

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **AN OVERVIEW OF THE INVESTIGATION, GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The main consideration of the study was the implementation of OBE from a management point of view at micro level. The research problem appropriately reflected issues around the foundational aspects of OBE, the management of the curriculum and the effectiveness of OBE implementation in the field. Within these parameters, the aims of the research were formulated as follows:

- to make a study of the foundations of OBE to provide a theoretical framework for the rest of the study. It will serve as a knowledge base for implementers of OBE with regard to future practice
- to examine the thinking around managing the curriculum
- to determine the perceptions of district officials, principals and teachers in the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape and
- to provide guidelines for improving the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape.

As set out in the ensuing section, it is clear that the aforementioned aims have been met, together with the reasons for its attainment.

Chapter 5 therefore provides the reader firstly, with a general overview of the investigation to show that the aims of the research have been achieved. A synthesis of significant findings follows, derived from the research outlined in Chapter 4, which is accompanied by recommendations for improving the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape. Finally, a number of recommendations for further research conclude the chapter.

## 5.2 An Overview of the Investigation

Since it is necessary that the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape be improved, the main aim of the study is to explore the effectiveness of current implementation. This has been done by breaking the problem down into a number of aims which are addressed in Chapters 2, 3 and 4.

The first aim of the study was to examine the foundations of OBE which include the fundamental theory and practice of OBE. Within this context, the aim was to establish what OBE actually entails (cf. 2.5 – 2.9) and what it can mean for education (cf. 2.3). The three approaches to OBE were also dealt with comprehensively (cf. 2.5.3.1 – 2.5.3.3). Outlined in Chapter 2, a study of the literature was undertaken in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the focus and features of OBE which indicate that the aim has been attained. The purpose of OBE introduced the reader to the significance of OBE as an educational approach followed by its principles to provide a clearer understanding of its purpose. The roles of district officials, principals and teachers followed to signify the practice of OBE.

The purpose of OBE commits the system to focus on futuristic performance abilities and to establish a success-orientated way of operating – whereas the principles are found to be driving the outcomes (cf. 2.5.5.1). Content is no longer the structure which serves as the starting point for lessons but it is merely *applied* so that it acts as a catalyst in attaining the Learning Outcomes (cf. 2.6.1.3b). A variety of activities (cf. 2.6.2.6) facilitates the teaching and learning process by creating learning opportunities for learners in which they can carry out learning experiences. Learner assessment (cf. 2.6.2) is found to be the cornerstone of OBE around which all learning- and teaching revolves. Together with the Learning Outcomes, it is introduced from the onset and serves to obtain information about a learner's competence.

Since it is necessary to meet the needs of learners through an appropriate education system, a further aim of the study was to find ways in which the curriculum can be managed so that effective OBE implementation can take place (cf. 1.3.2). This study was undertaken in Chapter 3 using a review of the literature as the main method of research (cf. 1.4).

The aim was reached as indicated by the findings. Curriculum problems are unique to districts and each district has varying levels of curriculum proficiency (cf. 3.1). The question was whether there are sufficient knowledgeable, committed and efficient district officials, principals and teachers to manage the curriculum at the district-, school- and classroom levels where OBE is implemented.

Sound practices for managing the curriculum were described – each located to its implementer being the district official, principal or teacher and its level of delivery (cf. 3.3; 3.4; 3.5) being the district, school or classroom. It is essential that these functions all be carried out to ensure effective OBE implementation.

Another aim was to explore the effectiveness of OBE implementation in the Eastern Cape (cf. 1.3.3). The aim was to explore the circumstances and problems encountered in the area. This was explored in Chapter 4, using individual interviews and focus group interviews with district officials, principals and teachers who are involved in the implementation of OBE, as the main methods of data gathering. In addition to this, an examination of documents was undertaken.

The findings in Chapter 4 indicate that the aim has been reached. OBE is being implemented at all three levels in the Eastern Cape but there are still issues that have to be addressed to make the implementation successful as can be seen in the next section (cf. 5.3.1). The study, which was limited to ten districts in the province, was divided into a framework of three levels, depicting the three operational levels in the province namely the district, school and classroom levels. Together they constituted the micro level.

