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**UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
ASSESSMENT IN OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION BY
GRADE SEVEN EDUCATORS IN THABONG PRIMARY
SCHOOLS IN THE FREE STATE GOLDFIELDS**

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By

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*Submitted in accordance with the requirements
for the degree Magister Educationis
in the Faculty of Education at
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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declares that: '*Understanding and Implementation of Assessment in Outcomes-Based Education by Grade Seven Educators in Thabong Primary Schools in the Free State Goldfields*', is my own work, and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged. I did not previously submit this thesis for a degree purpose at any university.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late cousin, Joyce Mogorosi. You are still my inspiration.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION.

During the late 1990s the people of South Africa were experiencing a period of widespread concern over the implementation of the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) curriculum. For its success, it has also become clear that the educator is the key to ultimate educational changes to OBE, hence the interest in doing this study. The government's decision to implement a curriculum based on the tenets of OBE, would, therefore, only be successful if educators were adequately prepared for this challenge (Department of Education, 1997b: 8).

According to a report by Rensburg (2000:14) in the *Sowetan*, the majority of South African educators are in need of more information on the implementation of OBE, and specifically, its assessment procedures. Educators seem to be familiar with only traditional methods of assessment and still use these methods. Educators prepare learners for the future, and thus emphasis should be more on ongoing assessment as a way to improve teaching and learning (Frith & McIntosh, 1984:5).

According to Malan (1997:1), OBE, which is embedded in Curriculum 2005, brings a shift from teaching and learning, where the educator plays the major role to teaching and learning, where primary focus is on the learner at the centre of all activities. It is thus evident that the implementation of OBE requires different methods of assessment. Vyver (1998:12) further suggests that assessment is a

simple matter of making clear what teaching should accomplish and adjusting teaching methods and assessment to achieve the proposed aims.

Practically, assessment involves a lot of work, as educators have to utilize each method of assessment. All assessment methods are vital for OBE to be a success, and need to be implemented cautiously (Schwartz & Caverner 1994:326). Educators need, therefore, to understand each method thoroughly in order to implement assessment as expected.

The fact that educators seem not prepared for OBE assessment could be attributed to incorrect implementation and limited training of educators. This study focuses, therefore, on the very issue of educators understanding of:

- assessment in OBE, and also
- its implementation.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

Uncertainty seems to prevail regarding the educators' understanding of OBE assessment and the implementation procedures thereof. There is also a great deal of stress amongst the educators, which can ultimately lead to work dissatisfaction and loss of interest in their profession. These professionals are confronted with a various forms of struggle with regard to implementation of assessment in OBE in which they cannot successfully carry out. These professionals receive limited support in order to deal with these kinds of stresses at their work place.

There is not enough material to improve assessment in OBE. Documents that are needed for record purposes, books, that is, textbooks are not explicit and materials for portfolios are not sufficient. Educators struggle to use the provided materials as

well as how to administer them. Procedures that need to be followed in order to make the implementation of assessment a success, are complicated, for example each method of assessment is unique and need different forms to be filled in by all parties namely educators, learners and sometimes parents. Educators usually find it difficult to successfully carry out most of these assessment methods. Training on implementation of assessment, provided by the department was not sufficient. Trainers on the procedures were not experts, in this field. These factors led to the problematic situation of inappropriate implementation of assessment in OBE.

The following questions will help to answer as to whether the educators understand assessment in OBE and its implementation:

- do educators understand different assessment methods of OBE?
- do educators know how assessment methods should be carried out?
- what are the implementation problems of assessment encountered by educators in OBE as far as materials, procedures and training is concerned?

③ 1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES. *Purpose*

✓ OBE contrasts with the past education system where only two assessment methods were used, namely, formative and summative assessment. OBE uses other forms of assessment too. These are, namely:

- continuous assessment, ✓
- criteria assessment,
- peer assessment,
- self-assessment,
- competency assessment, and
- group assessment.

The objective of this study can be summarized as follows:

- to establish whether educators understand different assessment methods of OBE;
- to evaluate if educators know how each assessment method should be carried out; and
- to identify the implementation problems of assessment encountered by educators in OBE.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS.

For the purpose of this study, the masculine pronouns he, him and his used do not denote sex bias, but are used for convenience. The terms *children* and *learners* are used interchangeably, as well as *educators* and *teachers*.

The following concepts have been used throughout the study. For the purpose of this study, they will be defined as follows:

1.4.1 Outcomes-based education.

OBE is based on the simple principle that decisions about curriculum and instructions should be driven by the outcomes which educators would like learners to display at the end of their educational experience. In 1997, a new people centred education and training system was introduced in South Africa. OBE aims at equipping all learners with the knowledge, competencies and orientations needed for success after they leaving school or completing their training. Its guiding principle is that of developing a thinking competent future citizen (Department of Education, 1997c: 1).

De Lange & Reddy (1998:4) argue that the learner approach in South Africa emphasises the outcomes of teaching and learning. It is a shift from a system that has been content based to one that is based on achieving outcomes.

1.4.2 Assessment.

According to Broadfoot et al. (1998:178), assessment is the act of measuring what learners have learned. Salvia & Ysseldyk (1999:74) further suggest that assessment is the process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions about learners and measuring what learners have learned in an educational activity. Assessment is the measurement of evidence against set criteria. Kotze (1999:19) emphasizes that assessment is a vital element in education. It is only through assessment that the educator can find out if successful learning has taken place.

1.4.3 Failure.

Failure implies the inability to achieve what is supposed to be achieved as far as assessment measures are concerned. It means non-performance or a lack of success (Tulloch, 1990:531).

1.4.4 Thabong.

Thabong is a black township, forming part of the city of Welkom, in the Free State Goldfields.

1.5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

As a full time educator the researcher undertook this study on part time basis. Most of the work and interviews were done after hours. Primary source materials were gathered and mostly had to be photocopied which proved to be expensive as most material had to be gathered all over different like places district offices, non-governmental organizations and from several learning facilitators. This was a limitation on the side of the researcher in order to gather more material than intended to. There was also time constraints which the researcher had to overcome.

Due to the fact that the research had to economize on the limited resources, namely questionnaires and time to complete the exactly has unpacked having on the particular sample for study. Though a limited had to be utilized for purpose of this study.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

In order to gather relevant information on the topic, qualitative research was conducted. This study will be done by means of personal, in-depth interviews with educators in primary schools in grade 7. The interview will continue until saturation has been reached. According to Mouton & Marian (1988:87), theoretical saturation means when the researcher discovers no new or negative responses is collected during the interview, only common response is given

Qualitative research is the study of individuals in their natural setting to observe the way in which they attribute meaning in social situations (Landman 1988: 77). Qualitative research was conducted in this regard because of the in-depth verbal description of phenomena. This was to capture the behavior that occurs in natural setting from the participants' perspective.

1.6.1 Literature study.

A literature study of relevant primary and secondary sources consisting of books newspapers, research projects and journals was done to gather as much background on the problems faced with implementation of assessment in OBE.

1.6.2 Interviews.

The researcher used interviews in order to collect relevant qualitative data. Four primary schools in Thabong were utilized for this.

1.7 THE COURSE OF STUDY.

Chapter 1: Introductory Orientation.

