

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUTCOMES-
BASED EDUCATION IN THE FOUNDATION
PHASE IN THE NORTH DURBAN REGION, IN
DIFFERENT SCHOOL CLIMATES.

BY

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*SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF*

MASTERS IN EDUCATION

IN THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN-WESTVILLE

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own work and has not previously in its entirety nor in part been submitted at any university for a degree.

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SIGNATURE

17 / 4 / 00
DATE



DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to all the OBE practitioners who, in the face of change, an increased teaching burden and minimum support, have taken bold, positive steps to implement OBE for the sake of the improvement of their charges.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude goes to Dr G. Kistan who spurred me on to complete this dissertation. His direction, constant encouragement, support and willingness to accommodate me at my convenience throughout this research study are truly appreciated.

I wish to express my sincere thanks to Devan Govender who selflessly offered his time, guidance and encouragement especially regarding the use of the computer.

I also extend my gratitude to all the Principals and OBE practitioners, including my friend Kers Annamalai, who sacrificed valuable time to answer my questionnaires and allowed me to interview them.

Finally, I am deeply indebted to my husband Pat and daughter Priya whose support have been invaluable.

ABSTRACT

Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) has been used successfully in many States in the United States of America, New Zealand and Denmark. Much of the information contained in the theoretical literature relates to America.

In South Africa, OBE is incorporated in Curriculum 2005 – the new national curriculum for the twenty-first century. Curriculum 2005 proposes to be a major step forward in ensuring quality education for all people in South Africa. It aims to equip learners with the knowledge, competencies and orientations needed for success once learners leave school or complete their training. OBE shifts the focus from a content-based education to one that is based on outcomes achieved by learners.

This research examines how the Foundation Phase educators, in the North Durban Region of KwaZulu-Natal, perceive the implementation of OBE and its implications for the entire school community. The study examines the advantages that OBE proposes and the related constraints.

The researcher concludes that in its infancy in South Africa, OBE with all its uncertainty of change, is being implemented with various degrees of success. This research study aims to highlight that the major burden of fulfilling the promise of OBE falls on the shoulders of the OBE practitioners.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Education is key to change. When South Africa gained democracy, it became necessary to change the system of education from one based on major inequities to one which was fundamentally egalitarian. Education is seen as the key to empower people to participate as active citizens and to compete globally.

At the heart of this change was the introduction of a new school curriculum – Curriculum 2005: a system of education that proposes to completely eliminate the traditional, content-based, teacher-centred education in all grades by the year 2005. Curriculum 2005 talks about lifelong learning – learning in both formal and informal ways. The teaching approach in the classroom aimed at increasing general knowledge and development of skills, thinking, attitudes and understanding, is called Outcomes-Based Education (OBE). OBE promises to bridge the gap between education and training.

OBE requires educators to focus on the learners and the outcomes of education. Great emphasis is placed on educators creating conditions that lead to success. Assessment of the learner's progress will be ongoing. OBE proposes to guarantee

every learner an education. Educational institutions exist as a result of the social needs of the country. OBE in South Africa talks of individuals who will acquire, through demonstration, the skills, values and attitudes that will provide them with the competence and motivation to participate appropriately in society and globally.

1.2. RATIONALE

William Spady, often referred to as the ‘father’ of OBE, believes that OBE means organising for results, basing what we do instructionally on the outcomes we want to achieve. All authentic outcomes-based systems make WHAT and WHETHER students learn successfully, more important than WHEN and HOW they learn it – accomplishing results are more important than providing learning programmes.

New York’s Johnson City School is a successful exemplar of OBE. This district initially identified a few learner outcomes in the areas of academics, skills and attitudes. The school reportedly managed to break the shackles of poverty through shared decision making and collaborative planning.

Grade One educators in South Africa were offered a brief training session (one week) to prepare themselves for the onslaught of OBE in 1998. Their attitudes and methodology had

to be changed to implement OBE. Amid this change, was the problem of the lack of resources, a non-user-friendly Foundation Phase Draft Policy / Phase Document with its complex and confusing terminology, different interpretations of the assessment procedure and the tremendous burden placed on the educators with regard to time-consuming lesson preparation.

The lack of support for educators from the Department of Education, Regional Education Departments and from school management personnel, created a further problem and the attitude towards OBE was not as positive as it promised to be. Transforming the country into one where all citizens would be promised quality education has not been totally smooth sailing.

1. 3. PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

The application, implementation, understanding and policies of OBE within the South African educational landscape have left educationists with more questions than answers. The lack of adequate literature, resources and training of OBE practitioners has indeed contributed to negative perceptions among educationists in South Africa.

Based on the above circumstances, this study attempts to investigate the level of implementation of OBE in selected school climates, i.e., in each of the four ex-Departments of

Education which had previously functioned separately with their own policies, funding and implementation. The purpose of this study is thus to identify, assess, evaluate and analyse how OBE is being implemented at the Grade 1 level in selected schools in these four ex-Departments of Education in KwaZulu-Natal.

By undertaking such an investigation, valuable information and data can emerge which in turn could be used to undertake a system analysis of OBE in South Africa. A number of recommendations and conclusions obtained from this investigation could also add value in terms of reformulating and refining policy frameworks around OBE.

1.4. KEY QUESTIONS TO BE ANSWERED IN THIS RESEARCH

The research intends to address the following three key questions:

1. What are the differences and similarities between OBE and traditional content-based education in terms of methodology, learning processes, management, remediation and enrichment?
2. What are the constraints, challenges and problems that face OBE practitioners at the Grade 1 level?

-
3. How does the implementation of OBE relate to the transformation and reconstruction of education within the South African system?

1.5. LIMITATIONS

The research study is not without limitations. Firstly, the research was limited to the North Durban area of KwaZulu-Natal. This area covers schools from each of the four ex-Departments of Education and includes both rural and urban settlements. For reasons of accessibility, economy and time, this research site was deemed appropriate.

Secondly, the researcher understands that the small sample of thirty-two OBE practitioners from twelve schools is not fully representative of the perceptions of Foundation Phase OBE practitioners.

Thirdly, the research to gather information focuses between the period of January 1998 to June 1999. The issues of OBE are shifting fast. The attitudes of Grade 1 OBE practitioners, and the implementation of OBE in the Foundation Phase could change.

1.6. BRIEF EXPOSITION OF THIS RESEARCH

Chapter 2 (Literature Review) deals with the views and opinions of various proponents and critics of OBE, and the rationale of implementing OBE in South Africa.

In Chapter 3, the methodology of the research is explained in detail. The survey method using questionnaires and interviews forms the crux of the methodology for gathering data.

Chapter 4 involves the presentation and analysis of data. The Microsoft Word programme was used to present data graphically. Information gathered from interviews and viewpoints of OBE proponents and critics are used to support the quantitative data.

Chapter 5 provides the researcher's recommendations to make the OBE process successful.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature based on research findings and opinions expressed by various authorities regarding outcomes-based education (OBE). Foreign and local literature have been reviewed and generalised. Further, the chapter will also explore how OBE has been accepted and implemented in South Africa.

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The latter part of the twentieth century has seen a fundamental shift in the focus of education. Previously, quality was judged in terms of inputs (intentions and efforts, institutions and services, resources and spending). In the recent past however, there has been an increasing focus on outputs (goals and ends, products and results) with a focus on core academic subjects. More often the question being asked is, “What are our children learning and how well are they learning it?” (Manno: 1994: 1)

The following are the sobering facts brought to attention by the Children’s Defense Fund, “ State of America’s Children” in 1994:

- Every 5 seconds of the school day a student drops out of public education.
- Every 34 seconds a baby is born to a mother who did not graduate from high school.
- Every 5 minutes a child is arrested for a violent crime.
- Every year 1 977 862 students are suspended from public schools. (Ascolese: 1996: 1)

These grim statistics help to demonstrate the need for fundamental change in education. As Janice Ascolese (1996: 1) states, "Public education's main responsibility is to educate all children," to prepare them to become fundamental participants in a global society.

Concerns that the education system cannot adequately prepare students for life in the twenty-first century have prompted people across the world to explore new ways of designing education. Educators and policy makers are attempting to change the way we measure the effectiveness of education from an emphasis on traditional inputs to results and outcomes. (Denver: 1995: 1)

"Let us not leave the meaning of education ambiguous or ill-defined." (Plato)

2.2. THE PHILOSOPHY OF OBE

The outcomes-based movement, as we know it today, is based on the pioneering ideas of Ralph Tyler and Benjamin Bloom (1950's). Tyler's Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction, emphasised a logical progression from the simple to the complex. These progressive steps, they argued, could be described in terms of learner competencies or learning objectives. (Malan: 1997: 13)

From the 1960's there have been a number of precursors of OBE, including competency-based education, criterion referenced education and mastery learning. While mastery learning and OBE are not synonymous, mastery learning is one possible expression of practice in an OBE context. Towers (1992: 293) quotes Guskey's definition of mastery learning as "organising instruction, providing students with regular feedback on their learning progress, giving guidance and direction to help students to correct their individual learning difficulties and providing extra challenges for students who have mastered their material."

"The push to focus school programmes so that students have to demonstrate proficiency in outcomes was dubbed OBE." (Brady: 1996: 7). Recently, OBE has been conceived and developed chiefly by William G. Spady. "OBE means clearly focusing and organising everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do

successfully at the end of their learning experience. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organising curriculum, instruction, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.” (1994a: 1)

The keys to having an outcomes-based system are:

- 1) developing a clear set of learning outcomes around which all of the system’s components can be focused.
- 2) establishing the conditions and opportunities within the system that enable and encourage all students to achieve those essential outcomes. (Spady: 1994a: 1-2)

This new way of thinking and education concentrates on giving value to the customers (students) by improving the system by which all work gets done. A culture that is caring and sharing as well as a commitment to continuous improvement is always at the centre of all aspects of operation. (Bickford: 1996: 1)

OBE practitioners start by determining the knowledge, competencies and qualities they want students to be able to demonstrate when they finish school and face the challenges of the adult world. Then, with these “exit” outcomes clearly in mind, they deliberately design curricula and instructional systems with the intent that all students will ultimately be able to demonstrate them successfully.

According to Spady (1994), OBE is not a programme, but a way of “designing, developing, delivering and documenting instruction in terms of its intended outcomes...OBE means having all students learn well, not just the fastest, the brightest, or the most advantaged.” (Towers: 1992: 292). Spady has always maintained that OBE promises that all students can learn if given the time and support to do so, that success encourages success, and that schools both create and control the conditions for success. Education that is outcomes-based presumes an instructional design in which learning is the constant, and time is the variable and not vice versa.

According to Finn (1990), “... education is the result achieved, the learning that takes place when the process has been effective. Only if the process succeeds and learning occurs will we say that ‘education happened’. Absent evidence of such a result, there is no education, regardless of how many attempts have been made, resources deployed, or energies expended.” (Towers: 1992: 292)

2.3. THE OBE PARADIGM

The dictionary meaning of a paradigm is an *example or a pattern*. The “OBE paradigm that shapes decision making and patterns of concrete action is the viewpoint that *WHAT* and *WHETHER* students learn successfully is more important than *WHEN* and *HOW* they learn something ... Implicit in the OBE

paradigm is the desire to have all students emerge from the system as genuinely successful learners.” (Spady: 1994a: 8)

The figure below depicts Spady’s perception of the key elements of a sound outcomes-based approach. These elements work together to change how schools operate and facilitate learning success for students.

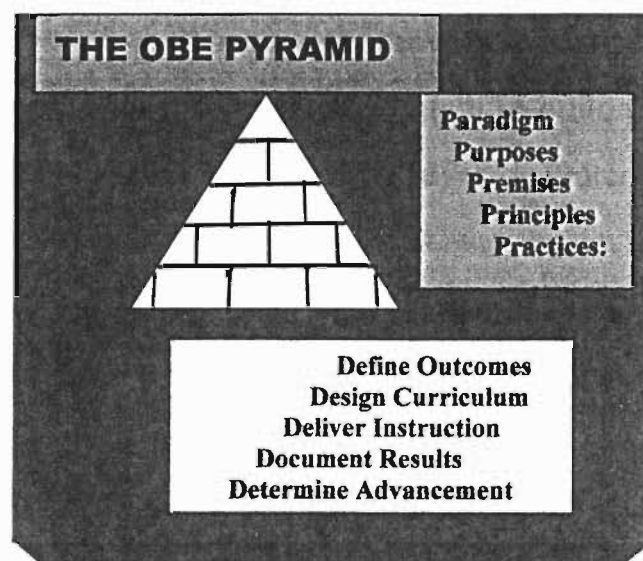


FIGURE 1: THE OBE PYRAMID.
(Adapted: Spady: 1994a: 8)

At the heart of OBE are 4 principles:

1. Clarity of focus on culminating exit outcomes of significance.
2. Expanded opportunity and support for learning success.
3. High expectations for all to succeed.
4. Design-down from your ultimate, culminating outcomes.

To make OBE successful and effective, these 4 principles need to be applied consistently, systematically, creatively and simultaneously. (Spady: 1994a: 10-11)

Education that is outcomes-based is a learner-centred, results-oriented system that hinges on the belief that all individuals can learn. (Brady: 1996: 8)

“The re-engineering of the learning system towards the outcomes-based approach is a major attempt to build the country into becoming an international role-player... Outcomes-based learning reflects the notion that the best way to get where you want to be, is to first determine what you want to achieve. Once the goal (product, outcome, etc.) has been determined, strategies, techniques and other ways and means will be put into place to achieve the goal.”(Oliver: 1998: 20)

Thus learning programmes and courses should be driven by outcomes which learners should be able to display during and at the end of their learning experience.

2.4. WHAT ARE OUTCOMES?

Various definitions of an outcome have been developed. Spady explains that outcomes are “not simply the things students believe, feel, remember, know or understand...outcomes are

what students actually can do with what they know and understand...Outcomes 'happen'. They are the learning results we desire from students that lead to culminating demonstrations." (Spady: 1994a: 49)

Spady (1994a: 51) states that outcomes of significance are those that "are worth pursuing and accomplishing." These outcomes become part of the general knowledge of pupils for a long time and are important for the educational and career needs of the pupils.

Kit Marshall, as quoted by O'Neil (1994: 9), remarks that "Good outcomes have to have 3 elements: the content (knowledge), the competence (what the student is doing) and setting (under what conditions the student is performing)...and you can't demonstrate anything without the basics...but the field has fallen short in defining what a good outcome is."

An outcome therefore, "is not simply the name of the learning content, concepts or competence, or a grade or a test score, but actual demonstration in an authentic context." (Department of Education: Undated: 3)

Cas Oliver (1998: 25) describes an outcome as having a verb, a noun or object and when necessary a qualifier. The verb signifies the activity that is going to take place to achieve the outcome. The noun spells out what is going to be achieved. It names and limits the issues to be addressed. The qualifier refers to the

technology, methodology, dimensions, scope, depth, and level of complexity and parameters of the achievement, which must be used or applied.

2.4.1. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

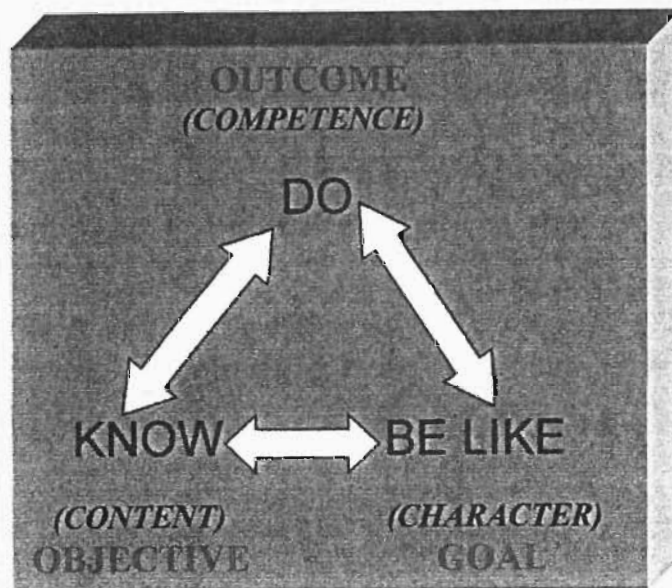


FIGURE 2: THE LEARNING PERFORMANCE PYRAMID. (Adapted: Spady:1994a: 54)

According to the OBE system, goals, objectives and outcomes are not synonymous but inter-related and cannot be isolated from each other. Figure 2 illustrates that “knowledge or content by itself is not an outcome but an enabling instructional objective. Similarly, what is called confidence is, by itself, essentially an educational goal for which students cannot be held specifically accountable. [Finally] competence does not exist in isolation

from the other two. To become real, it requires both content and the confidence and willingness to perform.” (Spady: 1994a: 55)

2.4.1.1. GOALS

Goals indicate what the curriculum intends to do, but not how and how well. Goals are really the long term aims of a whole curriculum and learning area and it is rarely intended that student achievements will be addressed directly in terms of their achievement of goals. (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 5)

2.4.1.2. OBJECTIVES

Objectives may be general or specific. General objectives may be broad in scope and may represent something of a “wish list”. Specific objectives are narrow in scope, relating to what the educator is to do, the subject matter to be covered, or the expected student learning experience.

Ralph Tyler in his book, Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction (1949) argued that educational purposes or goals should be articulated in the form of objectives which describe the desired changes in a learner in such a way that one can tell whether or not they have been achieved. These objectives should form the basis of curriculum development, planning of learning

experiences, student assessment and the evaluation of the learning programme. This explanation of objectives bears a strong resemblance to the definition of outcomes. (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 6)

2.4.1.3. OUTCOMES

Outcomes are “particular types of objectives, suggesting that outcomes shift the focus from objectives derived from content or textbook outlines to objectives based on desired changes in the learner.” (King and Evans: 1991: 73). The word “outcomes” is preferred to emphasise that they describe significant changes in students which result from provided learning experiences and that they focus on the ends rather than means. (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 6-7)

The following two types of outcomes are mentioned when discussing OBE:

- Essential Outcomes:

These are fundamental outcomes, working principles and should direct teaching, training and education practices and the development of learning programmes and material.

- Specific Outcomes:

These describe the competence which learners should be able to demonstrate in specific contexts and particular areas of

learning at certain levels. It is these outcomes which should serve as the basis for assessing the progress of learners and thus directly the effectiveness of learning processes and learning programmes.

2.5. INTERPRETATIONS OF OBE

William Bonville (1996) states that there is a widespread clamour for change in education. He questions whether OBE is the white knight to the rescue of the needs of our children. He sees OBE as a “cleverly packaged system of schooling handed down through federal and state educational bureaucracies which skilled experts, called facilitators and change agents, implant into each school district...it is not a system invented by experienced educators.” (Bonville: 1996: 1)

“In its simplest form, the OBE process virtually guarantees every student an education.” (Evans and King: 1994: 12). They also see OBE as an umbrella concept under which various reform efforts can be placed. “The fact that people who practice open education also claim to engage in outcomes-based education suggests the breadth of the concept.” (Evans and King: 1994: 12). Further, just because specific outcomes must be achieved to graduate from high school does not mean that schools necessarily engage in OBE.

Traditionalist Christians, according to Arnold Burron (1994: 74) object to students working with a common core of knowledge, working co-operatively and actively in group decision making. They object to fostering the abilities to “compromise” and “reach concensus” when such practices could lead, in certain situations, to capitulation to group pressure. They believe that OBE will deliberately undermine their children’s values, individuality and commitment to personal responsibility. They also believe that an OBE system will indoctrinate children with social, political and economic values in subjects such as Science, Health, Social Studies and Visual and Performing Arts.

Jim McKernan (1994: 326) contends that “OBE serves as a limited model for curriculum and that its greatest successes may lie in designing training and instruction. However, it is not compatible with a liberal notion of education as ‘induction into knowledge’, particularly in such disciplines as the arts and humanities (for example, Art, Science, Mathematics, History, Literature, Poetry and Music) that illuminate other areas of life and culture.”

McKernan (1994: 328) quotes Lawrence Stenhouse’s argument that, “Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioural outcomes of the student unpredictable.” Thus it would be nonsensical to try to define specific objectives that will result from education if our aim is to get pupils to use knowledge creatively. How can a teacher of

English Literature define what a student will have as an outcome from reading any literary work?

The question of national standards and creation of standards that apply equally to all students is of concern to John O' Neil (1993: 5). "With all the variability among students' opportunities to learn, their motivation and interests, and other factors, is it really possible to design a challenging set of content standards appropriate for all pupils, including those with language or other special needs?" Wouldn't pupils' achievements measured against performance standards be varied? The efforts to establish national standards affirm the reasoning that all students should be expected to master a core set of content standards. (ibid)

Randy Zitterkopf (1994) believes that all schools have outcomes, whether by design or not. All schools produce results of some kind. However, the difference between being outcomes-based and simply producing outcomes is significant. "An outcomes-based school produces results relating primarily to predetermined curriculum and instruction. The focus is on achievement of results... if the results do not occur by chance, they do occur as a consequence of circumstances, perceived beyond the control of the school." (Zitterkopf: 1994: 76). "Of course, who can argue with this inexhaustible list of desired inputs? The fact remains, however, that many educators promote inputs over outcomes precisely because accountability for outcomes is reduced, if not forgotten, as excuses become readily available." (ibid: 76).

OBE is understood “in different ways and with different understandings of its potential applications and implications for curriculum design, instructional delivery, learner assessment and the awarding of credentials. Outcomes-based education can be characterised as Traditional OBE, Transitional OBE and Transformational OBE.” (Department of Education: Undated: 7)

2.5.1. TRADITIONAL OBE

The outcomes in traditional OBE describe the demonstration of specific learner competencies in a particular subject or topic at the end of small units of instruction and basically resemble the teacher’s lesson objectives. The basic purpose of traditional OBE is to improve individual teacher effectiveness and to improve the percentage of students doing well on existing curricula.

2.5.2. TRANSITIONAL OBE

The outcomes here focus not only on the knowledge, skills and attributes which school-leavers should have acquired, but also on their ability to apply these in the world outside school.

2.5.3. TRANSFORMATIONAL OBE

The start here is “exit outcomes” which focus on “adult life roles”, e.g., self-directed learner, quality producer and community contributor or collaborative worker. The outcomes are formulated in terms of the roles which competent, well-adjusted adults might be expected to fulfil in the world outside school. (Malan: 1997: 16-17)

According to Manno (1994: 12), “Today's educational fad, transformational OBE has little in common with the content and performance outcomes in core areas espoused by those who gave the outcomes focus, widespread national (American) attention.”

He raised the issue for educational policy – “What is the word *outcome* to define?” (ibid: 12). He believes that the typical ‘transformational’ outcomes are vaguely worded and show little concern for academic content. They are largely in the affective domain. They describe mental processes such as attitudes and sentiments – behavioural and social outcomes rather than knowledge, skills and other cognitive outcomes. Manno quotes some of the mandatory outcomes for all students in Ohio: “to function as a responsible family member...maintain physical, emotional and social well-being.” (Manno: 1994: 22). These outcomes are vague and measuring students achieving them seems remote. Manno says, “This approach undermines efforts to track and compare educational progress or failure.” (ibid: 12).

This leads one to question the proponents' (of OBE) conception of the purpose and role of education.

2.6. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND OBE

Basic differences between the old, traditional education and OBE centre around the focus of teaching, time and intent. Spady (1988: 5) graphically explains the differences using very appropriate diagrams as shown in Figures 3 and 4.

