneficial to teach them together as that could create a better understanding of each other. To that end, one of them said: *“No!...no!...no!... it is better to teach them together so that girls can understand about boys and vice versa.”*

4.4.9. Learner Participation

Educators at the first school were emphatic that learners participated and learned more about sexuality education when outside organizations such as NGO’s, FBO’s and CBO’s disseminated the information to them. Their view was that learners probably

felt free to discuss sexuality- related issues with someone they do not interact with on a daily basis. This enables them to feel free to discuss issues of a personal nature without feeling embarrassed in the presence of a known educator. The research also indicated that not only were learners afraid to discuss sexuality with their teachers, but that the teachers also felt that an outsider would have a greater impact on the learners, than an educator who deals with learners on a daily basis. The following comment supports this view. *“Sometimes we invite other stakeholders form outside to address these issues to our learners. But this only happens once or twice a year. In fact we tend to think that they tend to understand outsiders in a better way than us. Sometimes learners feel free when somebody from outside or from another school is conducting a lesson. They are freer even to ask questions that are personal. That is another problem that we encounter, they are a bit scared asking questions from people they live with every day. In fact, not only learners are afraid, teachers as well. Some of them are reserved and do not want to call a spade a spade. This is somehow difficult... .. it is better if someone from outside discusses these issues.”*

4.4.10. Educator Training

Training of educators for any curriculum reform is essential if it is to have a positive impact. Educators sometimes perceived the lack of training and education as the greatest challenge to successfully implementing the sexuality education curriculum. In this regard they expressed the following: *“We need workshops and we also need to workshop the community... .. Although the department provides us with workshops, but these workshops are not enough because sometimes one teacher or two should attend that workshop and when they come back, there is no time for feedback and others remain in the dark and cannot implement this information that you have got from the workshop.”*

A need for further training was clearly indicated by this research study. Educators also said that it does not help to take one educator per school to go for training as is the practice in the Education Department. The belief that one educator who has been trained will cascade the information to others is regarded as ineffectual since it is sometimes very difficult to do this if one had attended a workshop. The situation becomes worse if that person who was trained then leaves the school, because he leaves with all the pertinent information. Educators agreed that: *“We need more*

workshops, because there is this problem let us take for instance at schools someone attends a workshop and the next year he goes to another school, there will be no-one with that information.”

4.4.11. Trust

In the focus group discussions respondents in both schools raised concerns concerning the issue confidentiality and trust. They perceived that educators breached issues of confidentiality and trust which they believed went against encouraging learners to talk openly about sexual practices and also in generating conversations around sexuality. Over and above this difficulty the fact that there are some educators who have covert sexual relationships with learners. This seemed to contribute further towards causing an attitude of mistrust between educators and parents. One educator said; *“How can parents trust such a person who looks for girlfriends amongst his own children? I don't think that we give them room enough to have confidence in us. This is a matter that needs to be treated seriously, but we tend to make jokes about it. We therefore become part of the problem rather than assisting to resolve the problem, ehh... are we contributing positively or negatively? That is a question that needs to be asked about the teaching of sexuality. How can parents trust us with their children to talk about sexuality if we are the ones who are sexually interested in them? You know, the issue of confidentiality is also a problem, because we tend to discuss learners' problems in the staff-room, other teachers make a joke and I think that affects the learners in the process. Though we are parents, we lack skills, we are not professionals in these things and I think that also affect the teaching of sexuality education.”*

4.4.12. Perceived Challenges

It was interesting to note from this research that male educators perceived that parents might think that educators had ulterior motives when implementing sexuality education. They felt that it was possible for parents to misinterpret the function of sexuality education. *“You will never know if by teaching sexuality, parents might think that you are levelling your ground, so that it will be easy for you to introduce your sexual interest in a learner, particularly if you are a male educator. Parents might think that we are promoting promiscuity. Tell me, what does one do in that case? Do we continue teaching about sexuality or we save our face and forget about it? Are we doing the same things that parents would have done? Hheeh! You know, we*

tend to apply those methods that we use in our families, where we say, according to this... ..this is my philosophy. For example, I can say that learners are not allowed to have boyfriends, yet in other families, they allow that and that contradicts the actual life as it is. When I come with my philosophy the learners become confused at the end. They end up not knowing what is expected in life. They also see us as role models, but what we do can also lead them astray, because sometimes what we say is not what we do.”