The functions of officials, principals and teachers in managing the curriculum (cf. 3.3-3.5), were used as indicators or benchmarks for developing criteria to explore the implementation of OBE in the field. These criteria translated quite well since the management of the curriculum is the narrower concept which fits into the broader concept of implementing OBE.

The final aspect of the aim was to provide guidelines for improving the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape. This was successfully reached since a number of practical

issues were highlighted that I, as curriculum specialist in the province see as essential for the success of OBE in the province.

In the light of all the aims having been achieved, a synthesis of significant findings, based on the interviews and examination of documents, is presented.

### **5.3 A Synthesis of Significant Findings and Recommendations**

The significant findings of the investigation are dealt with in this section.

#### **5.3.1 District Level**

The role that district officials play, have an impact on the implementation of OBE at district level (cf. 4.3.1). These officials – mainly curriculum advisers, perform three major functions which, upon investigation, produced the following findings:

##### **5.3.1.1 Managing Change**

The study on Managing Change (cf. 4.3.1.1) indicates that district officials train principals and teachers intensively on the latest curriculum developments but they find that teachers are often more readily open to change than their principals. Principals tend to become stagnant in a curriculum and feel threatened when their ‘comfort zones’ are disturbed. They are often guilty of being the ‘laggards’ (cf. 3.3.1.1). Unfortunately this impacts on the staff. It would be wise to attempt the paradigm shift with principals first, then the positive attitudes will cascade down to their staff. If district officials are not able to change the mindset of principals and teachers, the implementation of OBE will be ineffective. The first OBE curriculum, Curriculum 2005, was reviewed and revised approximately five years after its inception. Principals are uncertain as to how curriculum change should be managed. Managing change (cf. 3.3.1) is a skill and principals need to be trained on this highly essential skill. Change which is managed inappropriately may have undesirable effects that may have far-reaching consequences for the implementers. This in turn may impede on the attainment of the Learning Outcomes and more so, on that of the school’s objectives.

The biggest challenge for principals – whether in deep rural- or urban areas, is that of managing two curricula in the same school. The implementation of both C2005 and the RNCS were staggered – which resulted in some grades having to follow the one, while other grades followed the other, at any given period of time. This caused huge confusion – not only for the principal, but for the staff as well. The worst-case scenario played itself off when C2005 was introduced. Since its implementation was staggered, there were two *conflicting* curricula operating in the same school – that of content-based education and that of OBE. This issue needs serious intervention.

The ideal way for any change to take place is in a gradual way. People are likely to develop a more positive attitude towards change (cf. 3.3.1.1) if it takes place in an evolutionary way.

Research has also shown that principals are not familiar with their roles during a time of curriculum change. In times of change, the district official should be a source of knowledge. He should keep principals well informed about the changes being introduced. However, the district official can only do this if he/she understands these changes. This implies that the district official should be at the forefront of whatever changes are being introduced so that he/she can provide the necessary guidance and assistance (cf. 3.3.1). To do that, district officials need to develop themselves both academically and professionally and encourage principals and teachers to do likewise.

#### **5.3.1.2 The Training of Principals and Teachers**

It was clear in the outcome of this research that the training of the RNCS was, on the surface, successful (cf. 3.3.2; 4.2.2). However, due to a shortage of district officials to train principals and teachers, a number of teachers and redundant college lecturers were approached to assist with the training. Their training was insufficient and uncoordinated. They clearly lacked the background knowledge of district officials (cf. 4.3.1.2). For the implementation of OBE to be successful, every principal and teacher should be adequately trained in the curriculum to perform his/her role effectively and efficiently. While teachers require training to deal with curriculum development and implementation in the classroom

effectively, principals need training to monitor these functions. This will also enable them to manage the curriculum (cf. 3.4) more effectively.

To ensure that principals and teachers receive appropriate training, the EC DOE should form a partnership with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and use afternoons, weekends and school holidays for in-service training programmes. The EC DOE should then make incentives available to principals and teachers who undergo this training. Service providers could also be contracted to assist with training in collaboration with the EC DOE.