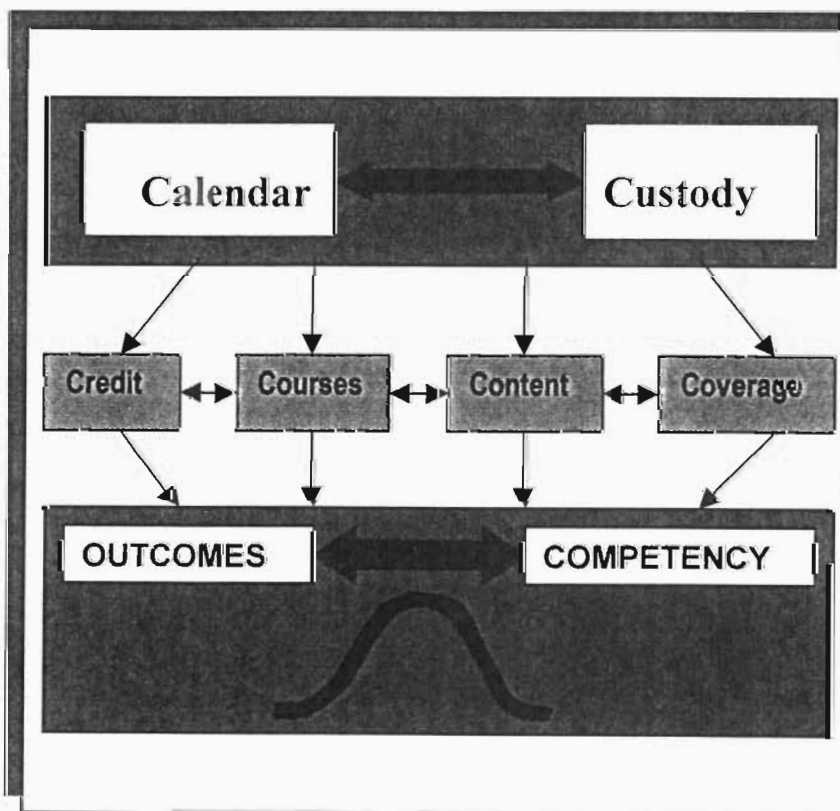


FIGURE 3. THE PREVALENT PRACTICE PARADIGM

(Adapted: Spady: 1988:5)

Figure 3 depicts the calendar defined model, promoting teaching that emphasises curriculum coverage over student mastery. Teachers are concerned with “covering material”. Schools seem organised for custody of the students in school for fixed periods of time rather than results. The bell-shaped curve is typical of only a small number of children reaching high levels of performance.

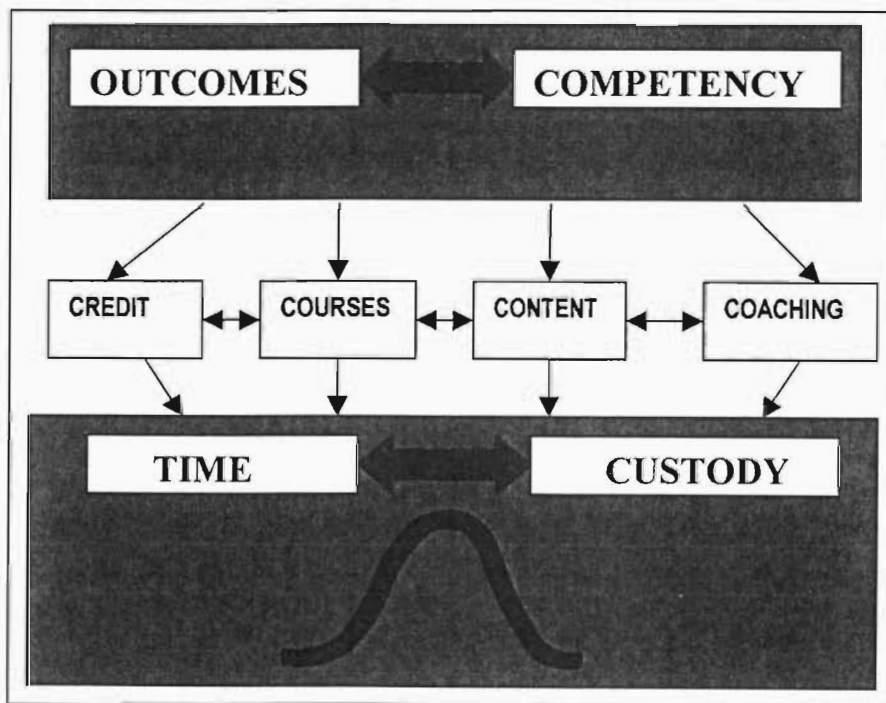


FIGURE 4: THE OUTCOME-BASED EDUCATION PARADIGM

(Adapted: Spady: 1988: 6)

Figure 4 depicts the outcomes-based education paradigm. Schools operate on the basis of what students can actually do. OBE means “organizing for results”. The starting point is the knowledge, competencies and qualities that students need to

demonstrate when they finish school. These “exit outcomes” determine the instruction and curriculum to enable all students to demonstrate these significant outcomes. OBE is a process of “designing, developing, delivering and documenting instruction in terms of its intended goals and outcomes.”

The key issue as seen in Figure 4 is reaching the outcomes successfully and not on when and how much time it takes to do it. The bell-curve shows the distribution of time and custody. “Differences in student aptitudes and abilities will be reflected in the time needed to reach given outcomes rather than in their success on those outcomes.” Of note, is the critical factor in designing the curriculum. “...you develop the curriculum from the [exit] outcomes you want students to demonstrate rather than writing objectives for the curriculum you already have.” (Spady: 1988: 6)

In addition, the table on the following page summarises the basic differences between the traditional education system and the OBE system.

	OLD TRANSMISSION MODEL OF LEARNING	NEW OUTCOMES-BASED MODEL OF LEARNING
THE LEARNER	Passive learners.	Active learners.
ASSESSMENT	Graded. Exam-driven. Exclusionary.	Continuous assessment; learners are assessed on an on-going basis.
ROLE OF TEACHER	Teacher-centred, textbook bound.	Learner-centred; teacher as facilitator; teacher constantly using group work and team work.
CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK	Syllabus seen as rigid and non-negotiable. Emphasis on what teacher hopes to achieve.	Learning programmes seen as guides that allow teachers to be innovative and creative in designing programmes. Emphasis on outcomes – what the learner becomes and understands.
TIME FRAMES AND LEARNER PACING	Content placed into rigid time frames.	Flexible time-frames allow learners to work at their own pace.

TABLE 1: PARADIGMATIC SHIFT FROM TRANSMISSION MODELS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING TO OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION AND TRAINING. (Adapted: Department of Education, 1997f: 6-7)

2.6.1. THE PARADIGM SHIFT TOWARDS OUTCOMES-BASED LEARNING

Outcomes-based learning implies that content should not only be mastered as with traditional content-based education, but be

drawn upon within a specific context within which the outcome must be achieved. “Knowledge and skills are now being mastered for the purpose of achieving the outcome...Outcomes-based learning incorporates mastering of knowledge and skills in addition to the procedural steps, i.e. prepare, perform, conclude, interact and assess, which must be mastered and followed in order to achieve outcomes.” (Oliver: 1998: 27)

When working towards the achievement of an outcome, there should be a balance in employing knowledge and skills on one hand and procedural steps on the other, as indicated in the diagram below.

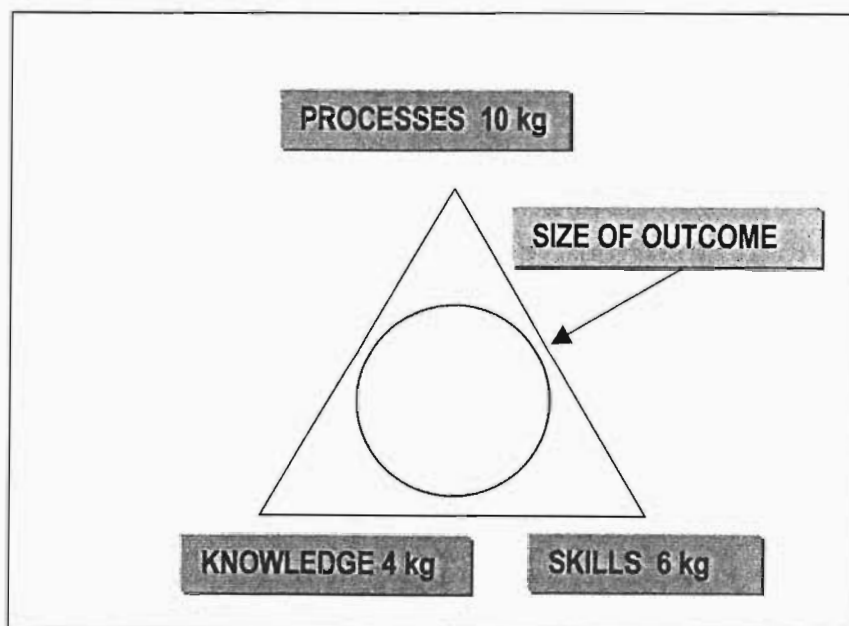


FIGURE 5: BALANCE BETWEEN EMPLOYING KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, AND PROCEDURAL STEPS.
(Adapted: Oliver: 1998: 27)

When, during learning, the equilibrium is disturbed by under-emphasising the process component, the accent will naturally fall on either knowledge and / or skills and the results can be illustrated as follows.

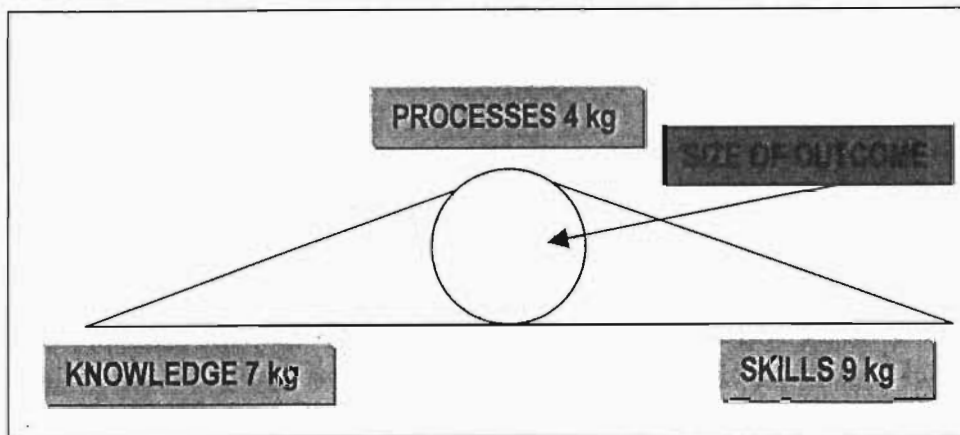


FIGURE 6: IMBALANCE BETWEEN KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS, AND PROCEDURAL STEPS. (Adapted: ibid: 28)

One cannot change limitations like physical time. Educators and trainers tend to over-educate by providing more and more knowledge and spending more and more time on practising skills instead of building the capacity of the learners by guiding them to follow specific procedures to achieve outcomes. Thus the quality of the outcome and learning experience as shown in the second triangle will decline. It is important for a proper alignment and balance of knowledge, skills and processes. (Oliver: 1998: 27-28)

2.7. PREMISES AND PRINCIPLES OF OBE

The OBE system believes there are certain things that all students should learn as a result of attending school. OBE has an unrelenting focus on what students have learned; rather than what systems and schools have provided and what teachers have taught. (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 2)

2.7.1. CURRICULUM CONTENT AND PEDAGOGY

OBE involves the premise that decisions about what and how to teach should be driven by the outcomes we would like students to exhibit at the end of their educational experience. O'Neil quotes Grant Wiggins as saying, "It's a simple matter of making sure that you're clear on what teaching should accomplish...and adjusting your teaching and assessing as necessary to accomplish what you set out to accomplish." (O'Neil: 1994: 6-7)

OBE claims that teaching and learning will be enhanced by the clear statement of outcomes. However, in terms of national standards, determined externally from the school, their adoption will be insufficient to ensure a common interpretation. Only considerable professional development will enable teachers to develop a shared meaning for and commitment to these outcomes. (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 3)

2.7.2. HIGH QUALITY OUTCOMES FOR ALL STUDENTS

With regard to equity, OBE involves the premise that all students can achieve learning outcomes of significance as long as the conditions necessary for their success are met. It professes that there is considerable social justice potential in the clear statement of what is important and the commitment to ensure that all groups of students, regardless of their class, gender, race, ethnicity or physical ability are expected to achieve at high levels on a common curriculum. This means that outcomes achieved shall be the same for all and not some partial or lesser version of them. This presupposes that there must be a commitment to make transparent the criteria by which students will be judged and to base assessments honestly upon these criteria. As King and Evans (1991: 74) describe it, “OBE forces us to express what we value in education, to commit educational resources to bringing that to life in students, and – in contrast to present practice – to continue until we have succeeded.”

2.7.3. SUCCESS FOR ALL

Spady (1988: 7) refers to “expanded opportunity and instructional support”. Instead of teachers merely “covering the curriculum”, they should ensure that every student has mastered content, concepts or skills before advancing them to lessons or levels that directly depend on those prerequisite learnings.

Teachers have observed that 'second chance' instructional opportunities have an impressive impact on the success and motivation of many students and these practices motivate them to reach levels of mastery not previously attainable.

According to Joan Abrams (1981: 138), teachers have found that the clear specification of objectives keep them and their pupils on task. Education is continuous. Children who demonstrate mastery of an objective are given enrichment activities. Those who do not, are given second or third opportunities to achieve the outcome and are retaught using different strategies and materials. Interestingly, Abrams found that the change from group work to whole class lessons to be a major stumbling block.

"The success of the outcomes-based learning system will depend on developing and maintaining education and training standards. Throwing standards out of the window would be detrimental to the system as well as to the economic development of the country as a whole..." Traditional education and training approaches " must be capitalised on, while at the same time the ability to learn in various situations is reinforced by building the capacity of learners with the aim to promote lifelong learning." (Oliver: 1998. ix)

2.7.4. ACCOUNTABILITY BY EDUCATORS

With the current emphasis on accountability, the concept of outcomes must be addressed. “After all, if educators are not forthright and specific about what is to be taught in the schools, how can any measurement be developed to determine the success of the enterprise...The fact remains that all schools – politically, ethically, professionally, and educationally – must identify their outcomes by whatever terms they want to invent it.” (Zitterkopf: 1994: 76)

The philosophy underpinning this approach to accountability is that desired student outcomes should be clearly articulated, and it is in these, rather than a plethora of policies and regulations about how schools should function, which should be the foundation for decisions about curriculum, teaching, assessment, professional development and so on.

However, each school is expected to determine the means to achieve these national standards. A corollary to this argument is that this system of OBE is unlikely to succeed “unless all levels of the system have a shared understanding of what it means to be outcomes-based.” (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 4)

2.8. DEVELOPMENT OF OBE IN SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's political change in 1994 has necessitated a massive reconstruction in the creation of economic growth and the ultimate goal has been to find ways to improve the quality of life of all South African citizens and to redress the inequalities of the past.

The education system is in the process of changing... involving not only remodelling an outdated system but a paradigm shift in the attitude South Africans adopt to the entire educational process. (Department of Education: 1997a: 4)

Almost two years of careful planning and development have gone into the new curriculum which was to be phased in, in general and further education and training from 1998. This new curriculum is based on the ideal of lifelong learning for all South Africans. For the first time, high quality education is proposed for everyone – irrespective of age, gender, race, colour, religion, ability or language. At the heart of this change is the introduction of the new curriculum – Curriculum 2005.

“We have developed transformative and educationally sound norms and standards to ensure uniformity in our diverse promises. We are replacing the content-cramming syllabi of Bantu Education with an outcomes-based curriculum within a framework of lifelong learning.” (Bengu: 1998: 10).

OBE has at its core an integrated approach to education and training, implying “a view of learning which rejects a rigid division between academic and applied knowledge, theory and practice, knowledge and skills, head and hand...Although it will not, in itself, create a successful economy and society in South Africa, such an approach is a prerequisite for successful human resource development.” (SAIDE: 1997: 6)

2.9. THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK (NQF)

The NQF was born out of a recognition that there was a need to change the education system in order to meet the economic and social needs of South Africa and its people. Like many countries, South Africa’s main reason for adopting the NQF and an outcomes-based education and training system was to effect transformation. To ensure effective transformation by means of an NQF, the government appointed a qualifications authority, the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) which has been commissioned to develop and maintain an effective qualifications framework which would serve all sectors of education and training equally well.

According to SAQA, “It is stated clearly that all education and training should be outcomes-based. Only education and training

that are based on the achievement of outcomes will be recognised by this system... It is primarily aimed at building the country into an international role-player through enhancement of a culture of life-long learning...Although there are very distinct differences between guiding and facilitation and ways of achieving outcomes within education and training, the ways in which human beings learn stay inherently the same. It therefore becomes an issue on where the emphasis with regard to guidance and facilitation is placed.” (Oliver: 1998: ix)

South Africa is the first country to develop a curriculum policy within a broad Early Child Development (ECD) vision encompassing 0-9 years. This ensures that education in the formative years follows an integrated child centred approach in which the learner is developed holistically. This forms the bedrock of all future learning. (Department of Education: 1997g: 1)

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995: 73) as quoted in the Foundation Phase Draft Policy / Phase Document (1997: 1) states that “The care and development of young children must be the foundation of social relations and the starting point of human resource development strategies from community to national levels.” The learning programmes for the Foundation Phase have been developed by a group of ECD practitioners representing a range of stakeholders from the National

Development of Education, provincial departments of education and training providers both formal and non-formal.

The NQF will ensure that education and training are brought together. In the past education was seen as an area where knowledge is gained, and training as an area where skills are obtained. The NQF will join these areas. This will enable learners to move from one place of learning to another.

The table on the next page (Department of Education: 1996) represents the learning pathways, locations of learning and qualifications levels which will enable learners to become part of a society of lifelong learners.

NOF scheme

NQF Level	Band	Types of Qualifications and Certificates	Location of learning for units and Qualifications			
8	Higher Education	Doctorates, Further research Degrees	Tertiary/Research/ Professional Institutions			
7	and Training	Higher Degrees, Professional Qualifications	Tertiary/Research/ Professional Institutions			
6		First Degrees, Higher Diplomas	Universities/Technikons/ Colleges/Private/Professional Institutions/Workplace.etc.			
5		Diplomas, Occupational Certificates	Universities/Technikons Colleges/Private/Professional Institutions/Workplace.etc.			
FURTHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE						
4	Further Education	School/College/ Trade Certificates, Mix of units from all	Formal High Schools/ Private/ State Schools	Technical/ Community/ Police/ Nursing/ Private Colleges	RDP and Labour Market Schemes/ Industry Training Boards/ Unions/ Work-place. etc.	
3	and Training	School/College/ Trade Certificates, Mix of units from all				
2		School/College/ Trade Certificates, Mix of units from all				
GENERAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING CERTIFICATE						
1	General Education and Training	Senior Phase	ABET Level 4	Formal Schools (Urban/ Rural/ Farm/ Special)	Occupation/ Work-based Training/ RDP/ Labour Market Schemes/ Upliftment/ Community Programmes.	NGOs/ Churches/ Night Schools/ ABET Programmes/ Private Providers/ Industry Training Boards/ Unions/ Work-place.etc.
		Intermediate Phase	ABET Level 3			
		Foundation Phase	ABET Level 2			
		Preschool	ABET Level 1			

TABLE 2: THE EIGHT NOF LEVELS PROVIDING FOR GENERAL, FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING BANDS

(Adapted: Independent Examinations Board: 1996: 24)

The major difference between previous requirements and NQF conditions lies in the formulation of criteria. Criteria, which will have to be satisfied before a qualification can be awarded, are clearly specified. Credits will be awarded to learners each time they attain a specific learning outcome or group of learning outcomes. Credits can be accumulated over a period of time until they satisfy the application for a qualification at a specific level of the NQF. Formal education and training are not the only requirements to apply for assessment of skills, knowledge and understandings.

2.10. CURRICULUM 2005

The new OBE system aims to prepare learners to meet the challenges of the twenty first century. South Africa's education system is in the process of change, change aimed at producing more qualified South Africans more consistently and more predictably, by equipping them for the real world. The changes are aimed at elevating the real skills and learning levels of the South African learner. The changes are focused on the adoption of a new educational approach entitled Curriculum 2005, which evolves around the concept of Transformational OBE. The product of this approach will be recognised and certified by the new NQF. The overall objective is to inculcate a culture of lifelong learning.

Curriculum 2005 changes the focus of our education system from content to outcomes. It has been developed around critical outcomes that emphasise things like being able to communicate effectively and the ability to use creative thinking to solve problems. Curriculum 2005 is organised around 8 key areas of learning, namely, Language, Literacy and Communication; Economic and Management Sciences; Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences; Life Orientation; Arts and Culture; Technology; Human and Social Sciences; and Natural Sciences. These learning areas include, expand and modernise the old subjects. Learning areas are introduced at Grade 1 (the first year of schooling) and provide a framework for what is to be learnt at school.

It includes aspects of knowledge previously ignored in the curriculum (such as Technology) and emphasises the Arts, Culture and Life Orientation. Content has not been defined. Instead, each learning area has specific outcomes that ensure that the specific learning areas achieve its contextualised and specific forms of the broader critical outcomes. (Department of Education: 1997e: 26). What matters is the achievement of broad outcomes, not the mastery of specific bits of isolated information or skills. The implementation of Curriculum 2005 proposes a liberating experience for transforming the South African society.

The role of the teacher is now more of a facilitator who guides activity-based learning and assists the learners to achieve the

outcomes specified. Assessment becomes a very important aspect of the new curriculum. Learners will not get marks for just remembering content. Both educators and learners will use a variety of methods to assess learning progress towards the specified outcomes and they will do this on a continuous basis throughout the year.

The former Minister of Education, Professor S.M.E. Bengu stated, “The introduction of this new curriculum will play a major role in helping us to transform our country into one which we all want to live, by producing thinking, caring learners.” (The Media in Education Trust: 1998: 1).

2.11. WHAT KIND OF OBE HAS SOUTH AFRICA CHOSEN?

The widespread concern about the education system of South Africa centres around 3 issues:

1. The irrelevance of what is being taught and learnt;
2. The lack of integration between education and training;
3. The lack of mobility of learners and the non-recognition of on-the-job experience and skills. (Department of Education: 1997e: 20)

South Africa has opted for what has been described as transformational OBE. The critical outcomes below sketch the vision most South Africans have for a new South Africa:

1. Identify and solve problems to show that responsible decisions, using critical and creative thinking, have been made.
2. Work effectively with each other as members of a team, group, organisation and community.
3. Organise and manage oneself and one's activities responsibly and effectively.
4. Collect, analyse, organise and evaluate information critically.
5. Communicate effectively, using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.
6. Use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and health of others.
7. Demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.

(Department of Education: 1997f: 16)

In addition to these critical outcomes (which focus strongly on knowledge and skills), it was agreed that all learners should become aware of the importance of the following:

1. Reflecting on and exploring a variety of strategies to learn more effectively.

-
2. Participating as responsible citizens in the field of local, national and global communities.
 3. Being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
 4. Exploring education and career opportunities.
 5. Developing entrepreneurial opportunities.

(Department of Education: 1997e: 22)

2.12. LINKING ASSESSMENT TO INSTRUCTION: COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND OTHER METHODS

Assessments are supposed to inform teachers of the learning progress and difficulties of their students so that appropriate decisions regarding further material can be made.

“One of the defining characteristics of OBE is that judgements about the success of the system, the school and the student should be based on the student outcomes achieved.” (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 31). “[T]ypical classroom based assessments assess the enacted curriculum. The intention is to find out how well students have learned and what was taught...Rarely if ever, is the achievement of goals directly assessed. In an outcome-based approach...the question to be asked is not how well did the students learn what was taught...[but] have they achieved the

outcomes?” (ibid: 31-32). How well we are able to answer this question “depends on the quality of information we have on students’ achievements of outcomes. It is now generally understood that the quality of assessment practices is integral to determining the success of OBE.” (ibid: 32)

The following are characteristics and relevant advantages and disadvantages of behavioural assessment, mastery learning, curriculum-based measurement and performance assessment.

2.12.1. BEHAVIOURAL ASSESSMENT

This relies on direct observation and recording of target behaviour, using repeated observations in the setting where the behaviour occurs. Environmental factors (i.e. situations in which the behaviour occurs) and their effect on behaviour are examined. This method is feasible to administer, score and interpret and it communicates clearly what the learning content is. However, this method focuses on discrete tasks that do not necessarily add up to important outcomes. It is further limited to observable behaviour and therefore limits the teacher’s instructional options. (Fuchs: 1995: 1)

2.12.2. MASTERY LEARNING

The curriculum is broken down into a set of sub-skills which are then placed in a hierarchy of instructional objectives. Mastery of each sub-skill is necessary to move up the hierarchy of skills and more difficult steps. Testing is done until students demonstrate mastery.