This chapter consists of an introduction to the study, statement of the problem, aim and objectives, definitions of terms, research methodology, demarcation of study and course of study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review (Assessment in Outcomes-Based Education: Understanding and Implementation).

This chapter is devoted to the review of literature. The focus thereof is assessment methods utilized in Outcomes-Based Education.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology.

This chapter deals with research design, data collection methods and procedures that were followed during the time of the study.

Chapter 4: Presentation of the Findings.

This chapter use is made of tables and explanations to present the data, as provided by the study participants. The responses, which were obtained through the interviews with the respondents, are presented.

Chapter 5: Interpretation of the Findings.

In this chapter, the findings are interpreted in order to facilitate a process of getting to conclusion, as well as recommendations with regard to assessment, as seen by the experiences and knowledge of the study participants (namely, Grade 7 educators in Thabong schools).

1.8. SUMMARY.

Chapter 1 explains how the study was conducted. It highlights the problems that need to be focussed on through out this study, who is included or excluded, and finally, how and where the study was conducted. Also included in the chapter are statement of the problem, aims and objectives, definition of terms, research methodology, limitations of the study and lastly the division of the whole study are indicated.

CHAPTER TWO

ASSESSMENT IN OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION: UNDERSTANDING AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION.

In the aftermath of the apartheid years, the South African education system is being reformed and the curriculum transformed. One reason for doing so is that the old curriculum - apart from being the product of a universally discredited past - was also inappropriate for a developing economy in the 21st century. The introduction of OBE in South Africa heralds an era of meaningful teaching. OBE strives to take out the last remains of apartheid education, and has a vision of empowering citizens of South Africa for the future (Steyn, 1998:203).

In OBE, learners work according to their ability and achieve outcomes at their own rates. Learners are not compared with others, they are treated as individuals and failing has been done away with. Learners do not proceed to the next task until an outcome has been achieved. In the previous system, tests were set in such a way that a certain percentage of learners got distinctions, most were average and a few failed. At the end of the final year of schooling, the decision whether a learner should pass or fail depended on one examination. Furthermore, it seems as though learners were judged in terms of passing and failing (Olivier, 1997:9). In OBE, all outcomes have to be achieved by all learners, if not achieved, they are given a chance to go through a lesson again.

This chapter aims at presenting information on the methods of assessment in OBE, and their implementation procedures.

2.2 ASSESSMENT.

According to Olivier (1997:5), assessment is the process of identifying and gathering information about a learner's achievement as measured against clear outcomes. Assessment involves generating and collecting evidence of achievement during the course of activities. This evidence is then measured against set criteria. According to Rowntree (1997:108), assessment is a way of finding out what a person knows, understands and thinks, and what he or she can do. It should not focus on rules and facts. Focus should rather be on critical thinking, creativity, problem solving, skills, values and attitude. All educators should constantly look for ways to improve the assessment of their learners in order to make learning more meaningful.

2.3 ASSESSMENT IN OBE.

In the past, only assessment in content was emphasized. With OBE, skills, knowledge and the application of content in a real situation and attitudes and values of learners, are assessed too (Oosterhof, 1996:151).

OBE-learner-centered assessment supports the learning and instruction programmes of the school. It provides educators with continuous and constructive information that specifies how learners are developing. It also assists facilitators in drawing up learning programmes tailored to each learner's needs (Brady, 1997:3). Learners are thus treated as entities, not as a group. Educators should, therefore, be

aware of levels of specific outcomes, that is, what each learner has achieved in order to be able to be assessed. As assessment plays a vital role in the success of OBE, educators should increase their knowledge of assessment methods. Only then would they be able to integrate assessment into teaching (Valentia, 1990:401).

OBE requires assessment to be authentic, based on real-life situations, and learners have to be able to demonstrate clearly defined outcomes. It is argued that all learners will succeed, but at different rates.

According to Horne & Brown (1997:42), for assessment to be successfully implemented, it should be manageable. Any assessment procedure should make teaching and learning more effective. In OBE, emphasis is placed on building the confidence of learners. Educators should give positive feedback and encourage and support learners verbally. Assessment should empower learners with comments that include suggestions, encouragement and advice (Manzano, 1997:135). OBE is continuous in nature. This implies being constantly aware of how learners are developing and keeping records of their development (Towers, 1994:19).

According to Wiggins (1993:7), educators must be diagnostic in their approach to assessment. This implies that they should find out whether learning is taking place, identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses and their emerging needs and interests. Diagnosis by educators may lead to remedial action if all is not well. Assessment can provide evidence of the effects and effectiveness of a learning programme.

2.4 CRITERIA, PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES OF OBE ASSESSMENT.

Assessment criteria are statements of the set of evidence that educators need to look for in order to decide whether specific outcomes or aspects have been achieved. The criteria indicate in broad terms, the observable process and product of learning, which serves as culminating demonstrations of the learner's achievement (Seiborger, 1998:120). The assessment criteria are broadly stated and do not provide details of exactly what and how much learning marks an acceptable level of achievement.

According to the Department of Education (1997a:20), there are fundamental principles in OBE assessment. Firstly, assessment should improve the relevance of education. Secondly, assessment should be used to refine the quality of education. In the third instance, assessment should be used to develop national standardization. Fourthly, various components of assessment should be identified continuously with particular skills being assessed in the work place. Finally, assessment should be valid, reliable, flexible and always fair.

Without reliable and valid assessment tools, it will be not be feasible to ascertain whether learners are developing necessary desired recommended competencies. Educators must decide which assessment strategies they must employ. In OBE, there are different kinds of strategies that can be followed in order to assess accurately. According to Wiggins (1993:44), the educator can assess through oral presentation or debate; assess understanding through role-play; assess the expressive or communicative through dance, mimic, rap, verse and verbal questioning. Written work can be assessed through written reports of problem

solving and investigation; exams and tests that target higher order thinking skills and concept processes. Technological expressions can be assessed through graphical communication tables, maps, diagrams and posters.

6.2.5 METHODS OF ASSESSMENT.

Traditionally, assessment was divided into two categories, namely summative assessment and formative assessment. OBE, however, includes other methods of assessing. In this section, the following OBE assessment methods are discussed: continuous assessment, criterion assessment, peer assessment, self-assessment, competency assessment, summative assessment and performance assessment.

2.5.1 Continuous assessment.

Continuous assessment comprises two types of assessment. Firstly, diagnostic assessment, whereby the educator diagnoses the problem. Secondly, achievement basic assessment, which includes examinations, tests projects, assignments and observation.

The main reason for continuous assessment is to give immediate feedback. In continuous assessment a judgement must be made and immediate action taken (Resnick, 1991:93). It involves teachers eliciting clues or observing and interpreting learners' actions as a reflection of their development. By acting immediately when the learners do not understand, the educators can help immediately. Teaching in this way requires confidence, as well as good subject knowledge (Glover, 1999:117). In the process, the educator is able to identify problems or gaps in the teaching.

The educator must be able to recognize the part of divergence as it happens. This is the point where a learner is about to go down a path that may eventually lead to an internalized misconception. At the point of divergence the teacher must be able to deflect the learners onto a path that will lead to a correctly understood concept (Department of Education, 1998a:30). Continuous assessment leads forward, it leads to refocusing the pupil's attention. Assessment helps the learner with the process of going rather than where he is actually going. It is better to pay attention to and interrogate what a learner is actually doing, form a judgement about the thinking the learner manifests, and then act in a way calculated to elicit thinking that seems to be moving in an appropriate direction.