Since the *planning* for teacher training was also discovered as being a problem, a number of recommendations are therefore offered to accommodate the gap. They basically seek to draw ‘attention to detail’.

## **1. The Profile of the Province**

A situational analysis should be conducted to include:

- the context of the province e.g. rural, deep-rural, urban, peri-urban
- the geographical context e.g. distances
- logistical requirements e.g. transport, accommodation
- resources e.g. human resources, financial resources and

Statistics of senior phase schools e.g. number of teachers.

## **2. District Training Teams**

The districts have limited human resources. This issue surfaced in the findings when it was discovered that redundant college lecturers and teachers were conducting the training of principals and teachers. In order to curb this hampering factor, officials (curriculum advisers) from the Foundation- and Intermediate Phases should be drawn in to assist with the training of the Senior

Phase teachers, given their recent experience in RNCS training in 2003 and 2004. Criteria for selection should be drawn up for the selection of these district officials. The teams must be structured in accordance with the weighting suggested by the DOE and should therefore comprise the following:

- Foundation Phase (FP) Officials

FP district officials who were part of the FP RNCS training programme and who were trained by the DOE and the EC DOE for a further period of five days should do the training. They should preferably also have had exposure to C2005 training and they must be specialists in the three Learning Programmes of the RNCS.

- Intermediate Phase (IP) Officials

A large number of IP district officials must be part of the FP RNCS training programme and a number must have been trained by the DOE for a period of at least twelve days and by the province for a number of seven days. All must have had exposure to C2005 training and be specialists in at least two of the eight Learning Areas of the RNCS.

- Higher Education Institutions

Unfortunately most lecturers have had little or no exposure to RNCS policy and training. They have been involved in C2005 training but are currently involved in other teacher development accredited courses. None of the HEI representatives attended the national- or provincial RNCS training-of-trainer programmes. It is essential that they be sent to the DOE so that they can become qualified trainers of the RNCS.

- Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)/Independent Consultants

The independents and NGOs must all be actively involved in the training programme. By its very nature their organizations are geared to support the EC DOE in the area of teacher development and in-service training

(INSET). All must have had exposure to RNCS training and be ex-teachers.

- Unions

All three unions i.e. SADTU, NUE and SAOU should be invited to participate. As far as possible, the same members who attended the Foundation- and Intermediate Phase RNCS training programmes should be identified for the Senior Phase training. Unfortunately most union members are office-based officials and may have limited experience in training teachers or understanding the curriculum needs of schools.

The representatives of HEIs, NGOs and Unions need to gain an in-depth understanding of the policy requirements of the RNCS (cf. 3.4.2.1) as it relates to the Senior Phase. They would also require practical hands-on demonstrations of classroom practice in:

- content and the use of portfolios
- handling continuous assessment in large classes taking into account all the ASs to be assessed
- recording and reporting
- clustering and integration
- teaching methods and facilitation techniques and
- the selection and use of text books and other LTSM in line with the RNCS.

### **3. Training Venues**

It is important that appropriate training venues are used. The suggested criteria are as follows. Venues should:



- accommodate delegates
- provide technical/IT equipment needed
- be within close proximity of facilities e.g. printing, delivery, easily accessible
- be cost-effective
- be flexible to accommodate the needs of the facilitators and
- have sufficient break-away rooms.

#### **4. Training Materials**

Districts must ensure that basic workshop stationery is provided at the venue and that there is a data projector/overhead projector. All break-away venues must have power, a screen etc. Participants must also be provided with a file, a pen and notepads. It is assumed that the DOE will provide:

- RNCS policy documents
- A Teacher's Guide for the Development of Learning Programmes
- Other relevant policy documents pertaining to the RNCS (cf 3.4.2.2-3.4.2.8).

The stationery must be procured through the Directorate: Professional Development and Support.