This method communicates clearly to teachers what is important to teach and learn. However, users do not know exactly what is being assessed and how to interpret the resulting information and how to use the measures effectively.

It also dictates a specific approach to instruction, leaving the teachers few instructional choices. The focus of measurement changes each time a student achieves mastery of a step in the curriculum and the steps may be of unequal difficulty. Therefore, progress cannot be judged over time. The focus is on discrete behaviour in both assessment and instruction. Since different students need to be measured simultaneously on different steps of the curriculum, mastery learning systems can become unmanageable for teachers. (Towers: 1992: 298)

In spite of this, mastery learning does have its advantages. Towers (1992: 297) quotes Guskey and Gates (1986) who, after research, concluded that “group-based applications of mastery learning have consistently positive effects on a broad range of student learning outcomes, including student achievement,

retention of learned material, involvement in learning activities and student affect.”

“There is belief that everyone can succeed under mastery learning, leading to the self-fulfilling prophecy phenomenon.”
(Towers: 1992: 296)

2.12.3. CURRICULUM-BASED MEASUREMENT

The focus of Curriculum-Based Measurement to evaluate growth is long-term. Broad outcomes are established, for example, *competently performing mathematics at the end of the third grade*. Student proficiency is measured.

A few of the advantages of this system are:

1. It provides standardised measurement techniques, making it reliable and valid.
2. It provides detailed information on students’ performance in specific skills.
3. A broad scale of instructional options can be used and the teacher can use widely varying methods with the same pupil to see which method is more beneficial.
4. Students can set personal learning goals because they know how they are evaluated.
5. Assessment demands in the classroom are manageable.

The long time periods to evaluate growth is a drawback of this particular system. The connection between assessment results and instructional decisions is not as clear as with behavioural assessments or mastery learning. Further, it relies too much on written tests. Current discussions about outcomes stress the utility of multi-dimensional measures that can cut across curriculum areas. (Fuchs: 1995)

2.12.4. PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS

Performance assessment is the direct and systematic observation of actual learner performances (demonstration of competence). It displays the following characteristics:

1. Learners are asked to perform, produce or create something.
2. They tap higher-order thinking processes and problem-solving skills.
3. They are graded or scored with the use of assessment criteria as the basis for human judgement.
4. They provide opportunities for learners to present and explain their work.
5. They involve learners in their own assessment.

The difference between traditional forms of assessment and outcomes-based assessment is that with OBE, the criteria are spelt out before assessment takes place. Since candidates know what criteria will be used to assess their performance, they can

be assured of fair and equitable judgements and they can take responsibility for demonstrating high quality performances.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

When OBE was introduced at Grade 1 level in 1997, the Grade 1 educators were in a quandary about methodology, assessment and group work. Limited training (one week) was offered to educators at various regional centres by facilitators who had already been trained by the Department of Education. Facilitators are Foundation Phase educators who were selected by the Department of Education to be trained by the Curriculum Unit and relevant superintendents for OBE implementation. Their function is two-fold:

- They disseminate knowledge and information gleaned during the training process to OBE practitioners at various regional meetings.
- They avail themselves for consultation by individual OBE practitioners who experience problems.

The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions of OBE practitioners regarding the level of implementation and progress of the OBE System in the Foundation Phase. The investigation was conducted at schools from each of the four ex-Departments of Education, namely, the three Houses of Delegates, Assembly and Representatives and the Department of

Education and Training in the North Durban Region of KwaZulu-Natal.

The study will investigate similarities and differences in the constraints, challenges and problems facing OBE practitioners in these schools. It is important to remember that each of the four ex-Departments previously functioned separately.

Further, the study will attempt to investigate how OBE is related to the transformation and reconstruction of education within the South African School System. The researcher hopes that this research will provide valuable input to future policy making decisions regarding OBE.

Cohen and Manion (1980: 29) quote C. J. Mouly on the nature of research as follows: "Research is best conceived as the process of arriving at dependable solutions to problems through the planned and systematic collection, analysis and interpretation of data. It is a most important tool for advancing knowledge, for promoting progress, and for enabling man to relate more effectively to his environment, to accomplish his purposes, and to resolve his conflicts."

3.2. METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

With regard to factors of expense, time and accessibility, the survey research method was considered to be most appropriate because:

- surveys are “used to measure attitudes, opinions, or achievements – any number of variables in the natural setting. Such studies may be local, regional...” (Wiersma: 1991: 166)
- The survey method enables the researcher “to collect information from a smaller group or subset of the population in such a way that the knowledge gained is representative of the total population under study.” (Cohen and Manion: 1980: 75)

When considering educational research, both qualitative and quantitative data have “great relevance for the improvement of education...and in fact can be supportive of each other in understanding the main factors that impact on education.” (Wiersma: 1991: 14). The survey method facilitates the collection of data that are both qualitative and quantitative.

3.3. THE RESEARCH AREA

Constraints of time, economy, accessibility and employment conditions of educators dictated that the research area be restricted to the North Durban Region of KwaZulu-Natal. This

area houses schools from each of the four ex-Departments of Education. Proximity of the researcher to the various schools was an important consideration to facilitate administering and collection of questionnaires and the conducting of interviews within a short space of time.

Although the research site may appear to be limited, it is fairly reflective of the diversity of schools in the North Durban Region.

3.4. THE RESEARCH POPULATION

Since the study concerns the implementation of OBE in the Foundation Phase, it was deemed appropriate that the research population include OBE practitioners and managers (Principals) of primary schools.

For the purpose of this study, an equal number of OBE practitioners from each of the four ex-Departments of Education was chosen as the target population.

3.4.1. THE TARGET POPULATION

Various Principals of primary schools in the North Durban Region were contacted telephonically. Many indicated reservations regarding the willingness of their educators to commit themselves to answer the questionnaires especially since

the present morale of educators was rather low, in the light of the impending rationalisation and redeployment. Based on their willingness to allow their OBE practitioners to participate in the research, three schools from each of the four ex-Departments of Education were selected as the target population.

3.4.2. THE SAMPLE SIZE

Cohen and Manion (1980: 77) regard a sample size of thirty to be the minimum number of cases if the research plans to use some form of statistical analysis of data. With this in mind, three OBE practitioners from three different schools belonging to each of the four ex-Departments of Education were selected as the research sample. It was decided that nine questionnaires were to be administered to each ex-Department: a total of thirty six questionnaires.

3.5. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaires and interviews were the two types of research instruments used in this study.

3.5.1. QUESTIONNAIRES

“The apparent ease of planning and using a questionnaire tends to make it appeal to novices in research...[yet it is] the most

flexible of tools which possesses unique advantages over other kinds of tools in collecting both quantitative and qualitative information.” (Sukhia et al: 1963: 103)

Cognisance was taken of the time the respondents will make available to answer the questionnaire. Thus, a balance was struck among the following types of questions:

- Unstructured responses (open-ended questions) – to allow the respondent to give his / her own responses.
- Checklist responses – that takes less time for respondents.
- Categorical responses (yes or no).

In developing the questionnaire, the variables to be measured / researched focused on three key questions:

- (1) What are the differences and similarities between OBE and traditional content-based education in terms of methodology, learning processes, management, remediation and enrichment?
- (2) What are the constraints and problems that face OBE practitioners at the Grade 1 level?
- (3) How does the implementation of OBE relate to the transformation and reconstruction of education within the South African school system?

3.5.2. INTERVIEWS

An “interview is relatively more flexible a tool than any written enquiry form and permits explanation, adjustment and variation according to the situation.” (Sukhia et al:1963: 27). Thus, to gain in-depth responses, interviews were conducted at four schools, one from each ex-Department of Education.

3.6. PROCEDURE FOR GATHERING DATA

3.6.1. PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was undertaken at two schools where four educators volunteered to answer the questionnaire and offer constructive criticism. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine possible flaws in terms of ambiguity, the intelligibility of the language employed, the length of the questionnaires (a lengthy questionnaire impinges on respondents’ valuable time) and the possibility of repetition of questions. Suggestions were invited with respect to the improvement of the questionnaire. One volunteer was questioned verbally as the questionnaire was answered. This was done to determine whether the respondent and researcher were on the same wave-length regarding the information the questionnaire proposed to obtain.

The questionnaire was not changed, as there were no negative suggestions.

3.6.2. PERMISSION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Written permission was requested (and granted) via the University of Durban-Westville. Copies of correspondence are found in Appendix A.

3.6.3. ADMINISTERING THE QUESTIONNAIRES

Appointments were made with the relevant school principals to hand over the questionnaires (Appendix C). The questionnaires were hand-delivered to the Junior Primary Heads of Department (with the Principals' permission) at each of the twelve schools. Accompanying these questionnaires was a letter to the Principal (Appendix B) detailing the purpose of the questionnaire, and a copy of the letter from the Department of Education and Culture granting permission for the research to be undertaken. OBE practitioners were given a week to answer the questionnaires.

3.6.4. RETURN OF THE COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES

Some principals requested self-addressed stamped envelopes to return the questionnaires. Questionnaires were collected personally from other schools. The latter proved to be more fruitful as all the questionnaires administered had been

completed and returned. A total of thirty six questionnaires were administered and thirty two were returned – a return rate of 89%.

3.6.5. INTERVIEWS

Permission for interviews was requested via the questionnaire. Based on the responses, one school, per ex-Department, was selected to conduct the interviews with the principals and OBE practitioners. Appointments were made telephonically and the interviews were conducted with both the Principal and OBE practitioners (separately). All principals were asked the same questions. (Appendix D)

Educators were asked specific questions based on their responses in the questionnaires. This was done to clarify their comments. All the interviewees were also asked the same set of questions as appears in Appendix E. Educators in each school were not interviewed separately but in a group. The reason for this was to gauge the opinion of the school rather than that of the individual educator. All the interviews were exceptionally pleasant experiences, with principals and educators offering their time, long after the school day was over.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Based on the constraints relating to inadequate literature, resources and training of OBE practitioners which have contributed to negative perceptions of OBE, this study attempts to identify, assess, evaluate and analyse how OBE is being implemented at the Foundation Phase in selected schools in the North Durban Region of KwaZulu-Natal.

Data gathered for this research were mainly responses from OBE practitioners (questionnaires and interviews) and interviews with principals from selected schools which included all ex-Departments of Education in KwaZulu-Natal, viz., Department of Education and Training (DET), House of Delegates (HOD), House of Assembly (HOA) and House of Representatives (HOR).

The table on the next page indicates the sample population to whom questionnaires were administered and interviews held.

SCHOOLS - EX-DEPT.	NUMBER OF QUESTIONN- AIRES ADMINISTERED	NUMBER OF QUESTIONN- AIRES RETURNED	NUMBER OF EDUCATORS INTERVIEW- ED	NUMBER OF PRINCIPALS INTERVIEW- ED
DET	9	9	3	1
HOD	9	8	3	1
HOA	9	7	2	1
HOR	9	8	2	1
TOTAL	36	32	10	4

TABLE 3: SAMPLE POPULATION

The response rate to the answering and returning of questionnaires was 89%. Four questionnaires were returned unanswered. This chapter represents a summary of the statistics and responses gleaned from the questionnaires and interviews, and is followed by a detailed analysis. The research findings have been grouped into two broad categories, namely,

- General advantages of OBE, and
- General constraints of the implementation of OBE.

The researcher hopes that these research findings will add value to the restructuring and re-formulation of the OBE implementation policy.

4.1. GENERAL ADVANTAGES OF OBE

The advantages of the implementation of OBE have manifested themselves in various ways in the performance of learners. The following analyses represent the perceptions of educators with regard to learner performance.

4.1.1. ARE LEARNERS ENGAGED IN CREATIVE, ACTIVE PARTICIPATION?

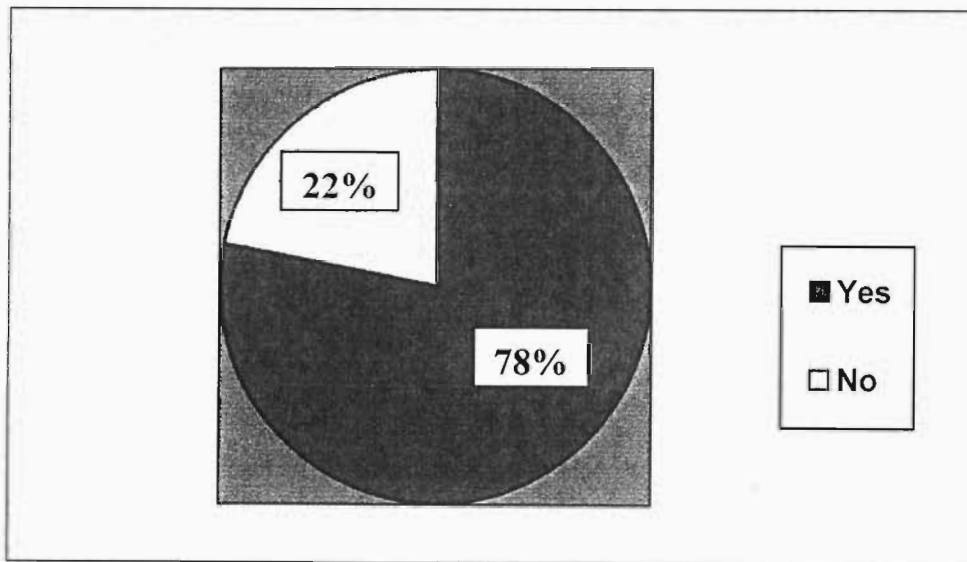


FIGURE 7. EDUCATORS' PERCEPTION OF LEARNER PARTICIPATION.

Figure 7 indicates that 78% of respondents believe that OBE has resulted in learners being actively involved in classroom activities and 22% believe that OBE has not resulted in active learners. The table below indicates that 43% of these respondents

who believe that OBE has not resulted in active learner participation are from ex-DET schools.

SCHOOLS – EX- DEPT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER INDICATING LITTLE OR NO LEARNER PARTICIPATION	%
DET	9	3	43
HOD	8	2	28
HOA	7	2	28
HOR	8	0	0
TOTAL	32	7	99

TABLE 4. PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING THAT OBE HAS NOT LED TO ACTIVE LEARNER PARTICIPATION.

Information gathered from the interviews at ex-HOA and ex-HOD schools indicated that respondents could have answered negatively, i.e., ‘no’ to the question because learners in the Foundation Phase have always been actively involved in participation and it is not only as the result of OBE. The interviewees at ex-DET schools cited the gross lack of resources as being the main reason for learners not being actively involved.

4.1.2. EVIDENCE OF CO-OPERATION AND INTER-DEPENDENCE WITHIN A GROUP

75% of respondents shown in Figure 8 indicated that while group work was always a feature of the old system of teaching, there is now a new enthusiasm because learners are given the freedom to express their thoughts, ideas and opinions. Many believe that learners are now more stimulated and are taking responsibility for their education.

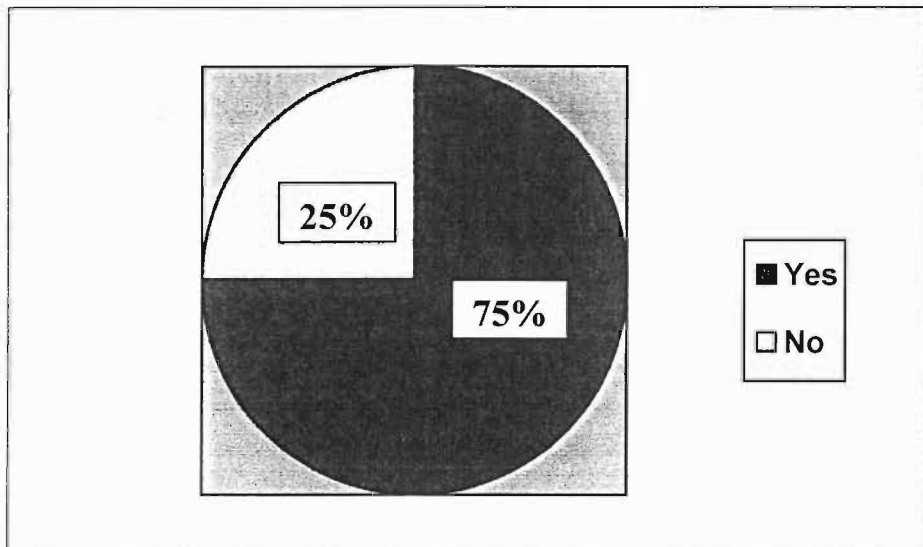


FIGURE 8. EVIDENCE OF CO-OPERATION AND INTER-DEPENDENCE WITHIN A GROUP.

The new passion for learning is possibly the result of learners being given the opportunity to work at their own pace and that everyone is given a chance to achieve in his/her own time. An interviewee from an ex-HOR school stated, “The children are not

pressured to move fast and keep pace with others. OBE caters for all learners. There are no really ‘weak’ learners.”

Of the 25% who perceived that learners have not been able to work co-operatively in a group, 62% were from the ex-HOD schools as indicated in Table 5.

SCHOOLS- EX-DEPT.	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	%
DET	1	12
HOD	5	62
HOA	1	12
HOR	1	12
TOTAL	8	98

TABLE 5. LEARNERS CANNOT WORK CO-OPERATIVELY AND INDEPENDENTLY IN A GROUP.

Reasons offered during the interview of ex-HOD educators were as follows:

- Learners are working at different rates.
- There is a tendency to ‘copy’ what the ‘more advanced’ learners are doing.
- All learners do not have basic stationery.
- There are too many complaints.

4.1.3. IMPROVEMENT IN THE CULTURE OF LEARNING AND ATTITUDE

Statistics in Figure 9 are indicative of the fact that the culture of learning has improved with 47% believing that there is an improvement in the culture of learning and attitude. 37% believe that this is partly true while only 19% believe that this is false.

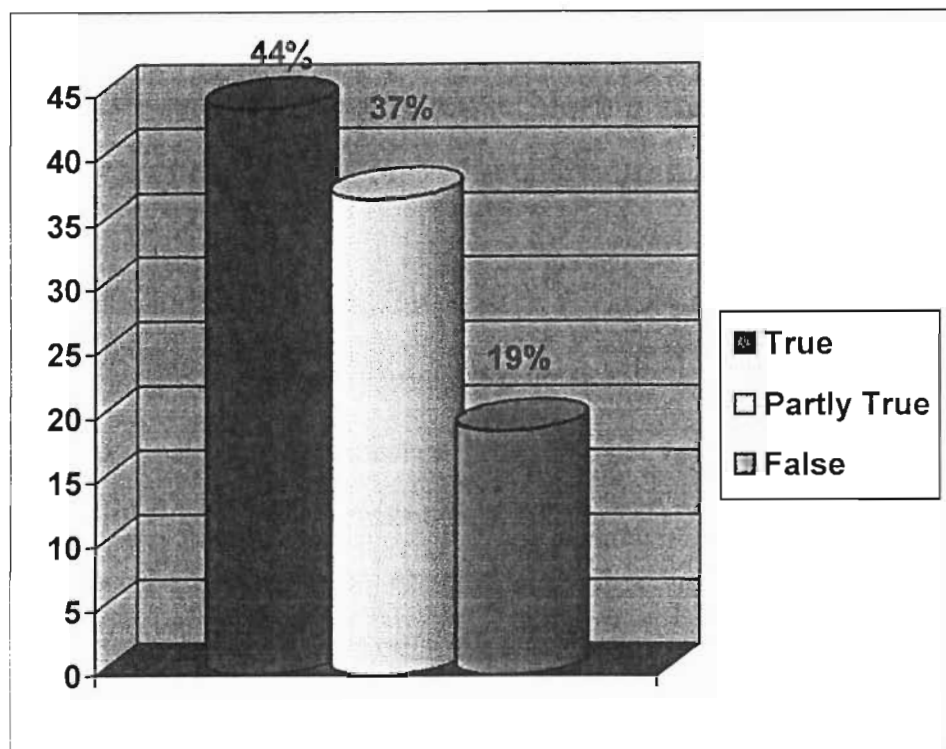


FIGURE 9. HAS THE ATTITUDE AND CULTURE OF LEARNING IMPROVED?

These statistics are encouraging and the improvement can be attributed to the freedom that is allowed to learners and the opportunity afforded to express themselves, learn by discovery

and problem solve. Terms such as 'independent thinkers', 'reflective learners', 'outspoken and confident', 'eager and enthusiastic' are often used to describe OBE learners. This augurs well for OBE.

Evans and King (1994: 16) after their research on OBE, cited the following possibilities for OBE:

1. The Outcomes Driven Development Model can work and is readily adapted into traditional systems.
2. OBE seems to benefit low-achieving students while having questionable effects on high-achieving students.

Phyllis Geddert (1993: 210) after a three-year action research project, made certain findings regarding the benefits of OBE :

1. More students achieved mastery levels in Mathematics following the implementation of the OBE principle. Teachers too, believed that OBE principles made a significant difference in student performance.
2. OBE students demonstrated higher achievements on external measures, such as provincial Mathematics achievement tests.

OBE's new methodology, although used in conjunction with the old teaching methods, has sparked a new enthusiasm from learners that has resulted in them being able to work confidently as individuals and team co-workers. As Spady (1994a: 155) says, "Those who advocate and implement OBE have a very optimistic viewpoint about children and their ability to

accomplish great things when inspired and challenged appropriately.”

4.1.4. LEARNERS CAN WORK INDEPENDENTLY OF THE EDUCATOR.

Figure 10 below substantiates the fact that OBE has resulted in an improvement in the culture of learning.

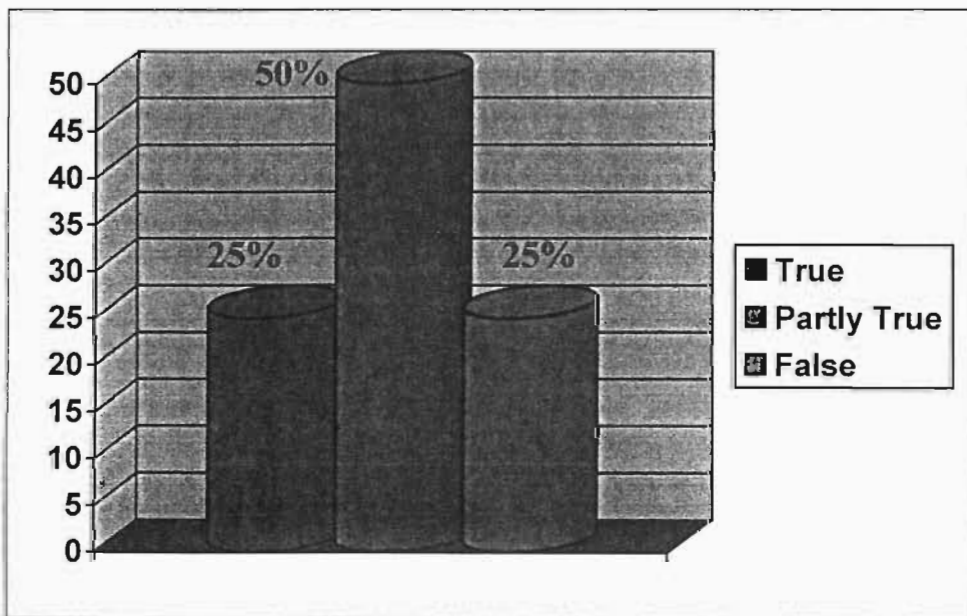


FIGURE 10. LEARNERS HAVE LEARNT TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY OF THE EDUCATOR.

75% of respondents (25% definite and 50% partly true) believed that learners can now work independently of the educator. The other 25% were unsure. The educator at the Foundation Phase level does realise that a certain percentage of learners will be

more inclined to work closely with him / her rather than his / her peers.

Respondents have indicated that although learners have become more independent, they still have to do a great deal of talking.

