A POLICY ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF FOUR SCHOOLS IN PIETERMARITZBURG

by

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ABSTRACT

This research was undertaken to outline the problems that are encountered by teachers in predominantly historically disadvantaged schools in South Africa, with regards to implementing the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) policy. The study found that in attempting to cope with these problems, teachers exercise their discretion in trying to make the policy relevant to their environment in that they try to get relevant material from other advantaged schools. The study found that at the moment it is difficult to implement this new policy because teachers themselves are not clear about what Outcomes Based Education policy entails. Teachers are also not confident in implementing OBE because they feel they do not have adequate facilities or resources for students, nor is there sufficient information and training about OBE and the syllabuses available.

To understand what actually happens in some historically disadvantaged schools with regard to policy implementation, I conducted research at four high schools in Pietermaritzburg. Information was elicited from teachers of grades 8 and 9 pupils. It became evident from my study that although Outcomes Based Education policy is in essence a good policy decision, the problem is that the time of implementation is not right. Historically disadvantaged schools will continue to battle with teaching OBE, even more so as it is planned to be extended to higher grades in the future. This study recommends that the government should improve training and education for teachers and provide relevant resources for implementing OBE. This would minimize the problems that lead to partial or non-implementation of the policy itself.

DECLARATION

This thesis was undertaken at the Centre for Government and Policy Studies, University of Natal Pietermaritzburg, under the supervision of Anne Stanton. This is an original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form for any degree or diploma to any other University. Where the work of others has been used, it has been duly acknowledged in the text.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Libenathi Magaqa, my 3-year-old son.
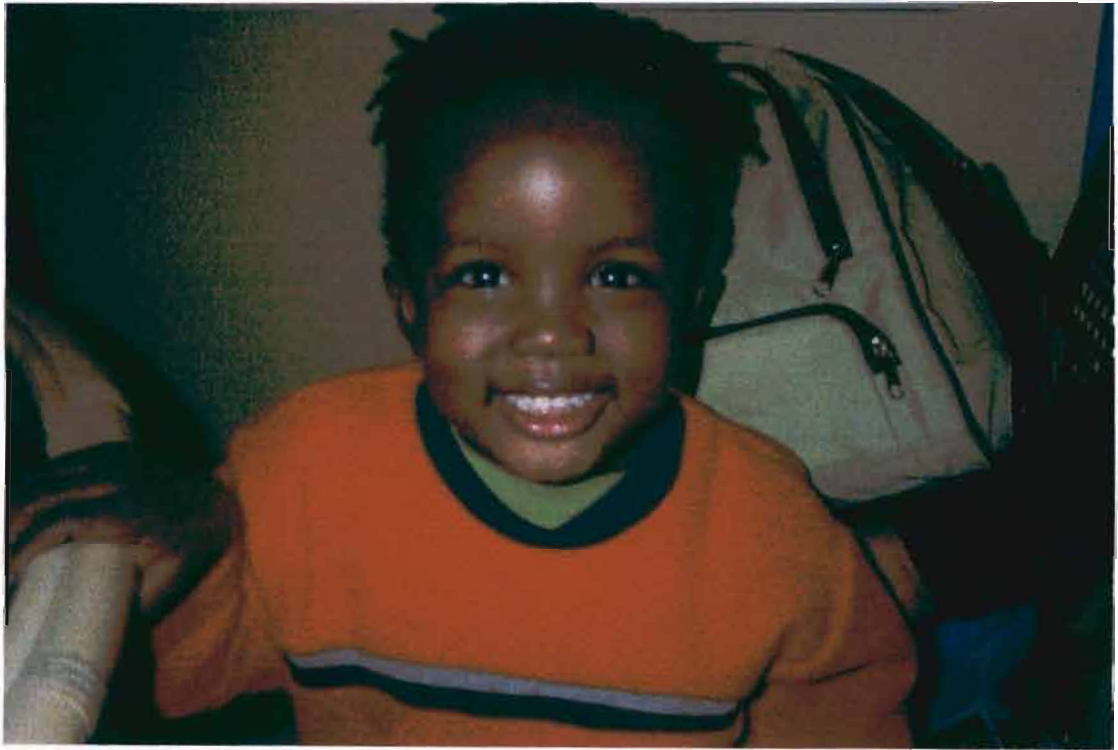
1. Introduction

Education policy discourses in South Africa have undergone rapid transformation since 1990, the time of South Africa's transition which aimed at offering equal education for advantaged and disadvantaged schools so as to ensure the eradication of apartheid. This period saw South Africa experiencing changes. A key feature of these changes was the trend towards participatory democracy.

There is now a shift from the traditional way of teaching to the introduction of Outcomes Based Education (OBE). The government is now faced with the challenge of making sure that all schools in South Africa are implementing this new education policy.

This study is aimed at identifying what actually happens in historically disadvantaged schools during the implementation of OBE. The investigation into implementing OBE will shed light on the problems that are encountered by policy actors in executing policies. It shows that good policies do not necessarily or automatically mean that they will achieve success when implemented, as there are a variety of factors that intervene in implementation.

As this study is guided by policy analysis, it will be presented in two parts. Part A will be a theoretical perspective, where the general policy making process will be outlined with particular reference as to how issues get onto the government's policy making agenda to call for policy formulation. My focus will thereafter be devoted to the problems of implementation in public policy. Part B is the final report, which sets out to analyze the findings obtained from interviews with teachers who are involved in implementing OBE in Pietermaritzburg. This part also includes the conclusion of the research project. It will offer a final analysis based on the issues I have identified in the first part of the study.

PART A

2.   Theoretical Perspective of Policy-Making and Implementation.

2.1.   Introduction

The aim of this section is to focus on the implementation process of the policy cycle. It will look at theories of the whole process of policy making up to the stage of implementation. It will briefly discuss the stages of a policy cycle and emphasize policy implementation. The first thing to do is to define what public policy is and what the purpose of public policy is. After that a closer look will be taken at the stages that lead to policy implementation and the issues that arise which lead to its success or failure.

2.2.   Definitions of Public Policy

Hanekom defines public policy as "a kind of guide that delimits action, a mechanism employed to realize society's goals and to allocate resources." Hanekom also further explains public policy as "a comprehensive framework of and for interaction where there is a purposive goal-oriented behavior"(1987: 7).

Howlett and Ramesh define public policy as a result of decisions made by government, noting that decisions by governments to do nothing are just as much policy as are decisions to do something (1995:4).

Dye (cited in Howlett and Ramesh) defines public policy as anything a government chooses to do or not to do (1995:4). Dye specifies clearly that government is the agent of public making policy.

Jenkins (cited in Howlett and Ramesh) defines public policy as "a set of interrelated decisions taken by a political sector or group of actors concerning the selection of a specified situation where those decisions should, in principle, be within the power of those actors to achieve" (1995:5).

According to the above definitions a public policy is a decision-making process by the government to give direction or present guidelines to be followed to achieve certain goals. If there is no public policy the implementation process can be chaotic and the goals cannot be achieved. Although the above authors used different words to define public policy it is clear that public policy deals with government policies. Political actors are key to public policy formulation. The following section is going to describe the stages of the policy cycle.

2.3. The Policy Cycle

The policy making process is often referred to as a policy cycle, which comprises different stages through which a policy issue proceeds. The policy cycle is often divided into five stages. These are:

- Agenda setting
- Policy alternatives
- Decision – making
- Policy implementation
- Policy evaluation

I will briefly discuss all of them.

2.3.1. Agenda Setting

William Johnson (cited in Bonser, 1996:43) states that there are two kinds of policy agendas, the popular agenda and the institutional agenda. He explains that the popular agenda is the list of issues the public is interested in at any particular time, which arise from old problems, radically defined problems, and new problems.

William Johnson (in Bonser, 1996:45) defines the institutional agenda as the issues derived from the internal agendas of the relevant agencies. Each department has its own internal policy agendas where the issues arise. Seemingly, it is problems that force issues to

be on the agenda.

Bonser (1996:48) argues that in solving a problem there are important questions that need to be addressed which give a full explanation of what is the actual problem. For instance, it is important to look at the background and source of the underlying problem. It is also important to know the causes of the problem and to know who believes that there is a problem. Policy analysts have to know this information about the problem before exploring alternative solutions to the problem.

Howlett and Ramesh define agenda setting in a similar way to Bonser. Howlett and Ramesh say it is the list of subjects or problems to which governmental officials and people outside of government closely associated with those officials are paying some serious attention to at any given time (1995:105). Howlett and Ramesh do not differentiate agenda setting into categories such as institutional and popular agendas. They believe that problems come to be interpreted as public problems which require government action, which raises deeper questions about the nature of that knowledge and the social construction of that knowledge.

Kingdon (1995) argues that agenda setting has three sets of variable streams, which he identifies as problems, policies and politics, which are said to interact. These will be briefly discussed.

(i) Problem Stream

By problem stream, Kingdon (1995) refers to the perceptions of problems as public problems requiring government action and government efforts to resolve them. According to Kingdon, problems typically come to the attention of policy makers either because of sudden events like crises, or through feedback from the operation of existing programs. Then only do people come to see a condition as a "problem." It is then that government will consider such a problem as an issue for their policy-making agenda. In other words, government may formulate policy as a way of dealing with a problem that is pressing on

the system, although Kingdon argues that the recognition of a problem does not automatically call for the attention of government (1955: 94).

(ii)   Policy Stream

The area of policies is fairly well handled by Lukes. His conceptualization of power encompasses the generation of policies, and how interests can be viewed as policy preferences. According to Lukes, pluralists "assume that interests are to be understood as policy preferences so that a conflict of interests is equivalent to a conflict of preferences" (Lukes 1979:14). What this eventually amounts to is the fact that for pluralists, interests and policies are taken to be the same thing. This means that any policy which is put forward, planned, or discussed, is taken to be a valid expression of preferences. The policy in question is taken to be an accurate representation of the conscious play of interests of the policy maker against the interests of others who would be seen as rivals. Kingdon argues that policy makers consist of experts and analysts examining problems and proposing solutions to them. In this stream, the various policy possibilities are explored and narrowed down (1995:97).

(iii)   Political Stream

Kingdon believes that the attention to policy problems is influenced by the political stream, which is composed of factors such as swings of national mood, administrative or legislative turnover and interest groups' pressure campaigns. The people in and around government are able to sense the public mood, that is, what people require from their government. This then promotes some issues onto the policy-making agenda. The national mood, Kingdon argues can be sensed through meetings, small gatherings, delegations of people and the media. In a democracy government tends to give priority to the issues of public concern. Kingdon also argues that shifts in the national mood make some proposals viable that would not have been viable before (1995:149).

Kingdon views these three streams as operating independently of one another until a specific point in time when their paths intersect and a policy window opens. When one

looks at how policy makers consider different policy decision alternatives, Kingdon argues that windows are opened either by the appearance of compelling problems or by happenings in the political stream. Policy entrepreneurs are people who are willing to invest their resources in pushing their pet proposals and are responsible not only for prompting important people to pay attention to them but also for coupling solutions to politics. The coming together of streams is termed 'coupling' by Kingdon (1995:165).

2.3.2. Policy Alternatives

The next stage on the policy cycle is policy alternatives. This entails the consideration and assessment of a range of possible policy solutions or alternatives.

Bonser says policy analysts need to identify, design and screen different policy alternatives. It means that policy analysts have to think broadly and creatively about all possible approaches to solving the problem at hand. After that, Bonser says that policy analysts should predict the consequences of each alternative. This is the point at which the analysts begin to reduce the alternative solutions to a manageable, practical set of options (1996:49).