The Directorate: Curriculum Management and Development must develop training materials for teachers. The development and printing costs of these materials may be funded by the IMBEWU Programme of the EC DOE (receiving British donor funds). The materials must be written in-house with a

reference group comprising district officials and other stakeholders. All materials must be written in line with the DOE requirements based on:

- national policy
- weighting of topics (e.g. development of Learning Programmes, Curriculum Management, etc) and
- the specific context of the province.

The Directorate: Professional Development must ensure that the materials are ‘packaged’ in line with an appropriate roll out plan.

## **5. Monitoring**

The monitoring plan must be built into the training plan and must include the following instruments:

- a biographical data form
- questionnaires: participants and facilitators (individual) and
- focus group schedule/group interview schedule

The district official (curriculum advisers and curriculum researchers), the provincial curriculum officials and the unions must operationalise a monitoring plan that must cover approximately 16 districts (a spread of urban-, peri-urban- and rural areas). The number of centres to be visited must be decided upon by the Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Committee. The rollout of the teacher-training programme must also be monitored externally through the Imbewu Programme between September and November of the particular year. All data e.g. teachers attending, venues used and trainers’ details should be recorded on the training database. All monitoring tools should be aligned to the DOE instruments. As far as possible, monitoring teams should make use of subsidised vehicles.

## **6. Accountability**

The Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Committee should call for an interim report midway and a summative report at the end of the monitoring visits. The minimum requirements for the training should be captured on a template and a final training report, which includes a summary of the data, should be provided by the Directorate: Professional Development and Support and be made available to all stakeholders and relevant directorates. The findings stipulated in the report should be used to inform further curriculum planning and RNCS training programmes.

## **7. Training**

Districts should, as far as possible, ensure that all facilitators of teacher training be trained by the DOE. Teacher training should ideally be carried out in four phases:

- Phase 1: Curriculum advisers who have not had any exposure to previous RNCS training must attend a training workshop to elevate their knowledge so that, prior to the teacher-training programme, all trainers will be at more or less the same level of understanding. Education Development Officers, School Management Teams, School Governing Bodies, LTSM evaluators as well as publishers should be included.
- Phase 2: Trainers must be trained in the provincial module for a period of eight days. Five days must be allocated to the training of Policy to include Theory and Practice and the last three days must focus on Facilitation and Presentation Skills.
- Phase 3: A five-day workshop must be mandatory for all Senior Phase teachers. The first three days must cover Theory and Practice and Curriculum Development. Day four and five should focus on the eight Learning Areas, looking specifically at the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Standards of each Learning Area.

- Phase 4: Districts must be divided into clusters. Each cluster must be offered a series of two-day Learning Area workshops over a period of six weeks. Teachers must attend a minimum of two Learning Area workshops.

The minimum human resource capacity required to implement this mode of training is twelve trainers per district. The training period should last for 10 weeks.

## **8. Communication**

All communication on the teacher training workshops must be communicated from the district office to the schools. The province should also be communicating to districts through a series of information-sharing workshops targeting the 24 district Chief Education Specialists (CES): Curriculum. At these workshops, districts should be assisted in developing workable implementation plans based on the framework provided by the province.

Provincial officials responsible for communicating with district officials are the Director: Professional Development and Support as well as the Senior Phase Co-ordinator. District officials in turn must communicate to schools through the district manager and CES: Curriculum. This is usually done by means of an official notice through the relevant supervisor and copies made available to other interested parties/directorates for their attention. Letters to school should be addressed to principals. All correspondence should reach the relevant stakeholders and participants at least three weeks prior to the training and teachers' attendance must be confirmed. In many cases reminders and confirmation of attendance is done telephonically – especially in cases where districts or schools do not have fax- or e-mail facilities.

It was also obvious in the study (cf. 4.2.2; 4.4) that the training of principals and teachers could not happen in a vacuum and that it should be preceded by the development of training materials. It was mentioned that the training went well on average – especially in urban, well resourced areas and it was noted that district

officials were satisfied with the quality of the materials. For the training of Senior Phase teachers in future, however, a lot needs to be done ‘behind the scenes’ to improve the smooth running and effectiveness of the actual *process* of materials development. The following recommendations are offered to facilitate the thinking of those officials in the districts in charge of teacher training.