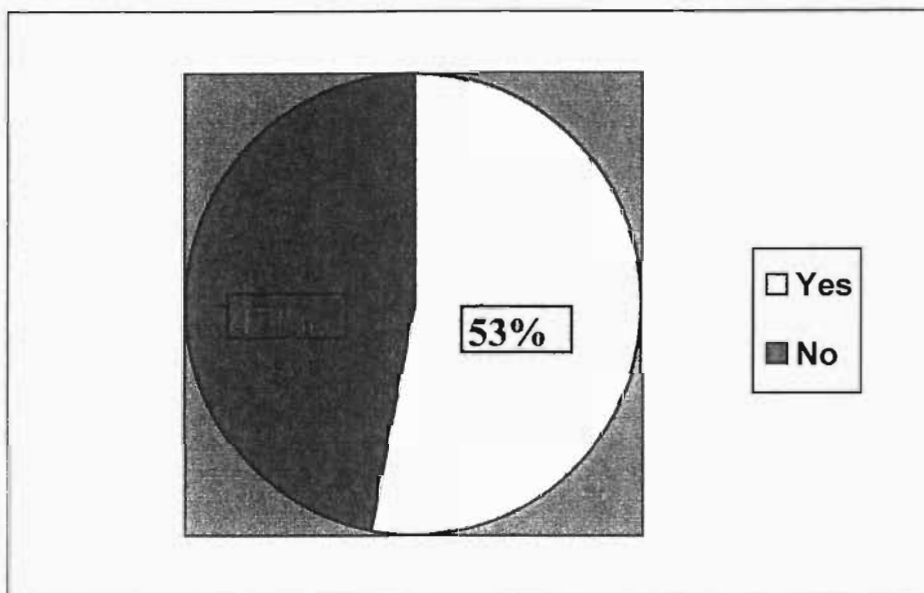


FIGURE 11. DO EDUCATORS NOW DO MORE TALKING?

53% of respondents, revealed in Figure 11, indicated that more talking is done now. This is evident of the fact that many young learners still need a high degree of direction and guidance in classroom activities.

4.1.5. THE ABSENCE OF A FIXED TIME-TABLE.

This has been a contributory factor towards the improvement of the culture of learning.

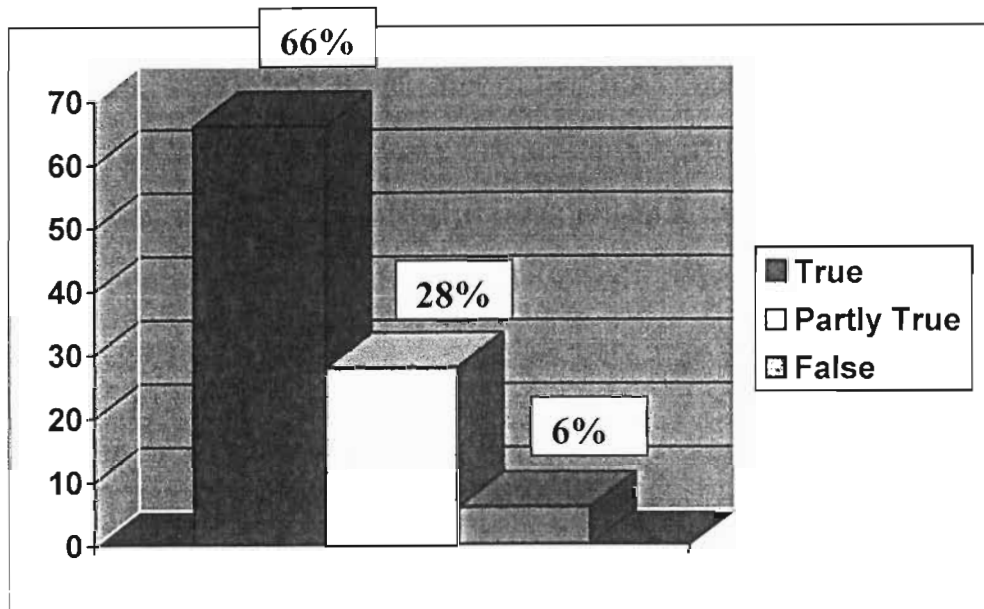


FIGURE 12. IS IT GOOD TO WORK WITHOUT A FIXED TIME-TABLE?

Statistics from Figure 12 reveal that only 6% disagreed that working without a fixed time-table is good. This can be attributed to the 'old school educators' need to be in control of activities in the classroom. These educators could probably be in the same category as those educators who have not been able to encompass change. An overwhelming 66% agreed that the scrapping of the time-table is a good idea, while 28% agreed that this was partly true. The flexi time-frames allow learners to work at their own pace with the emphasis on outcomes and what the

learner understands, not what the educator teaches. The learner is at the centre of the learning process.

An interviewee (ex-HOR) stated, “We now work at the pace of the children which is really better.” The absence of the time-table gives educators a great deal of latitude to allow learners to complete activities that are now not fixed-period bound. Although ‘slow learners’ are given the opportunity to have their views heard, educators are still adamant that the notional time is not enough to implement enrichment and / or remediation.

4.1.6. ALL LEARNERS CAN ACHIEVE COMMON OUTCOMES.

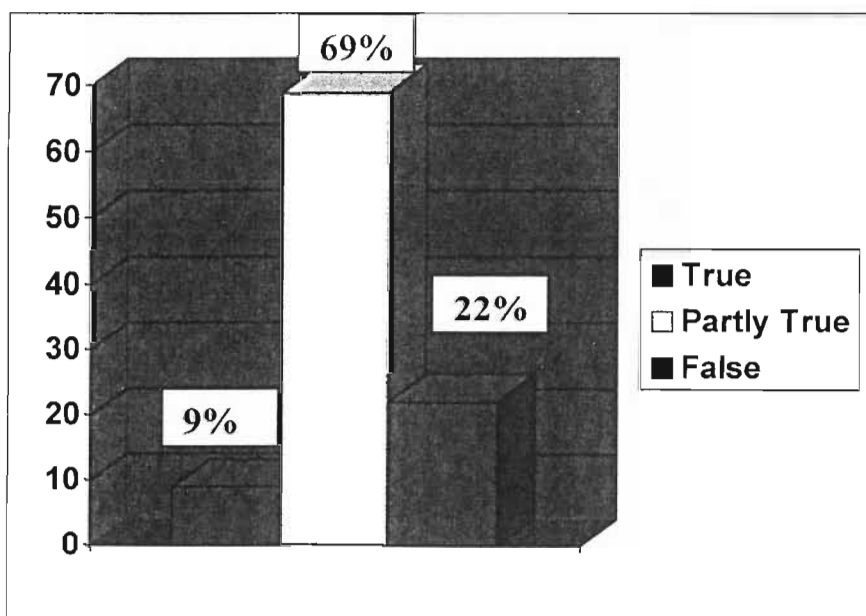


FIGURE 13. EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT ALL LEARNERS ACHIEVING COMMON OUTCOMES.

Only 22% of respondents believe that all learners cannot achieve common outcomes. The figure above indicates that 9% are confident and 69% tend to believe that all learners can achieve common outcomes. The 'partly true' response is supported by the educators' view that Foundation Phase learners need to be taught basic skills so that they could reach a certain level of understanding and knowledge before they can confidently achieve specified outcomes. Demonstration of outcomes is a result of the confidence of knowing certain basic skills.

According to Al Mamary (Brandt: 1994: 26), "All students will learn well...the emphasis is always on what the teacher does; training to the outcomes, teaching and assessing to criteria that were established...students are given opportunities to demonstrate to the teacher what they understand." It must be noted that Mamary places great emphasis on what the educator does. It can be safely concluded that the attitude of the educator plays a significant role in motivating the learner to achieve outcomes.

4.1.7. LEARNERS ARE ABLE TO VERBALISE WHAT THEY HAVE DONE.

The improvement in the culture of learning has led to learners being able to demonstrate and verbalise what they have learnt.

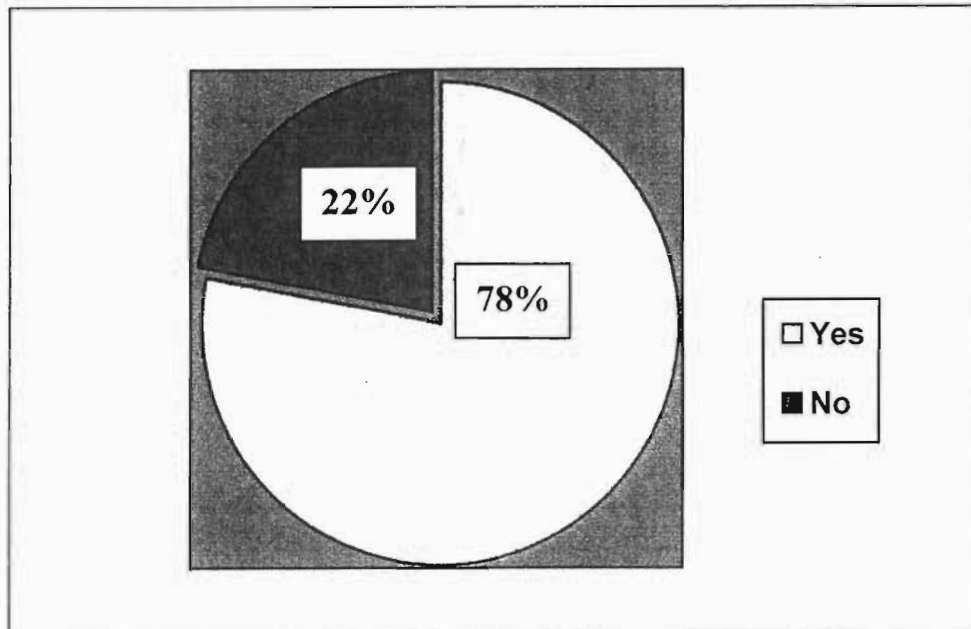


FIGURE 14. CAN LEARNERS TALK ABOUT WHAT THEY HAVE DONE?

Figure 14 indicates that 78% of respondents feel that the majority of learners are able to clearly verbalise what they have done. This is a positive result of OBE since learners are required to demonstrate and talk about what they have done and learnt to indicate whether a specific outcome was achieved.

Table 6 on the following page, indicates that the majority of educators who responded negatively were from the ex-DET schools.

SCHOOL EX-DEPT.	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	%
DET	3	43
HOD	1	14
HOA	1	14
HOR	2	28
TOTAL	7	99

TABLE 6. LEARNERS ARE UNABLE TO VERBALISE WHAT THEY HAVE LEARNT.

Ex-DET schools are poorly resourced. The lack of resources tends to hamper active participation by learners because discussion is restricted to written work which is really limited in OBE. Learning resources facilitate active participation by learners (even the ‘shy’ and ‘slow’ ones) and they are able to talk about and answer questions about what they have done, based on the learning resources.

4.2. OTHER PERSPECTIVES ON THE ADVANTAGES OF OBE.

The following advantages (elucidated by proponents of OBE) bear credence to the advantages of OBE emanating from the research study.

Denver (1995: 2) states the following as common arguments in favour of OBE:

1. Promotes high expectations and greater learning for all students. This view is one of the strengths that Spady points out and is also supported by Brady (1996: 11).
2. It prepares students for life and work in the twenty-first century.
3. It fosters more authentic forms of assessment; for example, students complete their Mathematics problems to demonstrate their ability to solve problems.
4. It encourages decision-making regarding curriculum, teaching methods, school structure and management at each school and district level.

According to Brady (1996: 11), the following are some of the benefits of OBE:

- “As outcomes provide a clear indication of what has to be achieved, teachers can better plan the means of achieving these outcomes.
- OBE may eliminate compromised standards, in that students have to achieve before going further...
- OBE assists in the operation of accountability...Employers and parents, it is argued, can also participate meaningfully in schooling if the criteria for student assessment are overt and demonstrable.”

One of the most remarkable success stories about OBE comes from the Johnson City School, Chicago. The likeness to the South African school system is of special note, especially as they have a large number of non-English speaking students, representing 17 different languages. Ron Brandt (1994: 24-26) from his conversation with Albert Mamary details some points regarding their success story using OBE.

Mamary bases most of the success on the creation of an environment where everybody is considered in partnership with the operation of education...an environment that says people are important, that no-one is to blame another, that there is no humiliation and coercion. He also states that there is a clear consensus on the mission of the school. Students get involved in self assessment. "...students are given opportunities to demonstrate to the teacher that they understand." Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate quality.

Johnson City School has 3 basic outcomes:

1. Academics – These are the subjects that are graded, nothing else. Pupils are taught to think within each of the disciplines, e.g., within Science, Art or Health.
2. Students must understand the curriculum.
3. Students should be self-directed within each discipline.

Mamary believes that having outcomes does not make you outcomes-based. Outcomes need to be defined clearly and

sensibly and it is absolutely essential to make specific provisions for accomplishing the outcomes.

The principles of OBE have transformed an average district in Sparta, Illinois, into an exemplary district in just four years (Brown: 1988: 12). With technical assessment from Clinton Bunke and William Spady, the Sparta Core Group (responsible for developing a holistic school improvement programme) adopted as its mission the 3 basic tenets of OBE:

1. Success breeds success.
2. Success for all students.
3. Schools control the conditions for success.

After 4 years of adopting OBE principles, the following were some of the results:

1. 50 per cent or more pupils scored above average on a nationally normed test (compared to none scoring above average previously).
2. Students' grades have risen.
3. More pupils are participating in extra-curricular activities.
4. Discipline problems, due to success in the classroom, are down.
5. There is a positive relationship between and among staff, administration, board of education and community.

-
6. Sparta is now known as a place to visit, to view exemplary educational activities – a far cry from their previous reputation.

4.3. GENERAL CONSTRAINTS RESULTING FROM THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OBE.

While the research has revealed that educators generally believe that learners have benefited from the implementation of OBE, many problems have become evident. The process of implementing OBE has had a negative impact on OBE practitioners.

4.3.1. METHODOLOGY

Educators have found it difficult to do away with old methodology in the formative years. All educators interviewed believed that the formality and routine of reading, writing and numeracy are of paramount importance before OBE can be properly implemented. One interviewee from an ex-DET school said emphatically, “You can’t beat the old system for literacy. There was progression. First the phonics, then the words and lastly, the sentence construction. Even the parents helped in reading.” Record keeping according to OBE principles does not enable the educator to gauge the reading competency of the

learner. Previously, the reading programme was structured and progress and level of reading was clearly evident from records kept.

Educators have not entirely disregarded the new OBE methodology, but have adapted them and used them in conjunction with old methods.

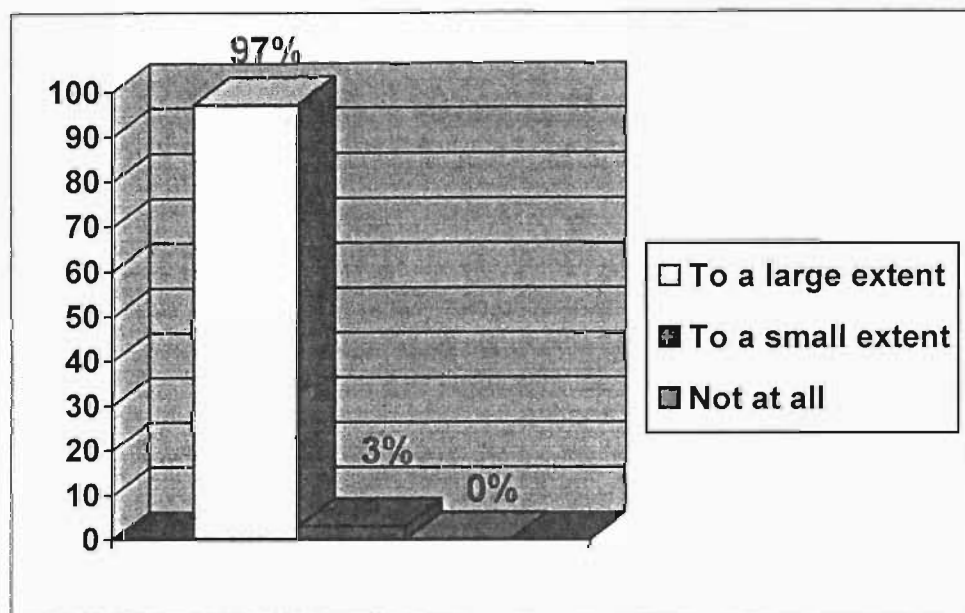


FIGURE 15. ARE A COMBINATION OF OLD AND NEW METHODS USED?

97% of respondents agreed that they use a combination of old and new methods. 3% indicated that they use a combination of methods to a small extent. Significantly, no-one indicated that a combination was not used at all. This is indicative of the success of the old methodology, especially to enable learners to gain a

certain degree of skills and knowledge before OBE is implemented.

Statistics from Figure 16 below support the idea that independence and confidence required for working in groups and demonstrating outcomes, comes from the confidence of knowing how to read and write.

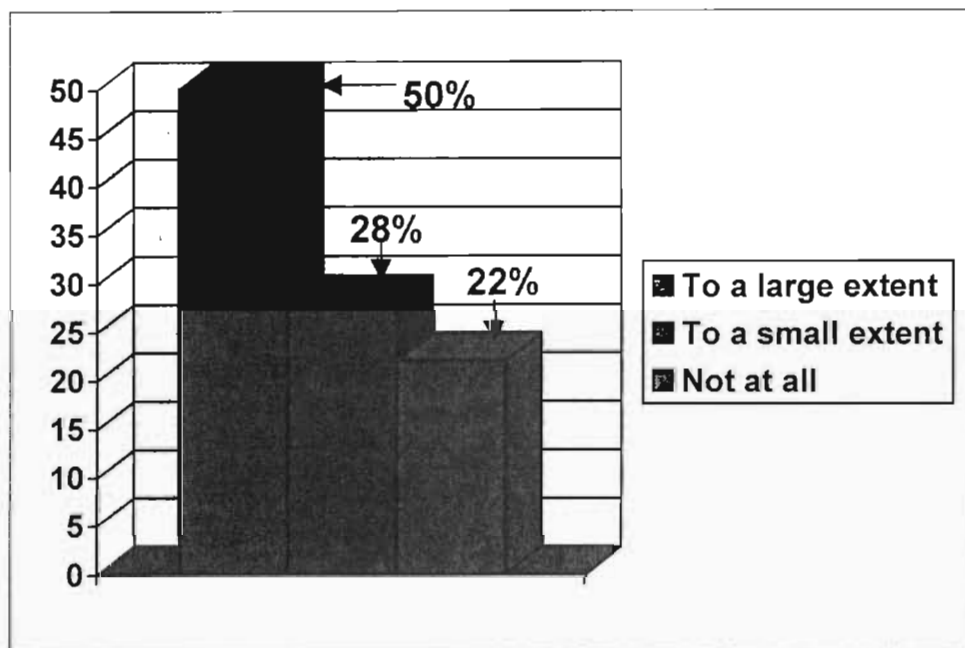


FIGURE 16. TO WHAT EXTENT ARE OLD METHODS USED FOR READING, WRITING AND NUMERACY?

50% of respondents indicated that old methods are used for reading, writing and numeracy to a large extent and 28% used it to a small extent. At an interview the explanation offered for not using the old methods was that although reading, writing and numeracy were still taught, the drill method was not employed anymore.

The importance of reading cannot be over-emphasised. George Roche, President of Hillside College, cites the alarming results of the City of Chicago that uses the OBE system. While students were becoming very astute at talking and passing sub-skills tests, many students were entering high school having successfully completed the various levels of programmes at school, at their own individualised rates of progress, “without ever having read a book and without being able to read one.” (Roche: 1998)

Fortunately, educators, respondents and interviewees have affirmed that reading is of great importance.

Certain factors seem to be responsible for some educators being divided in their opinions and use of old and new methods in implementing OBE as revealed in Figure 17.

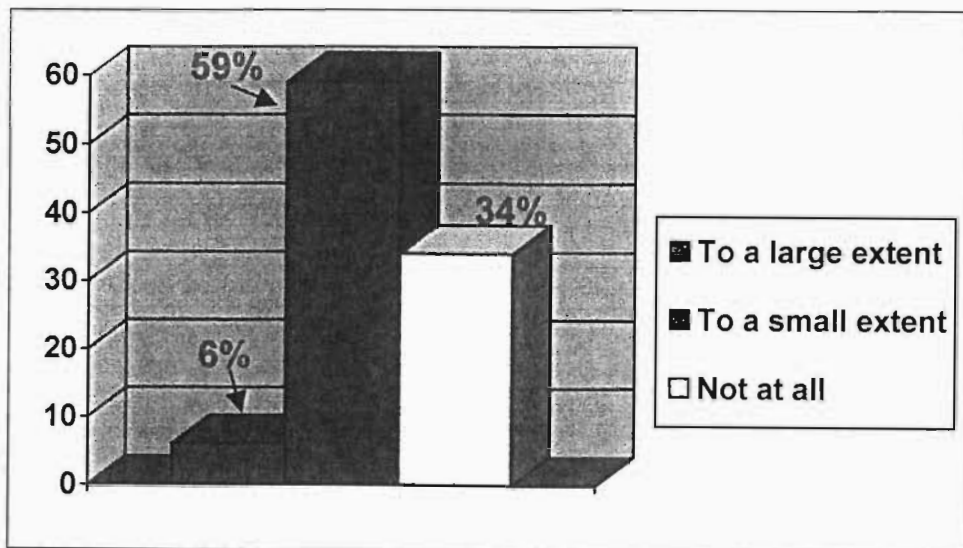


FIGURE 17. ARE OLD METHODS USED IN TEACHING BECAUSE THEY ARE COMFORTABLE AND FAMILIAR?

59% revealed that they still use old methods to a small extent and 6% indicated that they use it to a large extent. 34% indicated that the reason of comfort and familiarity of the old methodology was not significant in the implementation of OBE. What most respondents missed about the old system was that they worked according to a daily programme which was changed to meet the needs of the learners for the following day. When asked how the old system was better for educators, all agreed that it was less demanding and that they knew exactly at what level of reading and numeracy the learner was, and what remediation steps they had to undertake.

Educators have noted in the questionnaires and at interviews that the aspects of reading, writing and numeracy, especially the first two, have been neglected in the process of OBE implementation.

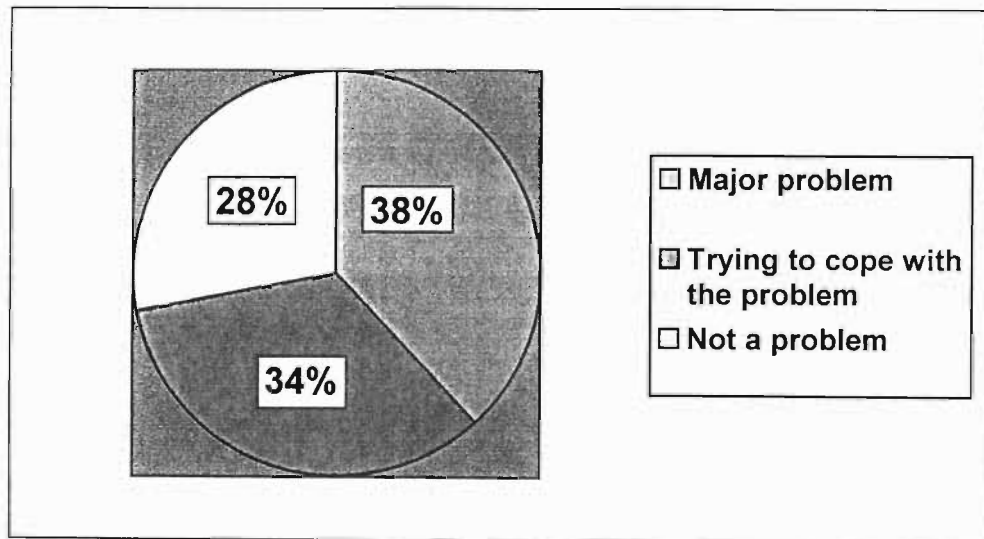


FIGURE 18. TO WHAT EXTENT IS THE NEGLECT OF BASIC SKILLS A PROBLEM?

