

**THE PEDAGOGICAL VALIDITY OF THE ASSESSMENT  
INSTRUMENT USED IN THE OUTCOME-BASED  
EDUCATION WITH REFERENCE TO THE: SENIOR PHASE  
OF EDUCATION**

BY

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**MVIST  
370.11 SKOS**



## DECLARATION

I the undersigned declare that I have scrutinised the language used in this dissertation



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## DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late parents Dina Turu Skosana, Thomas Mzimbili Skosana and also my sisters Poppy, Christina, Anna and Lizzy, as well as to my two brothers David and George

## SUMMARY

TITLE: THE PEDAGOGICAL VALIDITY OF THE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS  
USED IN OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION: IN THE SENIOR PHASE

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The study's main focus was on the pedagogical validity of the assessment instruments used by educators in the senior phase classrooms to assess learners. The assessment instruments play a major role in determining whether a learner has achieved the required skills, knowledge, values and attitudes as well as whether there can be progression from one grade to the next.

The study explored through in-depth interviews and observations the validity assessment instruments has in the teaching and learning tasks that both educators and learners engage in. the study strives to provide core and additional principles that must be met by any assessment instrument, so that educators can be able to successfully guide the learners.

In conclusion, the study discovered that the current assessment instruments used in the senior phase classrooms are not yet pedagogically valid to guarantee that learners have acquired the required skill, knowledge, values and attitudes as they progress between grade seven and grade nine.

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **THE PEDAGOGICAL VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND AUTHENTICITY OF THE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS**

### **1.1 THE STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The main thrust of this research is to determine the Pedagogical validity of the assessment instruments that are used in the Outcomes-based education (OBE), in the senior phase, where the General Education and Training Certificate is issued (GETC).

### **1.2 ORIENTATION AND MOTIVATING FACTORS**

Since we live in a changing society, the needs of a society are also changing and subsequently have implications for education and assessment at schools. The National Education Policy Act, No. 27 of 1996 and the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:33) discuss a new approach to assessment and types of assessment. The new approach to assessment is actually entrenched by the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA 2000:22). To this end, the Educationally Speaking Conference document (2002:82) also adds that "an Outcomes Based Approach has no promotion requirements in the General Education and Training (GET) Band from Grade R until Grade 9", which is the exit year for the GET Band". The recent Circular 63/2002 outlines how the new forms of assessment should be implemented. This circular deals with the progression of learners from one class to the next until Grade 9. It was this issue of progression from grade to grade that prompted the researcher to undertake the present study (Assessment in Grade Nine, 2002).

According to the Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion (May 2002:4) "assessment practices within the GET must also be guided by the constitution and relevant policy documents". To this end, the author argues that the progression of learners with their

peer group should be dependent on some reliable and authentic instruments of assessment in the senior phase so that the change from progression to promotion does not become a red robot like the current matriculation examination. According to Bellis (2000:1), the training of educators is also critical because 'if the Curriculum 2005 training sessions are not significant, performance by educators will not be standard'. As the education system changes from the old curriculum to the new Curriculum 2005 (C2005), educators must be well trained.

In this context Wilhelms (1967:3) agrees with the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:33) that "every society and school is in some way forever sizing up how assessment processes are ongoing and making up their mind what to do next,". According to Lombard (2000:84), the process of continuous assessment allows a learner to master the content or the skill at his or her own pace. However, it is important to ensure that during these changes in the assessment processes, the attitudes of educators, learners and stakeholders remain positive as Reglin (1990:214), De Villiers, Coetzee and Venter (1991:10) in Nonyana (2002:1) instructively warn that 'attitudes exert considerable influence on performance'. As education is being transformed from the old content-based to the new approach, we must take everybody along (Citizenship Education In Gauteng Schools, 2002:1).

To this end, Rault-Smith (2000:133) at the assessment conference but stresses "that new assessment instruments that are pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic are urgently needed". At the Educationally Speaking Conference held in Rustenburg during May 2002, Rault-Smith further raised concerns about how educators can "quality assure and what they can quality assure". Furthermore, the critical question was: "are the assessment instruments that were used in the apartheid DET still valid for the new outcomes-based curriculum of today"? The answer is a clear, 'no', because any educator who uses instruments that are purely content-based in the OBE grades will only be promoting inequality.

Lombard and Meyer (2000:89) declare that there should be "a new form of assessment that would have an effect on methodology and planning". Access, quality, redress, development and new forms of assessment can therefore not be effectively

implemented because there are no valid and reliable assessment instruments in place (South African Qualifications Authority, 1998:1). "Educators have to comply with the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:14), which states that there are twelve critical outcomes adopted by SAQA. If the educators comply with policy, the Critical Outcomes can be used to ensure that learners gain the required skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. Although Raseala (2000:1) does not deal with the construction of assessment instruments, he supports the view that " the outcomes-based approach needs assessment instruments that will help to produce citizens that will be capable of flexible thinking and independent learning". However, if the development of educators is still a cause for concern as raised by the Curriculum 2005 Review Committee (2000:15), then educators will not successful skill learners as required policy (Policy Document 1997:14). In the senior phase we do not have such instruments.

This absence of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase and the GETC has negative implications for both the specific outcomes and critical outcomes of outcomes-based education because OBE will not be able to produce capable, critical and independent thinkers. In responding to the report of the Review Committee on Curriculum 2005, the national Minister of Education accepted that the orientation and support for educators had not been adequate (Asmal 2000). This too, motivated the researcher to undertake the present study. Rault-Smith (2000:133) appropriately describes assessment in the new education system as "the Cinderella of Curriculum 2005". However, unless there is an assessment instrument that has the principles identified by Bunning in Zuber-Skerrit (1996:92) and the Independent Examinations Board (1998:8), the hidden effectiveness of outcomes-based education, in the South African context, will not be realized.

Furthermore, according to the NQF in the SAQA Act (No. 58 of 1995) it is made clear that, 'it is now time that pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments are developed to address the legacy of Bantu Education.' If the implementation of the new dimensions and forms of assessment is to succeed, the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase and the GETC is urgent, or else, some schools are going to promote inequality in the education profession. It is also important to note that currently the

Gauteng Department of Education does not have a tight final assessment policy in place yet (See circular 41/2000 and circular 13/2000).

Through the General Education and Training Certificate the National Department of Education aims at introducing appropriate and sound assessment instruments that will ensure that educators and learners do not focus on the retention and presentation of knowledge only, but also on the assessment of skills required and insight gained. However, such assessment instruments are currently not there. Teaching and learning may not be transformed" (Klenowski in Barry 1999:26). This brings us to the next problem that this study wishes to unravel in order to come out with a solution in the form of pertinent suggestions and proposals with regard to the development of a pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instrument that can be used in the senior phase.

To this end, Wilhelms (1967: 3) and Lujten (1996:60) agree, "that the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments is a continuous process." Therefore, this study is on course as it intends to ascertain the validity and reliability of the current assessment instruments used to track the performance of learners as a form of feedback. This includes "addressing barriers to learning" (Curriculum 2005 Assessment Guidelines for Inclusion 2002: 6). In line with the argument by Darling-Hammond et al. (1995:2), the Gauteng Department of Education holds 'conferences to discuss learner performance both inside and outside school and to confer about how to best serve learner needs'. While some collaborative work based on interaction and exchanges among education stakeholders is taking place, the question is still, 'do we have assessment instruments with which educators, learners, education officials, educator unions, employers and parents could proudly and confidently identify with?' The researcher agrees with Jansen (1998:8) that stakeholders will not claim ownership of OBE if they were not consulted. Therefore, the answer is still not clear, hence this present study.

### **1.3 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Since there is no guarantee that educators, learners and stakeholders can identify with

the assessment instruments currently used in the senior phase and the GETC, the research problem was formulated as follows:

- How pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic are the assessment instruments that are currently used in Outcomes-based Education, in the senior phase and the GETC?
- What principles are underpinning the current assessment instruments?
- Can assessment instruments in Outcomes-based Education be used to improve learner performance?
- Can assessment instruments be used to transform teaching and learning practice?
- Can principles of assessment in Outcomes-based Education be used to promote critical thinking in the learners?

#### **1.4 AIMS OF THE STUDY**

The following are the aims of the study:

- The immediate aim of this study is to investigate the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in Outcomes-based Education, in the senior phase and the GETC. The problem is that Raseala's (2000:15) "principles that promote sound and authentic assessment of learner performances", cannot be implemented without the correct assessment instrument. According to the GIED conference that was held on 27 and 28 February 2002, it was confirmed that 'educators are still struggling with discipline in OBE classrooms'. The researcher argues that this is due to the fact that there are no valid and reliable instruments of assessment to assist educators to manage OBE successfully.
- The long-term aim of the study is as follows:
  - To make a contribution towards the development of an assessment

instrument that assesses skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and the insight of the learners in the senior phase.

- To find an assessment instrument which will ensure that Specific Outcomes and Critical Outcomes are attained.

## **1.5 FORMULATION OF THE HYPOTHESES**

This study aims to test the following hypotheses

- Assessment instruments used in the senior phase and the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC) are not effective enough to assess the progress of the learners in the outcomes-based education system.
- Pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments for the senior phase and the GETC still need to be developed in order to cover all the sixty-six Specific Outcomes and the twelve Critical Outcomes across the eight Learning Areas.
- Introducing assessment instruments that are effective and relevant would lead to stakeholders in education to identify with them.

## **1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW**

From the literature read, there is no evidence of such a study having been conducted before, hence this present study. The IEB (1998: 20) supports Circular 23/2002:2 and the "Assessment of Learners in Grade 9" conference document of the Gauteng Department of Education. (Gauteng Department of Education: Session 2, 2002) that 'there should be on-going assessment in the process of assessing learners', but the researcher argues that; if there are no pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments, educators cannot track if learners have achieved the Specific Outcomes that were the focus of the learning activities. Without pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments:

- The changes to assessment which General Education and Training (also

called GET) aims to achieve

- The new dimensions to assessment and
- The new forms of assessment (Senior Phase Assessment Guidelines, 2002) will all be doomed to failure.

The following two questions have thus become critical:

- Will Common Tasks For Assessment (CTA) and School Based Assessment (SBA) be effective when there are no pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments?
- How will schools develop rubrics and improve their own assessment instruments if educators seem to be inadequately trained?
- In other words, the argument is that pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments can play a crucial role when it comes to:
  - transformation of teaching, learning and assessment processes in the senior phase,
  - covering the sixty-six Specific Outcomes across the eight Learning Areas,
  - attainment of the twelve Critical Outcomes, and
  - equipping learners for Further Education and Training (FET) by pointing out their possible career paths.