## **1. The Materials Development Process**

### **Step 1: The Identification of a Steering Committee**

This committee should be made up of district officials (curriculum advisers) who are experts in the content of their respective Learning Areas. The roles and responsibilities of the steering committee should include:

- developing a strategic plan for the development of training materials
- selecting content and activities for the modules and a blueprint to be developed to guide the writing team and
- critical readers must review the drafts.

### **Step 2: The Composition of Writing Teams**

There should be a writing team for each Learning Area which should include:

- district officials (curriculum advisers) who may be a member of the steering committee
- a recipient of the training programme for whom the materials are written (the teacher in this instance) and
- an expert writer.

### **Step 3: Writing Retreat**

Writers convene to develop a first draft in line with the negotiated blueprint. The preparation from the first to the final draft should be carried out by the writers themselves.

### **Step 4: The Production Loop**

The materials then go into the production loop where the following functions are carried out:

- the content is edited by the steering committee
- the language edit takes place
- the layout takes place (design and typeset)
- proofreading of materials
- design edit
- final proofreading and
- the signing off by steering committee.

## **2. The Budget**

Another concerning factor for materials development, was the funding for it. This was captured under ‘factors that hamper the training of teachers’ (cf. 4.4). It is recommended that a substantial budget be set aside by the EC DOE or funds raised to cover the cost of materials development. The cost for developing these training models, facilitators’ guides and teacher workbooks is so huge that it cannot possibly be taken from the budget for teacher training – yet it is an essential pre-requisite for the training of teachers.

Since the process needs a large budget, there is a heavy reliance on outsourcing. If a donor is not secured, the kind of materials that would emerge are questionable.

Unfortunately, the transfer of skills in the writing process is minimal because of time constraints. Out of the process there are no emerging writers that could confidently carry the process forward. This means that the level of skills transfer in the entire process is minimal.

A hampering factor also included the lack of communication between the DOE and the province. There was an uncertainty whether the national training materials would be a framework or a strategy. If it was a framework, district materials would have been written and completed on time. However, it turned out to be a strategy which did not allow time for creativity and pro-active materials development.

It is advised that the province insists on direction and policy on materials development from the DOE and that it reaches the province in good time in order for district officials to develop teacher training materials of a high quality.

Finally, it is recommended that the following people be appointed to sustain the materials development project:

- an LA manager to manage the project for its content and
- an operational manager to manage the project for its production.

It was also discovered that training of principals and teachers does not happen in a vacuum. Thorough initial *planning* for teacher training is essential as well as *developing training materials* for teacher training. Materials development is a costly exercise and the department also does not have the human capacity experienced in this area to undertake and sustain the process from its inception to printing. The content selected for training is one of the essential elements to be considered since there is no pro-active guidance from the DOE in this

regard. When the Department produces guidelines, it is past the deadline for the province to meet its deadline on delivery.

#### **5.3.1.3 Supporting Principals and Teachers**

Monitoring and support of principals and teachers was found to be adequate in urban areas (cf. 4.3.1.3). Cluster teams were established at the end of the training sessions as ‘the way forward’. Clusters engage in a cyclic mode of ‘training’ whereby lead-teachers of the cluster attend meetings with curriculum advisers and then return to the cluster of schools to disseminate the information. The topics are taken from the specific needs of teachers as they arise. In rural areas however, vast travelling distances make monitoring and support almost impossible

It is, therefore, recommended that all principals and teachers should be monitored and supported in order to perform their new roles. District officials should have intensive and ongoing support programmes for principals and teachers so that they become acquainted with their new roles. They should acquire new skills in order to help learners learn effectively. It is also recommended that principals should network with principals of schools that are performing well. This is known as benchmarking. Teachers should work as teams and network with teachers of other schools. This implies that teachers should not only rely on their principals, but they should also be self-empowered.