For the policy to be effective, policy analysts must not only find the proper course of action, but its findings must be accepted and incorporated into a decision (Bonser, 1996:51). Before the policy is to be implemented, policy analysts have to make sure that they have made the right decision on which alternative to be chosen can be implemented. The exploration of alternative solutions to problems is a critical part in the policy decision-making process, because if policy analysts did not manage to choose the suitable alternatives then the problem is not likely to be solved.

According to Howlett and Ramesh (1995:200), alternatives, proposals, and solutions are generated in communities of specialists. By specialists they mean the academics, policy experts, consultants, career bureaucrats, legislation staffers and policy analysts who work for either government or interest groups. These people are also referred to as the policy elites. They all share one thing, that is, their specialization and acquaintance with the issues in that particular policy area. Howlett and Ramesh argue that ideas bubble around in these

communities. People try out proposals in a variety of ways through speeches, introductions to bills, legislative hearings, leaks to the press, circulation of papers, conversations and even over lunches. They float their ideas, criticize one another's work, hone and revise their ideas, and float new versions. Some of these ideas are respectable, while others are out of the question, but many ideas are possible and are considered accordingly (Howlett and Ramesh, 1995:200).

Howlett and Ramesh argue that these policy specialists brainstorm possible solutions by looking at the problem, looking at communities' interests, and then making a list of many alternatives. They then discuss each alternative with an eye to solve that particular problem and satisfy the community. It means the real discussion takes place where the conflicting ideas and criticisms emerge. This discussion, in the end, results in the identification of the best suitable solution to be implemented to solve the problem. It is important for this study to look at models of decision-making, since they go hand-in-hand with choosing amongst the possible policy alternatives. At this stage, the study is going to look at how policy entrepreneurs influence choosing alternatives and their role in decision-making.

(i) Policy Entrepreneurs

According to Howlett and Ramesh (1995:204), policy entrepreneurs are people who are willing to invest their resources in return for future policies they favour, to have their own interests met based on their investigation. They are not looking at satisfying the community, but Howlett and Ramesh (1995:204) further argue that these people can be motivated by a combination of several things: by a straightforward concern about certain problems; by their pursuit of such self-serving benefits as protecting or expanding their bureaucracy's budget or claiming credit for accomplishment; by their promotion of their policy values; or by the simple pleasure of participating. Policy entrepreneurs are not mainly concerned with participation, rather their role is to reach and fulfill a particular policy outcome or decision. They may appear as selfish, because they are results driven as opposed to emphasizing full participatory decision-making process. They come to policy discussions with their own solutions and aim to get their concerns about certain problems recognized and pushed onto the agenda, pushing their pet proposals during a process of

softening up the system (Howlett and Ramesh 1995:204). These people are often regarded as hard to work with. Howlett and Ramesh (1995:204) argue that these entrepreneurs are found at many locations. They might be elected officials, career civil servants, lobbyists, academics or journalists. These people are powerful in the policy-making processes because, Howlett and Ramesh (1995:204) argue, there are often no other participants that dominate like the policy entrepreneurs do.

2.3.3. Decision-making

The next stage of the policy cycle is decision-making. Howlett and Ramesh (1995:139) argue that most authors identify two models of public policy decision-making, that is, the incremental model and the rational model. The incremental model deals with the actual behavior of decision-makers in practical situations. Howlett and Ramesh (1995:139) explain that the incremental model portrays public policy decision-making as a political process characterized by bargaining and compromise among self-interested decision-makers. The decisions that are eventually made represent what is politically feasible rather than what is always desirable. It entails concentrating on considered alternatives, by exploring only a few familiar policy alternatives differing only marginally from the status quo. The incremental model views decision-making as a practical exercise concerned with solving problems at hand rather than achieving lofty goals. Seemingly this model does not explore all the possible alternatives thoroughly by looking for the best solution, but shortlists a few amongst all possible alternatives. The incremental model is conscious of time and avoids spending money on exploring countless "possible" solutions.

The rational decision-making model refers to the procedures for decision-making that will lead to the choice of the most efficient means of achieving policy goals. Howlett and Ramesh (1995:140) describe this as a model that generates maximum results only if all possible alternatives and the costs of each alternative are assessed before a decision is made.

The rational model, argue Howlett and Ramesh (1995:140), aims to reach its goal by examining each and every alternative strategy. After that, all the significant consequences

of each alternative strategy are predicted and the probability of these consequences occurring is estimated, then, finally, the most appropriate solution is adopted. It is a strenuous approach to decision-making because of its thoroughness.

Anderson (1997:140) argues that any policy decision that is taken is influenced by factors such as values, party affiliations, constituency interests, public opinion, difference and decision rules. Whatever decision has been taken by policy-makers, he argues depends on which factor is strong at that particular time.

Anderson (1997:141) also argues that there are organizational values which influence decision-makers. If decision-makers have worked for a long time in a particular company they tend to acquire and act in accordance with the department's values.

Sometimes, professional values also influence decision-making. Anderson (1997:140) argues that professionals tend to form distinctive preferences as to how problems should be handled. Anderson further explains that professionally trained people carry these preferences or values within them into organizations, some of which become dominated by particular professionals which have their own way of handling problems.

Anderson (1997:140) argues that policy values influence decision- making when decision-makers act according to the perceptions of the public interest or the beliefs about what is proper, necessary or morally correct public policy. Policy-makers take decisions according to the policy framework, looking at the goals of the policy and what is morally correct.

Anderson (1997:155) does not only identify and discuss the factors that influence decision-making, he further argues that there are styles of making a decision, such as bargaining, persuasion and commanding (Anderson 1997:155). He argues that bargaining is the most common style of decision-making in the American political system. Anderson (1997:155) defines bargaining as a process in which two or more persons in positions of power or authority adjust their (at least) partially inconsistent goals in order to formulate a course of action that is acceptable, but not necessarily ideal, for all the participants. Bargaining involves negotiating, give-and-take, and compromise to reach a mutually acceptable

position.

Persuasion involves the marshalling of facts, data and information, the skillful construction of arguments and the use of reason and logic to convince another person of the wisdom or correctness of one's own position (Anderson 1997:156). The persuaders strive to convince others to think like they do.

Command, on the other hand, is different from persuasion. A command is a decision that comes from above without any negotiations where subordinates are just told what to do by superordinates. It is a non-negotiable instruction or order.

Hanekom (1987:12) sees decision-making as the process of evaluating factual information objectively, evaluating values objectively, relating values to facts and facts to values. Hanekom (like Howlett and Ramesh) defines decision-making as choosing best-fit solutions to problems.

2.3.4. Policy Implementation

Once a policy decision has been taken or adopted, the policy cycle moves to the implementation stage where adopted policies are executed. Dunn (1994:16) refers to policy implementation as a phase of the policy-making process where an adopted policy is carried out by administrative units, which mobilize financial and human resources to comply with policy. It means there is a lot to be done by implementers to reach the objectives of the policy, like organizing enough funds to get resources for implementation or trying other means to reach the objectives of the policy.

There are various and sometimes conflicting ideas about what policy implementation entails. Parsons (1995:98) argues that policy is being made as it is being administered and as it is being adjusted. He justifies this idea by stating that during the implementation stage problems might be encountered which necessitate modification of the policy in question. Lindblom (1980:68) also supports this view of implementation through his idea of trial and error. He states that the conditions in which administrators are expected to implement

policy compel them to join in the policy making process. Whenever next steps correct the inadequacies of preceding steps, the implementation of each step in policy making becomes a principal source of feedback information for the next step (Lindblom, 1980:68).

When one looks at implementation, one can think that it is simple because it does not involve drafting, choosing, and deciding on proposals but it is not that simple. Policy implementation deals with a number of problems like ambiguity of objectives, lack of control, inadequate resources and lack of information. It is for this reason that Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:xv) view implementation as a process of interaction between the setting of goals and actions geared to achieving them. They go on to say that implementation is the ability to forge subsequent links in the casual chain so as to obtain the desired results (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973:xv). Seemingly, judging policies against their objectives has problems because sometimes the expected objectives do not come out as intended. Or some objectives take time to be reached, or some results contradict the initial policy objective.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:xvi) argue that if one is interested in implementation one is supposed to be conscious of four steps required to accomplish each link in the chain. The steps are as follows: firstly, to know who is acting to begin implementation. Secondly, whose consent is required to continue implementation? Thirdly, how many participants are involved and, fourthly, how long do they take to act.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:xvi) show that technical details of implementation can delay the process of implementation. Issues like a lack of coordinated planning, problems with finance, and changes in the original plan can cause problems during the implementation process.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:xvi) feel that the introduction of new participants can complicate the original plan. If the implementers were not involved in planning, they may not be able to reach the objectives of the new policy because they were not fully informed about the objectives of the policy, and are not fully familiar with the whole policy.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:45) argue that sometimes, during the implementation process employees need to be trained to be able to execute or practice a new program. Training should be straightforward but the process becomes difficult when there is a lack of funds and inadequate training. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:70) state that difficulties during the implementation process can be caused by the difficulty of obtaining clearances on matters that had not been foreseen at the outset. Often during the implementation process, the unclarity of themes, terms, and objectives can come up and cause difficulties and delays during the implementation process.

Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:122) claim that if the participants have a number of other things to do while having to implement the policy, this in itself can cause delay and difficulties during the implementation process. If a government introduces a new policy, it must make sure that the participants have enough time to dedicate to the implementation process. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:136) also argue that failure to implement may result either from an over-estimation of what can be accomplished, or from an underestimation of the ability to implement. If the planning of the policy was not thorough and comprehensive, this can result in failure. Planning means to look at whether the time, resources, and environment are suitable to execute the policy. The implementers are supposed to be involved in the planning so as to ensure that they are clear about the objectives of the policy, and that they can also reflect on potential difficulties that they might experience during implementation.

The case study on Outcomes Based Education later on is this research project actually illustrates some of these issues which complicate policy implementation. Hanekom (1987:61) argues that new and unanticipated problems may be encountered during implementation. He further explains that few policies stipulate exactly how implementation should be effected, and it is often left to the discretion of the policy implementer to decide on the executive, administrative, and operational steps to be taken to implement the policy. Often decision-makers leave the policies vague on how to be implemented and by the time policy-makers decide on policy they only focus on the broad goals of the policy and do not look at the factors that may hinder the process.

The end result is that the implementers, whom Lipsky (1980:3) calls street-level bureaucrats, are the ones who have a lot of work to do. They are the engines of the policy implementation process. It is important to look closely at their role, since the case-study is going to focus on the role of street level bureaucrats in policy implementation.

(i)   The Role of Street-Level Bureaucrats

Lipsky (1980:3) argues that public service workers currently occupy a critical position in policy implementation. Although they are normally regarded as low level employees, the actions of most public service workers actually constitute policy implementation. Hence, they are the key people in delivering services. Lipsky (1980:3) calls these public service workers, who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work, street-level bureaucrats. Street-level bureaucrats can be teachers, police officers, social workers, judges, public lawyers and other court officers. (Lipsky 1980:3). In other words, all the public employees who grant access to government programs and provide services are regarded by Lipsky as street-level bureaucrats.

Seemingly, street-level bureaucrats are the ones who implement public policy the most, as they are the co-people of government. One can say that street-level bureaucrats are the pillars of service delivery in government. Lipsky (1980:8) argues that policy delivered by street-level bureaucrats is most often experienced immediately and personally. As a result, street-level bureaucrats tend to react to public controversy and pressure. Lipsky (1980:8) argues that street-level bureaucrats make decisions on the spot, although sometimes they try not to do so and their determinations are focused entirely on the individual. The decisions of street-level bureaucrats tend to be redistributive as well as allocative. This means that the street-level bureaucrats have control over how policies get implemented and thus have influence over people's lives. Hence Lipsky (1980:9) argues that since street-level bureaucrats deliver policy, they make decisions about people that affect their life chances.