## **1.7 ELUCIDATION OF THE TITLE, CONCEPTS AND RELATED CONCEPTS**

### **1.7.1 Title**

The title reads as follows: 'The Pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in Outcomes-based Education, in the senior phase;' it therefore, focuses attention specifically on the validity, reliability and authenticity of the



assessment instruments that are used to assess learners in the senior phase and the General Education and Training Certificate (GETC).

### 1.7.2 Concepts

The word 'outcome' means 'what the learners will be able to do after they have learned' IEB (1998: iii) and the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:21). According to Killen (ASSEESA Conference, 2000:17), This study too, regards outcomes as what learners are able to do or perform as a result of their learning.

#### ➤ **Pedagogics:**

This is the science or study of the science of teaching (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary 1994: 911). In this study, pedagogics will refer to the scientific knowledge that informs educators how to utilize assessment instruments to inspire learners to perform better.

#### ➤ **Validity:**

According to Killen (2000:18) at the Assessment Conference, "assessment procedures should actually assess what they are designed to assess and claim to assess. This refers to the capacity of an assessment instrument to lead the learner. Learner: A child who attends school.

#### ➤ **Phase:**

This refers to clusters of three grades per phase in the General Education and Training band, according to the policy document. The senior phase consists of grades 7 to 9.

#### ➤ **Assessment:**

This refers to ongoing formative and summative tasks set in order to obtain information about a learner's performance in order to ascertain whether outcomes have been achieved and finding out if learners understand (IEB 1998: ii) and (Senior Phase Policy Document 1997:2).

➤ **Educator:**

In this study, this term refers to an adult who guides and leads the learner in teaching and learning activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The term does not refer to any other person or adult who can teach children.

➤ **Suggestion:**

In this study this term means to put an idea forward so that the next person can accept the suggested idea.

➤ **Proposal:**

This term refers to a plan that is put forward for consideration.

➤ **Recommndation:**

It is to advise someone else about what the best choice is.

**1.7.3 Related concepts**

➤ **Competency:**

This is the capacity to perform within specified ranges and contexts.

➤ **Curriculum:**

This term refers to all aspects of teaching and learning (Senior Phase Policy Document 1997:14). These are all the learning areas and learning fields offered by a school or college.

➤ **Critical outcome:**

These are broad and generic cross-curricular outcomes adopted by the South African Qualifications Authority (Intermediate Phase Policy Document).

➤ **Early Childhood Development (ECD):**

This term refers to processes that have to do with supporting learners who

have physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, moral and social problems.

➤ **Specific outcome:**

This refers to that which the learners must be able to do at the end of a learning experience.

➤ **Progression:**

Learners no longer pass but progress from one grade to the other.

➤ **Continuous assessment:**

This means assessing learners on an on-going basis against given criteria.

➤ **Quality:**

Evidence that indicates that knowledge and skills are of the appropriate standard (Killen 2000:20).

## 1.8 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

For this study Magaliesburg is the chosen area and it lies on the border of Gauteng and North-West provinces (Nonyane 2002:18). It is a small town of about 34 km from Krugersdorp. This area consists of five primary and two secondary schools. The schools are within reach, and were visited with reasonable ease during the study. The names of the secondary schools are Magaliesburg State School and Bekker. The names of the three primary schools are Mphethuto, Rand Gold and Laerskool Bekker. These will be discussed in the subsequent subsections.

Magalies state school is a former DET secondary school and Bekker a former TED secondary school. The three primary schools that were selected, as already stated are: Laerskool Bekker which is a former TED school, as well as Mphethuto and Rand Gold, which are former DET schools. Although the former DET primary schools were randomly selected, the researcher purposely decided to include both secondary schools because they are the only two in the area. The Afrikaans primary school was also

intentionally included so that the researcher could have a representative sample of schools in Magaliesburg. A sample consisting of stakeholders in each of the chosen schools was thereafter selected for this study. Former DET schools in this area are resource-poor and the researcher chose them to highlight the need to "maximize available infrastructure and the personal qualities" of farm school educators (Simosko and Cook 1996: 1). Furthermore, five GDE officials and five consultants from the Gauteng Institute for Educational Development were selected for interviews. This is discussed further at 3.1 in this chapter. The total number of selected was twenty two. Except for Randgold, where only one respondent was selected, two heads of departments were selected from each of the four remaining schools. The selected individuals at school level came from the schools below:

### **1.8.1 Bekker Laerskool**

This school was established in 1935 as an Afrikaans medium school. The school started with 47 learners. On 6 October 1953 the boarding section of the school was founded and started with sixty boys and sixteen girls. The number of educators grew from 2 in 1935 to nineteen in 2002. The school has also become a dual medium school..

### **1.8.2 Mphe-Thuto Primary**

This farm school started as Joachim van Bruggen farm school in the days of the Transvaal Education Department. It used to be a school for whites only. The school gradually became empty and instead of integrating learners from various racial groups it opted to enroll black learners only at the beginning of 1997 when it was taken over by the Gauteng Department of Education. Since 1997 this school enrolls black learners only. Of the two hundred learners currently enrolled, there are no white learners. The school has a staff of eight black educators which includes one black female principal. The school's name has since been changed to Mphe-Thuto.

### **1.8.3 Rand Gold Primary**

Rand Gold Farm School started as a Nursery School and developed into a primary school in 1979. From the beginning of 1979 this school had three educators with fifty-

five learners and catered for grades one to four only. It was at this schools where the principal was interviewed because she is the only one who is at post level two. In ordinary public schools this post level is for a head of department. Contrary to other schools that are growing in the area, the enrolment of learners at Randgold is static because after all these years the school has seven educators, fifty-five learners and a principal.

#### **1.8.4 Bekker High School**

This school and its hostel facilities were established and opened on 26 August 1935 with 564 learners and two educators. It was known as Bekker Skoolplaas. It started as an agricultural school but the school has grown over the years to the extent that it now also offers academic, technical and accounting streams of the curriculum. In addition to the twenty-three educators, the governing body has also employed three more educators whose salaries are paid by them.

#### **1.8.5 Magalies State School**

Magalies State School started in 1984 as a combined school. It was then known as Sello Moreneng. Initially there were seven educators with four hundred and twenty four learners. Currently the school has nineteen educators and seven hundred and twenty five-learners. In 1997 Magalies State lost its primary school section to Mphethuto Farm School and has been operating as a secondary school since then.

#### **1.8.6 Magaliesburg**

Nine heads of departments (At Randgold the principal was interviewed as an HOD because she is on post level 2) educators from the five above-mentioned schools were interviewed. Two heads of departments from H/S Bekker and two heads of departments from Magalies State were interviewed. These heads of departments represented the views of all the senior phase educators at each school. Heads of departments responsible for the senior phase at the three primary schools were interviewed and notes were taken. At Randgold two learners were interviewed but at the other two primary schools four class representatives were interviewed. These two primary schools

are far bigger than Randgold. The class representatives from all five schools came from the senior phase classes. From the senior phase classes, the educators identified a boy and a girl. To ensure that all learners' responses were neutral and balanced, neither prefects nor members of Learners Representative Councils were chosen.

It was also not costly to visit the schools in Magaliesburg because the researcher works in the area for most of the time. Schools in this area represented a complete picture of what the researcher could investigate about the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of assessment instruments as implemented in Outcomes-based education, in the senior phase. As indicated in the Pretoria News of 20/04/2000, our children do not have enough textbooks, schools in Magaliesburg are resource-poor except Laerskool Bekker and H/S Bekker which are well-resourced schools. Fortunately, according to Khulisa Management Services (2001: 12), the introduction of OBE/C2005 is an education policy watershed in South African Education, ensuring that educator development is a priority in Gauteng. The researcher therefore aimed at developing an assessment instrument that will be pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic and yet remain simple to be understood by all education officials, educators, educator unions, learners and parents.

## **1.9 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

The qualitative methods was used to conduct this study. To facilitate this approach, the following methods were used:

### **1.9.1 The Descriptive Method**

Cohen and Marion as quoted in Mathipa (1989:35), hold that "when this method is used, it can help to describe, contrast, classify, analyse and interpret the entities and events that constitute their various fields of enquiry". In this study the descriptive method was therefore used to describe and analyse various assessment situations, problems and successes. Matseke (2000:14) notes that "the descriptive research method involves sending questionnaires and conducting interviews". In this study the researcher was therefore able to deliver questionnaires to educators and conduct interviews with them.

### **1.9.2 The Interview Method**

The interview method was used to interview respondents. Only unstructured interviews were conducted. Mathipa (1989:36) holds that "the unstructured interview method is rich in technique and procedures that allow the researcher to mine the true state of people's attitude and opinions".

### **1.9.3 Phenomenological Method**

According to Mathipa (1989:33), when the phenomenological method is used, reality is exposed (1989:33). This method was therefore used because it would help the researcher to be objective and free of prejudice when investigating assessment issues. Leedy (as quoted in Matseke 2000:12) says the phenomenological method is "an attempt to understand what a specific experience is like by describing it as it is found in concrete situations and it appears to the people who are living it". This method would, therefore, help the researcher to have a better understanding of the views of educators, as implementers of assessment instruments in the classrooms.

### **1.9.4 Opinionnaire Method**

According to Matseke (2000:14), when this method is used, "opinions, beliefs and attitudes of all stakeholders involved can be utilized in ensuring stability in the education profession". This method therefore assisted the researcher in gathering information by asking for people's opinions and assessing their attitudes towards the assessment instruments used in OBE in the senior phase.

### **1.9.5 Analytic Method**

According to Ary (1990:485) and Van Rensburg & Landman (1984: 269) the analytic method allows a researcher to work analytically and never prescriptively. This method help the researcher in processing, analysing results and interpreting findings.

### **1.9.6 Direct Observation**

According to Bailey (1982:8), "researchers using the direct observation method rely heavily on verbal analyses and are likely to be interested in a more subjective

understanding of their research subjects". In other words, he argues that this method should be used in a way that will promote rigorous quantitative dialogue. Barry (1999:135), maintains that observation is of particular relevance to the assessment of the critical outcomes that contribute to the full personal development of the learner. Finally, Bailey (1982:9) contends that a researcher should prepare a research design that will tell how the data will be gathered and analysed. This could help in ensuring that the assessment instruments developed are unbiased.

### **1.9.7 Hermeneutic Method**

Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation, and tries to explain how during different times people come to understand the same things differently. Thus, Sathekge in Mathipa (1994:10) argues that the hermeneutic method helps a researcher to interpret meanings and explain information better." This method was used, in this study, for gathering, analyzing and interpreting information from newspapers, books, dissertations, periodicals, theses and journals.

## **1.10 THE PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

Chapter I, deals with the research layout or design.

Chapter II, handles the conceptual framework, namely, principles, values and their application.

Chapter III, deals with the implementation of the research design.

Chapter IV, deals with the findings of the research and their interpretations.

Chapter V, deals with suggestions, proposals and recommendations.