While 38% agreed that this is a major problem, 34% are trying to cope with the problem. 28% agreed that this was not a problem. Statistics reveal that no conclusive statement can be made about the neglect of basic skills. Information gathered from interviewees revealed that it was not a problem because educators believed that although less emphasis is placed especially on reading and writing, these aspects were not neglected. This is especially so because educators understand and know the significance of learners achieving basic skills. The ability to demonstrate outcomes, by talking was of more significance than learners being able to read or record what they had done.

Interestingly, 50% of respondents do not find teaching according to OBE principles relaxing or easier as revealed in Figure 19.

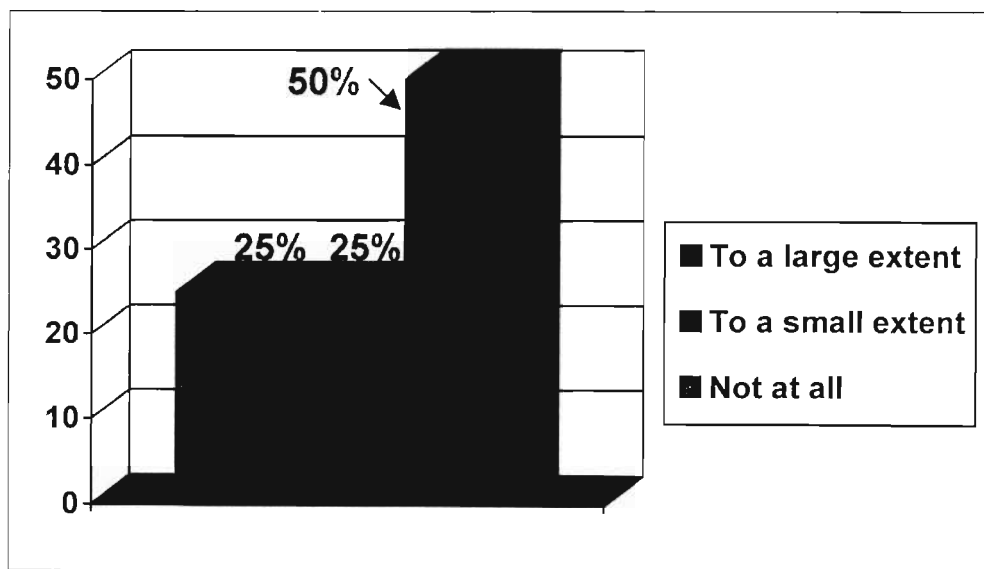


FIGURE 19. IS TEACHING ACCORDING TO OBE PRINCIPLES RELAXING AND EASIER?

The statistics in Figure 19 show that 25% find it relaxing and easier to a small extent and 25% to a large extent. Table 7 reveals that it is mostly ex-DET educators who find teaching according to OBE principles easier and relaxing.

SCHOOL – EX-DEPT.	NUMBER INDICATING OBE IS RELAXING AND EASIER	%
DET	6	75
HOD	2	25
HOA	0	0
HOR	0	0
TOTAL	8	100

TABLE 7. NUMBER INDICATING THAT OBE MAKES FOR EASIER AND MORE RELAXING TEACHING.

Interviewees from the ex-DET schools indicated a preference to teach without adherence to a time-table. One respondent stated: “I have become more flexible. I am not working alone in the class anymore. The gap between the teacher and pupils has closed. I sit with them. I listen to them.” An ex-HOA interviewee stated: “OBE is a lot of hard work, but it is good. We enjoy the children.”

The fact that OBE is not considered easier and relaxing has a direct bearing on some of the problems experienced in implementing OBE. Educators are expected to assess learners on

an on-going basis. Further, as argued by Marzano (1994: 44), outcomes-based performance assessments “make effective use of teacher judgement [and] they allow for student difference in style and interest.” It calls for an educator to allow each child to work at his/her own pace and to demonstrate outcomes according to his/her level of understanding. This definitely would be trying for any educator who, especially now, is in charge of an average of forty-five learners per class.

While educators have indicated that both old and new methods are used in implementing OBE, 94% indicated that there are differences in the methodologies. 47% agreed that there are slight differences, while an equal percentage agreed that there are major differences, as revealed in Figure 20.

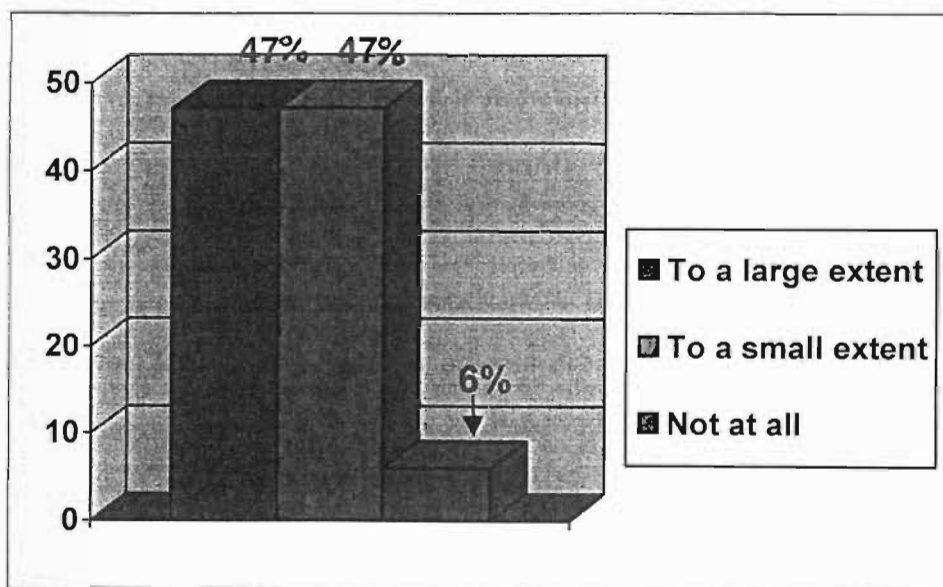


FIGURE 20. ARE THERE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW METHODOLOGIES?

It is interesting to note that respondents who agreed that the differences between the two methodologies were great, were mostly from the ex-DET and ex-HOD schools.

SCHOOL – EX-DEPT.	NUMBER INDICATING BIG DIFFERENCE (NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS IN BRACKETS)	%
DET	7 (9)	44
HOD	5 (8)	33
HOA	1 (7)	7
HOR	2 (8)	13
TOTAL	15 (32)	97

TABLE 8. EDUCATORS INDICATING MAJOR DIFFERENCES IN THE OLD AND NEW METHODOLOGIES.

Two reasons can be cited for the above statistics:

1. Ex-HOA and ex-HOR schools have long been employing child-centred methods of teaching. This was substantiated by the Principal of an ex-Model C school (ex-HOA).
2. Ex-HOD and ex-DET schools are experiencing problems with teaching according to mixed ability groups. Interviewees expressed this view. The ex-DET interviewees stated that they were finding teaching according to mixed ability groups difficult and, they avoid it.

Bonville (1996: 2) argued that OBE “undermines academic excellence by de-emphasising, eliminating and lowering academic standards such that all students can meet all requirements...it adds other standards which are attitudinal and affective, politically correct, verified by behaviour having nothing to do with academics. OBE focuses on changing behaviour, attitudes, values and feelings.”

Interviewees have revealed that with more workshops and interaction with other OBE practitioners, their attitude towards the practice of OBE has become more positive. One Principal remarked that educators are slowly growing into OBE. Time and practice will bring about the real measure of success of OBE. This attitude of uncertainty about implementing OBE has in the recent past allowed educators not to ‘throw out’ old methods of teaching. The expression, “marry the two methods” is commonly used by OBE facilitators.

Bonville appropriately stated that OBE “introduces ‘whole word’ reading in place of phonics, and employs group, co-operative and coercive learning strategies in place of motivating individual initiative. The approach de-emphasises individual choices and decisions of the learning of self-reliance. Replaces math drills with calculators, vocabulary building with feel-good choices, etc., as it takes the work out of academic learning.” (Bonville: 1996: 3)

When OBE was first implemented in 1997, it was thought to be prescriptive in terms of assessment criteria, specific outcomes and learning areas.

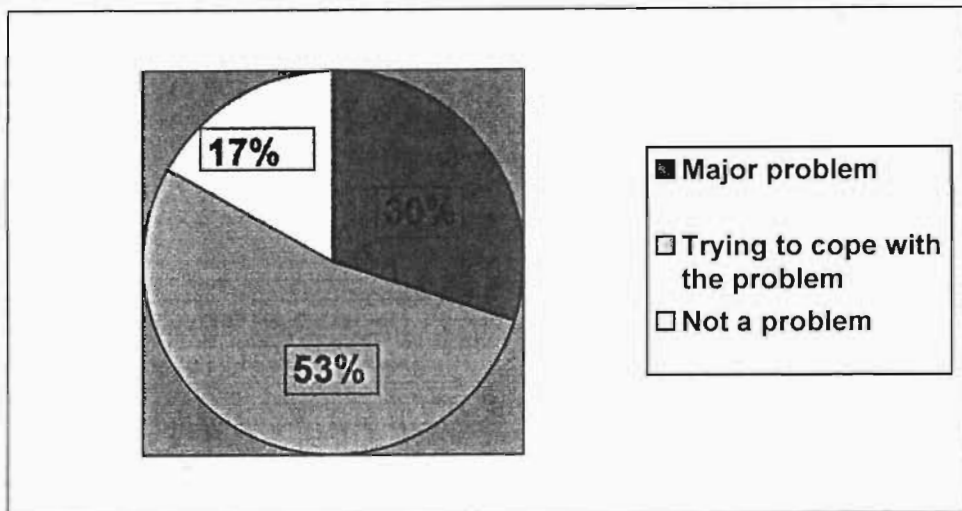


FIGURE 21. DOES THE PRESCRIPTIVE NATURE OF OBE POSE A PROBLEM?

According to Figure 21, only 30% of respondents agreed that the prescriptive nature of OBE implementation was a major problem. 53% are coping and 17% find it not to be problematic. As OBE is being implemented, educators seem to be coming to grips with its requirements. It has been repeatedly said that regular meeting with the relevant personnel, within the school structure and regions have helped to iron out many problems. Common problems are aired, solutions have been sought and mutual benefit has been derived.

It has to be remembered that “Outcomes provide a means for clarifying why and what we teach. But they are not cast in concrete. They can be re-defined as they become inappropriate in the light of changing social and economic contexts. Outcomes reflect society’s views of what is important, and these views are contestable and ever-changing.” (Department of Education: 1997e: 7).

4.3.2. LARGE CLASSES

Figure 22 below, clearly indicates that large classes are not welcome.

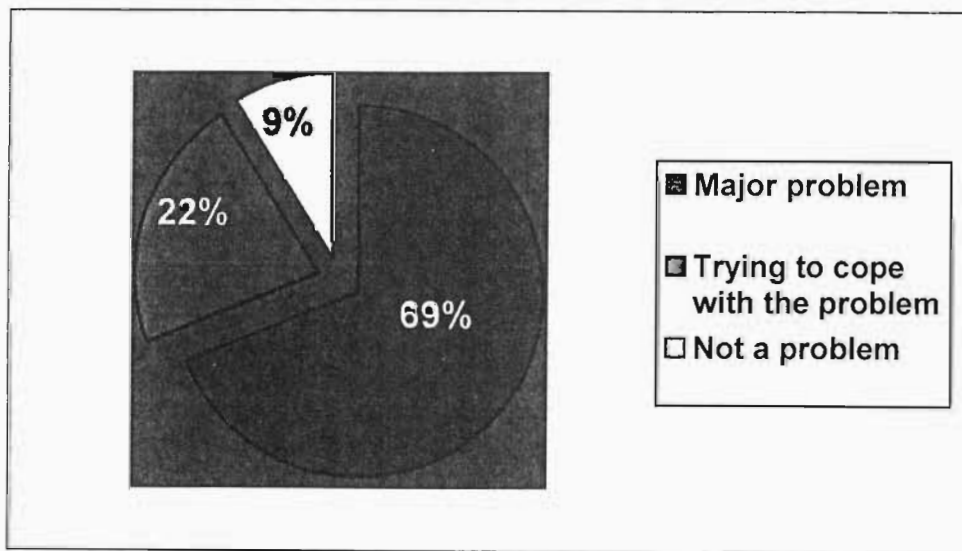


FIGURE 22. ARE LARGE CLASSES A PROBLEM?

Large classes add to the problem of assessment and discipline. The respondents from advantaged schools (mostly ex-HOA)

complain about the large classes of 30, yet disadvantaged schools deal with classes with an average of 45 learners.

Table 9 below clearly indicates how educators from the various ex-departments of education view the problem of large classes.

SCHOOL – EX-DEPT	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER INDICATING PROBLEM	NUMBER AS PERCENTAGE
DET	9	8	88
HOD	8	5	63
HOA	7	1	14
HOR	8	8	100
TOTAL	32	22	

TABLE 9. LARGE CLASSES ARE A MAJOR PROBLEM.

The statistics above reveal the following:

1. All educators with the exception of those at ex-HOA schools have to cope with large classes due to the recent rationalisation and redeployment process.
2. Ex-HOA educators, especially from the ex-Model C schools, are in a fortunate position because these schools can afford to employ a greater number of teachers who are paid by the School Governing Body.

The present Education Minister, Professor Kader Asmal (Educator’s Voice: 1999: 13) stated: “The provision of teachers

under apartheid resulted in two serious social distortions. One was the extreme inequality in learner-educator ratios. It is unfortunate that teachers have borne the brunt of the process of rationalisation that, for the first time, allocates teachers equitable to schools according to needs.”

Jansen (1998: 8) argues that class size norm (CZN) and OBE multiply the “pedagogic responsibilities of the teacher at the same time it increases their management and administrative roles. It diminishes the role of the teacher at the same time forcing them into greater control roles.”

The introduction of OBE and the rationalisation processes, concurrently have had serious implications for the educators and learners. Jansen says (1998: 7):

1. OBE requires relatively small, manageable classes; CZN results in larger classes.
2. OBE requires teachers who facilitate learning while learners initiate their own learning; CZN provides contexts within which teachers are forced into prominent management roles in their classrooms.
3. OBE assumes that highly confident teachers manage their classroom learning processes; CZN places additional pressures on under-qualified, less confident teachers to manage large classrooms.
4. OBE is premised on providing the same learning opportunities to all learners (equity); CZN increases the distance between

white schools (which can raise resources to manage increased class sizes) and black schools (which cannot).

4.3.3. DISCIPLINE AND NOISE

The new freedom that has been afforded to learners, to express their opinions and ideas, has brought about the problem of discipline, which has also been multiplied by the problem of large numbers of learners per class. All principals interviewed pointed out the increase in the noise level from OBE classes. But more importantly, they have accepted this noise because it is controlled and comes from the active participation and enthusiasm of learners. Figure 23 supports this notion.

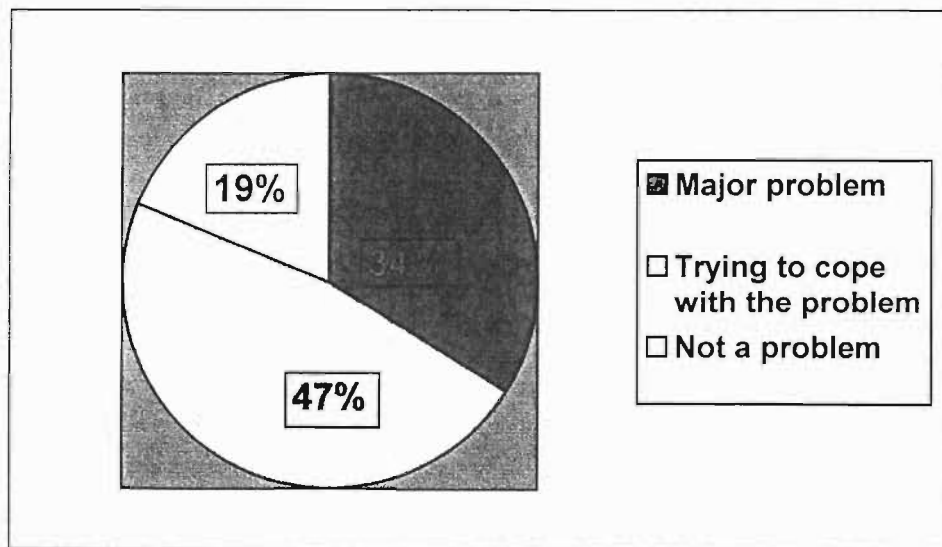


FIGURE 23. IS DISCIPLINE A PROBLEM?

Only 19% of respondents find the problem of discipline and noise in the classroom irrelevant. The concern is that 34%

consider it a major problem and 47% are trying to cope with this problem. Educators interviewed revealed that this 'noisy atmosphere' is a far cry from their previously organised and controlled classes, but they are learning to accept the new atmosphere because learners interact with each other and are taking responsibility for their learning. They consider the noise to be 'constructive'.

4.3.4. DEMANDS ON EDUCATORS

4.3.4.1. ASSESSMENT, REMEDIATION AND ENRICHMENT.

Children's attitudes towards themselves and their lives are determined during the primary years. The degree of success now will set limits on life-long success as well as school success. "Negative experiences during this period have a profound effect on their effort to develop positive self-image." (Morrison: 1988: 294)

According to Kate Jamentz (1994: 57), "Two most important reasons to develop and implement performance assessment is that it provides an impetus to explore questions at the very heart of the purposes and processes of schooling.

- What do we want students to know and be able to do?
- How will we know they can do it?
- What resources must be available to ensure that all students succeed?

- How do we structure and pace an instructional program that prepares all students to perform well?”

It is recognised that assessment has a variety of forms, uses and purposes such as providing feedback to pupils, setting objectives and targets for learners, improving of teaching, information to parents and providing paper qualification. Figure 24 below, reveals some interesting statistics.

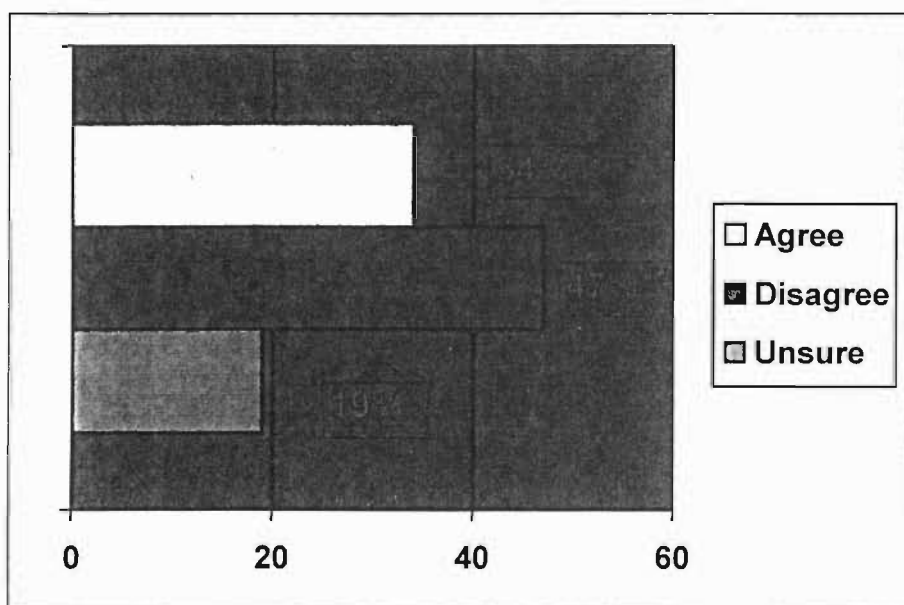


FIGURE 24. OBE ASSESSMENTS ARE SUBJECTIVE.

34% agree and 19% are unsure whether assessments according to OBE principles, because it is based on the educator’s judgement, are subjective. The 47% that disagree see that assessment is a part of the learning process and not something which happens

after learning is finished. This is justly supported by the statistics contained in Figure 25.

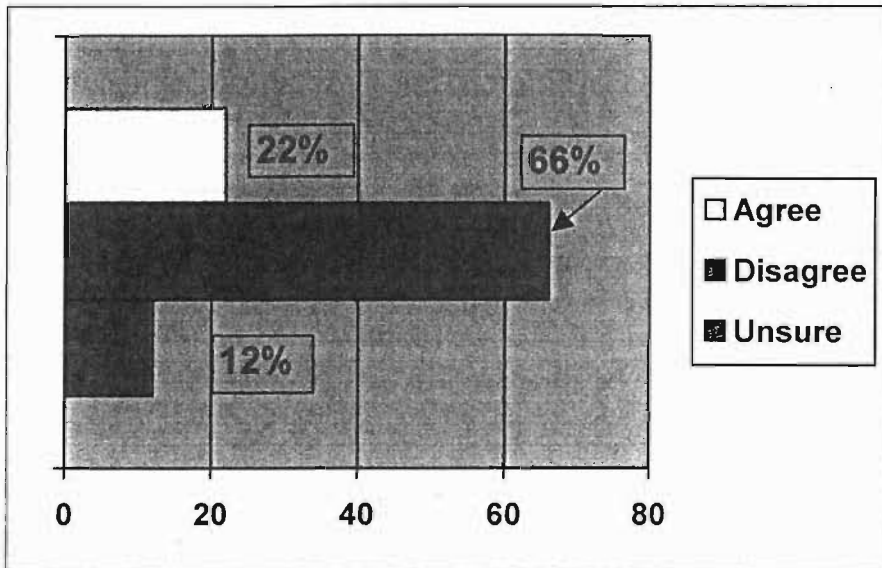


FIGURE 25. FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS (BY MEANS OF TESTS) IS A BETTER INDICATOR OF PROGRESS AND / OR AREAS OF WEAKNESS.

66% of respondents disagreed that formative assessments is a better indicator of progress or weakness. 22% agreed and 12% were unsure. Educators indicated that assessments as they are ongoing, include verbal assessments, peer assessments and demonstrations.

With regard to assessments (Porter 1994, Griffin 1994, Marzano 1994, Resnick 1994), OBE offers an advantage in that it offers teachers the possibility of assessment which is responsive to differences of culture and circumstances. Qualitative judgements

of outcomes achieved are easily possible according to explicit specifications of standards fairly comparable within and amongst schools. Further, self-assessment and negotiated assessment between teachers and pupils are seen as valuable ways of increasing motivation and commitment (Willis and Kissane: 1995: 40).

It is encouraging to note the importance placed on both remediation and enrichment.

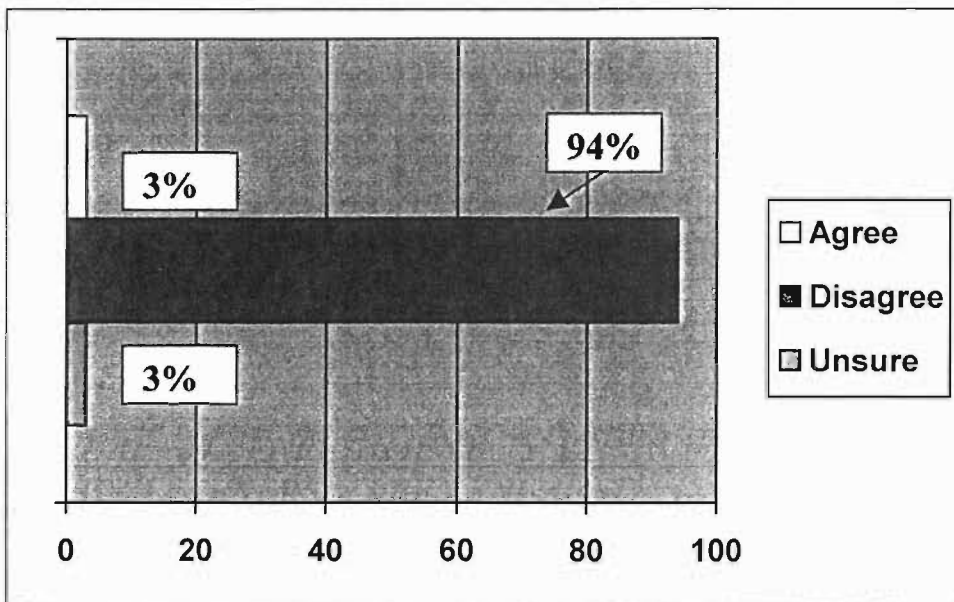


FIGURE 26. REMEDIATION IS UNNECESSARY BECAUSE ALL LEARNERS CAN ACHIEVE AND DEMONSTRATE OUTCOMES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS.