4.4.13. Security

The fear of reprisal against educators from community members and parents emerged from the data as a significant issue. Educators maintained that the teaching of sexuality education generated information from learners that was sensitive especially when sexual abuse was involved. Educators articulated that acting on this information compromised their own safety. Because educators are obliged by law to report any form or suspicion of abuse, this seemed to threaten their safety. *“Not only your credibility is at risk here, even your life is not safe. You know... .. there is a lot of abuse in our communities. Some learners are abused by their uncles, fathers etc. Those abuse cases are not easy to deal with as we have a number of educators who have been displaced in their schools, because of trying to protect children against abuse. Family members attack them and say they are destroying their families. We are afraid to talk about these issues. For me, teaching about child abuse is a problem. You teach with fear because you know that this topic might lead to other children disclosing that they are being abused or have been abused before. When this happens, you are expected to be a witness in court and nobody wants to be a witness because it puts your life in danger. I am sure you know that some pupils are being abused and they are not aware that they are being abused. When they become aware, they want the abuse to stop, but we are afraid to report and this does not help our children, and at this stage you wonder if the teaching of sexuality is empowering or disempowering to the learners.”*

4.4.14. Teaching Methods

The focus group discussions also revealed that the methods used to disseminate information on sexuality education according to the data should be revisited as educators in both schools claimed that these methods currently served as an obstacle to effective teaching. Some educators resort to the telling method and this does not seem to be effective. When educators were asked about the methods that are useful in the teaching of sexuality, one of them said; *“Our teaching methods also need to change. You know when one talks about sexuality, one should not preach because that does not help. But, the tendency is that we want to tell them what to do and what not to do. This stops learners from opening up.”* Educators also indicated that discussion and role-play are more effective than the telling method in actively teaching sexuality education.

4.5. Conclusions from the Focus Group Discussions

Data from the focus group discussions clearly demonstrate that educators were reflexive about the teaching of sexuality education. They expressed concerns about communication with parents which they believe needs improvement as well as the lack of resources which they viewed as a hindrance to effective sexuality teaching. Some educators also questioned the appropriateness of the content that is taught to learners when they span a wide age range in an individual class. The tension that exists between religion and sexuality education was expressed by some respondents who observed this as an unproductive factor. Although educators recognized the value and role of peer educators, they were concerned about the intimidation that they were exposed to from educators. The issue of language and the exclusion of sexuality education from the FET curriculum were also identified as barriers to the successful implementation of sexuality education. Some educators preferred teaching single sex lessons on some topics such as menstruation which they saw as being gender specific. Educators also expressed concern about their own safety when discovering the prevalent incidence of sexual abuse of learners by family members.

Educators also recommended an increased number of youth platforms which could generate greater dialogue amongst teenagers and expressed their own comfort in teaching some aspects of sexuality education. There was evidence from the data that learner participation could increase through greater community involvement and that

educators welcomed further training and workshops on the subject of sexuality education. All educators strongly believed that sexuality education must be taught. Many educators expressed the need for teaching methods in the subject to evolve towards a more successful outcome in this subject.

4.6. Conclusion

It is evident from the data that emerged from both the questionnaire and the focus group discussions that educators in this study are faced with some serious challenges in successfully implementing the sexuality education curriculum. This was highlighted by their concern with curriculum, language, parental involvement, teaching methods and the lack of resources. It was also encouraging to note that all educators are in favor of teaching sexuality education and also their recognition of the need for further workshops and training for both themselves and for parents in order to change the approach and perceptions of the curriculum.

Recommendations based on the findings of this study will be discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has focused on understanding teachers' perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education in secondary schools in the Pinetown District. Sexuality education has been viewed as playing a significant role in the lives of learners. It has also been seen as significant for schools to recognize and accept sexuality as an important, if not critical part of the development process of young persons.

This study recognizes that learners need to understand the sexual nature of their bodies and that, through sexuality education, learners could be exposed to more adequate educational guidance in matters related to sexuality.

Hence the objectives of this study on sexuality education were outlined as follows:

- to identify the factors that affect and influence the teaching of sexuality education
- to identify ways to encourage teachers to teach sexuality education
- to investigate the challenges and difficulties in teaching sexuality education so that these may be addressed at a later stage and
- to investigate what methods could prove to be most effective in teaching sexuality education.

Issues that emerged during the study will be discussed and recommendations will be made with a view to improving the teaching of this subject.

5.1. Findings from the Literature Study

5.1.1. Youngsters and sexuality education

The literature used in this study has revealed that teenagers do engage in unprotected sex and that this has led to an increase in teenage pregnancies as well as HIV and AIDS infections (HSRC, 2005). The study by (HSRC, 2003) has also indicated that the rate of unplanned pregnancies was 15 percent amongst the youth aged between 15 and 19 years. It has also revealed that 53 percent of youth between 20 and 24 years of age have had sexual relationships. This study has confirmed this view as educators have revealed that they have faced a high rate of pregnancies in their schools.

Literature has also indicated that most teenagers are not in a position to make informed decisions about sexuality. Therefore in order to protect them from the results of making uninformed decisions, educators need to teach sexuality education in schools (Vergnani & Frank, 1998). In support of this view, educators in this study agreed that if learners were not taught about sexuality, the results could be destructive to those learners. Educators have further agreed that if learners are taught about sexuality, they could make more informed decisions about sexuality and it is these decisions that might protect them from further risky behaviour.