## **1.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments should be available to guide and promote effective teaching and learning in schools. The involvement of stakeholders such as parents, educators, learners, education officials and educator



unions in the construction of desirable assessment instruments needs to be promoted, if the issue of ownership is to be ensured as well. Such collaboration could take place by inviting all these stakeholders to workshops and meetings where the assessment instruments are developed. In other words, it is imperative for stakeholders to identify with the assessment instruments used to assess learners in the schools; because such instruments can easily generate controversy and conflict. To conclude, chapter II provides a perspective on principles and values that underlie pedagogically sound, valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments.

# **CHAPTER II**

## **A PERSPECTIVE ON THE PRINCIPLES AND VALUES THAT UNDERSCORE PEDAGOGICALLY VALID, RELIABLE AND AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main aim of this study is, the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments that will assess skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and the insight of learners in the senior phase and the GETC. The definitions of assessment, reliability, validity, and authenticity were given at 1.7.2.1, 1.7.2.2, 1.7.2.3 and 1.7.2.4 in chapter one. The prevailing problem is that educators in the senior phase seem to be lacking instruments to "prepare learners for the FET and the world of work" (Intermediate Phase Policy Document 1997:5). This lack of assessment instruments shown in this chapter makes it impossible to create a classroom environment where "virtually all learners could learn" (Turner 1980: 5). Educators need to use pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments to guarantee the scholastic achievement of the learners.

### **2.2 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION**

Although the two terms are related because they both deal with the performance of learners, it is important to differentiate between assessment and evaluation, so that it can be understood why the researcher opted to study assessment rather than evaluation. Straughan (1980:9) agrees that 'there is a good deal of overlap between the use of the words assessment and evaluation'. In this study the two terms will not necessarily be used interchangeably.

### **2.2.1 What assessment is**

Assessment should be done on an on-going basis (Asquith and Lombard, 2000: 50). It is a process whereby a variety of methods, forms and tools are used to find out if learners have achieved the expected level of outcomes or not. In support, Raseala (2000:18) defines assessment as "the action and the way of finding out what someone knows." There is a need for the correct assessment instruments to be in place so that educators can assess learners effectively in order to determine what they know and also can do. The GIED (November 2000: 6), also demands that "a school should have a clear, consistent policy on how to assess fairly, reliably and validly". As argued by the National Curriculum Development Committee (Speak Out 1996:8), the availability of such a pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instrument can influence methodology and planning. In addition, it can help educators to cover in their teaching both the sixty-six specific outcomes and the twelve critical outcomes prescribed for the learners by OBE and the five minimum forms of assessment required by the National Department of Education (Senior Phase Guidelines, 2002).

### **2.2.2 What evaluation is**

Unlike assessment, which aims at finding out about learner performance, evaluation aims at judging and making findings about learner performance with the purpose of allocating credits (Thipe, Mdakane and Associates: Grade 6 Training, 2002). While Le Grange (1998:37) sees evaluation as the process of making judgements, in this study, evaluation is a process of interpreting findings of assessment in order to credit learners for achieving specific outcomes and meeting assessment criteria. According to Hitchcock and Hughes (1995:31), 'evaluation means evaluating events systematically in order to make decisions'. The focus of this study is therefore more on assessment procedures that can be effectively carried out if pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments are in place.

## 2.3 THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE PRINCIPLES UNDERPINNING A VALID AND RELIABLE ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT

Despite the fact that senior phase educators have been trained and therefore should know that they must not use “assessment instruments that are devoted to a rigid syllabus and to what the learner knows” (The Teachers’ Manual For Grade Seven 2000: 5), many educators revert to them. Gauteng Department of Education circulars 41/2001, 13/2001, 23/2002 and 58/2002 carry specific information about compliance with the implementation of assessment procedures in the senior phase. According to circulars 23/2002 and 58/2002 educators must ensure that ‘all the Specific Outcomes within a Learning Area are covered through the different forms of assessment’. Therefore, the following four core principles of OBE have been identified so that OBE can be implemented successfully (Collier 2000:60)

➤ **Clarity of focus:**

Both educator and learners must have a clear focus of what is going to happen in a lesson.

➤ **Expanded opportunities:**

Teaching and learning time should be flexible in order to give learners more opportunities.

➤ **Design down:**

Educators should start their planning with the desired outcome and plan backward (Outcomes-based education: Educator’s guide: 2002:8).

➤ **High expectations:**

This means raising the teaching and learning standard in teaching the learners.

However, the OBE principles identified by Spady in Outcomes-based Education (Educators’ Guide, 2000:8), do not deal with assessment instruments that must be used

in order to implement OBE successfully. At the “Educationally Speaking Conference” of the GDE held in Rustenburg during May 2002, Sindy Mafanga (2002: 79) stressed that “valid, reliable and credible assessment is an indispensable skill required of every educator”. The researcher agrees with these assessment principles but educators need assessment instruments that they can use to promote assessment to be valid, reliable and credible. To this end, this study has identified ten principles that are central to the construction and development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase. These principles will be discussed in terms of their nature, origin, value and application. The following section discusses the principles individually and separately:

### **2.3.1 The principle of quality**

The Collins Dictionary (1993:1091) defines quality as “high standards and abilities that are provided or attributes that are necessary for a task, office or duty”. While Molnar in Barry (1999:24) argues in a tax context that “quality assurance ensures that the taxpayers receive quality education in exchange for their tax contributions”. The McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology (1992:576), and the Campton Encyclopedia (1994:4) view the term ‘quality’ as originating in the manufacturing sector, where products or objects had to meet certain specifications in order to satisfy consumers. Over a period of time, the term ‘quality’ started to be used in other context, than commerce.

In education it led to learners now being viewed as products that schools are expected to produce for employers to consume in the form of employees. In other words, the concept ‘quality’ is related to teaching/learning activities that lead to the determination of what learners are able to perform as a result.

In the senior phase classrooms, quality can ensure that educators provide teaching of a high standard so that the potential of a learner could be actualized. According to Spady (1994:18), OBE outcomes are “high-quality and culminate with the demonstration of significant learning”. To ensure this, the educators must have pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments in place so as to generate authentic feedback geared at the improvement of learner performance.

Barry (1999:24), Jacobs (2000:01) and the GDE in Education Practice (1999:52) all agree that quality assessment instruments can 'ensure excellence in education'. If an educator uses an assessment instrument that has quality, he or she can be confident that learner achievement in and outside of the school is guaranteed (GDE 461, GET Band, Learner Profile 2000). Wrong assessment can be eliminated from getting into the Learner Profile. In the senior phase classrooms quality assessment instruments can be used for different purposes. They can:

- assist to evaluate the success of a learning activity;
- aid an educator in checking whether learners have understood new work or not;
- help in evaluating the effectiveness of an educator's teaching methods;
- aid an educator in placing a learner in an appropriate group;
- help a learner to form a clear picture of his or her strengths and weaknesses;
- aid a parent who wants to know how closely the school standards relate to national standards;
- guide an educational psychologist in diagnosing the root cause of a learner's learning difficulty; and
- assist in baseline assessment

(IEB 1998:8).

Quality can guarantee to educators that the current assessment instruments are capable of transforming classroom-related teaching and learning activities. However, the assessment instruments currently used in the senior phase lack quality and the implication is that:

- assessment is not pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic;
- educators cannot be focussed in their production of citizens and workers for the world of employment; and

- Parents and stakeholders are not interested in them.

Suppose an educator gives learners work in the class and wants them to be critical and creative; the educator is likely to find that the current assessment instruments used in the senior phase do not encourage learners to “feel free to explore in creative and messy ways” (Grade 8 Learner’ Handbook, MLMMS, Senior Phase). Through workshops and cluster meeting educators can however be trained to create a conducive environment for teaching and equipping learners with the required skills, values, knowledge and attitudes.

### **2.3.2 The principle of objectivity**

Objectivity and quality are related because they both contain an element of high standards in the performance of assessment. Objectivity is against personal prejudice. According to the Education White Paper (6: 10) the policy on inclusion aims at getting rid of segregation and prejudice against learners with disabilities, but the researcher argues that if there are no valid and reliable instruments of assessment, the inclusion policy cannot be implemented successfully. In education, objectivity in the assessment instruments can help to enhance achievement in teaching and learning situations because it will discourage the abuse of assessment by educators.

Historically, objectivity may have originated because the human race has always been trying and struggling to do better, but in education objectivity probably started with educators striving for objectivity in the marking and allocation of scores to the work of learners (Chauhan 1993: 24). According to Funk and Wagnalls' Standard Desk Dictionary (1984: 451), "objectivity is the state or quality of being objective. Objectivity as a principle should enhance the quality of the assessment instruments, because, according to the Young Students Intermediate Dictionary (1988: 492), objectivity means a wish to do better. To add to this, according to the Collins Dictionary (1993: 921), there is objectivity when assessment instrument exist independently of perception or conceptions by individuals. Assessment instruments should therefore not be influenced by any mental tendency or inclination meant to discriminate.

There is no validity, reliability and authenticity in the senior phase and GETC

assessment processes. Objectivity as a distinct feature of an assessment instrument, is there to ensure that all stakeholders accept the assessment instrument as being pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic, to the extent that all schools will be able to equip senior phase and GETC learners with skills that will make them acceptable to the further education and training band, employers and society. For example, in a classroom an educator who is not skilled in developing his or her own objective assessment instruments may not be able to:

- reflect on good assessment practice;
- take a broad view of the achievement of learners;
- give feedback about assessment processes;
- avoid distortion in assessment;
- assess learner achievement ((Grade 7 ILP, MLMMS, Module 3);
- encourage a range of assessments across a range of contexts;
- check both the assessment process and the product;
- implement a holistic type of assessment;
- share assessment criteria with learners;
- include learner self-assessment; and
- create equal opportunities for all learners (IEB 1998: 15).

When education officials visit schools to monitor how educators assess in the classroom, they will not be able to support the implementation of C2005 and OBE, if they are prejudiced. An objective assessment instrument should enable education officials to:

- pedagogically assist both educators and learners; and
- easily identify weaknesses through assessment



(Grade 8 Module 2, LLC, Illustrative Learning Programme).

- Objectivity plays an important role in assessment processes. It can assist educators to remain focused when assessing learners;
- stick to their task of producing quality products (Grade 4 Educator's Guide, HSS: Intermediate Phase);
- avoid using assessment as an instrument of maintaining discipline; and
- ensure assessment is not used to exclude other learners.

If the assessment instruments used lack objectivity, learning activities in the classrooms may not be able to "develop a wide range of skills" across the eight Learning Areas (Botha et al 2000: ii). To make matters worse, the senior phase may be failing to prepare learners for grade nine, which is an exit point.

### **2.3.3 The principle of practicability**

Assessment instruments should be practical in order to encourage learner participation and the involvement of other stakeholders in assessment processes of the senior phase and the GETC because, according to Barry (1999:98), "educators may have pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments", but, if those assessment instruments are not practically implementable, they are of no use.