Lipsky (1980:8) argues, however, that unlimited exercise of discretion may lead to the street-level bureaucrats making new policy. Street-level bureaucrats, when making some alterations and maneuvering a policy to make it suit the environment or their client, can end up creating a completely new unofficial policy. Sometimes the street-level bureaucrats are forced to alter the policies in cases where they have to deliver their services to many people and the policy is consequently formulated in such a way that makes it difficult to cope with a wide variety of cases.

If street-level bureaucrats are inefficient and incompetent, it will reflect as poor service delivery from government. A degree of discretion is necessary, otherwise there would be no progress on policy implementation because they would wait for more senior government officials to interpret or use their discretion to make the policies relevant for the environment, slowing down service delivery. The challenge is to balance the need for discretion with the need for control.

(ii)   Control of Street-Level Bureaucrats

In every government department, the street-level bureaucrats' performance has to be managed, controlled and assessed. Anderson (1997:245) argues that inspection, licensing and contracts are techniques of control that can bring about supervision and compliance in implementing policies.

During a control process, performance managers are looking at whether the policy implementation goals are achieved or not. It means that the objectives should be so clear that the management is clear about what to control. Lipsky (1980:40) states that appropriate performance measures for street-level bureaucrats must be available. These, he, argues, are of fundamental importance, not only to describe workers' job, but also to stipulate managers' responsibility to supervise and exercise control over policy. It is not an easy task to control and measure the performance of public workers. This is constrained by a number of factors like the lack of an accurate method of measuring performance, and a lack of support from management. This has implications for the way policies are implemented. This also creates problems for the street-level bureaucrats during the

implementation process, since they themselves may not be sure of what their exact responsibilities are, and whom they are accountable to.

(iii)   Problems Experienced By The Street-Level Bureaucrats.

Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979), cited in Lane (1993:102), argue that unambiguity of goals, good management, and political skills and support are key to successful implementation. Hood (1976:6-8) argues that there should be strict authority and control in order to enforce objectives and perfect coordination. Anderson (1997:214) regards policy implementation as neither a routine nor a highly predictable process. It means that strict control and excellent coordination cannot guarantee that effective implementation will occur. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:136) implied this in their research analysis into the causes of failure of the Economic Development Administration program. Pressman and Wildavsky's study illustrated that effective policy implementation depends on a good chain of command and a capacity to coordinate and control.

The socio-economic and political environment inhabited by the policy implementers presents its own limitations for successful policy implementation. The shortage of resources for executing policy properly and the unconducive outside world of organization are some of the factors that make it hard for street-level bureaucrats to implement policies. Hanekom (1987:54) does mention that some problems experienced by street-level bureaucrats include too much or too little information, insufficient resources, unsuitable institutions, or inadequate control measures.

Anderson (1997: 246) says that people may not comply with policies because of a lack of capacity to act accordingly. If street-level bureaucrats are uncertain about what and how to implement policies, implementation may not take place. One can say that a lack of capacity building for street-level bureaucrats also matters, even if there is enough control by officials. In this case, capacity enhancing skills and techniques such as job training, information and counseling programs should be put into place in order to motivate street-level bureaucrats to do what is required. Lindblom (1980:65) also argues that limited competence, inadequate resources and conflicting directives also make street-level

bureaucrats experience problems during the policy implementation process.

Another problem which is experienced by street-level bureaucrats is that policy objectives take time to be accomplished. Levitt (1980:204) argues that some policies are bound by their nature to take a long time to produce observable results. In such cases, a diagnosis of inaction may be faulty, if it is made unreasonably soon. The reality is that citizens blame the street-level bureaucrats for everything that seems to be wrong with government.

2.3.5. Policy Evaluation

After a public policy has been implemented, it is necessary to determine whether the policy has indeed had the effects intended by the policy-maker, and also whether it has had unintended effects, of a positive or negative nature. This is, theoretically, the last stage of the policy cycle, where those who determined and implemented the policy and those who were affected by the policy attempt to find out if it has really worked. Hanekom (1987:88) argues that the evaluation of policy impacts is the concern of both those who made and implemented the policy and those who are interested in public policies.

Hanekom (1987:89) says that public policies are evaluated with a view to adjust or terminate existing policies or devise new policies. In order to do this, the policy evaluator should determine the long and short-term positive and negative effects of a policy. This should be done by means of hearings, discussions, output measurement, pre- and post-implementation evaluation, systematic comparison, or controlled comparison using experimental and control groups (Hanekom, 1987:89). Seemingly, a policy evaluator has a lot of work to do to get a clear picture of whether the policy is doing what it is designed for.

Hanekom (1987:90) argues that there are certain aspects of policy, which are usually evaluated, and they are used to determine the performance of the government and its executive institutions in achieving specified policy objectives.

The guidelines that ought to be taken into account are to evaluate those policies where

causality can be determined, that is, where policy relevant aspects are clear and can be easily interpreted, where one can evaluate the intended and unintended results of the policies instead of the spillover effects, which are difficult to identify and measure. The evaluators, when evaluating public policies, must not favour a particular point of view. Rather, they must try to be impartial and judicious when evaluating information (Hanekom1987: 95). One can say the introduction of the new policy is meant to change the environment; therefore, there is a need to assess whether the environment is changed in an intended way.

Dunn (1981:343) states other approaches to evaluate policies. He argues that there are three approaches that can be used. They are the pseudo-evaluation approach, formal evaluation approach, and decision theoretic evaluation approach. To apply pseudo-evaluation, the evaluator uses scientific methods to produce reliable and valid information about policy outcomes, without attempting to question the values of these outcomes to persons, groups or society. The evaluator, in this method, is looking at whether the policy is working or not.

When the evaluator uses formal evaluation, the same scientific approach is used, but such outcomes are evaluated on the basis of policy programme objectives as set by policy makers or administrators (Dunn, 1981: 343). The evaluator, in this method, assess whether the goals of the policy are met or not. It does not look at whether the conditions were appropriate for the policy or not.

The decision theoretic evaluation approach also uses the same method, but produces information about the policy outcomes that are explicitly valued by multiple stakeholders, not only that of program administrators, policy makers or influential citizens or pressure groups (Dunn 1981: 343). This method concentrates more on the stakeholder's views about the policy.

It is important for policy-makers to evaluate the policy so as to know whether it serves its purpose or not. The evaluation process needs proper planning to make sure that the results are reliable. It means the evaluator must choose the appropriate tool to measure the effectiveness of the policy to avoid an incorrect policy assessment.

3. Conclusion

This part of the research project has explored some of the more theoretical issues that occur in the policy-making cycle. It focused on policy implementation, since the case-study which will be presented is on issues arising from the implementation of the new OBE education policy that emerged from the Department of Education in South Africa. This part has revealed that policy implementation is not easy, and that it needs a lot of coordinated and continuous effort to be successful. It revealed that those responsible for policy implementation, the street-level bureaucrats, experience a number of challenges. It gave reasons for the failure of the implementation process.

Part B of this study will present a South African case-study which will explore the issues experienced by teachers (or street-level bureaucrats) in implementing the national government's Outcomes Based Education policy. The issues that will be explored will be whether teachers are familiar with the goals of implementing this new policy or not, because Pressman and Wildavsky argue that the goals of implementation are important as they act as a tool to show the success and failure of implementation. Another issue that will be examined is whether coordinated planning does take place or not, because if it is lacking, this can result in the delay of the implementation process. Incompetence and inefficiency is another issue that will be explored, because it reflects poor service from the government. Some of the questions will focus on the street-level bureaucrat's (in this case, the teachers) modification of the policy to suit their particular needs and environment. It will also look at whether such teachers have adequate capacity and resources to implement the policy objectives of OBE in their respective classes and schools.

Since the literature review has found that street-level bureaucrats experience problems if they do not have the capacity to deliver, this study will investigate whether teachers have undergone capacity-building programs on Outcomes Based Education policy. Pressman and Wildavsky mentioned that it is important for street-level bureaucrats to get support while also being supervised or controlled. This study is going to explore whether teachers receive any support or supervision from their officials and superiors.

The following section will begin by looking at the background to Outcomes Based Education in South Africa and its origins. This will constitute the background to analyze data that will be gathered from four different previously disadvantaged schools within Pietermaritzburg.

PART B

A Preliminary Study of Outcomes Based Education

1.   Introduction

It is important for one to understand the background to the introduction of the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) policy in South Africa. This will, hopefully, shed light on the process that led to the implementation of such a policy. The focus will thereafter shift to report and analyze the more particular research findings.

It is important to look at the structure of education in South Africa, that is, the organization of education. This will help to explain why the South African Department of Education chose OBE as the new policy to be used to transform education. According to Van Schalk (1988:2), education takes the form of cultural transfer to the young and their incorporation into the life, traditions, customs, and way of life of the community.

Van Schalk (1988:2) argues that educational administration and management are necessary to enable educational institutions and supporting services to function effectively. He also argues that professional educators must carry out their task in close association with the community in all areas because the government, parents, church, private industry, the judiciary, the economy and many more all have a direct interest in, and have certain contributions to make to education.

Van Schalk (1988:7) also argues that an education system is a social structure. It means education has a purpose to fulfill social needs. Therefore, education as a social structure creates opportunities for the fulfillment and actualization of specific human responsibilities. To achieve its purpose, the social structure must carry out a specific task according to a specific policy that has been decided on (Van Schalk, 1988:7). This task must be divided and an organizational structure must be created to allow the task to be carried into effect by those in various positions of authority (such as principals, teachers, etc). It means that various tasks and responsibilities of a school must be divided according to the organizational structure of the school and the positions of the various staff members (Van

Schalk, 1988: 7).

Success in teaching requires appropriate work procedures, and arrangements that are conducive to the functioning of the education system, and control measures to determine whether the policy is carried out. It depends on whether the organizational arrangements are conducive to education; whether personnel are appropriately trained and utilized according to their abilities; whether there is sufficient funding, and whether it is responsibly utilized, and whether the administrative arrangements are effective enough so that educational policy is implemented effectively (Van Schalk, 1988:8). The above procedures are used by the education system for the smooth implementation of education policy.

A closer look will now be taken at the background to the introduction of Outcomes Based Education and Curriculum 2005 by the South African Department of Education. The term "Curriculum 2005," is the overall vision for transforming apartheid education. The vehicle by which this will be attained is an outcomes based approach to education and training. Over the last eight years, the Department of Education, in consultation with the provinces, has set national policy that specifies the main aspects of Curriculum 2005 for grades one to nine, that must be adhered to by all provinces in South Africa.

This model of OBE is an initiative aimed at transforming the education and training system so that South Africans are fully equipped to meet the challenges of the new millennium. The major change is in the focus of the education system, from content and the memorization of statistics and facts, to a system that places its primary emphasis on the development of an inquiring spirit, leading to the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes.