The study has further revealed that open approaches to sexuality education are viewed as more likely to contribute to reducing the rate of accelerated teenage pregnancies than those emphasizing morality (Epstein, 1998). A similar view was stated by Vergnani & Frank (1998). They suggested that if an educator discussed sexuality positively and was open to questioning, then he or she could create an effective atmosphere for the teaching of sexuality. Also advantageous in this pursuit of sexuality education could be an openness to questioning, to model tolerance, a sound demonstration of respect towards each learner in the classroom, as well as having a good sense of humour. Epstein (1998) further suggests that youngsters who are not open to discussing sexuality issues with adults are more likely to engage in sexual encounters than those who openly discuss the topic. Epstein et al (2003) adds to this view by suggesting that by avoiding sexuality education, learners may be put at risk because the more they are ignorant about their sexuality, the more they are in danger. In line with this view, educators in this study have revealed that the avoidance of sexuality education in the FET phase might expose learners to risky behaviour.

A similar view was expressed by Godow (1982) who has suggested that sexuality education encourages greater responsibility in sexual decision-making. Therefore it is considered that sexuality education should also address sexual desires and should not be presented in an authoritarian manner which presents sex as something bad that should not be engaged in. Educators in this study revealed that this view is not entertained by parents as they treat sexual issues in a generally authoritarian manner and still treat it as a taboo subject.

This view that sexuality education needs to address sexual desires was also supported by Rocheron & Whyld (1983). They argued that children are curious by nature and that sexual curiosity is awakened very early in the child's life. This suggestion is in line with the view that sexual development is a perfectly normal aspect of one's total development and that it continues on whether it is planned or not (Harilal, 1993). The findings of this study confirmed this view when educators revealed that younger children giggle and were amused by topics on sexuality. Young age does not necessarily imply that learners are not aware of sexual issues. Educators further felt that sexuality education should be introduced from Grade R.

Gerdes et al (1988) and Green et al (1977) further suggested that sexuality overlaps and integrates the physical, intellectual, emotional and social development of an individual. This study further revealed that sexuality education should not be left out until they reach a certain stage of development, but should form a part of the development in all stages of the child's growth.

Postman (1983) has further suggested that the biological and social development of a child could stimulate interest in sexuality for adolescents. At this point, questions were raised about making love and also the basic need to form intimate relationships with persons of the opposite sex (Baruch, 1953). According to Howell (1973) sexual desire is the dominant and basic emotional need of adolescence because the overall sex hormonal system is activated at this point. This results in males and females having different sexual needs and desires although they all have the potential for sexual arousal (Godow, 1983).

To this end, Ingersoll (1989) suggested that educators incorporate a set of culturally determined values concerning one's own sexual behaviour. This could assist one to have a clear sex identity, gender identity as well as an appropriate sex-role. This study has supported this view as educators revealed that parents ought to stop viewing sex as a taboo topic and need to actually discuss sexuality with their children.

5.1.2. The school and sexuality

Schools should play an important role in the teaching of sexuality education. This initially involves acknowledging that learners do have sexual desires. This study has

also shown that there are two discourses that view sexuality education differently. One discourse suggests that sex is dangerous and needs to be challenged by society, whilst the other discourse suggests that sex is healthy and good, but is repressed and distorted by the society (Weeks, 1981).

School rules and routine are seen as another form that are used by society to suppress learners sexual desires. According to Kehily (1998) learners, through participation in school rules and routines, learn to conform or resist the official culture of the school. These rules and routines are viewed as the hidden curriculum of the school which aims obliquely at inhibiting a sense of freedom. In line with this view, Paechter (2003) suggests that learners are made to control their bodies by being forced to sit still and be quiet in order to deny bodily urges and needs until an appropriate time.

Paechter (2003) further says that schools tend to focus on the development of the mind, while those aspects that are concerned with the education of bodies are marginalized. She further suggests that the body is forced to disappear so that it does not disturb sound learning. Wolpe (1988) has a different view and says that flirting between male educators and older girls in schools is used to keep girls interested in school and prevents them from going wild in the course of seeking pleasure outside the school.

Paechter (2003) however argues that schools often marginalize sexuality education because it is seen to threaten the good order of the school. She further suggests that educators have to change their formal approach when teaching sexuality to become more informal so that learners can open up and feel more free to discuss sensitive topics. She further suggests that because educators want to avoid being informal and need to maintain the dignity of the school, sexuality education is often marginalized.

5.1.3. Educators and sexuality education

This study has also revealed that a thriving sexuality education programme is dependent upon the expertise of educators. Their knowledge, skills and attitudes determine whether or not adolescents will take the issue of sexuality education seriously (Daria, 1986) as cited by Campbell (2004).