Practicability means something that is capable of being implemented. The practicability of an assessment instrument should not be questionable because, as stated above, Barry (1999:98), contends that "an assessment instrument should be capable of being done". Practicability seems to have originated from people's attempts to search for things and instruments that could be practically carried out. In education, assessment instruments should be simple and reasonable, and not difficult for educators and learners to plan and implement as one of the learning activities. If assessment instruments used by educators in the classrooms are not appropriate, OBE will be negatively affected and the GETC will not be successful because Kramer (1999:37) argues that "any education system is only as good as its assessment instruments".

Therefore, assessment instruments used in the senior phase must be simple and easy to use.

Spady in Kramer (1999:142) instructively argues that "when educators understand the outcomes to be achieved by the learners at the end of a learning activity, they can plan with ease". The practicability of the assessment instruments used in the senior phase and the GETC will therefore make it easy for educators to plan learning and assessment activities effectively. Practicability can make educators to be able to plan learning and assessment activities by ensuring that assessment is not only theoretical but also implementable. Practical assessment instruments work and pay off (Popenoe 1982:122). This is confirmed by Collins (1993:1050) and the "Assessment of Learners in Grade 9, Training Manual, 2002" who argue that "practicability has to do with real and practical experience".

One is inclined to agree with Darling-Hammond *et.al* (1995:2) who advocate for alternative assessment instruments and practices that will directly measure actual performance of learners. Assessing learners alone is not enough. Educators must involve learners in their own assessment. If the assessment instruments are easy to understand and use, there will be a desire among the learners to solve problems in their learning activities. In this way, practicability can prompt creation of assessment instruments that are pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic in the classrooms. If, as stated in paragraph 2.3.1 of this chapter, educators are trained through workshops and cluster meetings, it will be easy for them to develop assessment instruments that are practically affordable to keep or maintain.

If educators do not have assessment instruments that are practical, what is meant by assessment in the senior phase and the GETC will differ from school to school within the same phase. As stated in paragraph 1.5.3 of chapter 1, if the assessment instrument in use is pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic, stakeholders in education are likely to accept OBE as a successful approach to education. Since current assessment instruments lack the principle of practicability, many OBA problems remain unresolved, such as:

- Educators confusing the examinations component with CASS;

- educators confusing CASS with the end of the year marks;
- educators feeling frustrated that CASS is time consuming;
- educators feeling anxious and frustrated that OBA is complicated;
- learners being unfairly assessed with inconsistent instruments;
- assessment processes in the classrooms being invalid;
- assessment data being invalid;
- schools becoming reluctant to give information to parents; and
- learners not being given the necessary support

At the GIED conference on "Closing the Gap Between Curriculum Policy And Practice", it became clear that 'educators still find assessment instruments complex, cumbersome and demanding'. This implies that assessment instruments currently used at schools are neither valid nor relevant. Therefore, if educators are not skilled, assessment instruments lack originality in the South African context and are these instruments are developed externally away from educators and learners, it means that educators cannot 'help to solve assessment problems and give guidance' (Nonyana 2000:36). This implies that these assessment instruments have a disruptive impact on the normal classroom situation because they are foreign (Luijten 1991:124).

#### **2.3.4 The principle of validity**

Validity tries to obtain correct and effective formalities. A valid assessment instrument should actually measure what it is designed to measure.

Like objectivity and practicability, validity is related to the principle of quality. It seems 'validity' was originally used to refer to "the amount of quality a product had and was used to determine prices". Today this term is used in education as well, to refer to the quality of teaching and learning and assessment. According to the Britanica Encyclopedia the term 'validity' used to be "associated with manufacturing industries". In the classroom, if an educator uses an instrument to assess group work, the

instrument must assess group-work and not reading skills. As stated in 2.3.3 in this chapter, pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments are expected to be reasonable so that they can be implemented easily.

According to Wortham (1990:36) an assessment instrument is valid only if "it is consistent and free from error of assessment". If learners are assessed by their educator validity ensures that all errors in the process of assessing the learners are eliminated. In this way, assessment instruments can be accepted as pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic. Chauhan (1993:17) confirms that if educators use 'assessment instruments that have validity, they will be able to assess the desirable skills, knowledge, values and attitudes that the learners are expected to acquire in the senior phase'. In other words, the principle of validity is key in the construction of assessment instruments.

The principle of validity with regard to assessment instruments can prevent education officials, educators, parents, learners and other stakeholders from being frustrated with OBE. Mail and Guardian (2/06/2000) importantly identified that "Curriculum 2005 has confused and confounded educators and failed to rectify a legacy of inadequate educator training". As stated in 1.6, in chapter one, the principle of validity in assessment instruments can promote learners to be more active and involved in both peer and their own assessment, but if there is no validity in the assessment instruments used, there will be no pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity in their participation. In other words, without the principle of validity, assessment instruments will not be pedagogically valid. It is important that validity be used as a criterion in the construction of assessment instruments so that educators will not teach a "misconceived and jargon-laden version of C2005" (Review Committee 2001).

Educators in the senior phase seriously lack skills to construct and develop valid assessment instruments that can be used to deal with the problem identified by Broadfoot (1996:150) about parents accusing educators of favouritism. If parents, as important stakeholders in education, are involved in the construction of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments, they will understand when they see marks and symbols in the books of their children, and not blame educators. The

researcher argues that there is something seriously wrong with the validity of the implementation of assessment in the senior phase, if educators, learners and stakeholders will not give a damn on whether pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments are in place or not. One is inclined to agree with Hanson (1978:62) that 'successful programmes like the GETC assessment processes can die a slow death'. As stated in paragraph 1.2 of chapter 1, educators and stakeholders in the senior phase need better, functional rather than structural assessment instruments.

The GETC implementation programmes can lose the allegiance of educators and stakeholders if the assessment activities of educators in the classrooms lack validity (Broadfoot 1996:150). However, validity alone cannot solve problems of assessment in the senior phase.

### **2.3.5 The principle of accountability**

Accountability implies responsibility among people. Through this principle an educator can engage learners in quality assessment activities. This is confirmed by Holt (1991:148) that, "accountability is an attempt to improve the quality of education". Without quality in the assessment instruments used by educators in the senior phase classrooms, learners cannot be equipped with the required skills.

It seems accountability mainly originated in commerce circles, where financial statements, principles of measurement and various other kinds of managerial accounting processes had to be followed. To this end, in education accountability is seen when educators do their work, assess and give effective feedback to learners, parents and stakeholders. In education 'accountability' denotes certain theories, behavioral assumptions, measurement rules and procedures for collecting and reporting useful information (Encyclopedia Britannica 1974:52). In other words, in education this will consist of procedures for recording, classifying and interpreting assessment performances of learners in order to promote valid, reliable and authentic assessment.

Accountability involves the construction of assessment instruments that "can help to ensure that work is done efficiently and that information is used effectively" (World Book Encyclopedia (1977:2). This principle creates

The focus is on educators, that when they assess they must create pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments. This can make schools to be genuinely accountable in helping learners to acquire the required integrated skills, abilities, values and attitudes needed in the world outside of school (Darling-Hammond *et al* 1995:13). Since accountability does not allow the educator to operate in isolation, it makes assessment instruments used in the classroom to be pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic. This happens when educators, learners, parents and educator unions are all encouraged to participate.

This idea of collaboration is supported by Sooklal (1995:108) "parents who were made to shy away from assessment processes can now be involved, regardless of whether they are literate or not" (Refer also to paragraph 1.2 of chapter 1). Accountability makes an educator to be responsible in providing standards in the assessment of learners. In stressing accountability, Clegg (1994: 53) goes on to the extent that 'parents should also be at school and participate during the inspection visits of education officials'. Patches of good work or excellence by a few educators will not be enough to make the assessment of learners valid, reliable and authentic.

An educator who is involved in the development of assessment instruments is likely to enhance his or her professional development. This is confirmed by Khulisa (2001:26) when warning that 'effective delivery of OBE requires meticulous planning and preparation' country, like the former. According to Broadfoot (1996:12) the "development of pedagogically valid, reliable, and authentic assessment instruments" remains crucial in the senior phase. There is therefore a need for constant collaboration between education officials and their schools to control assessment and make accountable arrangements between schools and their stakeholders.

### **2.3.6 The principle of reliability**

Reliability implies that a pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instrument will be consistently good in performance. Like the principle of quality, as stated at 2.3.1 in this chapter, the reliability of an assessment instrument has to do with equal standards when applied.

In education the principle of reliability seems to have originated from people's attempts to ensure that assessment instruments perform intended functions in a manner that is reliable. According to circular 41/2001, "a sound assessment practice is fair, valid and reliable". Therefore, an educator who insists on reliability when constructing an assessment instrument for learners in the classroom can expect the teaching and learning environment to be enhanced. Learner achievement is also likely to improve. According to the Young Students Intermediate Dictionary (1988: 588), reliability is "an adverb that is used to refer to an assessment instrument that an educator can depend on, rely on or count on". Assessment instruments are pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic if they are "able to be trusted or depended upon" Collins' Dictionary (1992:1130) and McGraw-Hall Encyclopedia of Science and Technology (1992:301). Suppose an educator wants to assess learners in his or her class, reliability can ensure that the educator's assessment processes are free from error of judgement. It does this by "consistently measuring the assessment outcomes" (Wortham 1990:37).

If educators in the senior phase currently assess without pedagogically reliable assessment instruments, the GETC qualification will be worthless as Luitjen (1990:126) instructively warned that "unreliable assessment instruments are useless for any purpose". This would particularly be true if OBE would have been rushed as reported by Pretoria News (7/06/2000). This could imply that there was no proper consultation and stakeholders were again not involved. If assessment instruments lack reliability, stakeholders will continue to feel marginalised and OBE will always be viewed as being foreign to the South Africans. As stated at 2.3.6 in this chapter, an educator who insists on reliability when designing and developing an assessment instrument is more likely to succeed in tracking learner performance than an educator who does not. Reliability suggests that the assessment instruments are functional and can help to address as well as check the assessment outcomes. So, if educators are skilled to design and develop their own instruments, they should also be able to establish their reliability (Borich 1974:259).

As it can be seen in circulars 41/2000 and 41/2001 and in paragraph 2.3.6 of this chapter, without reliability, C2005 and OBE can be doomed to mediocrity and failure. The Star (2000:18) cautions that "currently there are such constraints in the education

system that learning becomes an alienating process to learners and educators". Assessment can only improve if the principle of reliability can be applied in designing assessment instruments because if there is reliability in the instruments used, there will be no great deal of flexibility in interpretation (Luijten 1990:126).