We are sure to face problems when introducing the dynamic dimensions of continuous assessment. However, such problems are due to teachers lacking confidence and poor subject knowledge. A confident teacher is able to devolve power without causing authority. Unfortunately, without devolving power to the learners, dynamic assessment has no meaning and is not possible. To implement OBE properly, continuous assessment has to be carried out correctly (O'Neil, 1997:123).

2.5.2 Criterion assessment.

The teacher has to consider what learning is linked to when assessing. Traditionally, assessment in school has tended to be norm-reflective, but with OBE, the emphasis will be on criticism. In OBE educator gives an "A" to all the learners who have met the criteria, regardless of how bad or well they have done (Oosterhof, 1996:134).

According to the Department of Education (1997b:33), this form of assessment only needs to discriminate between those who have achieved mastery and those who have not. The results do not tell the assessor about the specific performance of the learner. The educator should check if the criteria they are aiming at can be achieved. This kind of assessment is impossible without clearly defined objectives or outcomes. This can be done at any time during the process of teaching and learning.

2.5.3 Peer and self-assessment.

Learners may do self-assessment. They are encouraged to reflect on their own learning by assessing themselves, as well as others. This can take place at any time. Methods used include checklists and observation sheets, which can be designed by learners or educators (Rowntree, 1997:12). During self-assessment, learners should be given a checklist of performance indicators. Educators should assist learners to develop the skill of self-assessment. Peer assessment could be done in pairs, that is, two learners assessing each other, or within groups. Educators must always facilitate the process of assessment (Oosterhof, 1996:140).

2.5.4 Competency based assessment.

Under encouragement from the commonwealth government, almost all the professions have developed competency-based standards and are currently developing competency based assessment (Gonczi, 1994:27). Through OBE, the South African government is also implementing competency-based assessment.

Wolf (1996:13) believes that competency cannot be observed directly. However, according to Gonczi (1994:27), assessment of competency is possible if it is done

in an integrated manner. This implies that once assessment activities have been decided on, the next step is to decide how candidates' performance will be judged. While it may be possible to use some of the traditional methods, such as the awarding of marks and grades, attempts must be made to judge holistic integrated performance against qualitative standards. A cumbersome and subjective assessment process has the potential to frustrate and halt a competency-based training program. Competency-based training is more about the assessment of the learner against pre-defined standards than it is about the mechanism of learning unit standards by themselves. We still have to develop an internal comprehensive framework process that can be used to train and assess our learners. The primary goal of any competency based assessment activity in OBE is the consistent delivery of competent learners for workplaces (Blaine et al., 1996:273).

2.5.5 Summative assessment.

Summative assessment is done at the end of each section to establish if the learners can move on to the next part of the work. It is not sufficient to have assessment only at the end of a course, because then the assessment does not feed back into learning. OBE takes into consideration continuous assessment, as well as formative assessment and summative assessment (Brown, 1996:42).

According to Blaine et al. (1996:272), although summative assessment has been badly implemented in the past, with most of the emphasis on passing or failing and little on learning and understanding, it nevertheless has very important purposes. It is a useful form of evaluation. It provides evidence of the effects and effectiveness of the teaching and curriculum. Summative assessment enables the facilitators to see whether learners have achieved the outcomes that were set for the course as a

whole. It is also useful in enabling facilitators to see where they need to improve their teaching, and it also indicates to learners whether they have achieved these outcomes.

Summative assessment is important for putting learners in the appropriate grades. However, grading should not be seen merely as a product of summative assessment, but as a form of feedback that can assist the learner in his or her learning. Therefore, summative assessment should also be seen as a form of guidance, to help learners make more relevant and appropriate decisions (Department of Education, 1998a: 27).

2.5.6 Performance assessment.

The current emphasis on teaching thinking in the classroom has been accompanied by the realization that classroom assessment practices should focus more on assessing the thought processes that learners employ. Performance assessment can be used as a means of assessing learners' cognitive functioning. If the educators formulate challenging tasks that engage the learners in thinking, their thought processes could be observed or tracked carefully as they respond to the task (Blaine et al., 1996:255). According to Brown (1996:117), there are two common purposes for using performance assessment in the classroom, namely, to evaluate learners' proficiency in performing complex tasks that have relevance and utility in the world outside of school and to assess learners' thinking skills in various subjects.

Blaine et al. (1996:141) further suggests that performance assessment occur in numerous forms and varieties. Some performance assessment focuses on tasks that

are relatively simple and understandable some on much more complex tasks. Some tasks are short and brief, others are more structural and more time consuming to prepare, administer and score.

The nature of performance assessment is highly diverse and may include observation and evaluation of laboratory experiment, artwork, speaking, writing social interaction and feelings about issues (Flexter & Gestetner, 1993:93). According to Oosterhof (1996:153), the most significant advantage of performance assessment is that it allows evaluation of skills that cannot be assessed by written tests.

2.6 PORTFOLIOS.

Portfolio assessment has made a drastic entry on the 1990s assessment scene. The appeal and potential benefits of portfolios are many, particularly compared to traditional standardized testing (Schwartz & Caverner, 1994:121). The assessment of learners' performance on tasks can provide evidence of learner's accomplishment and thereby serve as a tool to support the constructional process. Portfolio assessment can boost the efficiency of teachers, encouraging them to consider deeply how students are progressing. Portfolios allow learners to reflect on and take responsibility for their own progress, the assessment process and ultimately their own learning. Portfolios can also provide parents and the wider community with credible evidence of learner's achievement (Freedman, 1993:197).

The portfolio is a reflective account of a learner's development as supported by his or her educator. By studying such a folder, educators and parents should be able to

see evidence of growth, but also conditions that support learning, as well as the interaction with classmates (Darling-Hammond, 1995:46).

2.6.1 Writing portfolios.

Both the educator and the learner, to report progress, keep portfolios that are up to date. Portfolios are transportable, and are designed to be of similar value no matter where they are to go (Demamiel & Steve, 1993:28).

Learners' portfolios can include only selected projects and should reflect the learner's development from the beginning to the end of the school year. If learners' portfolios are to serve as assessment tool, then they must include judgement, whether in the form of grades, narrative comments or measures. Portfolios are an opportunity for dialogue with learners (Stiggins, 1994:29). It makes sense to do summative assessment, where learners move from one phase to the other. The school should be able to gauge the learner's level of accomplishment through information in portfolios. According to Demamiel & Steve (1991:173), portfolios are flexible and they are learner-centered. Educators are clearly an important audience for portfolios. They also play a central role in linking portfolios to other audiences like parents, the principal, district and state accountants.

The primary purpose of the portfolios is to assess a learner's achievement and emphasis must be on validity. The quality of portfolios depend heavily, if not entirely, on the validity of its interpretation and use. To be valid, portfolios must assess relevant skills (Tierney et al., 1991:17).

2.6.2 Scoring learners' portfolios.

Scoring a portfolio involves making judgements about the learner's work. Although numerical scores can be used to summarize these judgements, the nature of portfolios favours qualitative rather than numerical scoring. As with numerical scores, it is very important to have consistency within the qualitative observation. The scoring of portfolios, therefore, needs to be reliable.