In support of this view, Greenberg (1989) argues that sexuality education teachers should possess the ability to lead discussions without being judgemental and moralistic. They need to create an environment that encourages open communication between educators and learners.

This study has also indicated that educators need to be trained in this subject field. In line with this, Milton (2001) contends that educators should be adequately trained and be given adequate resources so that sexuality education can be properly implemented. This view is further supported by Haignere & Culhane (1996) who suggest that the success of sexuality education depends on the expertise of the educator.

However, Aldred et al (2003) supports the view that although many educators are being committed to teaching sexuality education, they do report considerable anxieties about sexuality as a subject and its perceived low status in the school curriculum. Also revealed in this study was that low status of sexuality education was confirmed by the lack of adequate resources in schools.

5.1.4. Parents and Sexuality Education

This study indicated that parents felt uncomfortable about talking to their children about sexuality (Price et al, 2005). It was also described how parents not only felt uncomfortable talking about sexuality, but that they also did not have sufficient factual information concerning sexual issues (King et al, 1993). Furthermore Rule (1979) have further indicated that society is hesitant to deal with sexuality and operates from the hope that by ignoring such issues, they will simply not occur. Rule (1979) has also suggested that parents would rather threaten their children than openly discuss some sexuality issues with them. These findings further indicate that children's induction into sexual knowledge is usually left to their peers. Yet it was also discovered that parents who discussed sexuality with their children developed a good relationship with them.

A similar viewpoint was outlined by Hlalele (1998) who said that discussions about sexuality have the potential to strengthen the relationship between the child and the parent. However, Makanya (1993) found that the openness of the parent about

sexuality could be mistaken for permission or even encouragement to engage in sexual practice.

This study has also indicated that only 10% of educators received support from the parents. Parents lack of support for educators in the teaching of sexuality education is associated with either their opposition to the teaching of sexuality education or to their feelings of discomfort in discussing this subject.

The study has also revealed that some educators have had sexual relationships with learners. This has resulted in many male educators thinking that parents might consider educators to have ulterior motives when implementing sexuality education. This study presented this view as a challenge that could possibly make parents misinterpret the function of sexuality education.

5.1.5. Educator's security

Educators in this study maintained that their security was threatened by the teaching of sexuality education since it often generated information from learners that was sensitive, especially when sexual abuse was involved. The reason for this was that educators are obliged by law to report any form of abuse. Such cases often end up in court and educators are expected to give statements in court since the abuse was reported initially to them. When this has occurred, some perpetrators or their families started to threaten the lives of educators who were involved. It has also been shown that a number of educators have been displaced from their workplaces due to such incidences. This has resulted in educators wishing to avoid the teaching of sexuality so that there could be no platform in which learners could report any form of abuse.

5.1.6. Methods of teaching sexuality education

This study has revealed that the teacher-tell method was not effective in the teaching of sexuality education. It has further revealed that even though the telling method was known to be ineffective, educators still resorted to telling learners what to do and what not to do. The methods that proved to be more effective than the telling method were the role-play and discussion methods. Educators also revealed that the methods used to disseminate information on sexuality education should be revisited because the ineffective methods served as an obstacle to effective teaching.

5.1.7. Confidentiality

This study has indicated that educators do not treat issues that have been disclosed by the learners to them as confidential. This caused a great deal of mistrust and discouraged learners to openly talk about sexual practices that affected them. It also stopped them from generating conversations on the topic of sexuality. Some educators further made jokes about sexual issues raised by learners. This made educators become a part of the problem rather than an aid to resolving it. The same issues caused mistrust between parents and educators since no parent wished their child's problem to be discussed in the staff-room.

5.1.8. Adequate Training

This study has also confirmed that all educators need to be adequately trained in the teaching of sexuality education. Educators perceived the lack of adequate training as the greatest challenge to successfully implementing the sexuality education curriculum. More workshops on sexuality education are needed for educators as well as parents. It was also found that workshops provided by the department of education were inadequate as only one or two educators per school were invited to attend these workshops.

Even when those few educators have been trained, they are given insufficient time to give feedback to the other educators who could not attend the workshop. This results in further educators not implementing the teaching of this subject as expected. Educators revealed that it did not help to train one educator per school since the school was left with no one who could provide information if the educator left the school.

The duration of the workshops was also problematic and was seen to be inadequate in empowering educators to teach sexuality education in a manner that could be successful.

5.1.9. Involvement of other stakeholders

This study revealed that learners participated and learnt more about sexuality education when other stakeholders like NGO's, FBO's and CBO's disseminated the

information to them. Learners felt free to discuss issues of a personal nature without feeling embarrassed in the presence of a known educator. Educators felt that an outsider would have a greater impact on the learner than an educator who dealt with learners on a daily basis. This study has also indicated that learners tend to relate to outsiders in a better way than their own educators. It was further indicated that learners also felt free to discuss issues of sexuality with an educator from another school than with their own. This was particularly so because learners were hesitant to ask questions of those who they dealt with on a daily basis.