2.   The History of Education in South Africa

South African education was characterized by a uniform and predictable curriculum policy environment managed by the apartheid state under the leadership of the National Party. A centralized curriculum policy under the National Party government in 1970's existed, which was described as racist against non-whites, eurocentred, sexist, authoritative, prescriptive, unchanging, context blind and discriminatory (Jansen and Christie, 1999). It meant there was no common education system for blacks and whites to be followed. This distinction prevented the implementation of a single national policy on any matter (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

Up to and including 1983, the various education departments in South Africa functioned, to a large extent, independently of one another, and there was no significant indication of a common curriculum followed by all. A measure of commonality, especially in the higher standards was, however achieved, through the role that the then Joint Matriculation Board (JMB) played in curriculum development, examination, and certification (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

Education for Blacks within the boundaries of South Africa was regarded as General Affairs, and was placed under the jurisdiction of the then Department of Education and Training (DET). The rest of Black education was organized into four independent homelands and six self-governing territory education departments, the latter being the responsibility of Department of Co-operation and Development (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

These racially exclusive departments, provinces, homelands and self-governing territories resulted in the excessive fragmentation of South African education into 19 different departments. This fragmented management structure made the implementation of a single national policy on any matter impossible.

In 1984, a new constitution was adopted. Parliament was based on separate houses for Whites (House of Assembly), Coloureds (House of Representatives), and Indians (House of

Delegates), with no parliamentary house for blacks. Education was managed through three separate initial capitals. Black education was kept separate by the Black Education Act (No. 47 of 1953) and administered by the Department of Education and Training (DET) (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

The schools administered by the House of Assembly were located in urban areas close to cities, with advanced infrastructure and modern amenities. These schools were well resourced, with text books and stationary supplied by the state. The buildings were large and equipped with the best equipment. Teachers were well qualified and experienced, and learners were exposed to a wide curriculum as well as international exposure. The teacher-pupil ratio varied from 1:20 to 1:25 (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

On the other hand, schools administered by the House of Delegates and House of Representatives were located in semi-urban areas and townships that were racially divided. The worst schools administered by the Department of Education and Training were situated in rural areas and townships reserved for blacks only. These schools had buildings that were in bad condition and had old furniture. In some areas, there were no buildings, and children were taught under the trees and in nearby homes (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

Some schools located in rural areas were totally inaccessible by vehicles. Teachers were poorly qualified and lacked experience. This was due to the limited opportunities offered to them by the State for further study. There was a lack of electricity and running water. The teacher-pupil ratio varied from 1: 45-1:60 (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997). In short, black students and teachers were disadvantaged in every respect.

In 1995 as stated in the White Paper on Education and Training (1997) the entire education system underwent a transformation. All the former departments were incorporated in one national Department of Education. There was now to be only one central policy making department responsible for the determination of national policy regarding norms and standards for syllabus, examinations, and certification of qualifications in pre-tertiary education (ANC Discussion Document on Education, 1997).

The structure of the education system has undergone some drastic changes with the introduction of democracy in 1994. The criteria for admission to formerly segregated state schools were devolved after 1990 to the governing committees of such schools. But the racially segregated and ethnic structure of apartheid education remained essentially intact. Formerly white state schools (now called Model C schools) continued to have the power to determine admissions on a racial basis. Moreover, the government continued to advance notions of distinctive autogenous education within a single system. By 1993, only sixty thousand black students had been enrolled at the Model C schools, despite large numbers of vacant places in some of these schools (Kallaway *et al*, 1997:10).

Kallaway *et al* (1997: 11) argue that even where the National Party government in the late 1980's, through its Education Renewal Strategy (ERS), committed itself to equality in education and a single central educational authority, this was rarely translated into action for redressing the legacy of inequalities generated by apartheid. Equal opportunity under these conditions made little impact on the legacy of disadvantage inherited from apartheid education, and the changes that occurred had little effect on addressing the profound structural inequalities that conditioned educational outcomes. Furthermore, despite the National Party government's professed commitment to greater democratic participation in educational governance in the early 1990's, and the representation of the Education Renewal Strategy's proposals as discussion documents, the proposals constituted the basis for the unilateral restructuring of education. This was particularly evident in the decision to increase examination fees for the matriculation examination in standard 10, and for retrenchment rationalization in the form of retrenchment of a considerable numbers of teachers. In general, the crisis in black education continued unattended, including what has come to be referred to as the breakdown in the culture of learning, and the crisis of legitimacy for the structures of educational governance (Kallaway, 1997: 12). Education for black students was suffering in all respects. Therefore, there was a need for change in the education system if it was going to cater for all races at equal levels.

An organization known as the National Education Co-ordinating Committee (NECC) was formed in 1994 to initiate an investigation into education (called the National Education

Policy Investigation, NEPI) and to develop education policy options in line with the then broad democratic liberation movement. The NEPI provided a broad values framework for thinking about an education policy in a post-apartheid South Africa an education policy for a non-racist, non-sexist democracy with equality and redress as the platform for post-apartheid education. After democracy was introduced in 1994, the Ministry of Education produced a number of policy documents and discussion papers on education policy and implementation. These culminated into the White Paper on Education in 1995.

The White Paper on Education (1995) promoted the ideas of integration and competency as elements of a system-wide education restructuring ambition. NEPI also outlined some very operational areas for future attention, including early childhood education, adult education, teacher education and educational governance and finance (Jansen and Christie, 1999:4). This led to many curriculum policy documents in South Africa through the national Department of Education (The Department of National Education's Policy Document on Education, 1997).

Jansen and Christie (1999:182) argue that the most important curriculum actor was the National Training Board, an organization responsible for training in South Africa in all fields and disciplines. This National Training Board produced a policy document that called for an integrated approach to education and training in South Africa.

In February 1997 the then Minister of Education, Professor S.M.E. Bhengu, unveiled Curriculum 2005 –hailed as "the national curriculum for the twenty first century" after two years of careful planning (Bhengu, 1997:1). Seemingly, Bhengu wanted to eradicate racist education practises so that all races would receive the same quality of education.

Bhengu's vision of transforming South Africa was to "build a truly united democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens, leading to productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice" (Bhengu 1997:2). To promote these changes, the then Minister introduced Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

According to the Department of Education's Policy Document on Education (1997), most South Africans formed their values and attitudes in the old, divided South Africa. This document states that education is the key to changing many of the old commonly held values and beliefs. At the heart of all this change, it argues, is the new curriculum called 'Curriculum 2005'. This is the government's flagship educational plan to rid South Africa of the legacy of Bantu education.

3.   What is Outcomes Based Education and Curriculum 2005?

According to Lubisi and Parker (1998:24) Outcomes Based Education (OBE) means focusing and organizing the education system around what is essential for all students to be able to succeed at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing curriculum, teaching, and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens.

Jansen (1998: 280), in his study, found that many educators think Curriculum 2005 means a deadline or the year by which all general education grades (1-7) would have been converted to OBE, whilst education department officials see OBE and Curriculum 2005 as being synonymous. Jansen and Christie (1999:282) see OBE as simply a vehicle for expressing the methodology for achieving the goals stipulated in Curriculum 2005. Spady (cited in Hiralaal, 2000: 12) sees Curriculum 2005 as an educational invention of South Africans, which has nothing to do with OBE.

The Department of Education, (1997) states that Curriculum 2005 is a major strategy in the new Democratic South African government's attempt to restructure and transform education in South Africa so that education will encourage critical thinking, social transformation, and practical orientation. Danielson (1989, cited in Hiralaal, 2000:11) sees OBE as "a system for organizing and delivering the instructional programme in elementary and secondary schools that will assure successful learning for every student."

The principles of OBE originated in the U.S.A at the turn of the century, when the humanist John Dewey and his colleagues analyzed the use of the public school system as a

means of changing America. Blumenfield (1993:32) argues that OBE can be traced back to a 1948 meeting in Boston of the American Psychological Association Convention where a group of behavioural scientists decided to embark on a project of classifying the goals or outcomes of the education process. They claimed that educational objectives provided the basis for building curricula and tests, and represent the starting point for much of our educational research.

The philosophy underlying OBE is that all students have talent, and that it is the task of the teacher and school to develop it and find ways for students to succeed rather than fail. Teachers have to use their discretion to make this possible.

According to Spady (1994:26), OBE is founded on three basic premises:

- All students can learn and succeed (although not at the same speed or in the same way);
- Success breeds success; and
- Teachers and schools control the conditions that determine success.

Steyn and Wilkinson (cited in Hiralaal, 2000:24) state that there are four main theoretical philosophies upon which OBE is based. Those are behaviorism, social reconstructivism, critical theory and pragmatism. With social reconstructivists they argue in favour of the following:

- Empowering and emancipation of learners;
- Learners who should be able to construct their own meanings and knowledge.

In OBE, subjects are replaced or referred to as learning areas (these will be discussed later on). OBE specifies sets of outcomes to be achieved in the different learning areas. These outcomes are much broader than the traditional subjects educators customarily aimed at. The formulated outcomes, the spirit of the new democratic constitution, as well as elements of African culture and traditions are now reflected in the different learning areas during the compulsory phases of schooling in South Africa. According to the Education Department

(1997:3), the compulsory phases of schooling are as follows: Foundation phase (children from birth to nine years), Intermediate phase, and Senior phase. Foundation phase includes the Early Childhood Development (ECD) phase. It deals with the care and development of young children to be equipped with social relations and the starting point of human resources development strategies from community to national levels. This phase tries to prepare the child to be a part of his/her nation at an early stage.

The Intermediate phase includes grades four to six where learners are beginning to understand detailed relationships between materials, incidents, circumstances and people, and are able to infer the consequences of such relationships. This has significant implications for the selection of learning content and teaching and learning activities, which should develop these abilities to the full. This phase is advanced and more formal, and requires the child to become a critical thinker.

The Senior phase includes grades seven to nine, and is the phase that my study is focusing on. According to the Education Department (1997:5), this phase is called the General Education and Training Band (GET). At this stage, Learners are increasingly able to reason independently of concrete materials and experience. They are able to engage in open argument and are willing to accept multiple solutions to single problems. The learning content offered in this phase is less contextualised, more abstract, and more area specific than in the previous two phases. It means the learner is more independent, allowed to use his/her ideas, and allowed to be more active, take initiative and be involved in the learning area. In the Senior phase, there should be clear evidence that learners are being prepared for life after school, for life in the world of work. It means that learning programmes should create opportunities for learners to be informed about career and further learning opportunities, about ways and means of realizing their expectations for the future, and about their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a democratic, multi-cultural society. The learning areas in this phase have to be designed in such a way that they equip the child with the skills that are useful in the work field.

The Department of Education (1997:8) identified eight learning areas in this phase:

- Language, Literacy and Communication (which replaces 1st language and 2nd language Subjects).
- Human and Social Science (which replaces History and Geography).
- Technology (which is a new learning area).
- Mathematical literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences (which replace Mathematics and Arithmetic).
- Natural Science (which replaces Agricultural Science and Biology).
- Arts and Culture (which is a new learning area).
- Economics and Management Sciences (which replaces Business Economics).
- Life Orientation (which replaces Career Guidance).

According to Pretorius (1998:28), in each learning area there should be critical outcomes and specific outcomes. Critical outcomes relate to the broader intended results of education and training, while specific outcomes are linked to a particular context of the learning area. The learning outcome or goal that is supposed to be achieved is to be clearly stipulated before the learning programme starts. The conditions and opportunities within the system should enable and encourage all students to achieve those outcomes. Pretorius (1998:167) discusses the importance of sitting arrangements, and argues that learners must sit in clusters. Clusters mean permanent groupings. There are different types of groupings and sizes of groups. The number of learners in a group can vary according to the resources available. The most common group sizes that teachers use are either the whole class of approximately 35 learners, or small groups, usually four to eight members in a group. Sometimes teachers encourage pairs of learners to work together. The Education Department (1997) says the purpose of clustering is to encourage an integrated approach to learning in a group environment.