#### **5.3.2 School Level**

The role of the principal in the implementation of OBE is of paramount importance (cf. 4.3.3). During the investigation the following findings of significance came to the fore:

##### **5.3.2.1 Co-ordinating the Curriculum**

Although curriculum management at all three levels appears to be satisfactory, it is clear that it is the principal at school level who needs the most training to ensure the success of OBE. The complexities of the changes demanded by OBE and the



consequent sophistication of managing its curriculum, requires an empowered principal with above-average integrity (cf. 3.4.4.1).

The diverse functions of the principal have been addressed. The study has revealed that it would require creative, future-focussed principals to make the mindshift (cf. 1.1.3) to apply sound OBE practices like a strategic thinker to create timetables compatible to OBE (cf. 3.4.1) and a person with attention to detail to apply the policies implicated in the curriculum (cf. 3.4.2).

Findings show that co-ordinating an OBE curriculum (cf. 4.3.3.1) is far more complicated than that of a content-based curriculum. Principals are *in dire need of training* to be able to perform this duty. Many aspects need to be attended to like drawing up time-tables, with the weighting as prescribed by policy (cf. 3.4.1), so that teaching and learning becomes compatible to the attainment of outcomes. In the rural areas of the Eastern Cape principals are struggling to manage their schools in a way that is conducive to successful OBE implementation. They should be trained to understand the RNCS policy, other policies related to the curriculum and the guidelines developed from the policies. Since there is no longer a 'content' curriculum, they are confused by the fact that the content to be taught (cf. 2.5.5.2b) is stated implicitly, rather than explicitly. Although the issue of content has been much improved upon in the revised curriculum, it still shatters the confidence of principals who have not been trained.

#### **5.3.2.2 Implementing Policy**

The findings of this study suggested that principals have a limited knowledge of the implementation of policy (cf. 4.3.3.2). The reason for this is that information concerning curriculum related policies is not effectively communicated to schools. Principals complain of policy overload which contributes to some policies being poorly implemented or not at all. This leads to an unwillingness towards self-empowerment.

Curriculum related policies should be effectively communicated to all principals and they should be given sufficient time to understand and master these policies. Mechanisms should be put in place firstly to monitor the implementation of these

policies, such as a checklist for each policy. The criteria on the checklist may be derived from the number of implications for each policy (cf. 3.6.2). Secondly, to assist those who might experience problems with these policies.

Generally principals are guided by the RNCS policy for curriculum development and implementation but they are, however, not as efficient in implementing the other seven policies related to the RNCS (cf. 4.3.3.2). They need to align these policies with practice and use them as the base for teaching and learning.

### **5.3.2.3 Teacher Support**

Principals are tasked to support their staff throughout their function of delivering the curriculum (cf. 4.3.3.3). Central to this, is the all-encompassing task of developing the curriculum. Principals must monitor the development of Learning Programmes very closely since this is where the three-year plan for the entire phase is planned. They must ensure that, according to timelines and weighting, the necessary Learning Outcomes are addressed for each Learning Area. Additional to the teacher's management function as curriculum developer, the implementation of the curriculum and assessing the learner, the teacher also needs to be closely monitored and supported. In mostly rural- and peri-urban areas *principals need to be trained on these aspects*. The complexity of the changes demanded by OBE and the professionalism required of principals to manage the new curriculum, are not congruent with the training provided for principals to do so.

The problem is exacerbated in the disenfranchised communities due to a lack of resources in schools, teacher-learner ratios and un- or under-qualified teachers. The principal (cf. 2.7; 3.4) needs to be trained even more so where circumstances are problematic in cases such as these. There can be no effective teaching and learning in a school which is not properly managed – no matter how informed the teachers are. Teachers rely on the support of their principal (cf. 3.4.3) as a leader and manager. It is inevitable therefore that the principal receives the necessary training.