5.1.10. Gender issues in the teaching of sexuality education

Educators in this study revealed that they would rather separate boys from girls during the teaching of sexuality education. They further said that male educators should teach boys whilst female educators should teach girls. This was because they felt that certain topics would rather be discussed with the same-sex learners so as to avoid any embarrassment. However, some educators felt that it would be beneficial to teach both boys and girls in the same class as this would create a better understanding of each other. Interestingly, educators also perceived girls as being responsible for their own high teenage pregnancy rate.

5.1.11. Language as a barrier

This study revealed that some Zulu language terminologies were viewed as embarrassing for educators to use. In such instances, they preferred to use the English terminology. However, educators believed that sexuality education should be taught in isiZulu to achieve maximum effectiveness as this would give everyone an opportunity to express their own views when different topics were discussed. The study also indicated that it would be better if mother tongue was used in teaching sexuality education but proposed the use of English words where some Zulu terminology was difficult or embarrassing to express. Presently, the medium of instruction is English, but educators are aware that some learners do not understand certain aspects if discussions are held only in English.

5.1.12. Curriculum

Educators in this study expressed concern about the lack of sexuality education as part of the formal curriculum from Grade 10 to 12. Sexuality education is only taught in

Grade 8 and 9 only and this increased the risk of learners exposing themselves to risky behaviour. The reason for sexuality education to be taught in Grade 8 and 9 only is that it is considered as part of the Life Orientation learning area. Life Orientation is only taught in Grade 8 and 9 and not yet taught in Grade 10 to 12 but it was indicated that Life Orientation will be phased into Grade 10 to 12 as the learners currently in Grade 8 and 9 move up to the higher grades.

Furthermore, this study indicated that educators were selective of topics which they teach. They tended to only choose those topics that caused them no embarrassment. This was preferred because learners did not complicate the discussions and furthermore did not pose difficult questions when these topics were discussed. All topics unrelated to sexual behaviour and body parts were not seen as a problem when teaching sexuality education.

5.1.13. Challenges in teaching sexuality education

Educators in this study indicated that they are faced with a number of challenges when teaching sexuality education. These challenges included teachers' sexual relationships with learners, religion, varying age ranges in one class, lack of adequate resources as well as learners' expectations.

5.1.13.1. Teachers' sexual relationships with learners

All high schools in the Pinetown District have a group of learners who are peer educators. Their role is to assist other learners to deal with a number of issues affecting them. This role is sometimes seen as precarious because of the power relations that exist between the teaching educators and learner peer educators. This difficulty comes about as a result of some educators who have sexuality relationships with learners. Peer educators have been found to cause situations of conflict between learners and educators. This issue has caused their relationships with educators to become soured.

5.1.13.2. Religion

The findings in this study have revealed that religion is a barrier in the teaching of sexuality education since educators expressed the view that it could not be openly discussed due to the restraints imposed by a religious viewpoint. Topics related to the

use of condoms are not allowed by some religions, yet educators need to discuss the use of condoms at school. The study revealed that some educators were reluctant to discuss topics that went against the specific principles of their religion.

5.1.13.3. Varying age ranges

The varying age ranges that educators had to cater for in single classes was also seen as a challenge. Younger learners found certain aspects of the content inappropriate. On the other hand, many of the older learners found the content appropriate and wished to engage in the discussions. Furthermore, younger learners sometimes found certain topics amusing, older learners felt embarrassed since some issues had become personal.

5.1.13.4. Lack of adequate resources

This study has also indicated that 100 percent of educators were concerned with the non-availability of adequate resources to assist them in the teaching of sexuality education. This issue has affected the quality of lessons that they were able to provide in the classroom.

5.1.13.5. Learners' expectations

This study has also revealed that communication between learners and educators was affected by the expectations of learners that educators ought to be able to live the life that they preached about in the classroom. This optimistic expectation tended to limit what educators could say or teach. It further indicated that educators had to be good role models to the learners, and further, that their actions had to be in line with what they taught in the classroom concerning sexuality education.

5.2. Limitations of the study

This study has also demonstrated some limitations. These are indicated below -:

- The sample was limited as it was not representative of the entire population in KwaZulu-Natal. It was limited to two schools only in the Hammarisdale Circuit. This study was further limited to Africans. Other races were not represented at all, yet all races are in need of sexuality education. The inclusion of all races could increase the credibility of the findings of this study.