If two qualified educators arrive independently at the same judgement concerning the learner's achievement, it means there is a certain degree of validity (Bird, 1990:24). Flower (1994:192) further argues that work samples contained in portfolios are not the instructional goals. The samples of work are indicators of whether learners have achieved the aim of a lesson. They should provide the teacher with indicators as to whether learners have learned what they were supposed to learn.

With assessment, generalization is very significant. An educator must be able to generalize beyond her or his personal judgement of the learner's work, and beyond the specific samples of work included in the portfolio. An educator can follow procedures that facilitate consistent observation (Freedman, 1993:31).

2.7 CONCLUSION.

OBE and Curriculum 2005 in South Africa are postulated to be transformational. Curriculum 2005 represents a paradigm shift, that is, a shift from a system of education, which pointed content and rote learning to an educational approach that emphasizes outcomes. The literature review highlights how educators should accomplish assessment in OBE.

The South African government needs to make enough resources available for educators to evolve towards the right direction as far as assessment in OBE is concerned. If educators can undergo thorough training in assessment, it will help to develop their morale and boost their confidence and it will be easy for them to implement assessment successfully.



CHAPTER THREE

6

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION.

Chapter two highlighted the different methods that need to be followed, when implementing OBE assessment. For OBE to be correctly implemented, educators need to clearly understand the implementation procedures of such methods.

This chapter is devoted to how the study was conducted, focussing, therefore, on the research method that was used. The aspects that are included here include research design, data collection methods and data analysis methods.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN.

This study lends itself to a qualitative research approach. Qualitative study is defined as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture. Qualitative research reports the detailed views of respondents and is conducted in a natural setting (Cresswell, 1994:1). In these types of studies, fieldwork is also recommended (Smith, 1988:17). The qualitative approach is, therefore, concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the respondent's perspective. The qualitative researcher is interested in meaning and how people make sense of their life experiences. The process is more important than the outcomes.

For the purpose of this study, the exploratory-descriptive design was deemed most appropriate, as it provides educators with an opportunity to explain their own experiences and problems in the contexts in which they occur. As described by

Bailey (1982:38), exploratory-descriptive research can be used to investigate if educators in schools apply assessment effectively and correctly. In this study, the educators are the respondents, because they are the ones who monitor the assessment process. The idea was to devolve what is happening in schools during assessment and how educators are implementing assessment in OBE.

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS.

An instrument is a tool that is used to collect information from respondents. For the purpose of this study, the researcher constructed an interview schedule for collecting data. According to Patton (1990:278), researchers cannot observe everything. They cannot observe feelings, thoughts, intentions and behavior that took place at some previous point in time. They cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. The purpose of interviewing informants is to allow the researcher to understand the other person's perspective.

3.3.1 Interviews.

The interview guide is a list of questions that are to be explored in the course of the interview. The interview provides topics, which the researcher is free to explore (Patton, 1990:20). According to Marshal et al. (1989:202), the most common characteristic of interviewing is that the respondent uses his or her own words to express his or her own perspective. Interviewing varies in terms of prior structure and the latitude the interviewee has in responding to questions. The main aim of the interview is to find out from the respondents the things that cannot be directly observed by the researcher.

Disadvantages of using interviews in research, that the researcher has to be aware of, include that (Ary et al., 1990:439):

- the process of interviewing and data analysis are time consuming (as questions may evoke long narratives from respondents);
- the researcher may ask questions that are leading (which may mislead a study);
- the interviewee may feel uncomfortable sharing the information the interviewer hopes to explore (leading to less sharing, if not refusal to do so); and finally, that
- there is potential for subjectivity from the interviewee (as they are required to elaborate on how they view, whatever it is that they are responding about).

Ary et al. (1990) and Schemata & Macmillan (1993:390) give a list of reasons that show that interviewing, as a selected method of data collection, could be a plus for a study. These reasons include the following:

- the perspectives and experience of respondents emerge;
- interviewing is a useful, flexible, accessible and adaptable research tool to quickly get large amounts of data;
- responses can be probed, followed, clarified and elaborated to achieve accurate responses;
- interviews result in a much higher response rate than questionnaires; and
- Interviews permit greater depths than other methods of collecting data.

3.4 POPULATION AND SAMPLING. ✓

According to Ary et al. (1990:169), population is a large group about which a generalization is made. Bailey (1982:34) further states that population is all members of any well-defined class of people or objects. For the purpose of this study, the targeted population is grade seven educators in Thabong primary schools in Welkom, in the Free State Goldfields. Convenient sampling was used to draw the sample for this study.

A sample is a small well-chosen group of persons representing a much wider group (Smith, 1988:85). The non-probability type of sampling has been used because it is considered to be the most convenient collection of subjects that are available for the researcher purpose (Huysamen, 1994:44). The non-probability type of sampling is suited for exploratory studies where we are merely interested in obtaining as much unique data on a research question as possible (Grinnel 1988:251). Samples are likely to be knowledgeable and informed about the researchers' investigations (Schumacher & McMillan, 1993:378).

Four respondents were chosen from each of the four different schools in Thabong, for the purpose of this study. All these schools were visited to discuss the proposed study and to negotiate terms of access. Respondents were supposed to be teaching grade seven at the time of the interview. However, since it is usually not possible to deal with the whole of the targeted population, one must identify that portion of the population to which one have access known as the accessible population and it is from this group that the researcher will take the sample for the study. The time and the resources of the researcher influence the nature of the accessible

population and from the accessible population, one select a sample of the population (Ary, 1990:170).

Schummacher (1993:318) further suggest that, if the sample selected is truly representation of the accessible population, then there is little difficulty in making first step in the generalization the process. The general principle is: if a sample has been selected so that it is representation of the accessible population, findings from the sample can be generalized to the population. It must be emphasized, however that size alone will not guarantee accuracy. Representation is the most consideration in selecting a sample. A sample may be large and still contain a baize. The researcher must recognize that sample will not compensate the bias that may be introduced through faulty sampling techniques. Representativeness must remain the prime goal in sample selection (Bailey, 1982:86).

According to Ary et al. (1990:79) if the population under study is homogeneous, a small sample could represent it. For example, if the population under study is first graders, a small sample is needed than when elementary school children constitute the population under study. For the purpose of this study, the population of interest is Grade 7 educators, only a small sample is needed, as not all the educators in the school were involved in OBE.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION.

For effective interviewing, the interviewer needs to control both the content and the process of the interview. The researcher, therefore, stressed to the interviewee the importance of conducting the interview with as few disruptions as possible. The researcher began the interview with an informal conversation that pointed in

the direction of the topic (Rubin and Babies, 1993:129), asking questions such as “*Is OBE interesting?*”

The interview was carried out in a standardized way to minimize bias and to basically obtain the same information from all respondents. The participants were assured of privacy and confidentiality. The more spontaneous the interview procedure, the more likely it was that the researcher would obtain spontaneous, lively and unexpected answers from respondents (Ary et al., 1990:118). Self-consciousness, personal opinion and stereotyping the respondents were avoided at all costs.

Participants were given an opportunity to reflect on the interviews. The researcher thanked them for their participation, time and the ideas they shared.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS.