#### **5.3.2.4 Staff Development**

The findings indicate that principals do empower their staff to a greater or lesser degree (cf. 4.3.3.4). They acknowledge that sharing power, through shared responsibilities, does have advantages. In no other way could a curriculum, as complex as the RNCS, be managed. It is encouraging to see that the autocratic management style of the traditional system has ceased to exist. In some districts however, it surfaced in the interview that principals are complacent when it comes to staff development. These teachers are clearly deprived of the motivation and team efforts necessary for curriculum development and implementation. The training for principals must include measures of authority as well as ‘freedom’ so that they can exercise a justified amount of control *and* freedom when the teachers implement the curriculum. OBE provides principals with a level of control since it prescribes the outcomes (cf. 2.5.5.2b) that have to be attained for education to be successful. The principal therefore has the benchmark for successful education. At the same time, OBE allows for freedom and flexibility. Principals may leave it up to teachers to make choices regarding teaching methods and the selection of content (cf. 2.5.5.2b). If not trained, these two issues can result in conflict since teachers may disagree with the amount of ‘control’ imposed, and principals may question the amount of ‘freedom’ teachers have. Training principals on how to empower their staff could eliminate such conflict and at the same time have many other benefits.

#### **5.3.2.5 Resource Management**

Findings indicate that there is a vast amount of resources to be managed (cf. 4.3.3.5). Among them are human, financial and physical resources. LTSMs probably make out the greatest part of these resources. Teaching aids, including audio-visual equipment, are also managed by the principal. Principals must however, ensure that training manuals, policy documents and other teacher support materials are not withheld but are circulated to staff on a regular basis and timeously. *Training* on the use of catalogues, inventories and materials will have many positive results. Principals should also be trained in acquiring text books for instance. They must be able to visit book displays of the publishers at the teacher

training venues and be able to follow the procedures of ordering from the catalogues of approved books.

#### **5.3.2.6 Curriculum Evaluation**

Findings indicate that external, qualified and experienced evaluators are not adequately informed regarding the RNCS and its processes (cf. 4.3.3.6). Principals who know the theory and practice of the RNCS on the other hand, are not necessarily expert evaluators. Findings indicate that the better choice would be *for principals to be trained as evaluators* to enable them to undertake their own evaluations. Almost anything in education can be an object for evaluation, but what principals must distinguish between, is that evaluating for accountability would entail the evaluation of outcomes and evaluating for development or performance improvement, would entail evaluating processes. It is further of essence that principals are trained as evaluators by qualified, experienced evaluators. Internal evaluations are necessary in the school to establish whether the curriculum, or aspects thereof, are developed and implemented effectively.

In each of these six functions of the principal it became clear that the principal cannot be expected to execute these tasks if he or she does not receive the necessary training for it.

### **5.3.3 Classroom Level**

The teacher has an equally important role to fulfil in the implementation of OBE from a management perspective (cf. 4.3.5). At classroom level, his or her main function regarding management is that of developing the three levels of the curriculum. The investigation brought the following findings to light:

#### **5.3.3.1 Curriculum Development**

Interviews and an examination of documents in rural areas showed that there was little evidence of a Learning Programme, Work Schedule or a Lesson Plan – contrary to what teachers were taught and told to do at the RNCS training (cf. 4.3.5.1). In the better organised, resourceful schools in urban areas however, the

presence of these items was the norm. Teachers find the development of these three levels of curriculum development quite daunting at first, but as they progress and practise, the design becomes increasingly familiar. Templates provided by the DOE and the EC DOE have alleviated most of the fears around the issue. It seems however, that a major concern is that *teachers need more guidance* in terms of learner activities when working towards the Assessment Standards.

Since the main concern of curriculum designers at national level has been to foreground integration, there has been an under-specification of the requirements for conceptual coherence across all eight Learning Areas. This under-specification has led to successive rounds of attempts to compensate for this absence of content.

The RNCS therefore seems unable to provide the needed specification of content because of the strong logic on integration that dominates curriculum development. Teachers spent three hours in one of the training sessions on clustering and integrating Assessment Standards and Learning Outcomes. Although the RNCS has fewer design features than C2005, there is still not sufficient clarity *in* the Assessment Standards on the content to be *applied* in order to attain the Learning Outcome. In the Assessment Standards the sequential development (progression) must be spelt out for teachers particularly in Learning Areas where it occurs most, like Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Languages. Consideration must be given to the fact that these Learning Areas mentioned, have a knowledge base which extends far beyond that of compulsory schooling. A solution to the problem would be to develop an Assessment Standard guideline to assist teachers in curriculum development.