- The generalization of the findings of this study is limited since the study was limited to one rural and one township school. Schools in semi-rural, urban and semi-urban areas were not included in this research.
- Furthermore, this study was limited to high schools only; primary schools were excluded.
- Educator's responses to both focus group discussions and questionnaires may not necessarily reflect their real perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education. Since some of the responses may be influenced by their knowledge of what is socially desirable, and not what their genuine perceptions are. The respondents might have responded in a manner that aims at impressing the researcher with a view to the researcher holding them in high esteem due to their viewpoints.
- In the African culture, certain issues related to sexuality are regarded as taboo and cannot be openly discussed. This could result in respondents not answering questions honestly and in the manner in which they feel.
- The data was limited to responses to the questionnaire as well as focus group discussions. This meant that the credibility of the findings of this study was dependent on the validity of the items in the questionnaire as well as the feelings and general attitudes of the respondents.

However, the value of research cannot be discounted because of limitations, but can be enhanced by reporting such limitations. This is supported by Hinderson (1990) who argues that there is no harm in having limitations, but it is bad not to admit them. Despite these limitations, this study is an attempt to uncover teacher's perceptions of the teaching of sexuality education. However, these findings and the recommendations that follow should be viewed with these limitations in mind.

5.3. Recommendations from this research

The findings from this research have suggested that policy needs to be modified and changes implemented in two areas, those aspects related to the Department of Education, and those in dealing with the parents.

5.3.1. Recommendations to the Department of Education

The findings of educational research can be interpreted as both a contribution to understanding and as a specific guide to action. Dockrell (1980) maintains that “educational research like Janus, has two faces” (p. 12). From this statement, Dockrell implies that educational policy-makers fashionably refer to research findings as justification for their actions, rather than as the basis for their future policy decisions. It is this researcher’s viewpoint that this study has clearly indicated that more is needed in the field of sexuality education than simply justifying what exists at the time. Certain modifications to policy need to be taken based upon these limited findings. In view of the findings in this study, the following recommendations are made based both on the literature in this field as well as upon the specific responses to the questionnaire and focus group discussions that were undertaken in this research study.

- Tertiary institutions involved in the training of educators should include sexuality education as part of the compulsory course work for teacher trainees in order to qualify as educators. Specialized degrees or diplomas in sexuality education could be provided and would be advantageous in this field.
- Intensified in-service training should be provided for all educators in order to adequately deal with the ever-changing needs and demands related to human sexuality.
- Parents need to be given clear guidelines through specialists in sexuality education to positively and comfortably deal with issues related to sexuality rather than treating these issues as taboo subjects.
- Other stakeholders such as Non-governmental Organisations and other government departments should be invited by the Department of Education to

jointly design and implement programmes that will assist learners to become adequately equipped to make informed decisions, behave responsibly, and avoid risky behaviour related to sexuality education.

- A system of mentoring could usefully be developed. This system could be introduced through an in-service course using a relatively small committee of specialists who all have considerable expertise in the education system, one too that would not necessarily be too costly to the Department of Education.
- The composition of this committee could include specialists who could look into the biological problems, specialists that could provide the medical perspective, specialists that could look into the moral issues around sexuality education, specialists looking at the religious issues around sexuality education, as well as specialists from the justice system who could look into the legal issues around sexuality education.
- Sexuality education should be taught from grade R to grade 12 and the best ways of encouraging interest and commitment to this subject need to be devised by the Department of Education.
- An adequate time allocation for the subject of sexuality education should be part of the timetable.
- Educators should be provided with comprehensive and more adequate resources in order to assist them in the teaching of sexuality education. This could include arrangement of peer group meetings/discussions which will be guided by a manual that could be provided by the department.
- The Department of Education needs to vigorously deal with educators who have formed sexual relationships with learners as this negatively affects the teaching of this subject.

- The Department of Education needs to negotiate with the Department of Justice so that educators who report the abuse of children should not be expected to appear in court since this puts their lives in danger and further leads to a number of abuse cases not being reported. These departments should also ensure that cases of sexual abuse are prosecuted and that criminals are stopped from perpetrating these acts.

5.3.2. Recommendations to Parents

- Parents should be encouraged not to shy away from discussion of sexual related issues with their children. Parents' openness on these issues could allow children to discuss their problems with the parents without feeling embarrassed. Such encouragement should come from the school.
- Parents should form networks with other parents in order to empower each other with regard to dealing with sensitive issues related to sexuality and to deal with a clear understanding of the process and teaching of sexuality education.
- Parents need to be informed of their responsibility in the field of sexuality education by various means as part of school / parent business. This could be done through parent / teacher associations as well as obtaining assistance from the Psychological Services.
- With knowledge of this responsibility, parents need to realize that they cannot shift their responsibility on to teacher educators in the matter of sexuality education, but need to be informed and understand that effective sexuality education needs the support of parents as well as the community.
- Parents should also create a warm, loving environment in which their children will feel free to discuss sexually-related issues without feeling threatened or embarrassed.