An educator can use reliability to deal and address the negative impact assessment can have on the teaching and progression of learners. Stakeholders need assurance that assessment instruments used by educators will work as Collier (2000:84) alleged at the GDE conference that "C2005 is not good as a curriculum guideline". This implies that without reliability, the senior assessment processes cannot be trusted.

### **2.3.7 The principle of competency**

Competency refers to skills and abilities that are needed to effectively perform given tasks. It may also be applied to an exceptional way in which a person, machine, object or instrument performs a task. Bellis in Malan (2000:97) sees competency as a discrete skill of a job at which a person is competent. An educator is therefore competent if he or she is skilled in the practice of teaching.

According to Killen (2000:31), competency has to do with "how well a learner is required to perform". It seems the principle of competency was first used in law and meant the authority of a court to deal with specific matters. This term can also apply in education, in the senior phase and GETC assessment processes where an educator can be seen as being academically competent and therefore qualified to educate and equip learners with all sixty-six Specific Outcomes and the twelve Critical Outcomes right across the eight Learning Areas. The Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:14) defines competency as "the capacity for continuing performance within specified ranges and contexts resulting from the integration of a number of specific outcomes". The principle of competency is highly required in the senior phase and the GETC assessment processes so that educators can be able to provide learners with skills in all eight Learning Areas.

In OBE classrooms an educator can refer to a learner who displays skills of working within a group as competent with regard to associating and relating with others.



Competency, according to the Oxford Large Print Dictionary (1995:162), could refer to an assessment instrument that is "competent, able or has legal capacity" to track the performance of learners. According to the Young Students Intermediate Dictionary (1988:167), "competency seems to be usually associated with having abilities", such as being a competent learner or educator. In education competency can also be used to refer to learners who are capable and have sufficient knowledge and skills for a particular purpose.

Leat (1993: 507) defines competency as a potential to do something. Competency is usually used as a standard for crediting learners for successfully performing required tasks as Killen (2000:14) asserts that "the demonstration of competency is necessary when a learner is to be credited". An educator can give learners criteria and thereafter assess if they performed according to given criteria. This can be followed by peer assessment and rewarding of those learners who display knowledge, competence and skills. According to Spady (1994:3), learners are competent when they have "mastered the outcomes against which they are assessed". The value of competency in an instrument is that it can enable an educator to cater for each learner as a unique learner (Grade 8 Educator's Guide, Life Orientation, Senior Phase, SO 1). In this way the educator is able to identify and motivate learners who "manifest certain behaviour such as seeking attention and withdrawal" (Nonyana 2002:47). Normally educators prefer assessment instruments that will enable them to do their work with relative ease, while also concentrating on those who need support.

According to the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:15), competence is "the capacity for continuing performance within specified ranges and contexts resulting from the integration of a number of specific outcomes". In supporting learners to acquire and demonstrate competence in particular required skills, educators need instruments that are valid. The need for valid instruments of assessment is confirmed by Broadfoot's (1996:370) argument that it is only the pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments that can be used to "assess and ensure competence among both educators and learners". If educators can start designing and developing assessment instruments such as assessment criteria and rubrics on an ongoing basis, competence would be promoted in OBE classrooms.

The principle of competency does not seem to be used often enough to enable the assessment instruments to ensure that the achievement of required skills, knowledge, attitudes and values in the senior phase and the GETC comes first. It is only through and application of the principle of competency in the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments that:

- cramming and recalling facts can be discouraged;
- educators will not confuse continuous assessment with summative assessment; and
- the comprehension and application of skills are measured (Madaus 1980:166).

The researcher is convinced that the principle of competency is not used to create and make assessment instruments to be so effective that competition among learners is reduced to a minimum, in the senior phase. In constructing assessment instruments that are pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic, competency can be used to make competition among learners and schools to be acceptable to stakeholders and society at large (Broadfoot 1996:33).

### **2.3.8 The principle of control**

This principle can guide an educator to be regular in setting and meeting standards. Control suggests that an educator can use an assessment instrument to create harmony between related assessment activities in the classrooms.

According to the Encyclopedia Britanica (1974:117), the principle of control seems to have originated from business operations. The Oxford Large Print Dictionary (1995:174) defines "control" as a noun that refers to "the power of assessment instruments to give direction, regulate or restrain something", such as favouritism, biasness and unfairness when assessing. In education an educator can use the principle of control to direct learning processes and the assessment activities in the classroom. This principle can therefore be used to ensure that assessment instruments have consistency when criterion and norm referencing (Collins Dictionary 1993: 287).

According to Indicator SA. Vol. 17 No.1, "the Minister of National Education is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the entire education system". But the problem is in the classroom, where valid assessment instruments are needed most. The principle of control can help in exerting control over assessment process (Broadfoot 1996:8). This has to happen because "stakeholders in education want to be consulted about what is taking place in education"(see points 1.2, 1.8.5 in chapter 1 and Popenoe (1982:388)).

Control enhances teaching and assessment in the classroom. There is currently no guarantee that assessment instruments can:

- measure the achievements of learners effectively;
- control learners' conformity to accepted practice; and
- monitor the performance of educators in the senior phase.

There is a need for pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments that will guarantee control in the senior phase and the GETC in particular. The present assessment instruments cannot be trusted to give learners, parents and communities reliable feedback about what is happening in the senior phase classrooms (Popenoe 1982:388). Since there are no uniform rubrics and instruments to record continuous assessment in the senior phase, the principle of control is currently not used effectively to create uniformity. Control can enhance the ability of assessment instruments to produce pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic feedback which schools can give to learners and parents in the senior phase.

### **2.3.9 The principle of standardization**

Normally people like to identify with standards. The researcher agrees with Darling-Hammond *et al* (1995:244), who believe that "standardized assessment is predominantly the only accepted form of assessment to the public eye". If there are standards, there can be no favouritism.

Pahad (1997:5) argues that learner performance must be evaluated against agreed

upon standards. Like all the other principles of good assessment practice, the principle of standardization is related to the principle of quality and may have originated as people worked hard in search for standards, quality lifestyles and levels of quality in education. According to the Oxford Dictionary (1994:1250) standards must be used to "measure or test quality, purity, size or weight". In this context they measure and test the quality of assessment instruments. An educator at one school can assess effectively if the assessment instruments he or she uses are relatively uniform across the senior phase, at least in the same school. According to the Britanic Encyclopedia (1992:209), the principle of standardization refers to "assessment instruments that have been selected to serve as a model". This should also be the case in education because people usually have interest in things they believe are on an acceptable standard and admired by others in the society. Collins Dictionary (1993:1312) defines standardization as "an accepted or approved example of an assessment instrument against which learners are judged". A school with standards is usually appreciated and admired by the society.

As indicated in 2.3.9 of this chapter, the public or society has certain expectations about the standards that schools must attain or conform to. Sooklal (1995:109), argues that "parents and learners will lose confidence in public schools because of a high failure rate". Ironically, the GETC may become another red robot like the matriculation examinations if learners do not exit the GETC at the end of grade nine.

Educators in most township and farm schools have no standards or generally accepted valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments to evaluate quality in the classrooms. The need for standardized assessment instruments at schools is supported by Resnick in Darling-Hammond et al. (1995:244) by warning that assessment can sometimes have a demoralizing effect on the self-esteem and self-confidence of learners. Nevertheless, if this happens, Nonyana (2000:36) advises that this can be solved by involving parents.

### **2.3.10 The principle of effectiveness**

Effectiveness suggests that a person is effective if he or she is effective in what he does. Assessment instruments are effective if they enhance the growth and

development of learners (Hanson 1978:14). When educators use assessment instruments, their effectiveness will be manifested in the learners in high levels of morale and confidence in their learning.

The principle of effectiveness could have developed as a result of people always trying to be effective in what they do. This principle means being effective or having an effect in what you do. An educator who insists on effectiveness when assessing learners is most likely to succeed in skilling learners. According to the South African Students' Dictionary (1999:301), the word 'effectiveness' refers to "the actual or practical way of assessing if an instrument works or not". An instrument would therefore be seen as effective if it does what it is intended to do, very well. The Oxford Dictionary explains effectiveness as "having the ability to produce the intended results". This is what is needed in our instruments.

The principle of effectiveness can be utilized to ensure that the GETC has the ability to produce learners who will be effective products as, according to Sooklal (1995:109) and Rault-Smith (2000:133) and also as it was stated in 1.2 of chapter 1 the "apartheid education system was skewed and caused black children to fail". Effectiveness can therefore help to address the irony that "C2005 is also skewed in structure and design" (Jansen 1997). Without pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments, the new trends in assessment and the forms of assessment in the senior phase will be ineffective. According to the IEB (1998:14), "effective assessment procedures and criteria help learners to develop awareness and thoughtfulness about their own learning process and progress". Effective assessment instruments and criteria will encourage and make different assessment methods successful such as:

- Educators assessment;
- Self-assessment ;
- Peer assessment; and
- Parent/guardian/community involvement in assessment.

Church (1983:32) suggests that if assessment instruments could be applied by peers,

the principle of efficiency would be enhanced. This is currently not the case in the senior phase and the GETC. The researcher agrees with Jansen in Rault-Smith (2000:135) in the conference document, as stated in 1.2 of chapter 1, that OBE will be successful in those schools where educators operate in teams, clusters and weekly meetings. This can help to improve assessment instruments and make them effective. The implication is that the quality of teaching, assessment and learning will improve. Efficient assessment instruments will guarantee that learners who are promoted to grade ten have achieved the minimum requirements for the GETC. As mentioned at 2.3.10 above, the principle of effectiveness should be used to help redesign assessment instruments and C2005 because it is seen as skewed.

According to Darling-Hammond (1995:7) "for as long as the assessment processes and instruments overemphasize on superficial content coverage and rote drilling on skills at the expense of high in-depth projects and other thought provoking tasks", the new trends and forms of assessment in the senior phase and the GETC will not be successful. The assessment instruments currently used in the senior phase are not effective since they still promote drilling and rote learning in the classrooms more than ever.

## **2.4 IMPLICATIONS**

This chapter dealt with various perspectives, descriptions and definitions by various authors on the issue of the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments as implemented in the senior phase. If, as reported by the Sunday World (3/09/2000), "learners in township schools often go on warpath and take the law into their own hands towards examinations", then township school learners are not comfortable with what they were taught, because boycotting the examinations shows signs of anxiety, fear and frustration. These schools may result in producing a different type of citizen than the one described by the Senior Phase Policy Document (1997:14).

The lack of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase is a serious problem with very unpleasant implications in this country.

These implications are: for educators:

#### **For educators**

- If educators do not have pedagogically appropriate assessment instruments, they will not be able to assess effectively;
- If educators do not have pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments, they will not be able to assess and record the performance of learners properly;
- Without pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments, educators will not be able to identify the skills the learners have or have to acquire; and
- Without pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase, educators cannot be focused in their teaching activities because they would not know what learners can do or not do. This confirms the issue of moderation carried in the Government Gazette, Volume 402, No. 19640, (1998:23).