Rubin & Babies (1993:92) states that analysis of data is the process of manipulating the data for the purpose of answering the research questions. The researcher, therefore, presented the findings in the form of tables. Where no tables was used, an explanation was provided. With regard to problems in OBE assessment, the researcher explored the question whether OBE is being understood and can be correctly carried out. The researcher also investigated as to whether assessment is being correctly recorded in portfolios.

3.7 CONCLUSION.

In this chapter the research design, research instrument, population and sample, data collection and data analysis were discussed. All these assist in describing OBE

assessment by educators, finding out whether they understand assessment and are able to implement it correctly.

Chapter 4, following, focuses on data analysis. It is then followed by the last chapter (i.e., Five), which contains the interpretations of data and recommendations.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION.

This chapter considers the presentation of data collected and the analysis thereof. Tables are used for the presentation and analysis of the findings. An example of the interview schedule used is presented in Appendix A, at the end of this study.

SECTION A.

Section deals with the age, qualifications, work experience and OBE workshop attendance of the respondents. Data in this section is presented in Tables 4.1 to 4.4.

4.2. RESPONDENTS IN THE STUDY.

Table 4.1 presents' information (ages) about the study respondents, who were four Grade 7 educators, from Thabong primary schools, in Welkom.

TABLE 4.1
AGES OF STUDY RESPONDENTS

AGES	N
25 – 30	1
35 – 40	2
45 – 50	0
55 – 60	1
TOTAL	4

Two respondents are between the ages of 35 and 40. One falls between 25 and 30 years of age and a further one is between 55 and 66 years.

Table 4.2, following presents information about educational qualifications of the four study respondents.

TABLE 4.2
QUALIFICATIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS	N
Certificate	1
Diploma	1
Degree	2
Further training	0
TOTAL	4

Two of the respondents are in possession of a degree, while one has a certificate and another a diploma. None of the respondents holds qualifications in further training (Table 4.2).

Table 4.3 presents further background information about the study participants, who were educators. The information here is about the respondents' teaching experiences, in the form of the number of years of teaching.

TABLE 4.3
RESPONDENTS' TEACHING EXPERIENCE

YEARS	N
1-10	1
11-20	2
21-30	1
TOTAL	4

One of the respondents has less than ten years' of teaching experience, two had between 11 to 20 years, while one had more than 20 years of teaching experience. This indicates that the respondents are experienced teachers.

Table 4.4 is about OBE-related training that the study respondents had received, by the time the study was conducted. Information needed was about how many OBE-related workshops each respondent had attended.

TABLE 4.4
NUMBER OF OBE WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

ATTENDANCE	RESPONDENTS
Once	3
Twice	0
Thrice	0
Every Quarter	0
Every Six Months	1
TOTAL	4

Three of the respondents attended a training workshops on OBE that were organized by the Department of Education and Culture, it was presented by Learning Facilitators from the DEC. The main aim was to clarify the implementation of assessment in OBE. All educators in grade seven must attend the workshop once and only one respondent attended a workshop every six months (Table 4.4). This implies that the majority of the respondents have limited workshop training.

4.3 EDUCATORS' UNDERSTANDING OF ASSESSMENT METHODS PRESCRIBED BY THE OBE SYSTEM.

SECTION B.

Section B of the interviews focused on the educators' understanding of the assessment methods prescribed in OBE. The data in this section is presented in Tables 4.5 and 4.6. Presentation in sub-section 4.4 is not in a tabular form, due to the construction of questions. Table 4.5 is about the knowledge of listed OBE assessment methods.

TABLE 4.5
MENTIONING OF THE OBE
ASSESSMENT METHODS BY RESPONDENTS

ASSESSMENT METHODS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Continuous	3	1	4
Criterion	0	4	4
Competency	0	4	4
Summative	1	3	4
Performance	0	4	4
Group work	4	0	4
Peer	4	0	4
Self	4	0	4

As shown in Table 4.5, of the eight assessment methods listed, only five could be mentioned by some of the respondents. Three methods were not mentioned by any respondents. Those are criterion assessment, performance assessment and competency assessment. Only group assessment, peer and self-assessment were known by all respondents. Only three respondents could mention continuous assessment.

Educators were asked about their understanding of the eight OBE assessment methods. Their responses are presented in Table 4.6 following.

TABLE 4.6

IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

METHODS	YES	NO	TOTAL
Continuous	2	2	4
Criterion	0	4	4
Competency	0	4	4
Summative	1	3	4
Performance	0	4	4
Group	4	0	4
Peer	4	0	4
Self	3	1	4

Table 4.6 shows that two of the four educators in the study understood how continuous assessment was supposed to be carried out. Not one knows how criterion, competency or performance assessments are carried out. Three did not understand summative assessment. All respondents understood group assessment, as well as peer-assessment. Three respondents understand self-assessment, while one does not. All respondents stated that they understood group and peer assessment. Data in Table 4.6 suggests that educators may lack knowledge of assessment methods.

4.4 PROCEDURES IN ASSESSMENT METHODS. ✓

In this section, the questions here are of a qualitative nature, the data is, therefore, presented in a narrative form. The four educators were asked to respond to the following question, in their own words:

- *“Can you, in your own words, explain how each of the assessment method works?”*

4.4.1 Continuous assessment. ✓

All the four respondents correctly stated that continuous assessment is done throughout the process of teaching and learning to check if the outcomes have been achieved. The following are some of the responses:

- “It is not formal”.
- “It is done after every unit”.
- “It is used for promotion”.

Respondents do understand continuous assessment. All four could explain how it is carried out.

4.4.2 Criterion assessment. ✓

Only one of the respondents correctly stated that criterion assessment is used after all assessments. These are some of the other responses:

- “Not sure”.
- “It is done to check if learners are competent”.
- “To check if learners can express themselves”.

Respondents seem not to understand exactly what criterion assessment is and how it functions.

4.4.3 Competency assessment.

One respondent correctly stated that competency assessment is done to check if learners are competent enough. The other respondents said (not correct responses):

- “To discover what learners understand”.
- “It is done after assessment is completed”.
- “Usually done in Language, Literature and Communication (LLC)?

Respondents do not know what competency assessment is and its functions.

4.4.4 Summative assessment.

Out of the four, only one respondent said that summative assessment is done at the end of the year (correct). The other three other respondents said (incorrect):

- “It is done by educators”.
- “I am not sure, but I have heard of it”.
- “It is used for record purposes” (partly correct).

Not one respondent fully understands summative assessment. Only two respondents have some idea of what it is all about.

4.4.5. Performance assessment.

One respondent said that performance assessment is done to check how learners are performing (correct). The other three said that they were not sure what

performance assessment was. Three respondents, therefore, seem not to understand how performance assessment works.

4.4.6. Group assessment.

All respondents, correctly, explained that group assessment is done in-groups the teacher facilitates as groups of learners in class assess amongst themselves. All respondents seemed to understand what group assessment is. An example of the responses was as follows:

- “In a group, they choose a secretary and a presenter”.

4.4.7 Peer assessment.

Four respondents said that in peer assessment, learners assess learners, they work in pairs (correct). Respondents seem to understand what peer assessment is, and can also explain how it works.

4.4.8 Self-assessment.

Three respondents said that learners usually give themselves a lot of marks because they are inexperienced (correct response). All respondents correctly stated that in self-assessment, learners assess themselves but they need guidance. All respondents seem to understand how the self-assessment method is applied.