Statistics from Figure 26 show that an overwhelming 94% of respondents agreed that remediation is necessary, no matter at

what level learners achieve and demonstrate outcomes. 3% agreed and 3% were unsure.

In the same vein, 72% (Figure 27) disagreed that enrichment is unnecessary or not offered.

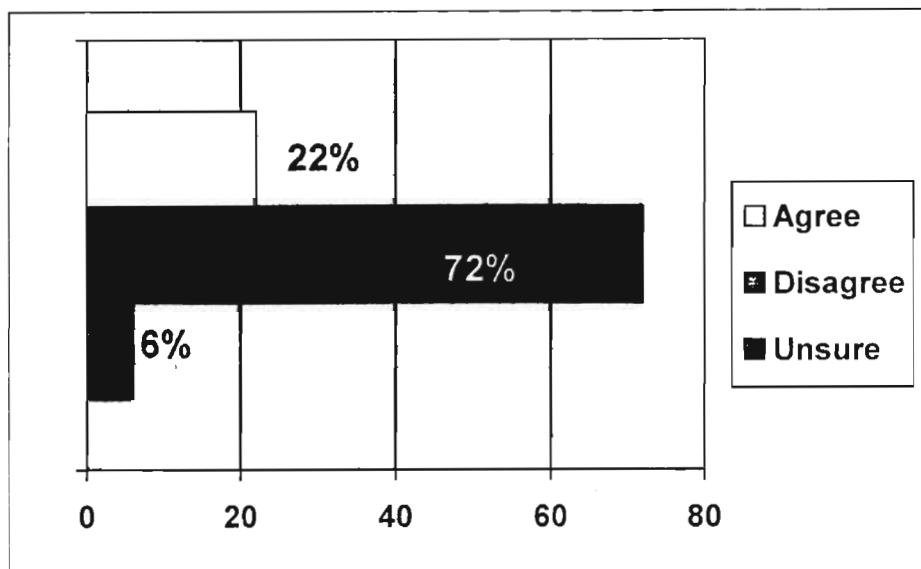


FIGURE 27. ENRICHMENT IS UNNECESSARY BECAUSE 'FAST LEARNERS' ARE ENGAGED IN PEER GROUP TEACHING.

22% of respondents felt that enrichment was unnecessary and 6% were unsure. Interviewees disagreed that OBE favours disadvantaged learners. Although it is difficult to offer enrichment to high-flyers, they believe that the onus lies with the individual educator to extend the ability of the advantaged learners.

The implementation of remediation and enrichment to learners of diverse abilities is also a challenge as revealed in Figure 28 below.

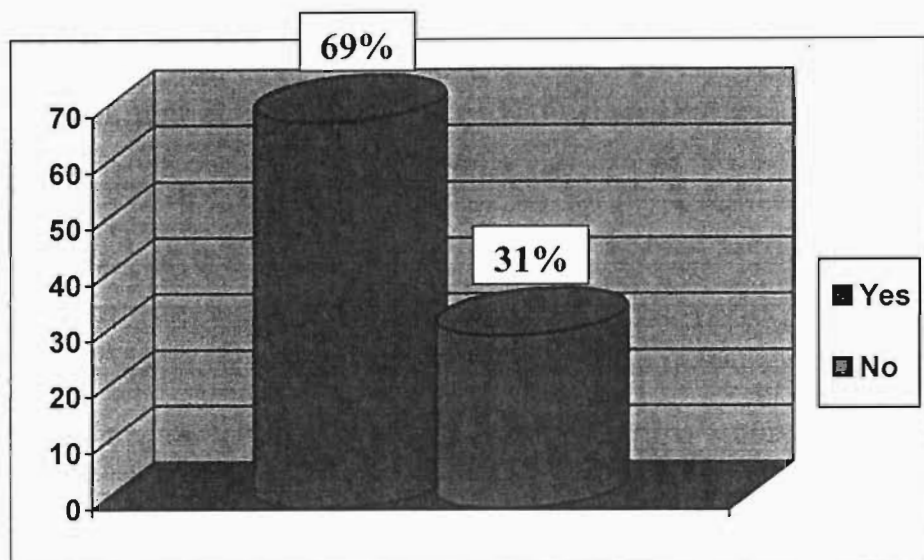


FIGURE 28. IS IMPLEMENTING REMEDIATION AND ENRICHMENT A PROBLEM?

Statistics revealed in Figure 28 show that 69% of respondents find implementing remediation and enrichment to learners of diverse abilities a problem. 31% disagree.

According to Spady (1994a: 162) the “dumbing down” notion of OBE that most critics have is not justifiable. “OBE has always stood for high expectations as well as high standards for all students.” The previous approach of teaching where everyone does exactly the same thing at the same time virtually guarantees a win/lose situation because students either pass or fail according

to the set standards (ibid: 163). With OBE there is no need for competition nor does it 'dumb down' the curriculum to equalise the achievements of all students, nor does it retard the pace and level of high achievers. OBE teachers avoid the waiting problem by having quicker learners engage in challenging extension and enrichment activities (ibid: 165). Further, the process of having more advanced students helping their less motivated peers to achieve outcomes has advantages. "Team-based learning and performing parallel the realities of the adult world." (ibid: 167).

Thomas Guskey (1994: 51) cites Wiggins' view (1989) that "performance assessments are likely to become an integral part of the instructional process, rather than a separate, after-the-fact check on student learning."

According to Bonville (1996: 3-4), "In OBE, a student must demonstrate an approved behaviour defined by the state as the required outcome of the educational process.

The state:

1. Sets the standard for 'mastery' of a specified goal.
2. Tests to verify that the goal has been achieved.
3. Remediate a student who fails to meet the standard until he does.

The required outcomes are attitudinal, not academically based...In practice, because of emphasis upon group learning strategies, all children must achieve the goals before the group

may move on...This group orientation makes OBE a system for education of the group, not the individual. It is “collective” education in which competition is discouraged and the individual learns that the group is more important than the individual.”

Since assessment is supposed to be continuous, educators are expected to be observing learners all the time. One educator from an ex-HOA school had this to say: “Assessment is necessary, yes, but it shouldn’t be an obsession. We don’t want to be clipboard teachers [making reference to walking around and making assessments]. We know our children. When they need help, we correct them immediately. We want to teach our children.”

When asked to comment about OBE being biased towards the disadvantaged learners, respondents gave varied responses, but it was evident that the majority agreed that OBE has advantages for all learners. When respondents agreed that OBE was biased towards the disadvantaged learners, it was qualified positively. They agreed that OBE allows the ‘slow’ or ‘disadvantaged’ learner to acquire skills and knowledge at his / her own pace and more importantly, to be an active participant and is not pressured by any urgency or competition to compete with others. An ex-HOR educator said, “OBE allows the slow learner to learn from hands-on experience.”

The little resistance to OBE in terms of being biased towards the disadvantaged learners came from a small contingent of

educators from the ex-HOD schools. They believe that OBE has demotivated high-flyers who achieve the outcomes without much effort. This has led them to take their work less seriously. This was further supported by the fact that promotion requirements are minimal. A few Principals expressed their concern regarding promotion. They believe that if certain learners are given the opportunity to repeat a year, they will mature and grasp concepts which are necessary for further development. The neglect of knowledge or the academic aspect is also seen as a problem. Both Principals and some educators fear that at the end of the year the learner is equipped with too little knowledge.

“OBE advocates have struggled mightily with the question of whether one set of outcomes will fit the needs of all students...Parents of high-achieving students, in particular, fear that such nebulous outcomes will result in less academic rigor in their children’s program.” (O’Neil: 1994: 9)

Brady (1996: 14) states that OBE “discriminates against the capable student as remediation takes priority over enrichment...Teaching continues until an outcome is achieved.”

Evans and King (1994) and Towers (1994) believe that OBE holds back top achievers until all have met the behavioural standards. This allows most members of a group or class to achieve only a small fraction of the academic progress gained

under the previous system. It discriminates against the capable students, as remediation takes precedence over enrichment.

Manno (1994: 5) states that the goal of self-worth is significant in the system of OBE. "All students understand and appreciate their worth as unique and capable individuals and exhibit self-esteem." There is no fear of failure since there is "a desire to succeed, while recognizing that failure is a part of everyone's experience." OBE may "eliminate permanent failure in that students who do not initially achieve an outcome may do so eventually with appropriate remediation." (Brady: 1996: 11)

OBE can overcome the lack of support and negative societal factors that so strongly influence traditional time-based performance. What is 'doable' is that by allowing a learner time to work at his/her own pace, the burden of missed work or work poorly done can be remediated until the outcome is achieved. (McGhan: 1994: 72)

OBE is about providing skills and knowledge for real-life challenges. What is quite conclusive is that OBE caters for learners of various learning abilities. The educator needs to organise himself/herself to cater for all learners by providing varied activities. Interviewees agreed that assessment of all learners at various levels is extremely demanding but once learners are gainfully occupied, there is something to achieve, be it skills or knowledge, by all learners.

Another problem of assessment is allocating time within instruction time to make and record assessments.

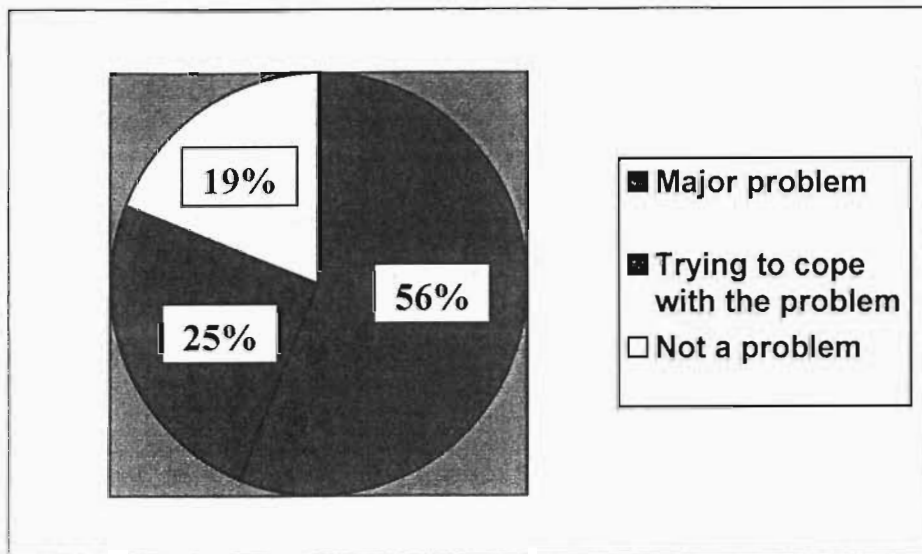


FIGURE 29. WHAT IS THE EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM OF ALLOCATING TIME TO MAKE AND RECORD ASSESSMENTS IN CLASS?

Statistics from Figure 29 reveal that 56% of respondents find assessing and recording assessments during instructional time a major problem; 25% are trying to cope with the problem, and 19% do not experience any problems. The mechanism for assessing learners and keeping records is tedious. Although facilitators have informed educators to keep records in a manner that they are comfortable with, interviewees say that there is no easy method to record assessments.

Educators have to be in constant ‘observation mode’ to check if learners can demonstrate the specific outcomes. These have to be checked against the assessment criteria. Draft records may be kept during instructional time, but later these have to be transferred in the appropriate manner in the appropriate record files.

Brady (1996: 11) points out that there is “also the related danger that curriculum makers may tend to state only those outcomes that can be measured, and this may result in an emphasis on the trivial outcomes of learning; and a tendency to teach more of the predictable specifics...Teachers certainly need to know more about assessment generally, and specifically as it relates to outcomes.”

Guskey (1994: 52-53) writes about Gary Vitali’s study involving extensive teacher interviews, questionnaires, and classroom observations regarding OBE. “He discovered that, simply put, teachers did not know how to teach to the performance-based assessments, nor did they believe that they could do so within their current time constraints.”

4.3.4.2. LEARNERS’ RECORD OF WORK DONE.

The aspect of writing and recording what is learnt (Figure 30) is seen as a point of concern.

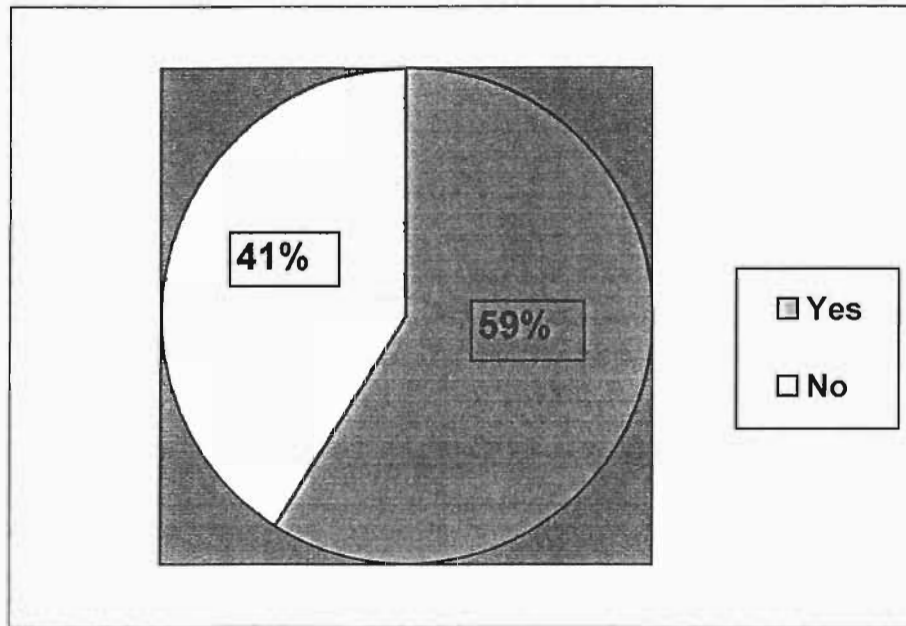


FIGURE 30. ARE LEARNERS ABLE TO RECORD (WRITE ABOUT) WHAT THEY HAVE DONE?

59% of respondents agreed that writing and recording by learners is a problem and 41% disagreed. This may be tied up with the traditional (old) system of education, where written work was proof and evidence to both educator and parents of the progression and ability level of the learner. One ex-HOD interviewee said that “writing has no status in OBE and that is why their work is so untidy.”

4.3.4.3. TEACHING AND MOTIVATING ALL LEARNERS TO ACHIEVE COMMON OUTCOMES.

Considering the demands that OBE places on educators, teaching and motivating learners of diverse abilities to achieve outcomes is considered to be a problem.

With OBE principles, each child is seen as an individual. Although learners are grouped, each learner is still expected to be assessed according to his / her individual way of demonstrating the outcomes of his activity.

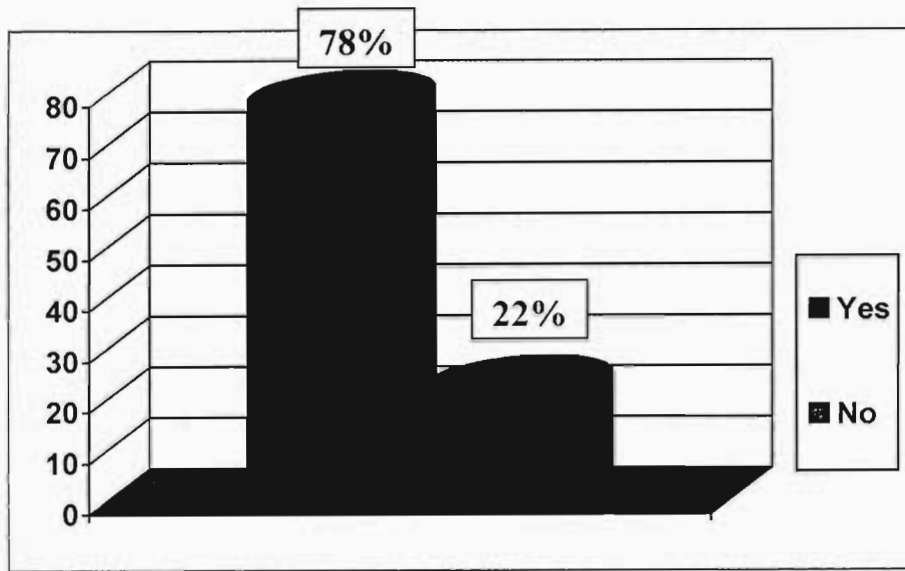


FIGURE 31. IS TEACHING AND MOTIVATING ALL LEARNERS TO ACHIEVE COMMON OUTCOMES A PROBLEM?

Figure 31 reveals that 78% of respondents consider teaching and motivating learners of diverse abilities a real challenge and is problematic. 22% disagree.

OBE “places enormous demands on teachers to further individualize instruction, plan remediation and enrichment, administer diagnostic assessment and keep extensive records.”
(Brady: 1996: 13)

The statistics in Figure 32 below substantiate this problem experienced by educators. Figure 32 reveals that teaching mixed ability groups is not easier than teaching groups according to ability. 59% declared that it is easier to teach learners according to ability groups, and 38% seem to prefer mixed ability groups. 3% are unsure.

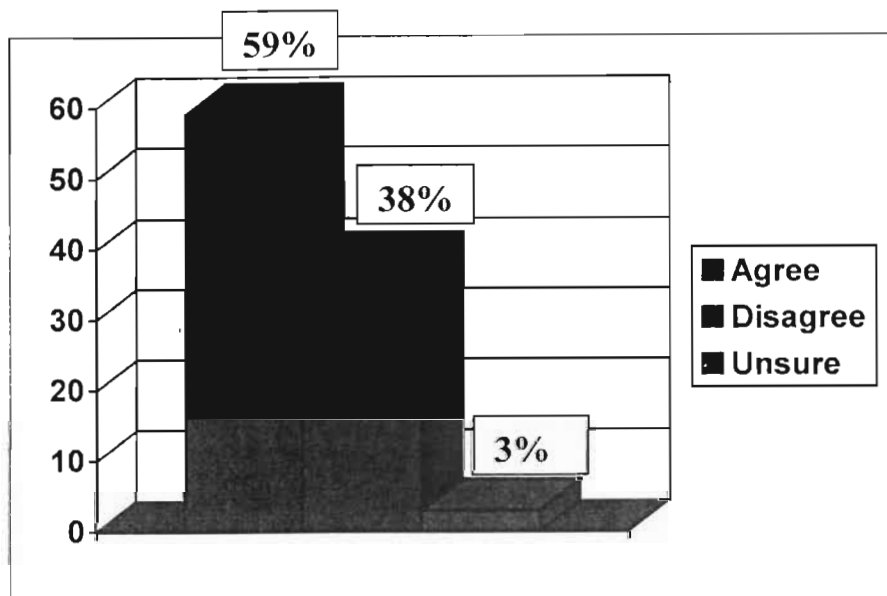


FIGURE 32. IS TEACHING ACCORDING TO ABILITY GROUPS EASIER THAN TEACHING ACCORDING TO MIXED (SOCIAL) GROUPS?

With the previous system of teaching, educators knew what objectives had to be reached by the end of the teaching day, and the classroom situation revealed the degree and the type of remediation and/or enrichment that had to be implemented. Educators were in command and knew at what 'level' learners were functioning.

An ex-HOD educator had this to say: “The ability groups were so good. The child kept pace with his own group. There was no need to know what the other group was doing. We could work with the weak group and bring them up to a certain standard.”

Interviewees at ex-DET schools confirmed that while they kept records according to OBE principles, they still teach according to ability groups. “Mixed groups are difficult. We don’t want that problem,” said one interviewee.

The table below reveals that those that favour social groups (mixed ability) are mostly ex-HOA and ex-HOR educators.

SCHOOL – EX-DEPT.	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	NUMBER WHO DISAGREE	%
DET	9	2	17
HOD	8	2	17
HOA	7	3	25
HOR	8	5	42
TOTAL	32	12	

TABLE 10. TEACHING IS EASIER ACCORDING TO ABILITY GROUPS.

Ex-HOA and ex-HOR educators who preferred teaching according to mixed ability groups cited the following reasons:

1. Mixed ability groups enable the learners to mix with and to get to know each other.
2. Children learn from those within a mixed-ability.
3. Children learn that within a group different children excel in different activities.
4. There is no stigma attached to any group – all are equal.

4.3.4.4. INTEGRATING ALL LEARNING AREAS.

It is interesting to note that educators are equally divided about the integration of all learning areas being a challenge.

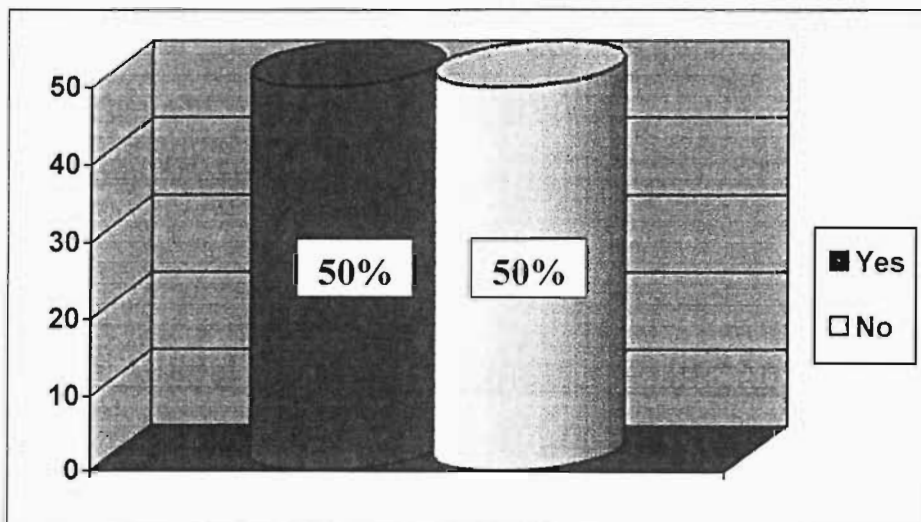


FIGURE 33. IS INTEGRATING ALL LEARNING AREAS A CHALLENGE?

From the statistics in Figure 33, the lack of resources does not seem to be a major contributing factor in integrating all areas.

This can only suggest that as time moves on, educators are coming to grips with the implementation of OBE.

4.3.5. LACK OF SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS

“For many school teachers and administrators, converting a school to an OBE system must appear to be an overwhelming task. Indeed, the translation of outcome-based ideas within a time-based school organisational structure is bound to yield problems and pitfalls. Being aware of these possible problems, and perhaps anticipating them, may be as valuable as knowing how to cope with them.” (Towers: 1992: 299). It is for this reason that OBE practitioners need a support system that is available and accessible so that they may implement OBE with a fair amount of success.

4.3.5.1. GUIDELINES ARE TOO VAGUE AND BROAD

The OBE Draft Policy / Phase Document for the Foundation Phase was meant to offer new OBE practitioners guidance in the preparation and planning of their lessons. Statistics from Figure 34 reveal that while 47% agree that the document is too vague and broad to offer assistance to educators, 41% disagree and 12% are unsure.