#### **For transformation**

- If there is no collaboration between stakeholders in the construction of the assessment instruments, there will be no interest in the performance of learners because stakeholders will feel marginalized; and
- Without pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments in the senior phase, educators and learners cannot cover the sixty-six Specific Outcomes and the twelve Critical Outcomes across the eight Learning Areas effectively and sufficiently.

#### **For curriculum**

- If learners are going to be pushed into the next grade without being properly

assessed, educators are going to be anxious and feel frustrated by learners who are not up to standard;

- If there are no pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then it will be difficult for curriculum developers to improve the curriculum; and
- Lack of curriculum relevancy will result in failure to achieve the goals of education.

#### **For standards**

- If there are no pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then there will be no uniformity in the standards of achievement in the senior phase within the same grade; and
- If there are not pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then learners will not be properly prepared "to contribute to their own success as well as to the success of their family, community and the nation as a whole".

#### **For policy**

If there are no pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, it means that educators and principals of schools do as they like and OBE may fail (Jansen, 1997):

- If learners in the senior phase progress on the basis that there are no assessment instruments that are pedagogically valid and reliable, then there will be trouble for them at the end;
- If there are no assessment instruments to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum and the education policy, then the education system as a whole is in trouble; and
- If the assessment instruments do not assist educators in tracking learner performance, then the performance of the learners in the senior phase cannot be guaranteed.



### **For training**

- If educators are not given pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then, they will do as they like;
- If educators are not given training in the use of pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then, they are not adequately prepared; and
- If educators do not apply pedagogically valid and reliable assessment instruments, then, it will be difficult for the tertiary institutions and curriculum developers to assist in curriculum development.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

This chapter dealt with the lack of assessment instrument in the senior phase. Chapter three deals with the implementation of the research design. From the discussions in chapter II, it is clear that there are no pedagogically valid and reliable instruments used to assess learners in the senior phase.

# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main aim of this study is discussed in paragraphs 1.4.2 and 2.1 as “the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments that will assess skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and the insight of learners in the senior phase and the General Education and Training Certificate”. This chapter is therefore aimed at implementing the research design mentioned earlier in chapter One, by examining the views and opinions of respondents regarding the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of assessment instruments used in the senior phase. To this end, the researcher will show how the study was conducted. It focused, through interviews, on the actual investigation into the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in the senior phase.

Through interviews the researcher attempted to establish the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in the outcomes-based education, in the senior phase. As mentioned at 1.8 in chapter 1, the researcher selected four groups of stakeholders from each of the five selected schools. The learners who responded all came from the senior phase. The fifth group of stakeholders was the district officials and they were interviewed at the Gauteng West District Office, in Krugersdorp.

### **3.2 IDENTIFYING THE RESPONDENTS**

At 1.8.3 in chapter one, demarcation of the study was done and all respondents mentioned but not actually distinguished. The respondents were distinguished by way of who they are. At the Gauteng West District Office five officials out of nine officials dealing with the senior phase were the first to be interviewed. Among the five private

consultants contracted to Gauteng Institute for Educational Development (GIED), one has consulted for both GIED and the Independent Examinations Board. At all schools the interviews started with the heads of departments followed by class representatives. Representatives of councils of learners and prefects could not be used because the researcher felt that these stakeholders would not necessarily represent the views and attitudes of all learners. All heads of departments did not have a problem with the researcher identifying them by their names. In total thirty-nine respondents were interviewed in five different categories. Below is a list of respondents who were interviewed.

### **3.2.1 District officials as respondents**

As stated at 3.2 in this chapter, the first respondents to be interviewed were five district officials from Gauteng West District Office (also known as D2).

#### **➤ First respondent**

The first respondent to be interviewed at the district office was Mr Intiaz Moosa. He has been an educator for nineteen years. He stated his qualifications as being a B.Sc degree and a Higher Education Diploma. He has been responsible for MLMMS and Mathematics at district level, in the Westrand for six years. He has also been involved in training educators in OBE since 1997.

#### **➤ Second respondent**

Mr John Clerk was the second district official to be interviewed at district D2. He is a subject facilitator responsible for Technology and Natural Sciences in the Intermediate-Senior (intersen) phase. He holds a Technical Teachers Diploma, Further Diploma in Education and an International Certificate in Technology. He has been involved in the training of educators at national and provincial levels.

#### **➤ Third respondent**

Ms Estie Badenhorst is also a subject facilitator in District D2, in the Westrand. She has been an educator for eight years. She stated her qualifications as being a BA, B. ED

(Psig) and M.ED (Psig) degrees. She was initially responsible for Life Orientation but she is currently in charge of Language, Literacy and Communication-English in the Intersen phase.

#### ➤ **Fourth respondent**

Mr Jan Breet is the Afrikaans facilitator in District D2 and has been an educator for twenty-six years. In addition to Afrikaans, he has also been responsible for History. He stated his qualifications as being a Higher Diploma in Education, BA and B. ED. degrees.

#### ➤ **Fifth respondent**

The last subject facilitator to be interviewed at the D2 district office was Mr J.S. Maseko. He holds a Junior Secondary Teachers Diploma, B. Sc and B. Ed degrees. He has been an educator for thirteen years. He is currently responsible for Education Resources and Computer Studies at D2.

### **3.2.2 Consultants as respondents**

This section consists of private consultants contracted to either GIED or IEB. Five consultants were interviewed: four from GIED and one from IEB. All these consultants are currently responsible for conducting OBE and OBA educator capacity building workshops for the Gauteng West District office (also called D2).

The first consultant to be interviewed was Mrs O.K. Kgoroadira who has been a GIED consultant for five years. Before she worked for GIED as a consultant she worked for GED and has thirty-two years of teaching experience. She holds a Masters Degree in Falk Law from Rand Afrikaans University. She has been a trainer in OBE and OBA for five years. She specialises in Life Orientation, LLC, Arts and Culture and Management. She is currently coordinating OBE and OBA teacher training in District D2.

Andiswa Majola was the second respondent among the GIED consultants. She has a Higher Education Diploma and a B ED Degree from Wits. She has ten years of teaching experience and specialized in teaching Business Economics and Economics to grade

twelve learners. She has been a trainer in Economic Management Sciences for three years.

The third consultant to be interviewed was Ms Angelique Nagar, who consults for GIED on a part time basis. She has an Honours Degree in Geography and Environmental Studies. She has been involved in the training and equipping educators with OBE and OBA processes for the past five years. She has been involved in Curriculum Development, Materials Development and Capacity building workshops for GDE educators.

Ms Jenny Hatton was the fourth consultant to respond to questions. She consults for GIED and her qualifications were stated as being a Higher Education Diploma, Diploma in Special Education, BA Degree and Bibl Honours (Unisa). She has been an educator for ten years. She also served as LLC (all languages) facilitator in the GDE for six years. She has been involved in the training of educators, as a private consultant for the past three years.

The fifth consultant to be interviewed was Ms Estel Nel. She is the Director of Training and Educator Development at IEB. She has a Higher Diploma in Education and a BSc Degree in Life Sciences from Wits University. She has been an educator for eighteen years. While teaching, she specialised in Biology and Physical Science. She has been an IEB trainer for five and a half years. She is also leading in conducting IEB Assessment courses for district officials and also provides training in all nine provinces of South Africa.

### **3.2.3 Heads of departments as respondents**

This section focused on educators at all five schools.

#### **➤ First respondent**

Mrs E. Heifer is a head of department for languages at H/S Bekker. She has been a teacher for twenty years. Her qualifications are a Higher Education Diploma in Education, BA degree and a Bed degree. She is in charge of all the languages in the school and she teaches Language literacy and Communication (also called LLC)

English and Afrikaans in the senior phase and grades eleven and twelve. She also teaches LLC Afrikaans in grade eight.

➤ **Second respondent**

The second respondent is Ms M. Nel who has been an educator for fourteen years. She is highly qualified and holds a Higher Education Diploma, BSc, B. ED and BSc Honours degrees. Her Learning Area is Natural Sciences and she also teaches Physical Science to in grades eleven and twelve.

➤ **Third respondent**

Mrs S.M. Vermeulen teaches Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences at Bekker Primary School. She holds a Bachelor of Primary Education degree. She is currently teaching Language, Literacy and Communication: English in the intermediate and senior phases. She has been an educator for fourteen years.

➤ **Fourth respondent**

The last respondent to be interviewed at Bekker Primary School was Mr P.G. Vosloo, a head of Department for Mathematics and Science. He teaches Mathematical Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences. He has been an educator for eleven years.

➤ **Fifth respondent**

Randgold Farm School started as a nursery school and developed into a primary school in 1979. At that time the school only catered for grades one to four. Ms C.C. Matsapola is the principal of Randgold Farm School and she teaches grades six and seven combined in the same class. Her qualification is a Senior Secondary Certificate. It is interesting to note that because of the circumstances at Randgold Farms School, learners tackle grade seven in a period of two years. Because of her experience of twenty years, Ms Matsapola feels that it will confuse learners to talk about grade six and grade seven learning programmes in the same class. It is unbelievable that Ms Matsapola teaches all the eight Learning Areas in the grade seven programme of two years.

➤ **Sixth respondent**

Mr J. Thomas is a head of department responsible for Technology in grade eight as well as technical subjects in grades ten, eleven and twelve at Magalies State School. He holds a BSc and a BED degrees. He has been an educator for more than twenty-two years.

➤ **Seventh respondent**

The ninth respondent was Mr T. Kgosimang from Magalies State School and is currently teaching Human and Social Sciences (HSS) and Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) in the senior phase. He is a head of department for social sciences and has been an educator for fifteen years. He holds a Secondary Teachers Diploma.

➤ **Eighth respondent**

Mr T. L. Phiti of Mphethuto Farm School was the thirteenth educator to be interviewed. He is a Head of Department for Sciences and she teaches LLC-English as well as MLMMS and Natural Sciences in the senior phase and the intermediate phase. He holds a Diploma in Education and a Further Diploma in Education Management. Mr Phiti has been an educator for six years.

➤ **Ninth respondent**

Ms L.D. Khumalo is a head of department for social sciences and technology at Mphethuto Farm School. She holds a Secondary Teachers Diploma. She is responsible for the Natural Sciences and Technology Learning Areas in the inter-mediate and senior phases. She has been an educator for fifteen years.

### **3.2.4 Class representatives as respondents**

The next group of respondents were the senior Phase learners selected from grade seven to grade nine. The two secondary schools used in this study do not have grade seven learners. Therefore, the grade seven learners came from the three primary schools used in this research. The educators helped the researcher to do a random

selection of the senior phase learners. Each learner was asked to respond to a total of three questions. Each learner gave his or her own opinion on how he or she understood the questions. To avoid concerns from parents, the researcher only recorded the names of the learners but chose not to disclose them.