Pretorius (1998) argues that learning support materials are a crucial element of Outcomes Based Education. These learning materials are totally different from those used traditionally. Traditionally, the syllabus and the textbook were the key education tools. The

educator and the learner had to keep close to both. However, according to OBE policy, learning support materials (LSM) are materials that support real learning by participating in a dialogue between learner, educator and materials. Learners synthesise and integrate facts, and ultimately construct their own knowledge. This approach provokes critical thinking and makes the learner a more active participant in the learning process. The teacher should build-up learning support material kits. Other learning support materials are various and unlimited, such as magazines, newspapers, learners workbooks, teaching aids (such as a chalk board, overhead projector), even parents, senior citizens, ex-students, politicians, libraries, computers, the internet, television and radio, which all become relevant teaching materials.

According to Pretorius (1998:44), all educators who teach different learning areas within the same grade are supposed to choose one focus topic for that particular term, in order to promote holistic and integrative learning. This would involve educators to use one example across the different learning areas, such as "water". For example, during Mathematical Literacy, the educator could teach measuring skills using water. During Human and Social Science, the educator could explain the formation of rain. During Natural Science, the educator would explain the importance of water to species, and so on. This is done to integrate the learning areas with one another, as well as to make learning interesting for the learner.

According to the Department of Education (1997), OBE includes a number of assessment criteria to ascertain whether or not the learner has achieved the specific outcome. These are performance indicators that show the level of achievement that the learner finally achieves, and that enables the educator to assess whether or not specific learning outcomes have been reached. There are many types of assessment, according to Pretorius (1998: 31). There is continuous assessment; when the educator assesses the child throughout the year. Performances assessment, when the educator assesses the level of performance in a particular task. There is also assessment by others, which is when learners assess each other. Self-assessment occurs when the learner can assess himself/ herself. There is checklist rating, which is when the educator creates a list of grading and rates the learner accordingly. For example, the list will have good, bad or fair. The educator will rate the

child according to those three rates. OBE is more practical, hence it needs knowledgeable well trained educators who have the necessary infrastructural support. In the following topic a close look at the different ideas surrounding the implementation of OBE in South Africa will be taken.

In 1997, the South African Department of Education published a set of norms and standards for educators, which are in line with the principles and philosophy of OBE. These standards state that educators have to be learning mediators. Accordingly, the educator will be required to mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners, including those with barriers to learning. Learning mediators will be required to construct and develop learning environments that are appropriately contextualised and inspirational. Another role stipulated by the Department of Education is that an educator should be an interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials. It means that the educator will have to understand and interpret provided learning programmes, design original learning programmes, identify the requirements for a specific context of learning as well as select and prepare suitable textual and visual resources for learning. This role implies that educators will have to be able to have practical competence to design original learning programmes so that they meet the desired outcomes and are appropriate for the context in which they occur.

The other role of the educator is to be an assessor. As assessors, the educators will be required to understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to integrate it into this process. The educator will have to manage assessment in ways that are appropriate to the level and purpose of the learning programme, and meet the requirements of accrediting bodies. The educator must understand how to interpret and use assessment results to feed into processes for the improvement of learning programmes.

The Department of Education (1997) also states that the educator is supposed to be the specialist in the learning areas. The educators need to be grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods and procedures relevant to the learning area. The educator will have to know about different approaches to teaching and learning, and how these may be

used in ways, which are appropriate to the learners and the context.

In theory, these Norms and Standards, as stipulated by the Department of Education, are valuable. However, the question becomes whether our present educators have these skills and expertise on which the norms and standards of educators depends?

4.   The Implementation of OBE in South Africa

As discussed earlier, the Department of Education decided to adopt Outcomes Based Education because the curriculum offered in the past was perpetuating race, class, gender, inequality and ethnic divisions which emphasized separateness, rather than a common citizenship and nationhood. The Department of Education felt that it was now the time to implement lifelong learning through a National Curriculum Framework document, which is informed by principles derived from the1995 White Paper on Education and Training. This emphasized the need for major changes in education and training in South Africa in order to normalize and transform teaching and learning. Now emphasis is placed on the necessity for a shift from the traditional aims and objectives approach to Outcomes Based Education. The major aim of educational transformation is to eradicate the legacy of apartheid in education. The vision is to create "a prosperous, truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens leading productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice"(Jansen and Christie, 1999:99).

The National Curriculum Framework policy document was distributed in 1997 to the teachers of all senior phase grades (grades 7 to 9) across all the provinces in South Africa. This policy document serves as the OBE guide for all educators. It also reminds educators not to neglect the integration of subjects as well as theory with practice.

There is a general perception that teachers in South Africa are negative about the implementation of OBE. The National Curriculum Framework policy document (1997) informs that, whereas previously the school calendar determined what a child might do at any moment of any school day, according to the OBE approach, now progress towards

specific outcomes will control activity.

In May 1998, the Educators Voice published a number of articles detailing teacher's problems with OBE. According to these articles, the problem is that the teachers are confused as to how to implement OBE. Many stated that they had attended workshops organized by the Department of Education but found OBE impossible to put into practice because teachers have up to 60 learners in the classrooms. Another problem identified was with OBE's assessment procedures. Proper assessment techniques and guidelines were lacking whilst the extra workload which resulted from the necessity to keep a portfolio on each learner raised further concerns.

Harley and Parker (1998) state that the danger with an OBE approach, is the reliance on a combination of outcomes and competence that can too easily be reduced to a mechanical format rote learning, which is heavily reliant on materials provided by the state. It depends on the state having to provide new material that is relevant to OBE. This has financial implications.

Deacon and Parker (1998:131) state that there is confusion about how OBE implementation should occur, as well as about the clear definition of the role of the teacher. Deacon and Parker (1998:135) argue that there is disagreement over the new terms like" education practitioner" that are being used instead of teacher to distinguish between school-based teachers and teachers in fields such as the workplace. Should the educator be a facilitator, an authority, liberator, assessor or scientist? These are some of the questions being asked. This shows that even the OBE policy formulators are not sure of what are suitable terms to use. In South Africa they opted for the term educators to refer to teachers and the term learners to refer to pupils.

Christie (cited in Taylor, 1993:113) states that the debate around Curriculum 2005 has been characterized by criticism and rather defensive, if not hostile, government responses. Curriculum 2005 is criticized for its inaccessibility and for being too complicated in the South African context. It is regarded as needing well-prepared teachers, ample resources, and suitable institutions, which is not always possible in South Africa.

Greenstein (cited in Jansen and Christie, 1999:103) believes that Curriculum 2005 is not compatible with the conditions of the majority of South African schools, nor does it address crucial issues in South African schools such as racism, sexism and Africanisation. Jansen (1998) points out that Curriculum 2005 has the greatest likelihood of success in well-resourced schools with well qualified teachers and better prepared students. It has been implied that OBE and Curriculum 2005 possibly do not suit disadvantaged and poor schools, like black schools in townships and in rural areas.

Christie (cited in Jansen and Christie, 1999:117) points out that in South Africa, although the curriculum framework for the eight learning areas were drawn up by committees on which teachers were represented, most teachers have not been actively engaged with the new curriculum. Possibly top government officials were the ones who were planning the curriculum, and the teacher representatives were observing, passively accepting what was done by top management.

The teacher representatives were supposed to be given an opportunity to make input and say something concerning the curriculum plan. Christie (cited in Jansen and Christie, 1999:147) argues that it was a poorly planned and poor introduction of the curriculum into schools, with teachers being insufficiently prepared. She argues that government introduced OBE into schools before the time was right. It was supposed to prepare the teachers, resources and schools for at least three to five years before the introduction of OBE. Rasool (cited in Jansen and Christie, 1999: 176) concludes that the question is not whether OBE should be implemented but rather whether sufficient support and encouragement is being given to teachers by all interested groups in education. Harley and Parker (cited in Jansen and Christie, 1999:187) state that there is a difference between the legislated rules and the practices. The Department of Education speaks about the break from the old South African principles of mechanical solidarity, but without sufficient subjection to new forms of moral obligation, rights and responsibilities or organic solidarity. They argue that this runs the risk of creating a sense of despair and powerlessness at the very moment teachers are called upon to play a major role in transforming education and training. The term mechanical solidarity, when it is applied to education, means those schools that have strong

boundaries between the school and everyday life. Organic solidarity refers to the weak boundaries between the schools and everyday life knowledge, as when South African schools deal with subjects like agriculture in the rural areas.

Harley and Parker (1998:181) have argued that the introduction of Outcomes Based Education may have misrecognised the nature of the relationship between school and society in South Africa, especially in respect to teachers' personal and professional identity. They suggest that to implement OBE, teachers may well need to shift their own identities, their own understanding of who they are and how they relate to others.

Carl (1997:167) argues that there are determining factors for successful curriculum implementation, although there are also factors that may inhibit development. He sees these factors as challenges to be identified and dealt with. Carl argues that to ensure success in the OBE curriculum implementation, educators should plan lessons properly and have continuous contact with their supervisors to receive advice and help, as well as to encourage mutual contact with learners and parents. It means there should be a link between the educator, the learner, the parent, and the community at large, since Outcomes Based Education involves the child and its outside world. Since Outcomes Based Education policy came with new terminology, it is important for the educators to be clear about their meaning to ensure successful implementation. Another factor is that there should be enough learning materials and teaching aids, as well as support, from other educators. With regards to support, the Department of Education is supposed to provide relevant materials and incentives to educators.

Carl (1997:168) claims that in-service training must be given and support must be continuously available, to offer material assistance and encouragement. He also mentions that time given for real meaningful involvement, reflection, and participation of learners in the lesson should be taken into consideration, and also enough time for educators to get together and choose a focus topic or phase organizer. He states that educator participation is high at this stage, therefore they make their own mark on the development. Educators plays a significant role in the success and implementation of OBE in South Africa,

therefore they need a thorough knowledge of it.

To conclude, this section presented a preliminary study of Outcomes Based Education in which it briefly described the history of education in South Africa and the rationale for the South African Department of Education choosing Outcomes Based Education as the education policy, which will transform education. It covered the background to the introduction of OBE and Curriculum 2005 in South Africa, and highlighted how the White Paper on Education (1995) promoted the ideas of integration and competency as elements of a system-wide education restructuring ambition.

This section concluded by arguing that the implementation of Outcomes Based Education policy is complicated and difficult. Educators in South Africa are negative about the implementation of Outcomes Based Education claiming that they have many learners in the classroom which makes it impossible for them to implement Outcomes Based Education.

The research portfolio will present the findings of a case study of four historically disadvantaged schools in Pietermaritzburg, and some of the difficulties experienced with the implementation of OBE. How do the teachers face the challenges of executing this new policy? The nature and results of this study will be highlighted in the next chapter.

5. A Case study of Outcomes Based Education at Four Schools in Pietermaritzburg

The focus of this study is on the implementation of Outcomes Based Education policy in four historically disadvantaged schools. I chose to do this study on four schools located in what was previously regarded as a black township. These schools lack the resources for teaching and learning, and their pupils come from neighbouring poor communities. The idea was therefore to identify the problems that are experienced by teachers in implementing the Outcomes Based Education policy.

Firstly, I am going to give a geographical location of these schools and a little background information for each school. Fundokuhle High School is situated in the Center of Imbali Township in Pietermaritzburg. In terms of the Department of Education, it is located in the Msunduzi Municipality, under the Vulindlela traditional authority. It is forty kilometers from the center of Pietermaritzburg. Fundokuhle High School's enrolment is 800, and teaches from grades 8 to grade 12. School staff comprises the Principal, Deputy Principal, four Heads of Department (HOD), and 23 educators. Out of 23 teachers, 16 teachers are females and 7 are males. There are four Heads of Department which are as follows: Department of Commerce; The Department of Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC); the other HOD is for Science; and the fourth Head of Department is for Human and Social Science.