5.3.3. Recommendations for Further Study

- This study was limited to one school in a rural area and one school in a township. It might be beneficial to investigate whether there is a difference between the perceptions of educators in rural schools and urban schools in some future research study.
- This present study could be greatly extended to all secondary schools in order to obtain a broader insight into teachers' perceptions of sexuality education. This could assist in minimizing and resolving the many and multifarious challenges faced by educators today.
- An expanded study on sexuality education could be undertaken in the future. In such a study, the moral implications of various forms of sexuality education could be included in research in this field. In such a study, philosophical, religious and even economic factors could be explored to provide a fuller and more comprehensive view on sexuality education.

5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature study and findings from this study have supplied evidence that sexuality education should be provided as an integral part of a learner's development from the earliest stages. This could assist learners to develop their own positive value systems, become assertive, make informed decisions and avoid risky sexual behaviour.

It is evident from this study that educators are capable and willing to teach about sexuality education, but it is clear that they do need support from other educators, from school management, from parents as well as from society at large. Even though educators see the need for sexuality education and are willing to teach it, they do feel uncomfortable in discussing certain topics related to sexuality. This means that educators should be given more adequate training together with ongoing in-service training. Educators should also be provided with adequate resources that could assist in the effective implementation of all aspects of sexuality education.

The effectiveness of the teaching of sexuality education depends ultimately on the effective co-operation between the educators, the Department of Education and also through the role of the parents. The educators have a pivotal role in making the entire process successful. It is upon their broad shoulders that the responsibility rests. It is with this intention that this research, analysis and the suggested remediation measures may together contribute to the improvement in the teaching of this subject, sexuality education in schools.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter to the principal and governing body.

Appendix 2: Governing body and principal's consent letter.

Appendix 3: Letter to the educator.

Appendix 4: Educator's consent letter.

Appendix 5: Educator's questionnaire.

Appendix 6: Letter to the Department of Education.

Appendix 7: Approval letter from the Department of Education.

Appendix 8: Permission to conduct research.

Appendix 1: Letter to the Principal and the Governing Body

P. O Box 614
Hammarsdale
3700

Request to conduct the research study

To: The Principal and
School Governing body

Dear Sir

I am an M.Ed student at University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am interested in the teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of sexuality education in schools. As part of the study I would like to interview your educators about the issues referring to the teaching of sexuality education, what they find working in teaching the subject, what doesn't work, the challenges they are facing when teaching this subject, and how they think these can be managed.

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will be audio- taped. The data from the interview will only be used in the study that I am doing and will not be used for any other purpose without your consent. They are not obliged to answer all the questions that I ask, and they are free to withdraw from the interview at any time. No real names will be used in any material that I write up for the course and every attempt will be made to keep the material confidential.

If you require any further information please feel free to contact my course supervisor, Dr C.A.E Moodie at 031 2603421. Dr Moodie's e-mail address is moodiet@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your assistance.
Sincerely

Namisile Mchunu

Should you like to contact me, my contact details are as follows

Tel. 031 716-2700/9(w)

031 771-1340(h)

Cell 0823363984

If you agree to allow your educators to participate in the interview kindly fill in and sign the attached letter.

Appendix 2: Governing Body and Principal's Consent Letter.

Letter of consent

I, _____ (chairperson of the SGB/ principal) allow the educators of this school to participate in the study. I understand that the real name of the school and the real educators' names will not be used anywhere in the study, and that their responses will be treated confidentially. I also understand that they are free to withdraw from the study at any time.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 3: Letter To The Educator

P. O Box 614
Hammarisdale
3700

Request to conduct the research study

Dear Educator

I am an M.Ed student at University of KwaZulu- Natal. I am interested in the teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of sexuality education in schools. As part of the study I would like to interview you about the issues referring to the teaching of sexuality education, what you find working in teaching the subject, what doesn't work, the challenges you are facing when teaching this subject, and how you think these can be managed.

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will be audio taped. The data from the interview will only be used in the study that I am doing and will not be used for any other purpose without your consent. You are not obliged to answer all the questions that I ask, and you are free to withdraw from the interview at any time. No real names will be used in any material that I write up for the course and every attempt will be made to keep the material confidential.

If you require any further information please feel free to contact my course supervisor, Dr C.A.E Moodie at 031 2603421. Dr Moodie's e-mail address is moodiet@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely

Namisile Mchunu

Should you like to contact me, my contact details are as follows

Tel. 031 716-2700/9(w)

031 771-1340(h)

Cell 0823363984

If you agree to allow your educators to participate in the interview kindly fill in and sign the attached letter.

Appendix 4: Educators Letter Of Consent.

Letter of Consent

I, _____ agree to participate in the study. I understand that my real name will not be used anywhere in the write-ups and that my responses will be treated confidentially. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time. I also agree to be tape-recorded.

Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix 5: Educator's questionnaire

This questionnaire seeks to understand the teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of sexuality education. You may not write your name anywhere on the questionnaire, therefore feel free to express your views on the following statements. There is no right nor wrong answer, you only need to answer sincerely.