SECTION C

This section was done to find out if educators know how assessment is implemented in OBE.

4.5 IMPLEMENTATION OF ASSESSMENT IN OBE.

Table 4.7, following, presents what respondents indicated as problems when implementing assessment required in OBE.

TABLE 4.7

THE PROBLEMS IN IMPLEMENTING ASSESSMENT IN OBE

RESPONSES	NO	YES	TOTAL
None	0	4	4
Not easy to understand	1	3	4
Not easy to implement	1	3	4
Not practical	2	2	4
Time consuming	4	0	4

One respondent said that it was not easy to understand assessment in OBE, while another respondent said that it was not easy at all to implement assessment in OBE. Two respondents said that the implementation of assessment in OBE was not practical. All respondents said implementation was time consuming. It seems as though educators experience problems in implementing assessment in OBE. They do not understand how to do it; they find it difficult, not practical and time consuming.

SECTION D

This section was done to find out if educators experience problems during the implementation of assessment.

4.6 THE PROBLEMS IN OBE ASSESSMENT.

Due to the construction of these questions, tables were not used.

- *“In your own view, what are the problems with assessment in OBE?”*

4.6.1 Continuous assessment.

All respondents stated that in continuous assessment there is a lot of paper work and, therefore, it is time consuming.

4.6.2 Criterion assessment.

All respondents were unsure of problems faced in criterion assessment.

4.6.3 Competency.

Two of the respondents said that learners were shy during competency assessment. One of the respondents did not give an answer, while the last was:

- “I am not sure”.

4.6.4 Summative assessment.

Two of the respondents said that summative assessment involves a lot of work, while the other two said that they were not sure about it.

4.6.5 Performance assessment.

According to all respondents, performance assessment is not easy to check or implement. Some of the responses were as follows:

- “It is time consuming”.
- “I am not sure of implementation the of performance assessment”.

4.6.7 Group assessment.

According to all the four respondents, group assessment leads to noise in class, and learners become uncontrollable. The other problem is that classrooms are small, whilst learners are many for group assessment. Other responses were as follows:

- “Intelligent learners dominated learners who are slow”.
- “They do not all participate”.

4.6.8 Peer assessment.

Three respondents said that peer assessment is not an easy task for learners. To explain the response, one of them stated that:

- “Intelligent learners dominate slow learners”.

4.6.9 Self-assessment.

According to three respondents, learners allocate too many marks to themselves. One respondent said:

- “Learners are unable to assess themselves fairly”.

Responses obtained from the study participants and presented here suggest that continuous assessment demands a lot from educators and it needs a lot of time and paperwork. Not all respondents know about problems experienced in criterion assessment, as they cannot even mention criterion assessment as one of the OBE assessment methods. The respondents do not know what competency assessment is; thus they cannot implement it. In relation to summative assessment, the respondents cannot give explicit answers because they are not sure what it is.

The fact that all the respondents said that performance assessment is not easy to implement shows that they may not be able to use it at this stage. Group assessment seems to be understood and can be implemented by all the respondents, but there are some obstacles such as small classes, large numbers, dominance and non-participation of learners. Therefore, group assessment cannot be successfully implemented. It appears that peer assessment is not effectively implemented, as most respondents claim that it is not an easy task. As far as self assessment is concerned, learners enjoy it, but their allocation of marks is unrealistic.

SECTION E.

The following section was done to find out if teachers know the purpose, steps, criteria, and principles of assessment. Four tables have been used for the presentation of the results (namely, Tables 4.8 to 4.10).

4.7 THE CRITERIA, PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES OF ASSESSMENT IN OBE.

Educators in the study asked whether they knew about the criteria used for assessment in OBE (Table 4.8).

TABLE 4.8
THE KNOWLEDGE OF
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

RESPONSES	N
Yes	0
No	4
TOTAL	4

None of the respondents knows what the criteria of assessment are. The respondents do not carry out assessment criteria as prescribed in OBE assessment.

Table 4.9, following, presents responses on the knowledge of the educators about the applicable OBE principles of assessment.

TABLE 4.9
THE KNOWLEDGE OF
ASSESSMENT PRINCIPLES

RESPONSES	N
Yes	2
No	2
TOTAL	4

Two respondents know the principles of assessment and two respondents do not know the principles of assessment. It would seem that some educators know they must assess and some do not.

Assessment strategies are at the core of OBE. Educators in the study were asked whether they understood recommended strategies for OBE. The following were their responses (Table 4.10):

TABLE 4.10
KNOWLEDGE OF STRATEGIES IN ASSESSMENT

RESPONSES	N
Yes	1
No	3
TOTAL	4

One respondent knows the strategies of assessment and three do not. This implies that the majority of educators do not follow the prescribed strategies when they assess in OBE.

SECTION F.

This section was done to establish as to whether respondents use assessment activities. One table presents the data obtained.

4.8 ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES.

OBE suggests usage of a variety of assessment methods (e.g., assignments and projects). Table 4.11, following here, presents responses from the educators in the study, on the frequency of the usage of some of these assessment activities.

TABLE 4.11
THE USAGE OF
ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

RESPONSES	N
Do not know	0
Never	0
Rarely	0
Sometime	0
Always	4
Total	4

All the respondents said they always do assessment activities in spite of the fact that most of the assessment procedures are difficult. They try to implement them.

SECTION G.

This section was carried out in order to establish if educators get support and training from the DEC far as assessment in OBE is concerned.

Due to qualitative nature of the questions, tables were not used. Five questions were asked, and respondents explained their answers.

4.9 THE SUPPORT AND TRAINING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF OBE ASSESSMENT FOR EDUCATORS.

4.9.1 “*What support system is used when implementing OBE assessment?*”

All the respondents said none.

4.9.2 “*What departmental training support system has been used in helping the educator to implement OBE?*”

Three respondents said learning facilitators (LFS) help them and one said they received no support system from the Department of Education.

4.9.3 “*Can you recommend better educational support?*”

Two of the respondents said that there is a need for further training of teachers, as well as more workshops on assessment in OBE.

One respondent said:

- “Due to the fact that program organizers are different, there is a need to design assessment which will be used by all”.

4.9.4 “Which aspects of the implementation of OBE assessment give the educators the worst headache?”

According to two respondents, all parts of assessment are difficult. Some of the respondents said:

- “Self and peer assessment are difficult”.
- “All parts of assessment are difficult to implement”.
- “Portfolios”.
- “In LLC where teachers has to assess three different languages at the same time namely Afrikaans, English and mother tongue”.

4,9.5 “Any further suggestions?”

All the respondents felt that they needed better and in-depth training. Some of the utterances were as follows:

- “Vista can help”.
- “Something must be done urgently”.
- “This kind of education is not for a child from the previously disadvantaged areas, it needs a lot of money from parents for research, projects, assignments and creativity”.

Respondents do not receive support and training from the Department of Education for the implementation of assessment in OBE. The respondents feel that educators need further training and dedicated support from the department. They also indicated that all parts of OBE assessment are difficult to implement and institutions like Vista University can aid in further training and workshops. Educators should undergo in-depth training on OBE assessment. Respondents feel that this is a matter of urgency in order for OBE to be a success.

SECTION H.