### **3.3 QUESTIONS DIRECTED TO THE RESPONDENTS**

There were questions for district officials, GIED consultants, heads of departments at schools, and class representatives. As stated at 3.1 in this chapter, prefects and representatives of the council of learners were not interviewed because the researcher wanted a neutral and independent point of view from the learners. The following four clusters of questions were directed to the different groups of respondents according to their classification:

#### **3.3.1 Questions Directed To The District Officials**

- How do the assessment instruments in the senior phase, differ from the content-driven assessment instruments of the current matriculation examinations, to ensure that the grade nine examination as an exit point does not become another type of a matriculation examination?
- Are the assessment instruments helpful in accelerating transformation in the teaching and learning activities of learners and educators as expected in OBE?
- What is the role of the examination component in OBE with regard to assessment?
- Do assessment instruments indicate that the critical cross-field outcomes are being achieved?

#### **3.3.2 Questions Directed To Consultants From Gauteng Institute For Educational Development (GIED)**

Consultants responded to the questions mentioned below:



- Do you develop assessment instruments that assist educators in providing pedagogically valid education?
- Are the assessment instruments developed helping educators to ascertain whether learners are gaining skills and abilities such that educators are able to direct the learners to specific career options?
- Will the assessment instruments, through their feedback, eventually help to transform and improve the quality of teaching and learning?
- Can the progress of learners be effectively tracked as a result of the feedback from the assessment instruments?
- Does the feedback from the assessment instruments aid educators in checking whether learners have understood or not?
- As a result of the feedback that you get, do you think educators are competent in implementing OBE?
- Do educators have a common assessment policy and marking grid in the senior phase?
- Do educators record everything they assess?

### **3.3.3 Questions Directed To Heads Of Departments**

This section focussed on the heads of departments that were interviewed at the five schools. One of the schools, Randgold Farm School does not qualify for a head of department post due to the teacher-learner ratio used by the education department. At this school, the researcher interviewed the principal because she also plays the role of a head of department. From all the other schools the researcher interviewed two heads of departments. Heads of departments were chosen because they are responsible for managing and coordinating curriculum implementation at schools. Therefore, the researcher saw heads of departments as suitable representatives for all educators in the senior phase classrooms. A total of nine heads of departments from the five schools was interviewed. Each head of department responded to six questions asked by the

researcher. As stated at 3.2 in this chapter, all the heads of departments had no problem in their names being used.

- Can educators develop and use their own assessment instruments in their classrooms?
- Can senior phase educators plan good lessons that will help to create opportunities for their learners?
- Do educators understand and practice the new dimensions in assessment?
- Will the rubrics and other types of assessment instruments help to bring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment? Do educators understand and use the policy document?
- Is there evidence of the five forms of assessment being used in the different learning areas?

#### **3.3.4 Questions Directed To Class Representatives**

This section focuses on senior phase learners who were interviewed at the five schools. As stated at point 1.8 in chapter one, two learners were interviewed from each senior phase class. The researcher decided on interviewing both boys and girls in order to get a balanced view of responses. Heads of departments were the first to be interviewed. Nineteen class representatives were interviewed after the heads of departments. The class representatives were selected on the basis of their active participation in group-work and other forms of assessment inside and outside the classrooms. Each learner was asked and responded to a total of three questions. The researcher recorded the names of the learners but decided to use pseudo names for the learners in order to avoid seeking for permission from the parents. The learners responded to the questions listed below:

- Are you involved in the construction of assessment instruments?
- Are you enthusiastic about the new five forms of assessment?

- How does School-based Assessment affect you?

### **3.4 EDUCATION OFFICIALS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

#### **➤ Response to question 1**

All the respondents pointed out that the assessment instruments used in the senior phase will differ from the content-driven assessment instrument currently used in matriculation examinations. According to the respondents the GDE was piloting assessment instruments that will in future test the abilities of learners in problem solving skills. Assessment will not be content driven. However, there is no guarantee that learners will not fail grade nine in large numbers as it is happening with matriculation examinations. All the respondents stressed that assessment instruments in OBE assess skills, values and attitudes rather than knowledge only. One respondent indicated that all the current matriculation assessment instruments mainly involve data manipulation and interpretation. Another respondent said the new assessment instruments are also based on criteria instead of norms. Assessment instruments are aimed at measuring the different or multiple intelligences of learners.

#### **➤ Response to question 2**

In answering this question, all the respondents agreed that the assessment instruments can be helpful in accelerating transformation in the teaching and learning activities of learners and educators as expected in OBE. The problem is, according to one respondent, educators need more training and skilling in the development and application of assessment instruments. She added that even the educators who are on board OBA processes tend to manipulate OBE as NATED 550. Two respondents indicated that the purpose of introducing the Common Tasks for Assessment (also called CTA) and the External Assessment Tests (also called EATS) was precisely to ensure that assessment instruments become helpful in accelerating transformation in the senior phase. The respondents agreed that the GDE was still in the process of developing assessment instruments relevant for OBE in the senior phase. Another respondent emphasized that educators do not treat Learning Areas holistically but as separate focuses, e.g. the emphasis of Accounting in Economic Management Science

instead of treating the EMS Learning Area as a single whole.

➤ **Response to question 3**

On the third question, almost all the respondents felt that the role of the examination component in OBE was only to develop a skill of an examination technique. Only one respondent felt that he was not a strong supporter of OBE. This respondent felt that the examinations should be more important and carry more weight than continuous assessment. All the other respondents felt that the examination component was not very valuable in assessing attitudes and values. The respondents felt that the examination component was less valuable than other forms of assessment. One respondent added that it is in the FET, where career orientation is more important and specific knowledge is required, that the examinations will be more significant than in the General Education and Training Band. It was felt that in OBE examinations could not be administered as the only method to determine progression.

➤ **Response to question 4**

All the respondents agreed that at this stage there is no evidence to prove that the critical cross-field outcomes are being achieved. The respondents felt that, while educators are not skilled enough in the application and management of assessment processes, they have no instruments they can use to prove that the critical cross-field outcomes are being achieved. One respondent highlighted the fact that a single assessment will not give a true reflection of critical outcomes' achievement. He added that it is only possible to judge the achievement of Critical Outcomes over an extended period of time. Three respondents indicated very careful planning could lead to assessments which could build up a series of evaluations which would give a picture of the level at which the CO's have been achieved.

### **3.5 CONSULTANTS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

➤ **Response to question 1**

With regard to the first question the GIED consultants felt that they were developing

illustrative learning programmes and assessment modules that were exposing educators to a non-conformist culture. The consultants felt that by doing this, they were assisting and providing educators an opportunity to be creative and to vary their methodology, and thus benefiting learners in the process of assessment. All five respondents felt that with good planning, assessment instruments in OBE will not take too much time to be administered and therefore teaching and assessment can be used effectively. These respondents felt that educators usually complain that assessing group-work can take the whole period, as they also have to collaborate with learners from group to group. One consultant felt that, depending on what educators want to assess, they don't have to spend the whole period monitoring group-work.

➤ **Response to question 2**

Consultants felt that the assessment instruments used by the educators are helping to ascertain that learners are gaining some skills. All the respondents felt that educators still need to unlearn what was within their comfort zones. One consultant felt that a well resourced school could be in a position to vary the instruments received from the GIED and thus be in a position to direct learners to career opportunities. It was felt that, for an under-resourced school, a possibility exists that educators could still have a repetition of the same instruments if the variety is inaccessible to the disadvantage of the learners in terms of lifelong skills. All the consultants felt that by using different assessment methods and instruments, educators could ensure that learners do achieve the specific outcomes and the critical outcomes, thereby gain the required skills and abilities.

➤ **Response to question 3**

Virtually all the respondents felt that feedback from the assessment instruments should serve as a self-reflection exercise for the educators' teaching and assessment strategies. One respondent felt that a diligent and conscientious educator will use feedback to make informed decisions and to improve on the competencies of both learners and educators. However, respondents were not sure whether educators used the feedback they received through the assessment instruments to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. All respondents felt that more time was needed to deal with the feedback educators receive from assessment instruments. All the

consultants responded positively to the question and felt that the quality of teaching and learning will eventually improve if feedback is used to ensure that all learners receive the necessary support. All respondents felt that feedback is currently not effectively used to ensure that learners get the necessary support because not all educators give learners a chance to progress at their own individual pace.

➤ **Response to question 4**

One consultant strongly felt that the smaller the classroom organization and the better resourced the school is, the more effective it would be for the educators to track the progress of learners. The other four respondents agreed that for smaller classes, it is easier to vary the teaching methods, for example, letting learners work individually, in pairs and also in groups. It was felt that in this way, the progress of learners in terms of content relevance and acquiring critical skills could be established. The respondents felt that, for bigger classes, however, educators are likely to lean towards group-work. The consultants warned that if the progress of learners cannot be effectively tracked, the danger is that only a selection of the critical outcomes may be met. All the respondents felt that the assessment instruments used should help the educators to track the progress of learners. From their experience, the respondents were confident about the feedback from the assessment instruments they developed. One respondent felt that in a large class an educator could always rely on other assessment methods such as self-assessment, and peer assessment because the educator cannot always effectively monitor the learners and their tasks alone.

➤ **Response to question 5**

Similar to the response to the fourth question above, all the consultants were convinced that the assessment instruments they developed help educators in checking and ensuring whether the learners understood or not. It was felt that if the assessment instrument is appropriately designed or used in assessing a specific outcome, the feedback received by the educators should clearly indicate the learners' level of understanding. Most consultants felt that in a large class it is difficult for the educator to ensure that feedback received is from the original work of the learners.

➤ **Response to question 6**

In answering this question, the respondents felt that the initial training educators received on OBE had its flaws because it focussed on methodology and assessment was isolated. It was felt that the use of assessment instruments and how to compile rubric was neglected. As a result, the consultants felt that most educators still require rigorous training in order to be fully conversant with OBE principles.

➤ **Response to question 7**

All respondents felt that schools do not have a common assessment policy and marking grids. The newly introduced assessment guidelines in the senior phase were seen as a great contribution towards setting a standard in assessment. Three respondents felt that the marking grids developed by the department of education are still vague and not clearly understandable. The use of four level descriptors such as "not achieved", "partly achieved", "achieved" and "outstanding" were seen as problematic for many educators. The main problem was that there is often a thin line that exists between what is considered to be good and what is excellent.

➤ **Response to question 8**

There were respondents who felt that educators should have an observation book and record everything they assess and observe. Some of the respondents were not sure whether educators should record everything they assess or not. Respondents gave contradictory answers to this question. Two respondents said that educators do not have time to record everything they assess. Three consultants felt that if educators are expected to record everything they assess they would never find time to teach learners. The three respondents said that educators would have to stay behind after school to record everything they assessed and observed about the learners everyday.