The second school is Sibanesihle High School. It is also located in the Vulindlela area and teaches grades 8 to 12. It is fifty kilometers from the center of Pietermaritzburg. It has an enrolment of 450 learners with 13 educators (7 educators are females and 6 are males). School staff comprises the Principal, Deputy Principal and 3 Heads of Department. There is a Head of Department for Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) and Human and Social Science (HSS). The other HOD is for Commerce and Science.

The third school is St. Joseph High School, and is located in the rural area of New Hanover. It is about forty kilometers from the center of Pietermaritzburg. It consists of 400 learners with 15 educators, of which 10 are females and 5 males. School staff is comprised of the Principal, Deputy Principal and 4 Heads of Department. These are the Head of Department

for Language, Literacy, and Communication (LLC) and Human and Social Sciences (HSS); the Head of Department for Economics and Management Science (EMS); and the other Head of Department is for Science.

The fourth school is Trustfeed High School, which is located in the rural areas of Wartberg. It is about thirty kilometers from the centre of Pietermaritzburg. The enrolment is 800 with 25 teachers of which 15 are female teachers and are 10 male teachers. School staff comprises a Principal, the Deputy Principal and 4 Heads of Departments. This school, unlike the others three schools, teaches from grade 1 through to grade 12. One Head of Department deals with grade 1 to grade 7, managing all the learning areas. There is a Head of Department for Commerce and Science, and a Head of Department for Human and Social Sciences (HSS) and Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC).

5.1.   Research Methodology

(i)   Research Design and Population

This study has used a qualitative information gathering method through structured questionnaires. The reason for choosing this method is that Rubin & Rubin (1995:2) argue that this approach succeeds in getting depth, details, and vividness from respondents. According to Rubin & Rubin (1995:2), depth means getting a thoughtful answer based on considerable evidence, as well as getting full consideration of a topic from diverse points of view.

Only teachers who are actively involved in implementing Outcomes Based Education were asked to participate. The sample population was five teachers from each of the four schools selected randomly from the list of the historically disadvantaged schools in Pietermaritzburg to avoid bias. I obtained the list of historically disadvantaged schools from the Provincial Department of Education's regional office, which identifies two hundred and thirteen public high schools in Pietermaritzburg. Of these, one hundred and seventy seven are regarded as historically disadvantaged schools (Education Management Information Systems EMIS - Regional Office, Annual Survey Returns, 2000). The reason

for choosing historically disadvantaged schools is that the teachers who teach in the historically disadvantaged schools claimed that they are confused on how to implement OBE and they are forced by the Department to implement it. (The Natal Witness 2002: 3).

The teachers I interviewed were teaching grades 8 and 9 because at high school only these two grades are presently implementing Outcomes Based Education. I selected the teachers by asking for the list of the teachers that are teaching Outcomes Based Education from the principals in each school. I intended to administer the questionnaires to twenty teachers but two teachers fell sick, leaving me with responses from eighteen teachers only.

(ii)   Development of the Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was developed in order to get as much detail about the implementation of Outcomes Based Education by grade 8 and 9 teachers. Macmillan and Schumacher (1983:34) define a questionnaire as a relatively economical technique for obtaining information from subjects since it is standardized, ensures anonymity and questions can be written for a specific purpose. Robson (1997) states that questionnaires are very efficient in terms of research, time and effort.

The questionnaire commenced with a brief introduction by the researcher on the aims of the study. These are some of the questions and the areas of investigation that guided the research project. (More detail is included in Appendix One.)

- Do you have a policy document that guides you on the implementation of Outcomes Based Education?
- What resources do you need to implement Outcomes Based Education?
- Did you attend workshops, and if yes, did you benefit from them?
- What supports do you receive from management to implement Outcomes Based Education?
- What problems do you experience in implementing Outcomes Based Education in your classroom?

- What alternative material do you use to assist you with the implementation of Outcomes Based Education?

(iii)   Data Analysis

The data collected was qualitative and descriptive. The data was obtained from the filled-in questionnaires, and then coded and analyzed. Jessop (1997) defines coding as a complex process by which the researcher labels units of meaning or categories according to a system of codes, usually developed through a close reading of the data. A thorough reading of the data was done and emerging themes were identified. Biklen (1992) argues that these phrases are called "coding categories," and they were used as a means of sorting the descriptive data that had been collected in order to physically separate the material related to a given topic from the rest of the data.

The transcribed data from the filled-in questionnaires was read thoroughly in order to discover codes and emerging themes around which to categorize the data. The data was also checked for incomplete and/or irrelevant data.

The data was analyzed to note core ideas and concepts, identified possible emotive stories and tried to find themes. Similar ideas were grouped together and considered how these themes relate to each other. The data was sorted into a few main coding categories. For example, code A was used for positive responses and code B was used for negative responses and code C was used for those who were neutral. Then similarities and differences between responses were compared across the categories to discover connections between themes. The goal was to integrate the themes and concepts into a potential explanation that offers an accurate, detailed, yet subtle interpretation of the research. The questionnaire findings were then analyzed in terms of what the literature review argued about policy implementation.

(iv)   Constraints

To collect the data was a bit difficult. It was hard to get hold of the principals at the respective schools due to the nature of their work, since they travel to and from the district office and the regional office. Another problem was that the teachers claimed they were too busy. They said that they did not have time to respond to the questionnaires because they are implementing Outcomes Based Education and at the same time are involved in teaching the traditional curriculum. Some teachers did not keep appointments made with them. Others were absent from school, attending workshops.

Problems were also encountered with the nature of the responses to the questionnaires, because sometimes they did not answer all the questions.   This meant that those questionnaires had to be re-administered. Some teachers did not want to talk about Outcomes Based Education. They claim that they are tired and bored with its implementation. It is difficult to do research about a policy when the recipients are experiencing serious problems because they are unhappy and they lose interest in everything related to it. Nevertheless, the findings of this research remain valuable and interesting.

5.2 Data Findings

For clarity's sake, the data collected through the questionnaires has been organized under various themes and illustrated in respective tables.

5.2.1 Gender break-down

Table 1: Gender break-down of Educators who participated in the study.

Schools	Males	Females	Total
Fundokuhle High School	2	3	5
Sibanesihle High School	1	3	4
St Joseph High School	2	2	5
Trust feed High School	2	2	4
Total	7	11	18

This shows that there are more female teachers than males in my study.

5.2.2 Experience of teaching

Table 2: Teaching Experience

Educators	Experience
15	20 years or more
3	30 years or more

All the teachers in my sample are between 40 and 49 years, they have considerable experience in teaching but they all experienced problems with implementing OBE policy.

5.2.3 Experience in teaching grade 8 and 9

Table 3: Teaching Experience in Grade 8 and 9

Educators	Experience in grade 8 and 9
17	20 years or more
1	30 years or more

Although teaching OBE is mandatory, only one teacher had more than 30 years experience of teaching grades 8 and 9. The study shows that all the teachers who participated have a lot of teaching experience. In fact, the principals have requested the more experienced teachers to teach OBE classes. The conclusion that one can reach is that despite the overwhelming experience of the teachers, they all acknowledged that they have experienced difficulties with implementing OBE. (The reasons for this are discussed later on this study).

5.2.4 Educator: Pupil Ratio

Table 4: Educator and Pupil Ratio

School	Number of Educators	Number of learners	Ratio
Fundokuhle High school	5	200	1:40
Sibanesihle High school	4	320	1:80
St. Joseph High school	5	200	1:40
Trust feed combined school	4	320	1:80
Total	18	1040	

According to the OBE policy, the teacher: pupil ratio is supposed to be 1:35 (Jansen et al, 1999), but in these historically disadvantaged schools it can be seen that not a single school has that teacher: pupil ratio. This alone shows that it could be hard to implement OBE with such large numbers of pupils, since the learner needs individual attention.

5.2.5 Average student attendance

When asked what the average attendances of students were, all respondents stated that it was pretty high. For ten educators with forty learners each, attendance was approximately about 37 students per day. For eight educators with eighty learners each, attendance was approximately about 67 a day. Since the introduction of OBE, teachers did not experience an increase or decrease in students' attendance.

5.2.6 Teaching tools and resources

An assessment was done of the teachers' respective teaching tools and resources. Most teachers have standard equipment like desks, chairs, tables, notice boards, cupboards, and charts. However, given the high student numbers, they are not enough. For instance, at Fundokuhle High School three learners share one desk. At Sibanesihle High School, learners have to share chairs. At Trustfeed High School and at St. Joseph High School, the classrooms are very small and barely accommodate learners. Sibanesihle High School and Trustfeed have no adequate lighting and not enough ventilation. When asked what resources they need to implement OBE, all mentioned computers, audiovisual aids, textbooks relevant to OBE, and overhead projectors. It is important to have enough instruments to apply a new policy so as to ensure the smooth running of the policy. If the policy is implemented without relevant material, it is likely to pose difficulties.

5.2.7 OBE Competence and Expertise

Table 5: Teacher Expertise in OBE

Schools	Number of teachers
Fundokuhle High School	1
Sibanesihle High School	0
St. Joseph High School	0
Trust feed High School	0

This shows that out of the 18 respondents, only 1 teacher felt that they had the necessary OBE competency and expertise to implement OBE policy. This shows that they need a lot of training. They argued that they have no idea of what is expected from them to deliver the new policy correctly. When asked whether they received any OBE training or not, all of them indicated that they had received OBE training.

5.2.8   OBE Training

All the teachers interviewed received in-service training in OBE, but they found it useless since it has not helped them to implement the OBE system. They claim that it is hard to implement what they learnt from the workshops because of their huge numbers in class and the lack of enough material and equipment like computers, audio visual aids, photocopying machines, textbooks relevant to OBE, and so on.   This hinders their progress.   The educators at the focus schools also claim that the facilitators at the workshops were often unable to answer questions properly. Pressman and Wildavsky (1973: 45) argue that street-level bureaucrats, such as educators, need to be trained to be able to practise any new program as part of policy implementation. They further argue that training should be straightforward to avoid unclarity of themes, terms, and objectives that come up during implementation, which causes delays and difficulties in the implementation process. All the teachers interviewed felt that their OBE training workshop failed to do this.

According to the educators, the most difficult part about the whole situation is that they do not get support from subject advisors and facilitators. Instead, the eighteen teachers stated that they get support from other educators who teach Outcomes Based Education. There are no class visits done by school management (that is the principal, the head of department, the deputy principal or the subject advisor). A school's management team, the department officials, subject advisors and facilitators are supposed to monitor and control the work of teachers and assist them in order to see to it that implementation of the new policy is running smoothly. Such supervision should generally be done through class visits where school management can quickly see where there is a need for support or help.

Anderson (1997:248-249) identifies the techniques of control of policy implementation, as inspection, licensing, and contracts. Perhaps because the management in the focus schools were not involved in the planning (they do not know what or how to control and supervise), or perhaps management themselves do not know what OBE entails. This is one of the reasons raised by Pressman and Wildavsky (1973). They claim that a lack of coordinated planning can delay or at worst, doom the process of implementation (Pressman and Wildavsky, 1973:xvi).

One could say that monitoring and inspection are the main techniques that could be used to control and oversee the implementation of OBE policy. The educators are not inspected or monitored as often as they should be. Maybe the Heads of Departments and principals are not sure of OBE and their responsibilities. Others claimed that they are highly involved in administrative work and have not enough time. This leaves little or no time for doing regular class visits to observe whether OBE is being implemented smoothly or not.