This section was aimed at find out if teachers check the assessment they implement is related to outcomes; furthermore, if they kept portfolios and that these portfolios were up-to-date (Tables 4.12 to 4.15).

4.10 DOCUMENTS ON ASSESSMENT.

The responses that are presented in Table 4.12, following, were about whether there is a perceived relationship between assessment and outcomes.

TABLE 4.12
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
ASSESSMENT AND OUTCOMES

RESPONSES	N
Yes	4
No	0
TOTAL	4

All four respondents said that they check if outcomes are achieved when they assess. They then write or tick them off in portfolios.

Finally, Table 4.13 to 4.15 presents responses of the four educators, to the following questions: Do educators maintain portfolios, keep records and

documents in these portfolios, and whether the portfolios were up-to-date, respectively.

TABLE 4.13
THE KEEPING OF PORTFOLIOS

RESPONSES	N
Yes	4
No	0
TOTAL	4

All four respondents said that they keep records of assessment in portfolios. Portfolios are kept even though most of the procedures are not clear and educators do not understand how to implement OBE assessment.

TABLE 4.14
THE KEEPING OF RECORDS AND
DOCUMENTS IN PORTFOLIOS

RESPONSES	N
Yes	4
No	0
TOTAL	4

All the four respondents said that they do keep records and documents in portfolios.

TABLE 4.15
ARE WORK PORTFOLIOS UP-TO-DATE

RESPONSES	N
Yes	1
No	3
TOTAL	4

One respondent said that the portfolios are up to date. Three respondents said that the portfolios are not up to date. The educators do keep records in portfolios and assess according to outcomes but it is difficult and needs a lot of time for them to keep portfolios up to date.

4.11 SUMMARY.

The data presented in this chapter was collected from the primary sources (educators in primary schools). The researcher used 15 tables and explanations to report data. Identifying in particular, educators understanding of assessment methods prescribed by OBE, their familiarity with OBE assessment methods, as problems encountered in implementing OBE assessment, and the provision of support and training for the educators by the department were identified.

CHAPTER FIVE

OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION.

In this final chapter, the researcher aims to recapitulate the salient points of the study by discussing the findings. An overview of the study, its conclusions and recommendations are presented.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY.

The study concentrated on the understanding and implementation of assessment in OBE by primary school educators. Interviews were used to obtain the following information:

- teaching experience of respondents;
- assessment training;
- knowledge on assessment methods;
- assessment procedures followed;
- implementation of assessment in OBE;
- problems encountered implementing OBE assessment;
- knowledge on purposes, steps, criteria and principles of OBE assessment;
- support and in-service training; and
- documents on assessment.

This study was conducted in the Goldfields area. The data was collected in Thabong primary schools from Grade 7 teachers, during August 2000.

This research is qualitative in nature. The qualitative methods emphasize depth of understanding, which attempt to tap the deeper meaning of human experience, and intends to generate theoretically richer observation (Rubin and Babbie, 1993:30). Educators used an exploratory descriptive design with the purpose of getting more information on the understanding and implementation of OBE assessment. The exploratory design was used because it allows questions about which little is known, it also uncovers generalization and develops the hypothesis which can be investigated and tested later with more precise hence more complex designs and data gathering method (Grinnel, 1993:136). This data was collected by using a structured interview schedule.

5.3 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS.

The major findings on the understanding and implementation of assessment in OBE are as follows:

- Two of the four the respondents were between the age of 35 and 40 years. One was between 25 and 30 years and the other one between 55 and 60 years of age.
- Two have a degree, one has a teacher-training certificate and another has a diploma in teaching.
- Three of the four had attended only one OBE assessment workshop. The fourth respondent stated that he had attended OBE assessment workshops every six months.
- Three out of four respondents indicated that they knew what continuous and self-assessment were. All educators knew both group and peer assessments. None of the respondents knew what criterion and performance assessments were.

- All respondents understood only two methods of assessment, namely, continuous and peer assessments.
- The respondents were not familiar with five methods of assessment, namely, competency, criteria, summative and performance assessments.
- All the respondents indicated that the implementation of assessment in OBE is time consuming.
- Three out of the four respondents said that they were not sure what problems they faced with the following four methods: criterion, competency, summative and performance assessment. They stated that the problem was that they were not even familiar with these methods.
- When asked to name assessment methods in OBE, none of the educators named assessment criteria.
- Two out of the four respondents did not know the principles of OBE assessment.
- Three of four did not know the steps to be followed in the implementation of OBE assessment.
- The respondents said that they were always using assessment activities in spite of the fact that assessment procedure is difficult.
- All the respondents indicated that they did not receive support to make OBE a success.
- All the respondents kept records on assessment in portfolios, but these records were not up-to-date.
- All the respondents indicated that their assessment procedures, in class, are always related to outcomes.

5.4 DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS.

5.4.1 Identifying particulars.

OBE is a totally new approach in the South African education system. Educators, who were interviewed on OBE assessment, are between 35 and 40 years and 55 and 60 years of age. They are also not satisfactorily qualified. This implies they did not receive training in OBE. One respondent has a certificate, another a diploma in teaching. All institutions are presently emphasizing the OBE approach in their education-training program. New teachers with degrees from these institutions are therefore trained in OBE. There is a possibility of a lack of knowledge of educators who have been in the system for long without furthering their studies.

Only one respondent claimed that she undergoes training every six months. Three of the respondents attended OBE workshops only once since OBE has been introduced.

5.4.2 Educators' understanding of assessment methods prescribed by the OBE evaluation system.

Of the eight methods listed, the respondents knew only five methods of assessment. It is vital for an educator to know all assessment methods in order to implement them successfully. All methods of assessment are important. None of the respondents understood criterion assessment, competency assessment and performance assessment. Group assessment, self-assessment and peer assessments are understood by all.

5.4.3 Procedures in assessment methods.

All respondents were able to explain the procedures to be followed in continuous assessment group assessment and peer assessment. The respondents could not explain criterion assessment and competency assessment procedures correctly. Only one respondent could explain summative assessment. One respondent could only explain performance assessment and three respondents were not sure what performance assessment was.

5.4.4 Implementation of assessment in OBE.

One respondent said that it was not easy to understand assessment in OBE, another one said it was not easy at all. Two respondents said that the implementation of assessment in OBE was not practical. All respondents said the implementation of OBE assessment is time consuming. Respondents said that implementation is difficult, not practical and needs a lot of time.

5.4.5 Problems in OBE assessment.

All respondents said that continuous assessment has a lot of work. They were not sure what are problems faced in criterion assessment, as they did not know the methods. The respondents did not know what competency assessment was; thus they were unable to implement it. In relation to summative assessment, the respondents could not give explicit answers because they were not sure what summative assessment was.

5.4.6 Criteria, principles and strategies of assessment in OBE.

None of the respondents knew criteria of assessment. The respondents did not carry out assessment criteria as prescribed in OBE assessment. Two respondents

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5.4.6 Criteria, principles and strategies of assessment in OBE.

None of the respondents knew criteria of assessment. The respondents did not carry out assessment criteria as prescribed in OBE assessment. Two respondents

knew the principles of assessment and two respondents did not know the principles of assessment. It seems as if some educators knew they must assess and some did not. One respondent knew the steps in assessment and three did not. This implies that the majority of educators did not follow the prescribed steps when they assess in OBE.