Tick with an (x) where appropriate.

1. Sex: Male Female

2. Age:

20-30 years

31-40 years

41-50 years

51-60 years

above 60 years

3. Marital status:

Married

Single

4. Number of years teaching.....

5. Number of years teaching sexuality.....

6. Number of hours teaching about sexuality per week: (Fill in the blank space)

Grade 8.....hours

Grade 9.....hours.

Grade 10.....hours

Grade 11.....hours

Grade 12.....hours

7. Training received on sexuality education :

None

Tertiary training

Workshop

8. Number of workshops attended on sexuality education:

1

2

3

4

5 or more

Indicate whether you strongly agree, agree, not sure, disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements. Choose only one response for each statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9. I am comfortable to teach about sexuality.					
10 I feel competent to teach sexuality					
11. All educators should teach about sexuality.					
12. My school has enough resources to help me teach about sexuality.					
13. I do not have enough time to teach sexuality.					
14. The school management supports me to teach the subject.					
15. I get support from other educators.					
16. I get support from parents.					
17. Sexuality education promotes promiscuity.					
18. I do not teach some topics that I am not comfortable with.					
19. I do not feel comfortable to use some terminology.					
20. I cannot thoroughly teach all topics					
21. I can discuss sexual orientation with learners.					
22. Some parents are against the teaching of sexuality education.					
23. I teach about abstinence only.					
24 Teachers discuss both abstinence and protective sex with learners.					
25. I can teach about masturbation to boys and girls.					
26. Conception, pregnancy, and birth must be covered in lessons.					
27. HIV/AIDS information should form part of sexuality education.					
28. Culture and religion are problematic in teaching sexuality					
29. Sexuality education is included in the time- table.					
30. Sexuality education should be taught to young learners.					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix 6: Letter to the department of education.

P.O Box 614
Hammarisdale
3700

TO: General Manager:
Research, Strategy, EMIS& Communications
Head Office

REQUEST TO CONDUCT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Sir

I am an M.Ed student at University of KwaZulu- Natal. I am interested in the teachers' perceptions towards the teaching of sexuality education in schools. As part of the study, I would like to interview 10 educators in two different schools about the issues referring to the teaching of sexuality education, what they find working in teaching the subject, what doesn't work, the challenges they are facing when teaching this subject, and how they think these can be managed.

Educators will be requested to fill in the questionnaire and also participate in focus group interviews. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will be audio taped. The data from the interview will only be used in the study that I am doing and will not be used for any other purpose without their consent. They are not obliged to answer all the questions asked, and they are free to withdraw from the interview at any time. No real names will be used in any material that I write up for the course and every attempt will be made to keep the material confidential.

I believe that the results of the study will assist both the schools and the department in ensuring that sexuality education is provided in a manner that will benefit our learners and communities at large. It can also be a useful tool to help learners make informed decisions, and reduce the rate of pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and STI infections.

In the light of the above, I hereby request that I be granted permission to conduct the study in our schools.

If you require any further information please feel free to contact my course supervisor, Dr CAE Moodie at 031 2603421. Dr Moodie's UKZN e-mail address is moodiet@ukzn.ac.za

Thank you for your assistance
Sincerely

Namisile Mchunu

Should you like to contact me, my contact details are as follows
Tel. 031 716-2700 / 9 (w)
031 7711340 (h)
Cell:0823363984

Appendix 7: Approval letter from the Department of Education



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8613
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:
Imibuzo: M Francis
Navrae:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0196/06
Verwysing:

Date:
Usuku:
Datum: 14 August 2006

To: Ms Namisile Joice Mchunu

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Please be informed that your application to conduct research has been approved with the following terms and conditions:

That as a researcher, you must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution bearing in mind that the institution is not obliged to participate if the research is not a departmental project.

Research should not be conducted during official contact time, as education programmes should not be interrupted, except in exceptional cases with special approval of the KZNDoe.

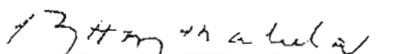
The research is not to be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where the KZNDoe deem it necessary to undertake research at schools during that period.

Should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application for extension must be directed to the Director: Resource Planning.

The research will be limited to the schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.

A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis must be provided to the Research Directorate.

Lastly, you must sign the attached declaration that, you are aware of the procedures and will abide by the same.


for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Appendix 8: Permission to Conduct Research



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFLUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8613
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKHOHOVISI

PIETERMARITZBURG

HEAD OFFICE

Inqulbes:
mibuzo: M Francis
javrao:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0197/06
Verwysing:

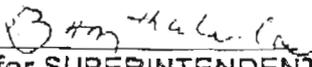
Date:
Usuku:
Datum: 28 August 2006

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Ms Namisile Joice Mchunu has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in. however, it must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDoe project.
- Ms Namisile Joice Mchunu has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.


for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education