When asked in what areas teachers needed in-service training, all of them responded that they wanted to be trained on lesson preparation, classroom organization, discipline, facilitating pupil-group work, developing curriculum materials, assessing the learners and they would also like to see examples or a demonstration of lessons in implementing OBE in a large class. They also want to be provided with the resource teaching tools relevant to OBE as mentioned earlier. All of them mention that assessing methods required by OBE policy are time consuming and they are not clear which one is relevant to assess a particular Specific Learning Outcome.

Teachers of all four focus schools seemingly have too little information and support on OBE. This shows that educators feel the need for in-service training in everything related to OBE implementation. They do not have enough information about OBE implementation, or their requirements. Hanekom (1987:54), in his discussion on problems of implementation, noted that it should be acknowledged that during the implementation process, problems could crop up because of too much or too little information, insufficient resources, unsuitable institutions, or inadequate control measures. In this case, it would seem that all of these are leading to the problems in OBE implementation.

Danielson (cited in Hiralaal, 2000:11) states that OBE is a complex, comprehensive and powerful model for school improvement, but it is not a package that can be bought off the shelf and instituted the next week. In order to implement OBE, it is important for principals to receive in-service training first, so that they can be able to give support to their junior staff. Then each staff member can be trained and only then will they come to understand the goals of OBE. This is so because OBE is dependent on the skills and knowledge of the professional staff. There should therefore be a heavy commitment to improving the skills of the staff. This shows that there is a need for proper planning and in-service training, but in a holistic manner. Training should include everyone from teachers to senior school management. This allows for everyone to have an equal understanding.

5.2.9 Educators working as a team

According to the OBE policy document (1997), during the implementation of OBE, the educators of different learning areas are supposed to work together as a team. They are supposed to meet frequently to see that their learning areas are coordinated under a phase organizer. A phase organiser is a theme for that particular term. For example, water could be the theme for the phase organizer. This then means that each teacher would use water across the different learning areas as the example for the term. The aim of a common theme is to make the curriculum more integrated. They are supposed to have time to network with other educators who are also teaching OBE to learn from one another, gain capacity building, support, and find better ways of implementing OBE. Out of the eighteen educators, eleven educators in my sample do work together and have clusters where they meet once a year at the beginning of the first term, but that is not enough. According to the OBE policy document (1997), they are supposed to meet during all four terms. Those who do not meet argue that they are overloaded at work and that they do not have the chance to do so.

According to the teachers, their timetable at school does not allow time to go out to cluster meetings and to choose the phase organizer. Another problem cited by them is that they are

not teaching outcomes based education classes only (that is, grades 8 and 9). They also teach grades 10, 11 and 12.

Anderson (1997:246) argues that people may not comply with policies because of lack of capacity to act accordingly. In this case, the environment of the school should be changed to suit OBE, (things like a timetable to accommodate the chance to meet and to attend cluster meetings). Ideally, schools should be able to increase their teaching staff so that teachers who implement OBE policy should not have to teach the other classes which are not doing OBE (that is grade10 to grade 12). Pressman and Wildavsky (1975:122) argue that if the participants have other things to do instead of concentrating on implementing the new policy that can cause delay and cause difficulties during the implementation process. Ideally the educators who teach Outcomes Based Education should be able to concentrate only on Outcomes Based Education classes.

5.2.10 Educators and the System of Grouping Learners in the Classroom

The OBE policy emphasizes that learners have to work in groups as to ensure teamwork. Grouping was identified as a need to organize learning programmes in an integrated way, which draws on elements of the different learning areas. Learners are supposed to be grouped according to mixed abilities. The gifted ones are supposed to mix with the less gifted ones to support each other. The educators interviewed in the four focus school all stated that it was not explained how and why they must do this. All of them have grouped the learners differently. For instance, five educators grouped them in groups of four/eight randomly. Three educators grouped them according to their abilities. They make sure that weaker learners are grouped together with stronger learners in groups of five pupils each. Six educators say that they do not group the learners at all because they do not know the criteria of grouping the learners. Four educators say the learners simply choose by themselves where to sit as a group of six learners.

Table 6: Educators and the System of Grouping Learners in the Classroom

Educators	Grouping
5	Randomly group learners into group of 4-8.
3	Group learners based on mixed abilities
6	Do not group learners at all
4	Let the learners choose the group

The table above shows that the teachers do not understand the purpose of grouping the learners. Only three educators understood why and how to group learners according to ability. The objectives of grouping were not made clear to them and misinformation like this can result in the failure of the policy. Lipsky (1980:40) says "the ambiguity and unclarity of goals and the unavailability of appropriate performance measures in street-level bureaucrats is of fundamental importance, not only to worker's job experience, but also to managers' ability to exercise control over policy". Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:XV) argue that the goals and the purpose of implementation are important, because they act as a tool to show the success and failure of implementation.

5.2.11 Confidence in teaching Outcomes Based Education.

The final finding of the Data Analysis pertains to the respective confidence of teachers in teaching OBE. Fourteen educators of the focus of study do not feel confident in teaching Outcomes Based Education. Only one educator feels confident, and three feel neutral.

Table 7: Confidence in Teaching Outcomes Based Education. (OBE)

Confidence in teaching OBE	Not confident	Neutral
1 Educator	14 Educators	3 Educators

This shows that most teachers in the focus study are not confident of what they are doing. This lack of confidence may be caused by the fact that most educators are not clear of what is needed, nor of what OBE policy entails, or because they do not have adequate facilities and resources. Hanekom (1987:54) states that too little information, and insufficient

resources, can a cause lack of confidence. Based on the findings presented earlier, it is not difficult to understand and empathize with these teachers.

6   Conclusion

6.1 Policy Implementation and Outcomes Based Education

As discussed earlier, policy implementation is a stage in the policy process where the policy is put into action. Parsons (1995:98) argues that if there are problems during the implementation of policy, it is modified as a way of avoiding or dealing with those problems. Hence, sometimes implementation can be regarded as policy making. Lindblom (1980:68) also confirms that administrators are sometimes compelled to join in the policy making process because of the conditions in the environment where they are supposed to carry out the policy. In schools, the teachers are the administrators of the OBE policy. Teachers 'make' policy when they encounter problems and use their discretion in implementing the policy of OBE, albeit unofficial policy.

One can say implementation may be regarded as simple, but practice has proved that it is constrained by a number of factors such as the environment, inadequate resources, information, and so on. That is why Pressman and Wildavsky (1973:XV) view implementation as a process of interaction between setting of goals and actions geared to achieve them. They go on to say that implementation is the ability to forge subsequent links in the casual chain so as to obtain the desired results (Wildavsky (973:XV).

Parsons (1995:469) says, "Policies, regulations, laws and procedures contain an interpretative element." Policies do not accommodate the specific environment, they are couched in more general terms. This then demands that teachers make sense of the policies and find ways to achieve objectives. This interpretation can lead to differences between the actual policy and the one that is created by the teacher. In addition, it is crucial that the teacher understands the policy properly, otherwise their interpretation could be incorrect and policy thus wrongly implemented.

According to Jansen, Jonathan and Sayed (2001), the implementation process of OBE was formerly implemented in Australia in the early 1990's. They also state that successful OBE policy implementation was accelerated by computer-based technologies. They argue that

educators at schools with adequate technological resources fared better than those with less. Computers alter teaching and redistribute power and management in the classroom (Jansen, *et al*, 2001:219). Jansen *et al* showed that OBE implementation is an advanced education policy approach. One of the problems they were experiencing in Australia was that there were too few computers for students. Jansen *et al* (2002:219) cited an example where a teacher only had five computers in a class of twenty-eight learners. This meant that only some learners could work with computers, others had to use books or other resources while still having to achieve the same learning outcome. This is ironic when compared to South Africa, where most schools don't even have five computers.

Seemingly, successful policy implementation depends on the educator and his or her ability or technical expertise. This is a challenge for the educator in South Africa where huge knowledge and skills gaps exist in OBE. This system of teaching concentrates on the outcomes that are supposed to be achieved. In the implementation of OBE, the teachers have to use their discretion in order for implementation to be successful. Given the starkly limited resources of most schools, especially with regard to technological resources such as computers, the pressure on educators to find alternative ways of reaching the same learning outcomes is high.

These types of realities, argues Lipsky (1980:15), stress the need for discretion because the accepted definitions of their tasks call for sensitive observation and judgment. The teachers, as street-level bureaucrats, are forced to exercise their discretion for the sake of success and to avoid being proved incompetent and inefficient by their management.

The role of implementers is of utmost importance in the implementation stage, because they influence the success or failure of a policy. Teachers spend about 40 hours a week with learners during the delivery of government's service in the context of education.

Teachers have classes of between thirty-five and seventy-two learners in my focus schools. These teachers exercise substantial discretion in their jobs, because they deal with a number of learners who have a variety of capabilities and limitations. Moreover, they deal with big

numbers per classroom, and limited technological resources. The challenge for successful policy implementation is thus eminent.

Despite all their problems with implementing OBE, the teachers all adapted and found ways to cope with the implementation of OBE, which enables them to continue with the OBE progamme. For instance, all the teachers of the focus schools said they guide learners by asking questions to initiate the subject matter, since the Outcomes Based Education policy claims that the learners have to initiate the activities to stimulate thinking. Five educators claim that they try to go to the richer schools to get relevant materials, like borrowing pamphlets and making some photocopies of activities in the nearest libraries, which the school pays for. Eleven educators claim that they have changed the seating arrangements for learners to sit in groups, which the OBE policy document stated, and which they have clarified Outcomes Based Education terms for themselves. For instance, the term *specific outcome* (S.O.) teachers interpret as meaning objectives of that particular lesson, *activities* means class work, and *projects* means something that the educator has designed as homework.

In Fundokuhle High School, a teacher with eighty learners in class was able to convince the school to reduce the number to forty instead. This means more classes but with fewer learners. In addition, they have changed the style of teaching. The educator does not stand in front of the learners and teach the subject matter as they did before, but organizes activities, which the learners must execute. This shows that the teachers have to use their own discretion, which can be quite a daunting task.

However, because of discretion, educators are in a position to delay the implementation of policies, or to only partially implement them, or even cause disruption in the way the policy is implemented. Generally, policies allows for the exercise of discretion by street-level bureaucrats. This exercise of discretion is necessary, since they work in different environments and are faced with different individual cases that have to be dealt with.

The conditions of work of the street-level bureaucrats, such as teachers, may necessitate the regular exercise of discretion in trying to cope with their working situations. This is what

is happening to the educators of the focus study. If these teachers followed rules rigidly in providing Outcomes Based Education there would be more delays, which could show them to be inefficient and unresponsive. The educators are forced to use their own discretion for the sake of progress towards Outcomes Based Education. Lipsky (1980:3) argues that street- level bureaucrats have a lot of work to do. They are the engines of the whole implementation process.

However, there is a confusion of goals that teachers have to deal with in their teaching of Outcomes Based Education. In this position, educators exercise their discretion in deciding what actually matters in implementing outcomes based education. In most cases the achievement of goals through meaningful learning is what matters most to the educators. The educators at this stage are implementing a policy without meaning to them. This can have an impact on their confidence in teaching outcomes based education. It seems as if most educators have made a few artificial changes to their traditional teaching approaches, as opposed to making any real progress in implementing OBE. This is not purposely so, but is partly due to a real lack of understanding of OBE, capacity and support available from school management.