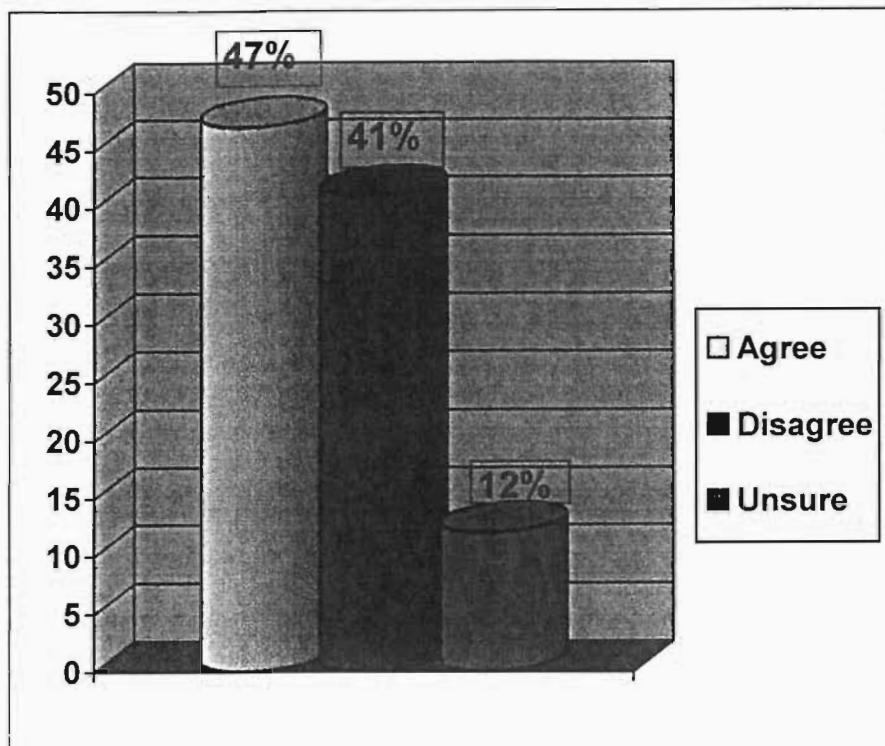


FIGURE 34. THE GUIDELINES ARE TOO BROAD AND VAGUE TO OFFER ASSISTANCE.

The researcher believes that this small discrepancy can be attributed to the novelty of the 'OBE shock syndrome' being over and that educators who believe that practice makes perfect, are able to cope with the changes in the classroom regarding methodology and assessment.

Further, according to a facilitator from a school in Phoenix (August 1999), the language in the draft policy document has been changed to become more user-friendly, especially with the use of intelligible flow diagrams.

4.3.5.2. LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT.

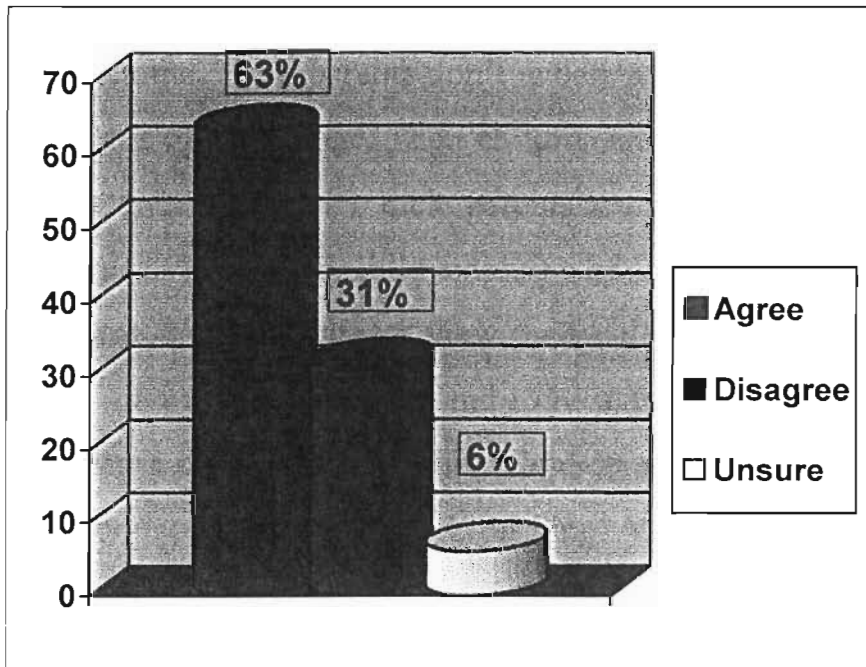


FIGURE 35. THERE IS A LACK OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

With the exception of ex-HOA educators, educators expressed their disappointment at the lack of parental involvement. Educators and Principals see their (parents) involvement as vital. Although parents are kept well-informed via newsletters, personal notes and learners' homework books, response from them is poor. Parents' OBE workshops are very poorly attended. Of the 63% of respondents who agreed (Figure 35) that parental involvement is lacking, an overwhelming 85% were from the ex-DET, ex-HOD and ex-HOR schools.

It is interesting to note some of the comments made by educators and Principals regarding parental involvement. An ex-DET Principal said that most Foundation Phase learners were in a state of dilemma. Their parents don't understand or like OBE because of a lack of knowledge. Their children are subjected to OBE, and don't understand why their parents won't help them at home. The result is that very little extension of school work can be done at home. Further, parents view their children's written work as proof of work done. They tend to be a little confused about the scholastic development of their children as concrete evidence (in the form of written work) is lacking. With OBE, the learners demonstrate outcomes, in any manner that will enable the educator to assess whether the outcomes have been achieved. Formal writing is not a very significant aspect of OBE. Parents need to understand that they are partners in education and should try to accept the new system of education and its changes.

The following table on the next page is part of a summary of parent, student and teacher comments received through a survey regarding the OBE process, carried out by Phyllis Geddert (1993).

STAKEHOLDER	STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
PARENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High standards for achievement • High expectations for students to work at it and perform well • Process builds self-esteem and confidence • Second chances are realistic • Promotes a solid understanding for math • The clear reporting system • Teacher support for student success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who move to non-OBE classes do not necessarily perform well in those classes even with having had time in the OBE process • Second chances are not realistic • Opportunity to “goof off” and not try hard the first time • Semester system goes too fast
STUDENTS GRADES 3 to 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OBE is less confusing and easier • Second chances help to improve math skills • Useful to get a job • It provides a challenge • It’s fun 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It’s a bother, sports activities may be missed • Teachers expect too much • The process continues even when students are not finished

TABLE 11. STAKEHOLDER PERCEPTIONS REGARDING OBE (Adapted: Phyllis Geddert: 1993: 213)

4.3.5.3. LACK OF SUPPORT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

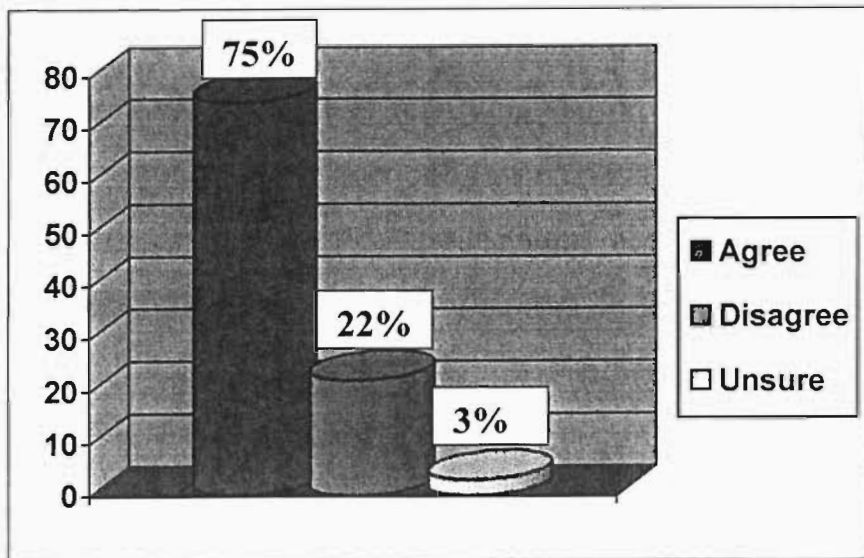


FIGURE 36. THERE IS A LACK OF PRACTICAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.

Figure 36 reveals that an alarming 75% of educators strongly believe that there is a desperate lack of education and training by the Department of Education. An ex-HOR educator very appropriately remarked: “Teachers will lose interest if their special needs are not attended to.” Further, the top-down approach regarding OBE implementation has disappointed educators. Educators complain that there was no consultation regarding the drawing up of outcomes, and thus interpretations by different educators would vary. They agree that those who draw up specific outcomes and assessment criteria must at least work closely with the facilitators so that interpretation could be

more or less uniform. Educators do not favour working in isolation or “doing our own thing” as they call it.

“It would be helpful for the administration to have an idea of the perceptions of teachers regarding the proposed innovations and take those into account when making plans for the implementation. Top-down decisions about the program being carried out are more likely to produce undesirable side-effects and minimal recipient satisfaction. Neither top-down nor bottom-up but rather collaborative planning by teachers and administrators results in more effective implementation of resulting plans.” (Towers: 1992: 302)

Educators virtually insist that practical workshops, and not demonstration lessons under perfect conditions, should be undertaken regularly. Educators would also like to network ideas to share and benefit each other mutually. Educators readily agree that visits, advice and follow-up advisory visits by facilitators and/or knowledgeable OBE practitioners and supervisors are most welcome.

There were many complaints about the resources supplied by the Department. Ex-HOA interviewees indicated that books supplied did not suit their needs. However, they were in a fortunate financial position to buy their own books. Others, besides the ex-DET educators, complained that these books were relatively easy and did not challenge the above-average learners.

4.3.5.4. LACK OF REGIONAL STRUCTURES.

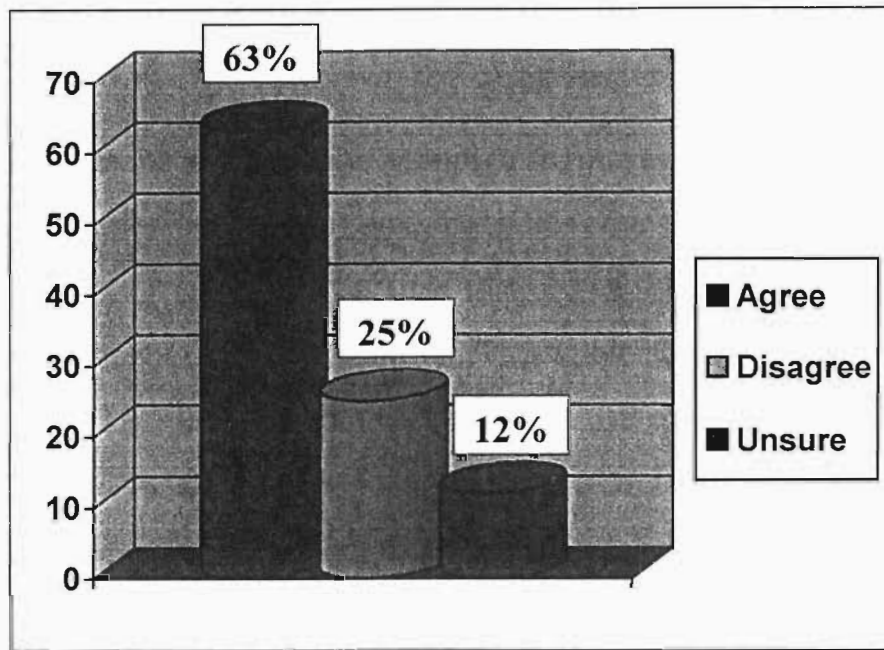


FIGURE 37. THERE IS A LACK OF A SUPPORTIVE REGIONAL STRUCTURE (TO ASSIST EDUCATORS)

Statistics from Figure 37 reveal the need for a regional support system for OBE practitioners. 63% of respondents see the importance of a supportive regional structure. 25% disagree and 12% are unsure. Some Principals interviewed, have begun a networking system among schools to assist OBE educators in the planning and preparation of their lessons. These educators would probably disagree that there is a lack of regional support. Interviewees believe that regional meetings can serve as an important means to provide regular, accessible help and

would like to know what other OBE practitioners are doing, and how to cope.

4.3.5.5. LACK OF A SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL STRUCTURE

The management of a school also plays an important role in implementing OBE. An ex-HOR educator, who is also a facilitator, aptly put this idea forward as follows: “OBE does not only happen in the classroom. The whole school should be OBE-run. The Principal and even non-OBE practitioners can and should make meaningful inputs.” Ex-DET interviewees see the support of management as non-existent since they (management) too are not well-informed about OBE.

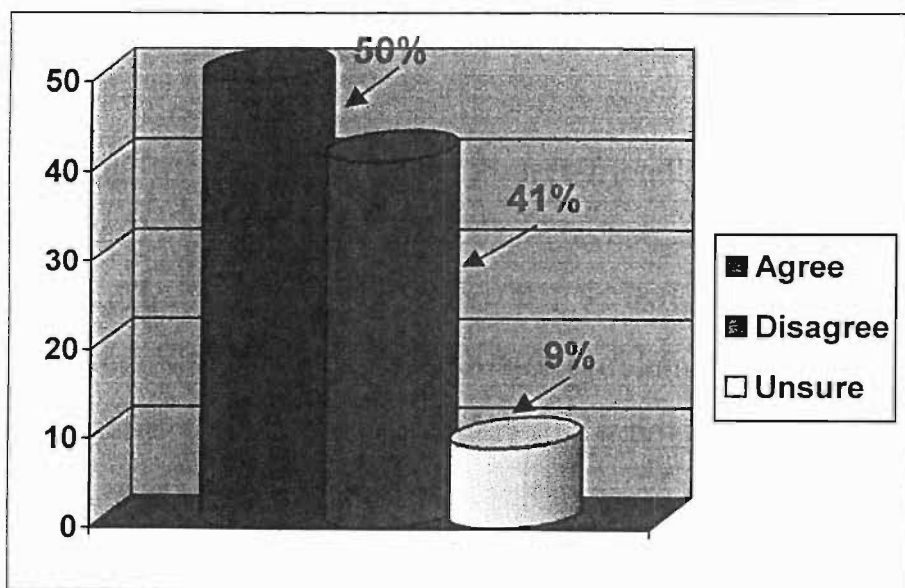


FIGURE 38. THERE IS A LACK OF A SUPPORTIVE SCHOOL STRUCTURE (TO AID OBE EDUCATORS)

The statistics contained in Figure 38 indicate that there needs to be a supportive OBE structure at schools, including management and all OBE practitioners. The fact that only 41% disagree that there is a lack of support, is evidence that OBE practitioners have seen the gains of working together for mutual benefit. This would see the 50% who agree that there is a lack of support in the school environment, decrease.

It became evident, after the interviews, that where Principals were supportive of their OBE practitioners, the attitude of their educators towards OBE was more positive. These Principals facilitated networking in their regions.

4.3.6.LESSON PREPARATION IS FAR TOO TIME- CONSUMING

Adding to the problem of a user-friendly policy document, Figure 39 on the following page reveals that the majority of respondents (88%) agreed that OBE is extremely demanding of time, and thus it was either a major problem (50%) or they were trying to cope with it (38%). 12% find it not to be a problem.

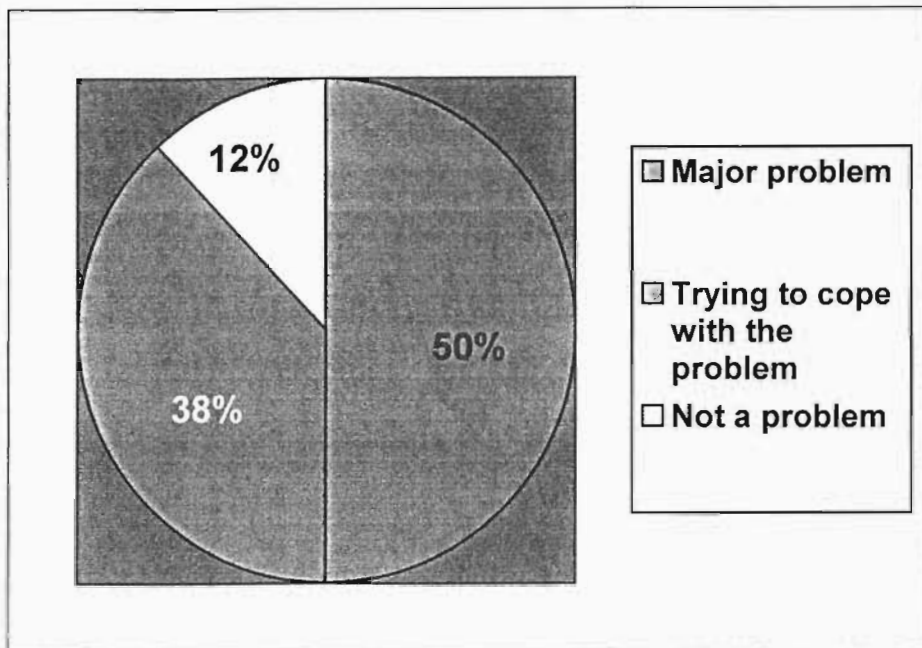


FIGURE 39. EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT OBE BEING TOO TIME-CONSUMING.

Interviewees have mentioned how this impacts negatively on family life, as lesson preparation impinges on quality family time at home.

4.4. OTHER PERSPECTIVES ON THE LIMITATIONS OF OBE

The following limitations (elucidated by proponents of OBE) bear credence to the limitations of OBE emanating from the research study.

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- 4.4.1. To define education as a set of outcomes conflicts with the wonderful voyages of exploration that characterises learning through discovery and enquiry. (McKernan: 1994: 330)
- 4.4.2. McKernan's greatest concern is "the apparent assumption that the structures of knowledge can be translated into simple outcomes or observable performances, an assumption he claims that trivialises knowledge." (Brady: 1996: 12)
- 4.4.3. The "typical transformational outcomes are vaguely worded and show little concern for academic content. They are largely in the affective domain. They describe mental processes such as attitudes, dispositions and sentiments – behavioural and social outcomes rather than knowledge, skills and other cognitive outcomes...Further, almost all OBE plans include long lists of outcomes...[that] send no clear message about what knowledge, skills and other understandings their designers expect children to master so that they can live, work, and compete successfully in the twenty-first century." (Manno: 1994: 12)
- 4.4.4. Spady and Marshall couch their argument for OBE in a "success for all" vision. This, according to McKernan (1994: 328) may be true for only some pupils and some subjects.
- 4.4.5. Manno (1994: 15) asks, "Why spend money on a wide scale effort when there is no widespread evidence

indicating that OBE works...Is the cost of training teachers, revising curricula, developing new tests justified?"

4.4.6. Jonathan Jansen (Perspectives on OBE: 1997: 67-74) does not see the implementation of OBE in South Africa as being successful for some of the following reasons:

- The language of OBE is too complex, confusing and sometimes contradictory. There are too many terms, and definitions. The inaccessible language will make it difficult to interpret and give these policies meaning through classroom practices.
- OBE is argued as facilitating human resource development and has the potential to contribute to economic upliftment. There is no evidence in almost 80 years of curriculum change literature to suggest that altering the curriculum will lead to changes in the economy.
- An overwhelming majority of teachers do not have access to information on OBE.
- To give the OBE policy a reasonable chance of success requires radical change in teacher training, assessment, classroom organisation, management of the process – “an entire re-engineering of the education system.” There has not been enough intervention in the education system to bring about this change.

4.5. SOME CONCERNS REGARDING OBE

Towers cautions that converting to an OBE system could be an overwhelming task. A fundamental concern about any programme revision is the fidelity with which it is implemented. “Discrepancies between the program as described on paper and the program as implemented call into question the quality and / or necessity of the innovation or revision. Once it is implemented, it is necessary to maintain it.” (Towers: 1992: 299)

Burns and Wood (Towers: 1992: 301) conducted a survey in 1989 of teacher perceptions on the implementation of OBE. Overall, they found elementary school teachers to be generally more positive. Elementary school teachers seemed to comment from a pupil-centred stance but secondary school teachers responded from a subject-specialist viewpoint, raising issues concerning the practicality of dealing with large numbers of students and the limited time in which to cover the syllabus. Some of the written comments from the secondary school teachers were as follows:

- “Self-concept is not enhanced when students are put in watered-down courses.”
- “There isn’t enough time in the day to individualise lesson plans for 90-130 students, nor is there enough time in a 40-45 minute period to teach several group levels.”

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- “Much work would need to be done outside the class period. I haven’t found many students who need remedial work who will come before or after school to do it.”
 - “Great in theory, but with 125 students a day, it’s just not feasible.

Interestingly, a South African educator, Sharma Bhika voiced the concern that all teachers will change and want to change.

“ Change is often accompanied by resistance, fear and anxiety” (Perspectives on OBE: 1997: 53).

Towers (1992: 300) wrote about educators and change, stating, “...embracing major change is an implicit admission that the teachers’ current classroom practices are in need of an overhaul. Not only are the time commitments demanding, but the philosophy of OBE-mastery learning challenges prevailing teacher beliefs about students. To suggest that all students can and will learn if only taught ‘properly’ raises a red flag for some teachers. Some teachers may resist OBE because they simply do not initially understand the concept.” (Towers: 1992: 300).

Further, at a workshop which Sharma Bhika facilitated prior to the implementation of OBE in South Africa, many negative perceptions were encountered. Of concern are the following:

- OBE is a first world concept “being dumped” in our third world conditions.

- OBE was implemented and failed in other countries, yet it was going to be implemented here.
- The decision-making process to adopt and to implement OBE was hierarchical, and not participatory – putting the notion of democracy in education into question. Teachers were marginalised from the process.
- Would schools be properly resourced before the implementation of OBE, considering that most schools lack basic resources?
- The present teacher-pupil ratio where many teachers are responsible for over 200 pupils per day is not workable for the successful implementation of OBE.
- Will teachers have to prepare many lessons for the same class/ period since pupils are supposed to be allowed to work at their own pace? This would be very demanding to an already burdened teacher.
- Receiving support during the implementation process is an essential pre-requisite for OBE to succeed. Would this support be forthcoming from pupils, parents and other stakeholders?
- When a pupil moves from one district or school to another, what would be the implications for the pupil and how would it be resolved?
- There is a fear that more time will be required for assessing pupils and record keeping than teaching. (Perspectives on OBE: 1997: 56-57).

CHAPTER 5

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Early Childhood Development (ECD) applies to the processes by which children “grow and thrive physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and socially.” (Department of Education: 1997f: 31). ECD forms the first phase of the National Qualifications Framework. OBE, which is incorporated in the Curriculum 2005 process, promises all learners equal and quality education. If OBE is to fulfil this promise, then the problems encountered by the practitioners of OBE should be addressed immediately. Only then will there be ‘success for all’.

Based on the research findings, the researcher offers the following recommendations for the improvement of the OBE process.

5.1. METHODOLOGY

The first two terms of the Grade 1 year should focus on bringing all learners to a certain basic standard of knowledge and skills to prepare them for the OBE process. Reading, Writing and Numeracy must be given greater significance because they

provide a firm foundation which will be a springboard to enabling learners to work independently and co-operatively within a group.

Jonathan Jansen stated that data collected and based on the first five months of implementation showed that “teachers held vastly differing views of OBE... Many other teachers believed that implementing OBE in the first six months of Grade One was ‘inappropriate’ as the preferred focus for teaching was on language and life skills.” (Daily News: 1998: 25 June: 7)

The Report on the National Evaluation of the Trial of Curriculum 2005 cited some of the following recommendations on methodology made by educators during the evaluation programme.

- Activities should be on many different levels...the development of basic skills should not be neglected.
- More intensive writing, reading and numeracy skills need to be developed. (Department of Education: 1997h: 16-18).

5.2. RESOURCE MATERIAL

Since OBE caters for all learners, the onus is on the educator to motivate and provide challenging activities for all types of learners – those academically and those skills inclined. This burden, placed on educators, can be alleviated if resource

material supplied is accompanied by various suggested activities and their related assessment criteria and specific outcomes, so that both learners and educators can recognise and know how to proceed to achieve these outcomes. Resource material supplied by the Department of Education must take into cognisance learners of various learning abilities and learning environments, and be sufficiently challenging and accessible. Further, every resource book supplied should have a sub-section that caters for the 'advanced learner'. This will enable them to be gainfully occupied with minimum assistance from the educator.