5.4.7 Support and training.

It seems as though the Department of Education does not give enough support and training as far as implementation of assessment in OBE is concerned. The respondents suggested that educators need further training and dedicated support. They also indicated that all parts of OBE assessment are difficult to implement and institutions like Vista University can help in further training and workshops. Educators should undergo in-depth training in OBE assessment.

5.4.8 Portfolio.

Educators do have portfolios, but it is difficult for them to keep work up to date as there is a lot of time needed to record and file work in the portfolios. Every time they assess, they make it a point that their assessment is evaluated against the outcomes.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY.

The aim of the study was to uncover whether educators are knowledgeable on assessment methods as prescribed by OBE. If they are not, it will be difficult for them to implement it successfully.

From this research the following recommendations are made in order to allay the lack of knowledge and experience of educators on the implementation of OBE assessment which came to the fore in this study:

5.5.1 In-service programs.

There should be extensive in-service training programs for educators in OBE assessment. Emphasis should be on the different methods of assessment. Educators should also contribute on how assessment in OBE can be correctly or practically implemented. The difference between evaluation in past and assessment in OBE should be a point of departure from which training programs proceed. In the process, educators should be assessed on their knowledge of assessing. The theoretical background of assessment in OBE should be supplied. The training sessions can also involve real situations, demonstrating how assessment can or should be implemented.

Whilst attending in-service training in OBE assessment, it should not be thought that educators are ready and perfect. Educators should attend refresher courses from time to time. Each and every method of assessment should be emphasized, as well as its purposes, principles, criteria and the steps to be followed.

5.5.2 Materials.

At school, there should not be too many learners in class, as space is needed for free movement when assessing. Materials needed for assessment should be readily available. If projects are to be carried out, educators should take into consideration learners from disadvantaged background. For example, if they are to bring a cheque from home, as part of the project in the learning area of Economics and

Business management, they might not be able to do so because their parents might not be using cheques or have access to them. In this instance, the school should be ready to provide examples of these (i.e., cheques).

There should be enough books for learners at school. Each and every learner must have her own books. They are not supposed to share books. Stationary should not be a problem, learners should have the necessary aid as expected in the OBE curriculum.

As technology is one of the learning areas in OBE, the department should see to it that each and every school has a computer laboratory. All educators and learners should be computer literate. If learners are to be assessed in technology, educators who are well trained should do this.

5.5.3 Training of educators.

Tertiary institutions should make sure that they train their students in OBE. Assessment should be given proper attention in the process of training educators. Assessment is a vital part of education. As far as the curriculum of the departments of education in all the tertiary institutions is concerned, there should be a total change. Learners should be prepared to implement OBE successfully.

5.5.4 Parents, community, non-governmental and also business organizations.

It seems as though many of the parents in the black communities do not take the education of their children seriously. The school is seen as the only place where education can take place. Parents who care will always motivate educators, but support from parents is often minimal. Parents should also be educated as far as

OBE is concerned, and special attention should be given to assessment. Through media, the government should sensitize parents and community.

5.6 FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.

Further research can be done with respect to developing training programs for educators on OBE assessment.

5.7 CONCLUSION.

The South African education system is in a state of making a paradigm shift from the old curriculum to the new curriculum, which is OBE. South African schools should begin to pride themselves in their human product, that is learners who have been through an education system that is harmonious and through a reliable and valid assessment route.

If recommendations on in-service programs, materials, training of educators-to-be, parents, community, NGO's and businesses can be heeded, the educators can perform better in assessing the learners. Assessment is one of the vital elements in education; therefore a thorough training and well planning ahead of the assessment procedures need to be seriously considered by all educators.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

THE ASSEMENT FACTORS IN OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION SYSTEM: PROBLEMS IN EMPLEMENTATION

1.1. Introduction.

Ms. Motlalekgomo C. (Lindy) Mogorosi, a Master of Education (M Ed.) degree student at Vista University (Welkom), is conducting a study on the knowledge and experience of educators in utilizing assessment methods, as prescribed by the Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) system. Can you please assist in answering the following questions?

SECTION A.

RESPONDENTS' BACKGROUND.

Can you please tell me about yourself in relation to your training and experience?

FACTOR	RESPONSE
Age	
Qualifications (highest)	
Teaching experience (years)	
Attended OBE experience workshop (yes/no)	

SECTION B.

**2. EDUCATORS UNDERSTANDING OF ASSESSMENT METHODS
PRESCRIBED BY THE OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

Can you please list OBE assessment methods?

OBE ASSESSMENT METHODS	MENTIONED	NOT MENTIONED
Continuos		
Criterion		
Competency-based		
Summative		
Performance		
Group work		
Self		
Peer		
Individual		

3.2. EDUCATORS' FAMILIARITY WITH ASSESSMENT METHODS.

Do you understand how each assessment methods work?

OBE ASSESSMENT METHODS	YES	NO
Continuos		
Criterion		
Competency based		
Summative		
Performance		
Group work		
Peer		
Self		
Individual		

SECTION C.

4. Can you please explain in your own how each of the assessment method works?

4.1 Continous: _____

4.2 Criterion: _____

4.3. Competency: _____

4.4. Summative: _____

4.5 Performance: _____

4.6 Group work: _____

4.7 Peer /self/individual: _____

SECTION D.

5. EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF OBE ASSESSMENT.

Problem area in the practical implementation of OBE.

Can you please indicate the type of problem about each of the methods of assessment?

ASSESSMENT METHODS	NONE	NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND	NOT EASY TO IMPLEMENT	NOT PRACTICAL	TIME CONSUMING
Continuous					
Criterion					
Competency-based					
Summative					
Performance					
Group work					
Peer					
Self					

6. Can you please, in your own words, explain the following assessment methods?

6.1 Continuous: _____

6.2 Criterion: _____

6.3 Competency-based: _____

6.4 Summative: _____

6.5 Performance: _____

6.6 Groupwork: _____

6.7 Peer: _____

6.8 Self: _____

SECTION E.

7. Assessment Criteria, Principles and Strategies.

Do you know criteria of assessment in OBE? **YES: NO**

If yes, can you please mention them:

8. Principles of OBE assessment.

Do you know principles of assessment in OBE? **YES: NO**

If yes, can you please mention them:

9. Strategies of Assessment.

Educators can follow strategies of assessment in OBE? **YES: NO**

If yes, can you please mention them:

SECTION F.

10. This section is to establish the frequency of assessment, by educators.

Do you do assessment? **YES: NO**

If yes, how often do you do that?

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Always
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SECTION G.

11. This section is to establish whether educators get support and training.

Support and training.

What systems have been put in your school to help educators implement OBE assessment?	
What departmental training events and support system have been effective in helping educators, in your school to implement OBE?	
Can you make recommendations for better educational support?	
Which aspects of the implementation of OBE assessment are the worst headaches to the educators?	
Any additional comments that you as an educator can give in relation to OBE assessment?	

SECTION H.

12. This section is about the educators keeping of portfolios and as to whether these are up-to-date.

PORTFOLIOS

QUESTION	YES	NO
Is assessment related to outcomes?		
Do you keep portfolios?		
Do you keep record and documents in portfobs?		
Are the portfolios up-to-date?		