In the focus schools, fourteen educators out of eighteen do not have the OBE policy document. It is important for all teachers to have a copy of the OBE policy document, because it gives all the guidelines on how to implement outcomes based education. It defines the new terms like Phase Organiser, Specific Outcomes, Indicators, and so on. It shows the structure of the new syllabus, and how to prepare a lesson plan. All learning areas are listed, with their respective outcomes, in order to implement OBE. The teachers have to use their own discretion, because they do not have guidelines on how to implement OBE.

Despite all the problems, ten out of the eighteen educators felt that OBE could be a success if the Department of Education could organize more workshops, providing better facilitators, and better information. They also claim that the OBE policy would need to be reworked in such a way that it suits historically disadvantaged schools, or that the

Department makes sure that there are enough resources and materials available for carrying out OBE in such schools. Seemingly these suggestions show a positive attitude to OBE.

There were negative views from three educators, who have lost hope that OBE can produce any good results. They claim that OBE is confusing, and that it should be stopped so that the traditional way of teaching can resume. They also claim that OBE is not good for secondary school level. They suggest that it should be implemented at primary school. They feel that it is not appropriate at high school level.

In introducing new policy, the goals should be stated clearly to those who are going to implement it so as to ensure that those responsible for implementing the policy understand it. More training is also needed to build confidence, competency, and to provide more clarity about the new policy. If implementers are uncertain about what and how to implement policies, no (or incorrect) implementation may take place.

Policies may be stated simply and also supported by the majority of the public, but that does not necessarily mean that those policies automatically become a success when they are implemented. A combination of many factors determines the failure or success of implementation. Anderson (1997:214) sums this up well when he says that, "implementation is neither a routine nor highly predictable process". It means that one cannot predict how policy implementation will run.

When asked whether this new policy is an appropriate approach for teaching grades 8 and 9, fifteen teachers out of the eighteen believe that OBE is a good and appropriate policy in principle, since it encourages independent thinking with the learners. They argue that a child-centred education is good for a child to develop mentally. The only thing they dislike is that they do not have enough material and resources to implement it properly. Moreover, they argue that the environment at their schools is not yet conducive to OBE implementation. Hanekom (1987:54) argues that unsuitable institutions or inadequate control measures and shortage of resources make the implementation of policies extremely hard.

Anderson (1997:246) argues that people may not comply with policies because of a lack of capacity to act accordingly. If the implementers are not sure about how and what to implement, no implementation may take place.

Eight educators felt that OBE will not succeed. They claim that OBE is too child-centred, and that children do not take any initiative. The problem is that most learners cannot express themselves in English, which is the medium of instruction in South Africa. They also claim that OBE is not compatible with the existing syllabus. The syllabus they have does not accommodate OBE principles. They argue that OBE requires that the children should lead or initiate discussions in order to stimulate thinking, but their learners do not want to do that, they expect the teacher to deliver the lesson since that is what they are used to. However, one must keep in mind that it will take time and effort encouraging the learners to get used to a new style of teaching. This is only natural. As Levitt (1980: 204) argues some policies are bound by their nature to take time to produce observable results.

Perhaps one could conclude that the new OBE policy is good in principle, but the problem is that there are no suitable facilities for implementing it now. Maybe it is not yet the right time. Instead, there needs to be more and proper preparation for the introduction of this new policy at different schools.

Spady *et al* (cited in Hiralaal, 2000:22) cited the following districts in the United States where OBE has been successfully implemented and has contributed to substantial increases in pass rates: Johnson City, New York, Central Schools, Glendale, Arizona, Union High School District, Township High School District 214, and Arlington Heights, Illinios. The United States prepared for five years before introducing OBE in schools. Spady (cited in Hiralaal, 2000:22) also stated that OBE failed in other districts of United States, like in Kentucky. Here, the failure rate increased after the introduction of OBE. The reason for this was that students had been expected with OBE to think for themselves and to focus on true learning and academic scholarship. Thus adaptation is a real issue, since OBE has specified sets of outcomes to be achieved in the different learning areas.

Moreover, these outcomes are much broader than the traditional subjects specialized educators are accustomed to. OBE has elements of African culture and traditions to be reflected in the different learning areas of the compulsory phases of schooling. It means OBE tries to revive African culture and traditions, which is a good thing for the children.

6.2 Government support

The educators claim that the government is supposed to monitor OBE implementation in schools in order to see what needs to be done to make the implementation possible. They suggested that learners should have their own workshops, where the meaning and importance of OBE can be discussed and explained.

Seemingly, the Department of Education is not providing enough workshops and support to schools in relation to OBE. The educators in the focus study claim that more regular contact between the subject advisors and teachers could have positive effects in improving the teacher's capacity in their learning areas or subjects. One of the teachers in Sibanesihle High School also claimed that the lack of parental support impacts negatively on the performance of learners at school .The educators felt that the parents and other members of the families need to reinforce what is being done at school, and should help with whatever difficulties learners experience. OBE has introduced subjects like arts and culture that deals with the culture of learners, and life orientation, which deals with life skills. But this also emphasizes the problems of implementing policy in historically disadvantaged schools. Many parents are illiterate, and sometimes do not have time or expertise to help their children with their schoolwork.

When asked whether the educators had any advice for the Department of Education, one educator at St. Joseph's High School argued that OBE should compliment traditional teaching and not replace it, because it is not the right time to do away with the traditional way totally. Another educator at St Joseph High School said that the workshops should be better prepared; and that the facilitators should be better informed about OBE. Another educator at Trust Feed High School said the school management should be the first to receive training so that they, in turn, can support their teachers. One educator at

Fundokuhle High School said that the Department must do away with OBE, because it creates a lot of confusion to educators, to such an extent that many educators want to leave the education field. Fourteen teachers of the focus study would not respond to the question on what advice they had for the Department of Education some felt that would be futile because the government does not consult them about anything that is happening around them.

The study can safely conclude that most of the educators feel demoralized about OBE, to such an extent that they do not even want to talk about it at length.

Christie (1999:117) regards this as poor planning and over-hasty introduction of the new curriculum into schools, with teachers being insufficiently prepared for outcomes based pedagogy and continuous assessment.

This study has shown that implementing OBE policy in previously disadvantaged schools is not a simple matter. All four of the focus schools and the educators felt ill prepared. These sorts of shortcomings can result in not achieving the policy's objectives. Too much discretion can also result in substantial differences in the implementation of OBE policy. In implementing policies, street-level bureaucrats, (teachers in this context), 'make' policy in the process of trying to cope with the problems of implementation.

It has become clear that the implementation of the policy of OBE in historically disadvantaged schools is, to date, not successful, considering the teacher's self admitted lack of capacity, insufficient resources, ambiguity of goals and lack of support and relevant teaching material. But the teachers in the focus study are trying, by all means, to implement OBE, although they are not sure of what they are doing, and even lack the confidence or support of school management.

The study wishes to conclude that despite the difficulties, OBE remains in principle a good education policy, since it can go a long way towards addressing the inequalities of the past. However, precisely because of our past, previously disadvantaged schools still experience

an environment of inequality, and impoverishment. And as long as this remains, OBE will remain a difficult policy to implement.

APPENDIX ONE

Questionnaire

A Survey of Grade 8 & 9 Teachers' Views on Implementing OBE

- This questionnaire is confidential. The data will be used for research purposes only, and neither your name, nor the name of your school will be divulged.

- In the Questionnaire you will find different types of questions. Please follow the instructions carefully for type of question.

- This questionnaire should take about 30 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your time and effort in completing the questionnaire.

May God bless you

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Section A: Background Information

1. What is your gender?

   ☐ Male

   ☐ Female

2. How many years of full-time teaching experience do you have?

Years	Months

3. How many years of experience do you have in teaching grade 8 or 9 classes?

Years	Months

4. Number of pupils in your class. ☐

5. Average attendance of pupils in your classroom (approximate number usually present) ☐

6. What is your official position at school? You can tick more than one.

Deputy Principal		Assistant Teacher	
Acting Deputy Principal		Head of Department	
Principal		Acting Head of Department	
Acting Principal		Other (specify)	

Section B: Classroom Resource Profile

Place a tick in the appropriate column applicable to the resources available in the classroom.

ITEM	**YES**	**NO**
Chalkboard available		
Chair for the teacher		
Table for the teacher		
Lockable cupboard		
Adequate roofing		
Adequate ventilation		
Adequate lighting		
Wall painted and well maintained		
Windows available and in a reasonable state of repair		
Pupils have adequate seating places		
Charts displayed in the classroom		
A notice board to display pupil's work		
Space apart from the desks		

Section C: Materials

1.   Do you have enough material for implementing OBE?

Yes	No

1.1   If yes, what materials do you have?

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1.2   If no, what material do you need?

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2.   Do you have the OBE policy document?

Yes	No

2.1   If yes, how does it help you?

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2.2   If no, what is the problem with it?

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2.3   What alternative material do you have as a support for implementing OBE?

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Section D: OBE: In-Service Training Courses

1. Did you receive any workshop training for OBE?

Yes	No

2. What did you find most valuable about the course and why?

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3. Are there any suggestions you would like to make to future courses?

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4. Did you manage to implement what you have gained in the workshop?

Yes	No

4.1 If no, what is the problem?

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5. What other support, if any, have you received?
    (Tick The Appropriate Answer)

	Support from within the school
	Support from the Principal
	Support from the Head of Department
	Support from other teachers of Grade 8 & 9
	Support from the Subject Advisor
	Support from OBE facilitators

6.   In what areas would you value more in-service training in OBE? (Please tick from areas below).

☐	Classroom organization and discipline
☐	Lesson planning and preparation
☐	Demonstration lessons on implementing OBE in a large class
☐	Assessing pupils more easily
☐	Facilitating pupils' group work
☐	Developing curriculum materials

Please specify if there is other ....

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Section E: Working As A Team

1.   Do the grade 8/9 teachers in your school work as a team?

Yes	No

1.1   If yes, how often do you meet and what do you do as a team?

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1.2   If no, explain briefly what prevents you from working as a team?

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2. Which of the following statements best describe how you feel about teaching in relation to OBE?

Use the following scale:

Strongly agree	Agree	No Particular view	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4	5

Please tick the appropriate column

	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident to teach OBE					
I am competent in the teaching of OBE					
OBE is an appropriate approach for teaching grade 8/9 children					

Section F: Group Work

1. Are pupils in your class arranged for group work?

Yes	No

If yes, specify it

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2. Do you have special systems of grouping the children?

Yes	No

If yes, specify it

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3. How do the pupils do the work?

Individually	As a group

4.   What changes have you made in your teachings to accommodate the introduction of OBE?

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5.   Is there any success/achievement with regard to an OBE approach in your classroom?

Yes	No

6.   If no, what is the problem?

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Section G: Problems Facing Teachers

Use the following scale to give your opinion about problems facing teachers of grade 8/9. Place tick.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	2	3	4

	1	2	3	4
1. Uncertainty of what OBE is in practice				
2. Little time to assimilate/understand concepts of OBE before implementation				
3. Lack of feedback about my performance as a teacher				
4. No follow-up assistance given in school after the OBE course				
5. There is no clear scheme of work for grade 8/9				
6. Assessment recording is time-consuming				
7. Large number of pupils in class				
8. Not enough text books for all pupils				
9. Inability to make copies of teaching material e.g. worksheets, activities				
10. No free time during school hours for preparing lessons				
11. Management in school does not have the capacity to steer OBE				
12. Poor pupil discipline				
13. District officers not supportive of OBE				
14. Lack of home support for pupils				

If you have one important piece of advice for the Department of Education, what can you say?

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