The Report on the National Evaluation of the Trial of Curriculum 2005 made the following general recommendations regarding programme materials used:

- "Materials should be in the language of the learner"
- "Learning material should be relevant to learners' own experience. Should this not be the case, teachers should be encouraged to develop their own material and use local resources where needed." (Department of Education: 1997h: 17)

5.3. NOISE AND DISCIPLINE IN THE CLASSROOM

It should not be the sole task of the educators to be creative planners of challenging activities for their learners. The problem of noise and discipline will be greatly reduced if educators are

provided with a readily available bank of activities so that learners can be gainfully occupied in order to achieve the specific objectives. Further, noise that is not 'constructive' is indicative of an unprepared educator. Thus educators should provide adequately for all learners and have contingency plans for remediation and enrichment. Managers of schools should overlook the increased levels of noise as it is characteristic of the OBE process where learners are active participants, taking responsibility for their education.

Alan Brown (1988: 12) noted how an average district in Sparta, Illinois, after four years of adopting a uniform discipline programme as part of an improvement strategy within an OBE approach, showed decreases in discipline procedures such as detention. "...we credit this to kids being more successful in the classroom."

5.4. TIME-TABLES

Although the time-table is not followed rigidly, a certain 'casual routine' should be fostered in each class. Engaging learners in a small measure of meaningful, not contrived, routine helps them to develop a sense of order that is so relevant in the adult world. This can be done in ways such as cleaning up after every activity, placing items in their correct places and doing certain

work at regular times, e.g., numeracy in the morning and literacy after the break.

5.5. SUPPORT PROGRAMMES FOR EDUCATORS

“Leadership and organisational support must permeate the implementation process. Decisions made by whomever administers the reform efforts must maintain and support the implementation rather than sidetrack or impede it. Without solid leadership and organizational support, all else is jeopardized. This includes school board support.” (Towers: 1992: 300).

5.5.1. SCHOOL AND REGIONAL SUPPORT

OBE does not occur only in the classroom. All Principals and Heads of Departments in primary schools should be included in part of the OBE training process and become pro-active in terms of networking with other primary schools within their region to obtain assistance for their OBE educators.

All OBE practitioners should be allowed to meet regularly (at least monthly) from 12h30, when their charges are dismissed, at regional level to offer help and / or seek assistance and benefit each other mutually.

5.5.2. SUPPORT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In February 1997, the former Minister of Education, Professor SME Bengu said, "I am aware that implementing the new curriculum will require considerable commitment from all participants in the learning process. Accordingly, much of our efforts will be focussed on providing the necessary support in the form of in-service teacher training, assessment, guidelines and student orientation." (Department of Education: 1997f: 1)

Unfortunately, as can be gleaned from the research study, it is evident that this promise has not been fulfilled.

5.5.2.1. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Proper, practical education and training for OBE practitioners must be forthcoming. This will negate the uncertainty some educators experience, about whether what they are doing in class constitutes OBE.

Demonstration lessons, under ideal conditions is not acceptable. OBE practitioners should have been given (and it is not too late now to offer this assistance) sufficient time to afford them hands-on experience so that they become familiar with the OBE process and its implementation mechanism. These educators should be offered this intensive training opportunity during school hours.

Relief teachers (perhaps ex-Junior Primary teachers) who are capable of teaching learners basic skills, necessary for the implementation of OBE, should be employed (at State expense) during this time. Training must include, among others, matters such as interpreting the OBE Policy Document, lesson preparation, group work, assessment (the different types), record keeping, classroom management and coping with learners of different learning abilities.

Guskey (1994: 53-54) stated that “adapting instructional practices to performance based assessments... will also demand a substantial amount of additional time, resources and training opportunities... These opportunities could offer ideas on how to design activities that promote authentic learning... Adequate treatment of these topics will certainly require more extensive time commitments than a one-day in-service program. Further, because the challenge involves the expansion of teachers’ expertise and instructional repertoires, regular follow-up and continuous support will also be important factors.”

The Report on the National Evaluation of the Trial of Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education: 1997h: 17) made the following recommendations on support programmes:

- The feasibility of support programmes needs to be investigated.
- Principals and parents should also receive training in managing the implementation.

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- There is a need for a national teacher development and in-service plan that could be provincialised to suit local conditions.

5.5.2.2. PROVISION OF BASIC FACILITIES

To expedite the progress in the culture of learning, the Department of Education should consider it a moral duty to provide all schools with sufficient resources and basic facilities such as running water, hygienic sanitation, basic stationery, and perhaps a photocopier.

O'Neil (1993: 5) stated that “ if a national system of standards and assessments [for what students can learn] is created before basic inequalities among schools are addressed, students will be the one to pay the price. At present, issues such as class size, outmoded facilities, and inequitable school financing are on the back burner...[There is a general feeling among some American educators] that policy makers are more committed to holding schools accountable than to helping change the conditions to allow students to meet higher standards.”

The above concerns the situation pertaining in the United States of America, but is directly pertinent to the South African situation as well.

5.5.2.3. COMPULSORY PRE-SCHOOL EDUCATION

To facilitate the proper implementation of OBE, the State should provide compulsory pre-school education, especially to second language English learners, to bring them to a certain basic standard so that they may be able to participate in the OBE process successfully. Teaching through the medium of their mother-tongue may have advantages, but the real world with real jobs is English-orientated.

5.5.2.4. CONTINUOUS / ACCESSIBLE SUPPORT SERVICE

To sustain the educator's interest and motivation to implement OBE, it is imperative that an adequate and regular support service is provided on an on-going basis for a number of years until educators have gained confidence in implementing OBE and all its related functions. Facilitators, who are themselves OBE practitioners are not readily accessible as they are involved with their own learners most of the time.

5.5.2.5. CLASS SIZE

Basing South Africa's OBE system on that of New Zealand or Denmark is inappropriate since their average class size rarely exceeds twenty. Thus it is necessary to reduce the number of learners per class because in the Foundation Phase, it is ethically

correct to give every learner the opportunity to interact with the class teacher on an individual basis so that a bond of trust and confidence is forged. This bond will enable the learner to realise that when problems are experienced in the learning process, he / she can fall back on the loving support of the educator.

5.6. ASSESSMENT AND RECORD-KEEPING

The process of assessment and record-keeping needs to be revised with consultation from OBE practitioners. Their inputs should be made and a strategy developed to make assessment and record-keeping practical, meaningful and intelligible, even to non-educators. Resource materials supplied by the Department of Education must clearly specify varied activities and specific outcomes that can be recognised by learners and educators, to be used in assessment.

When learners are aware of assessment criteria, they can use them [criteria] to help them understand how well they are performing in terms of achieving specific outcomes.

Jamentz (1994: 57) stated that to ensure that assessment improves performance, schools should “communicate performance standards in ways that any student can understand and use them. Like teachers, students need opportunities to state standards in personally meaningful terms.”

There should be a certain degree of uniformity in assessment and record-keeping. Thus, learners who are transferred or promoted will move with their learner profiles which would assist new educators in 'knowing' the child and his / her capabilities. A uniform system will facilitate meaningful communication by fellow OBE colleagues at meetings.

For educators to have meaningful dialogue with regard to assessment, there is a need for professional development. Since assessment in the OBE process is so different from the old method of education, the procedure of assessment should be taught to OBE practitioners by means of practical demonstration lessons.

Guskey (1994: 54) noted that "performance based assessments with high quality professional development opportunities to help teachers align instruction with improved assessments will make advances in student learning more likely."

Record-keeping should also be linked to resource material. When resource material provides sufficient information to educators for lesson preparation, together with specific outcomes to be achieved, educators can keep records while learners are engaged in class activities.

The researcher endorses the following suggestions made by educators to improve recording. (Department of Education: 1997h: 15-16).

- Wording to parents must be kept simple. Assessment criteria must be 'parent-friendly'.
- Definite guidelines are needed in terms of a prescribed format. Assessment should not be subjectively done.
- While assessment demands more dedication from educators, the provision of guidelines for activities to be assessed will alleviate the educator's burden.
- Assessment of basic skills should be included.
- Assessment criteria should be scaled down / graded separately to accommodate learners of different levels.

5.7. REMEDIATION AND ENRICHMENT

Every Junior Primary Phase must have at least one suitably qualified assistant / remedial educator who will cater for the needs of the 'slow learner' on the advice of the class educator. The resource material supplied by the Department of Education should cater for learners of various learning abilities.

5.8. EDUCATORS' SUPPORT MATERIAL

Any information is only as good as what it has to offer the user.

In the same vein, the Policy Document and educators' support material and manuals should be rid of unintelligible jargon and be accessible to educators to an extent that it will lead to an understanding of the OBE process. This will then be manifested in the application of OBE in the classroom.

Document and manual writers must remember that English is not the first language of the majority of South African educators. The language has to be very simple and must be supported by diagrammatic explanations. Facilitators too, should disseminate information simply and in language that is understood by the educators.

5.9. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Parental involvement has not yet been recognised as a useful resource (other than helping in non-education matters). Portfolios of parents should be part of school records (with regular updates). While it is understood that employment conditions of parents hinder their involvement in school affairs during the school day, the use of parents to provide hands-on experience to learners must not be under-estimated. Parents represent the real world and should, even with some goading, be encouraged to become involved in the learning process.

O'Neil (1994: 10) emphasises that educators “substantially underestimate the public confusion and disagreement with OBE...[There is a need for] systematic attempts to communicate with the public what outcomes-based education is about.”

5.10. CONCLUSION

The merits of OBE are based on the belief that all students can learn and succeed, though at different rates, and in different ways. It emphasises difference and needs of individual students and believes that schools have an obligation to help students learn successfully, and prepare them for a productive adult life.

On June 24 1998, Dr Spady stated that he believed that there was not a single outcomes-based system in the world and that the concept of such a system is an ideal. He said that the credentialing system in most countries was defined around the clock, the calendar and schooling schedules, allowing little flexibility for students to learn at their own pace, in their own styles. (Daily News, 25 June 1998: 4). “There is much greater interest in South Africa. Whether you can pull it off, I don't know.” (ibid: 7)

Professor Jansen vehemently believes that OBE will fail in South Africa, but Enver Motala, Deputy Director General, Gauteng

Department of Education, is rather optimistic. He stated, "It will fail if it is not taken on in the way in which it ought to be. So you can set it up to fail by refusing to be engaged in it." (Perspectives on OBE: 1997: 95)

The education policy makers believe that the Curriculum 2005 programme is a fundamental part of the changes of the education system. Chabani Manganyi, the Director General of the Education Department (1998), said that the Department had expected difficulty in implementing the new teaching system. "We anticipated from the beginning that it would not be a smooth ride...What is quite clear is that we have to proceed in a manner which ensures that the programme is successful. We may modify it from time to time." (Daily News, 29 June 1998: 3)

Despite these concerns, literature abounds on the merits of OBE. Perhaps as most proponents of OBE suggest, it is not the case of the failure in OBE, but that OBE failed because the implementation failed.

South Africa's launch of OBE has not been smooth. The limited research done on the implementation of OBE in several schools reveals many problems. Global experiences on the implementation of OBE differ. South Africa with its multi-racial population, is in a unique predicament. The major challenge is the great paradigm shift from the old content-based separatist education for different race groups to a common education for all

learners. This new education system promises high quality, equal education leading to success for all. The challenges facing educators and learners and the degree of success or failure in implementing OBE can only be gauged through further research. Research is necessary to reveal new and persistent problems, constraints and successes that ensue through the implementation of OBE. It is hoped that this research will lead to concrete findings about the problems and strengths of OBE in KwaZulu-Natal. Perhaps these findings will lead to problems being addressed so that the implementation of OBE can offer all educators and learners the benefits it professes to offer.

George Bernard Shaw stated, "Liberty means responsibility." Are students ready to take up their responsibility to learn and prepare for a productive adult life; are educators ready and prepared to take up their responsibility to teach, prepare and assess students to achieve set outcomes; and finally, is the Department of Education ready to take up their responsibility to resource and finance schools to implement Curriculum 2005 successfully?

6.

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7.

APPENDICES

7.1. APPENDIX A:

Correspondence with the Department of Education and Culture

7.1.1. and 7.1.2. – Request for permission to conduct research at schools.

7.1.3. and 7.1.4. – Permission to conduct research.

7.2. APPENDIX B:

Letter to School Principal regarding the administering of questionnaires on OBE.

7.3. APPENDIX C:

Questionnaire (7 pages)

7.4. APPENDIX D:

Interview questions to Principals.

7.5. APPENDIX E:

Interview questions to OBE Practitioners.



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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Office of the Dean – Dr G. Kistan

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Fax: (031)204-4003

E-mail: kistan@pixie.udw.ac.za

05 May 1999

Ms N. P. Ntisiba
Regional Chief Director
North Durban Region
Private Bag X54323
Durban
4000

Dear Ms Ntisiba,

PERMISSION FOR MS P. MOODLEY TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH AT SCHOOLS

I hereby seek permission on behalf of Ms P. Moodley, a permanent teacher at Mounthaven Primary School, Verulam and a registered Master of Education student in the Faculty of Education, University of Durban Westville to conduct research at schools under your department.

Ms P. Moodley is researching the Implementation of OBE at schools and is in the field work stage which requires of her to visit schools and administer questionnaires to teachers who are directly involved in the teaching of Curriculum 2005 through the Outcomes-based education approach. Her research will benefit all teachers and pupils in the country.

Ms P. Moodley will conduct this investigation with the understanding that the information gathered will be treated with strict confidentiality and no names of schools or persons will be revealed in her dissertation.

I look forward to your co-operation and approval.

Yours sincerely

Dr G. Kistan
Dean
Faculty of Education

Dr. Chandru G. Kistan

DEAN OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF DURBAN-WESTVILLE

Signature of Student : (Ms P. Moodley)

Signature of Supervisor : (Dr G. Kistan)



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07 June 1999

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Dr D.W..M EDLEY
Chief Superintendent of Education (Academic)
Research Co-ordinator : North Durban Region
Truro House
17 Victoria Embankment
Esplande
4001

REF NO. : 2/12/2/3

Dear Dr Edley,

RE : PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Your letter dated 25 May 1999 refers.

Enclosed, please find the complete research proposal as submitted to the Faculty of Education, University of Durban Westville.

The candidate, Mrs P. Moodley also takes note of the content of the letter and will follow the necessary procedure with regard to visiting schools and contacting individuals.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Dr G. Kistan
Dean of Education

cc: Mrs P. Moodley : M.Ed Student : 7507886



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



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO NAMASIKO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR

NORTH DURBAN REGION

ISIFUNDAZWE SENYATHO NETHOKU

NOORD DURBAN STREEK

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Private Bag: Private Bag X54323
Isikhwama Seposi: Durban
Privaatsak: 4000

Telephone: (031) 360-6911
Ucingo:
Telefoon:
Fax: (031) 337-4261

Enquiries: Dr D W M Edley
Imibuzo: 360-6247
Navrae:

Reference: 2/12/2/3
Inkomba:
Verwysing:

Date: 25 May 1999
Usiuku:
Datum:

Mrs P Moodley
P O Box 23071
VERULAM
4340

Dear Mrs Moodley,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. Your letter dated 18 May 1999, addressed Mrs T S P Ntsiba, on this matter, has been referred to me.
2. The Department requires a complete research proposal (as submitted to your University) before any decision on this matter can be taken. However from the correspondence enclosed there does not appear to be any other obstacle to your being granted permission.
3. Kindly note that the granting of permission does not guarantee access to schools in this Region, as that must be negotiated with individual schools, their principals and educators.

Your kind co-operation in furnishing the required documentation will greatly expedite the process.

Yours faithfully,

Dr D W M Edley
Chief Superintendent of Education (Academic)
Research Co-ordinator: North Durban Region



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



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO NAMASIKO
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				Fax:	(031) 337-4261
Enquiries:	Dr D W M Edley	Reference:	2/12/2/3	Date:	14 June 1999
Imibuzo:	360-6247	Inkomba:		Usuku:	
Navrae:		Verwysing:		Datum:	

Mrs P Moodley
P O Box 23071
VERULAM
4340

Dear Mrs Moodley,

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. Previous correspondence in this regard refers. I have received a letter dated 7 June 1999 from the Dean of the Faculty of Education, at the University of Durban-Westville, Dr G Kistan, enclosing a copy of your research proposal.
2. It therefore gives me pleasure to advise you that you have been granted permission to conduct the research as outlined in your research proposal in schools in the North Durban Region, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. No school, member of staff, or learner may be compelled to take part in the study;
 - b. Access to schools and Departmental officials must be negotiated with the principals of such schools, or the officials concerned;
 - c. The normal teaching and learning programme of the host schools must not be disrupted by the research;
 - d. Confidentiality of participants must be respected, should they request this; and
 - e. A copy of the final research report must be submitted to the Regional Chief Director: North Durban Region, Dr G K Nair.
3. May I take this opportunity to wish you every success with your important research into the implementation of Outcomes-Based Education.

Yours faithfully,

Dr D W M Edley
Chief Superintendent of Education (Academic)

Mrs P Moodley
Tel: (0322) 376784
P O Box 23071
Verulam
4340

23 June 1999

The Principal

Sir / Madam

ADMINISTERING OF QUESTIONNAIRES ON OBE

Thank you for allowing me to administer these questionnaires at your school. As stated on the covering letter of the questionnaires, all information will be treated confidentially. A copy of the research findings will be forwarded to you.

Please find enclosed copies of the questionnaire for educators of Grade I (preferably) and / or Grade II. Also included is a self-addressed envelope for the return of the completed questionnaires.

Thanking you and your staff,

Yours faithfully

P Moodley (Mrs)

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for offering to answer this questionnaire. The time and effort that you will be spending is greatly appreciated.

This questionnaire intends to seek evidence regarding the problems, constraints and successes that have resulted from the implementation of OBE. It is in two parts.

Section A : You will be required to place ticks in the appropriate columns.

Section B : You will be required to make some personal input.

Please note that the following will be strictly adhered to :

1. All information will be treated confidentially.
2. Names of respondents and schools will not be mentioned in any written text (unless it is specifically requested by the respondent or school).
3. The information gathered will be analysed and used as part of a research project for a master's degree in education.
4. A copy of the findings of this research will be made available to your school.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research.

Yours faithfully

.....
(Mrs Premilla Moodley)

Tel: (0322) 376784

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

For each of the statements in this section, please insert a tick in the appropriate column.

QUESTION 1

With regard to the methods used in implementing OBE, to what extent does each of the following apply to you?

	To a large extent	To a small extent	Not at all
1.1. Old methods are used in all aspects of teaching because they are comfortable and familiar.....			
1.2. Old methods are used mainly for reading, writing and numeracy.....			
1.3. A combination of old and new methods is used...			
1.4. Teaching according to OBE principles and methods is relaxing and easier.....			
1.5. There is doubt about whether what you are doing constitutes OBE, i.e., whether you are implementing OBE.....			
1.6. There is a difference between methods used in OBE and methods used in the past.....			

QUESTION 2

In your experience, have the following occurred because of OBE?

	Yes	No
2.1. Learners are engaged in creative, active participation.....		
2.2. Learners are able to verbalise what they have done.....		
2.3. Learners are able to record (write about) what they have done.....		
2.4. As a teacher, you now do more talking to guide learners.....		

QUESTION 2 CONTINUED

2.5. There is evidence of co-operation and inter-dependence within a group.....

Yes	No

QUESTION 3

What is your view with regard to assessment, remediation and enrichment in OBE?

- 3.1. Assessment is based on the teacher's judgement and is therefore subjective.....
- 3.2. Formative assessments (by means of tests) is a better indicator of progress and/or areas of weakness.....
- 3.3. Remediation is unnecessary because all learners can achieve and demonstrate outcomes at different levels.....
- 3.4. Enrichment is not offered because "fast learners" are engaged in peer group teaching/learning.....

Agree	Disagree	Unsure

QUESTION 4

Implementing OBE is still new and is still a challenge. Do you regard the following as being demanding on you as an educator?

- 4.1. Teaching and motivating learners of diverse abilities to achieve the common outcomes.....
- 4.2. Integrating all learning areas.....
- 4.3. The implementation of remediation and enrichment.....
- 4.4. Other factors (please state):

Yes	No

QUESTION 5

Research has revealed that the practice of OBE can be successful or unsuccessful. From your PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, what is your opinion of each of the following statements?

	True	Partly true	False
5.1. All learners can achieve common (general) outcomes.....			
5.2. Learners have learnt to work independently of the teacher.....			
5.3. It is good to work without a fixed time-table.....			
5.4. The attitude and culture of learning has improved.....			
5.5. Others (please state)			

QUESTION 6

How do you view each of the following factors that may hinder (hold back) the implementation of OBE?

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
6.1. The guidelines are too broad and vague to offer sufficient help in lesson preparations			
6.2. Teaching is easier according to ability groups rather than social (mixed) groups....			
6.3. There is a lack of parental involvement.....			
6.4. There is a lack of practical training and support by the Department of Education.....			
6.5. There is a lack of a supportive <u>regional</u> structure (to aid teachers).....			
6.6. There is a lack of a supportive <u>school</u> structure (to aid teachers)			

QUESTION 7

Certain problems have been experienced regarding the implementation of OBE. How do you feel about each of the following?

	Major problem	Trying to cope with the problem	Not a problem
7.1. Discipline and the "noise" in the classroom			
7.2. Lesson preparation is far too time-consuming			
7.3. Basic skills (reading, writing, numeracy) are neglected or are less important than before.....			
7.4. OBE is prescriptive in terms of assessment criteria, specific objectives and learning areas.....			
7.5. Allocating time within instruction time to make and record assessments.....			
7.6. Large classes.....			

SECTION B (PERSONAL INPUT)

It would be appreciated if you could answer the following questions briefly. PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE ANSWERS YOU HAVE ALREADY PROVIDED IN SECTION A (THE QUESTIONNAIRE)

1. Briefly list your best experiences (2-3) that you might have had while you were implementing OBE.

2. What do you find most difficult about implementing OBE?

3. List any significant changes that have occurred to you personally and/or your teaching methods since you have implemented OBE.

4. List any significant changes you have observed in learners (compared to your Grade 1 learners of the past).

5. Do you think that OBE is biased towards disadvantaged learners? If you say yes, can you offer any reason/s?

6. What in your opinion can be done to make OBE a definite success?

7. Any other comment/s you would like to make regarding the implementation of OBE.

Sir/Madam

Should I find any comment/s made in the questionnaire of particular interest, would you kindly allow me to interview you (regarding the comment)

Please tick (✓)

YES

NO

EDUCATOR'S NAME (OPTIONAL) _____

SCHOOL _____

TELEPHONE NO. (SCHOOL) _____

OPTIONAL (HOME) _____

Thank You

INTERVIEW:
QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO PRINCIPALS

1. Since the inception of OBE, how have your views and attitudes about OBE changed?
2. To what extent is Management supportive to the implementation of OBE?
3. What do you sense about the attitudes of the OBE educators?
4. Have you noticed any significant changes in learners of Grade 1 /2 as compared to previous Grade 1 / 2 learners?
5. What do you see as the merits of OBE?
6. What do you see as the obstacles in the implementation of OBE?
7. Do you see OBE as helping to address the imbalances of the past and aiding the transformation process?
8. Do you think that as a pilot school – with a year’s head start – you are at an advantage over other schools?

INTERVIEW: OBE PRACTITIONERS

COMMON QUESTIONS TO OBTAIN AN IN-DEPTH INSIGHT INTO EDUCATORS' VIEWS ABOUT OBE

1. Comment on Spady's view that "All children can learn and succeed, but not on the same day in the same way." How do learners of different learning abilities achieve common outcomes?
2. Comment on Spady's view that "Successful learning promotes even more successful learning." Once a child succeeds, is he automatically motivated to succeed again and again?
3. Compared to the old system of teaching and learning, how is OBE better for: (1) the learners; (2) you, the educator?
4. Compared to the new OBE method of teaching and learning, how is the old system better for: (1) the learners; (2) you, the educator?
5. How do you feel about not being in total control of the class activities?
6. How do you think the learner will be affected if he is transferred from one school to another?
7. How do you cope with learners of different ability levels in a group as compared to the old method of grouping according to ability levels?
8. Given the ideal situation where all learners are exposed to the proper resources, to what level do you think that OBE will succeed?