Although the Assessment Standards provide for the skills, knowledge and values to be taught in each grade, its scope, level and depth it is still too vague for Learning Areas that require sequential development. It is therefore recommended that this strategic plan be developed for all three phases in which a detailed analysis is given of the sequencing and progression of activities within these Learning Areas. It needs to include an implementation plan which includes timelines indicating by when these competencies must be accomplished in each grade.

At all times it must be taken into account that if Learning Areas with distinctive conceptual coherence requirements are driven mainly by clustering and integration, then the potential for conceptual progression is retarded.

Admittedly all the troubling issues arising from the findings should have been included in this section to make the investigation more complete. However, the study could not cover every aspect of the problems around the implementation of OBE in the Eastern Cape. It rather tried to provide guidelines and recommendations on issues in need of immediate intervention.

## **5.4 Recommendations for Further Research**

### **5.4.1 The Availability, Quality and Effectiveness of Training Materials for Teacher Training**

In the light of all the concerns raised around the development of training materials for teacher training, it is recommended that further research on the topic be carried out to establish needs in other provinces and what mechanisms are in place to sustain the process. This should ultimately ensure successful teacher training in the RNCS – a project of paramount importance in the implementation of OBE at district level.

### **5.4.2 The Training of Principals in Managing the Curriculum**

It is obvious from the findings that principals cannot perform their tasks if they do not receive training. It is therefore recommended that future investigations examine the extent to which principals are trained in provinces in managing the curriculum and the effectiveness thereof. The training of principals in managing the curriculum might be researched in terms of:

- the training models
- funding
- training materials

- content for training
- communication structures
- logistics and
- accountability (outcomes for the training).

## **5.5 Limitations of the Study**

Typical of qualitative research is the small size of the sample which is a limitation to the study. It does not support a general theory on the roles of district officials, principals and teachers in the implementation of OBE. The study was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature (cf. 1.3) and as a result no attempt was made to generalise or quantify the findings.

Since the Eastern Cape is, geographically speaking, one of the largest provinces in the country, vast travelling distances to remote areas often made the study difficult or, even at times, impossible. Time was also compromised through untarred roads which often required the use of '4 x 4' vehicles.

Since districts are understaffed, officials could not always keep their interview appointments due to other commitments. The teacher unions were also on strike on two occasions, which led to teachers being called away to participate in the strike actions.

The controversy around OBE in the country often led to an unwillingness of participants to be interviewed. Some did not understand OBE and did not want their lack of understanding or confusion to be exposed. This condition often resulted from the fact that participants were not well versed in English which was the medium of training. Interpreters often had to be called in.

In spite of these limitations, data gathered from the study yielded key areas that contributed to a better understanding of the role of district officials, principals and teachers in managing the curriculum.

## **5.6 Concluding Remarks**

OBE is considered to be an important cornerstone for a democratic society. It is vital in building the knowledge, skills and values that underpin a just and equitable social order.

The curricula – first C2005 and then the RNCS – was introduced to take the OBE process forward. The first one met with a number of implementation problems and was subsequently reviewed and revised. The latter proved to be clearer with simpler language. Curriculum requirements were also pitched at the specific grades.

The challenge however, was for the province to implement OBE successfully at the three levels of delivery in the province. Officials, principals and teachers were implicated to oversee the management of the OBE implementation.

The study has attempted to examine the process of implementation in the Eastern Cape as it stands at present and to provide guidelines to enhance the implementation in the province. Findings were often encouraging and positive. Where factors were challenging and hampering the process, it was often due to a lack of resources, infrastructure or commitment. The curriculum must be managed as part of an ongoing process at district, school and classroom levels so that it is always seen as being relevant.

It is the responsibility of the DOE to provide guidance in the implementation of OBE in the province so that there is a measure of uniformity in all provinces. The province should not hesitate in seeking this guidance should the DOE's assistance appear inadequate. Pertinent factors as dealt with in this project, should be addressed in order to facilitate the provision of OBE in the Eastern Cape.