### **3.6 HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS' RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS**

➤ **Response to question 1**

On the first question, all the respondents felt that educators identified with the

assessment instruments that they used but felt that they still had problems with regard to developing their own. More than half the respondents had problems with the assessment instruments that come from Ellerines and the district office because these instruments were either in short supply or too expensive for resource-poor schools to augment. Three respondents felt that the support schedules (also called GDE 450's) leading to the retention or promotion of learners are time consuming. Four respondents felt that it was such a daunting and cumbersome task to work with the support and promotion instruments which some educators avoid working with by letting virtually all the learners merely progressing to the next grades. Two respondents saw the introduction of Common Tasks for Assessment and External Assessment Tests as haphazard but felt that the CTA's can be more acceptable to educators if they were trained and skilled to develop their own. It was felt that the problems of learners not achieving the outcomes are therefore transferred from one educator to another.

➤ **Response to question 2**

Although some of the respondents were unhappy with the competence of educators with regard to planning good learning programmes, everybody felt that educators were trying hard to ensure that learning opportunities are created for learners. However, no head of department could guarantee that learners are being equipped with skills required by the further education and training and the world of work. The respondents were not sure whether lessons planned and offered by educators could help to give some indication about the level of achievement of the specific outcomes. This could imply that opportunities are not created for the learners to express themselves and gain the required skills, knowledge, values and attitudes required by the senior phase document. Four respondents indicated that some educators use assessment instruments and assessment methods that were bought by their schools in some form of a syllabus. Still, the indication is that currently educators experience problems with regard to planning good lesson.

➤ **Response to question 3**

All nine respondents felt that most educators were frustrated and demotivated. With regard to the question of understanding and using the new dimensions in assessment,



the respondents felt that it was critical, even for the average educator to be competent and skilled in using these new dimensions in assessment, so that all learners could be given opportunities to be creative and develop to their full potential. The heads of departments felt that a clear understanding of the new forms of assessment could be helpful to educators when they prepare for the following lessons. All the heads of departments felt that if educators have been using the senior phase policy and covering the specific outcomes and the critical outcomes, understanding the new dimensions in assessment should not be difficult. Learners should also be ready for the portfolios and the Common Tasks for Assessment. It was felt that learners should not be used as guinea-pigs of the GETC process of 2002 because the senior phase policy documents have been in use since 1997. However, the heads of departments were not sure whether all educators use the policy document effectively.

➤ **Response to question 4**

All nine respondents answered this question by indicating that the assessment instruments used in OBE, such as the rubrics, should contribute towards change in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Five respondents added that even though the quality of life of the learners and the schools on the farms had not changed, the use of properly designed rubrics and other instruments of assessment could make a significant improvement to classroom teaching and learning activities. The respondents were positive that as rubrics and other assessment instruments help to bring about changes to the way educators teach and assess, the education system on the farms should also change. They felt that through the rubrics and other instruments of assessment, some farm schools could even be more successful than town schools, when it comes to equipping learners with the needed skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. One head of department who responded did not see any improvement brought by the rubrics and other new assessment instruments.

➤ **Response to question 5**

Of the nine heads of departments interviewed, only four indicated that educators had always been using the required different forms of assessment, but did not follow the new senior phase assessment guidelines because there were guidelines from the GDE.

It is interesting to note that four respondents from former DET farm schools had not used the different forms of assessment before. Therefore, while the former TED schools only needed to adapt and develop rubrics for their assessment, the former DET educators virtually had to start from scratch with the new forms of assessment. Tests were the only form of assessment done at all schools.

### **3.7 RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS BY CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **➤ Response to question 1**

Of the twenty class representatives who responded, only eight indicated that their educators involve learners in the construction of the assessment instruments. The same eight learners said that it is interesting to do their tasks after they had been involved in the construction of assessment instruments. Eleven learners said that they were satisfied with the assessment instruments constructed and brought by their educators because the educators always explained how tasks would be assessed and scored. Three female learners complained that there were days when almost a whole double period is spent on discussing and constructing an assessment instrument. Eight male learners felt that there is sometimes no transparency because assessment instruments were not constructed in consultation with all learners. Although the investigation showed that very few educators encourage learner involvement in the construction of assessment instruments, assessment instruments were explained and shared with learners.

#### **➤ Response to question 2**

All the twenty respondents were satisfied and enthusiastic about the assessment instruments and the new forms of assessment. However, seventeen learners felt that the assessment instruments used created too much work for learners and their parents. These learners complained that educators gave too much work in the form of projects, assignments and portfolios to learners and their parents. Twelve learners indicated that they had no time for projects and homework because they lived too far from the schools

and had no lights at their homes. They said that everything has to be done at school. More than half the number of respondents interviewed expressed frustration at the fact that while other learners bring projects and tasks that were actually done by their parents, their parents could not assist with projects and tasks because they had never been to school.

### ➤ **Response to question 3**

According to the survey, all the twenty respondents were very enthusiastic about school-based assessment and the new continuous assessment approach. Learners felt that continuous assessment was benefiting them because everything they did at school, both inside and outside the classrooms was worthwhile. Twenty learners felt that they did not want to miss or bunk lessons because continuous assessment would affect them negatively if they were absent from school. Three learners felt that educators use assessment as a form of punishment by recording mainly poor performance.

## **3.8 CONCLUSION**

Assessment is still a major problem for both educators and learners. In most cases, even district officials who are expected to give support to schools, are also battling with assessment and how educators should implement. However, with skilled and competent service providers, such as the GIED consultants, there is hope that suitable assessment instruments and processes will be in place.

# **CHAPTER IV**

## **THE INTERPRETATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

As stated at 3.2 in the preceding chapter, the purpose of this chapter is to interpret the findings of the respondents with regard to the lack of pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity in the assessment instruments used in the senior phase.

### **4.2 INITIAL FINDINGS**

Initially two rounds of interviews were conducted. These findings were based on the practical experience of the district officials, educators, educator unions, parents and learners as important stakeholders in education. To this end, the responses of the respondents were distinguished into five different categories. Three rounds of appointments were made with schools. Initially school-based stakeholders (i.e. educators, educator unions and learners) were interviewed. After the first round of interviews between the researcher and the stakeholders, information and the number of stakeholders interviewed seemed to be insufficient. After gathering data for the second time, the information was then analyzed to see if the responses clarified the problem of the lack of pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in the senior phase.

### **4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS**

As stated at 4.1 in this chapter, the purpose of this chapter was to distinguish and analyze the findings according to the responses received from different groups of respondents. The researcher went through the responses, per group of stakeholders, and summarized responses with the same ideas.

### 4.3.1 Findings on the responses of district officials

#### ➤ Findings on the first question

As Darling-Hammond *et al* (1995:2) advocate for alternative assessment instrument and practices, the analysis of the responses to this question points to the fact that educators are currently not skilled and confident in developing their own assessment instruments in the senior phase. As stated at point 1.4.2 in chapter 1, the long-term aim of this study is to contribute towards the development of an assessment instrument that will assess skills, knowledge attitudes and values. There is, therefore no evidence at this stage that educators in the OBE classrooms are becoming better with regard to constructing their own assessment instruments. To this end, Bebell in Wilhelms (1967:18) refers to assessment as the “sick man” of education because if educators are not confident in developing their own assessment instruments, this could be consuming teaching and learning time to the detriment and distortion of learning.

The study revealed that; if special focus is not paid to enabling educators to develop assessment instruments used in the senior phase, the lack of pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity in the assessment instruments still used in the senior phase could lead to the senior phase becoming a red robot with learners unable to go through to the further education and training phase. The study further showed that; educators have a serious problem with the new shift of focus from content-driven assessment to skills based assessment. To this end, Bebell in Wilhelms (1967:18) argues that educators are the most intransigent group of people. It was felt that educators do not know how to link content that learners should know with the skills that learners should acquire. This confirms the researcher’s argument at point 2.1 in chapter 2 that too many assessment approaches may lead to confusion.

#### ➤ Findings on the second question

According to the findings, the assessment instruments are helpful in accelerating transformation in the teaching and learning activities but at a very slow pace. Wilhelms (1967:3) argued that every society is making up its mind on what to do next (see 1.2 in chapter 1). As the findings to the preceding chapter revealed, educators still have

problems with the application of assessment instruments in OBE and need some more training. The implication is that if the education department does not prioritize the development of pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments in the senior phase, “a lot of teaching time is going to be wasted to the detriment and even to the distortion of learning” (Wilhelms 1967:18). Respondents further indicated that many educators still confuse OBE with NATED 550 approaches and methods, with the result that the Learning Areas were not being treated holistically.

➤ **Findings on the third question**

The study found that; the examination component still plays a major role in OBE but examinations are not the only assessment technique that can be used in determining learner progression. This is particularly true because the old content driven assessment instruments, as argued by Rault-Smith at point 1.2 in chapter 1, were used to prevent black learners from achieving success. However, educators often confuse the role of continuous assessment with the examination component. It was felt that the GDE assessment policies do not clearly specify what must happen with the examination mark at the end of the year. The findings revealed that there was some inconsistency with regard to how examination marks are calculated at the end of the year. Some schools add the examination component to continuous assessment, others give it a heavier weighting. The implication is that the examination component means different things to different schools within the same phase.

➤ **Findings on the fourth question**

The study confirmed that there are no uniform or common assessment policies or instruments to be used by all schools in the senior phase. There is no evidence that as educators teach and assess, learners in the senior phase are achieving the cross-field outcomes. Respondents felt that; educators still work too much in isolation. According to Luijten (1991:124) as stated at 2.2.3 in chapter 2, assessment instruments can have a disruptive impact on the classroom situation. The implication is that currently learners in the senior phase are not being skilled as required by the new OBE approach and the critical outcomes are not achieved. Only through thorough planning and implementation of OBA can the cross-field outcomes be achieved.

## **4.4 FINDINGS ON THE RESPONSES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS**

### **➤ Findings on the first question**

The study revealed that educators believe that; assessment instruments should assist in providing pedagogically valid education. Although the educators felt that their own assessment instruments were helpful in proving pedagogically valid education, there was no guarantee that the current assessment instruments used in OBE in the senior phase actually assist educators in providing pedagogically valid education. The implication is that senior phase learners are currently neither achieving the specific outcomes nor the critical outcomes. In the process of the assessment of learners in the classrooms, the current assessment instruments are open to human error and abuse because, different educators use the instruments differently within the same phase. These findings agree with the researcher's argument stated at paragraph 1.2 in chapter 1, that the Gauteng Department of Education does not have a tight final assessment policy in place yet (also see Circulars 41/2000 and 13/2000). Since educators cannot develop their own assessment instruments, they have serious problems with the use and management of group-work as a technique. They felt that too much time was spent on trying to develop assessment instruments that can help to manage group-work, in particular. Bebell in Wilhelms (1967: 18) confirmed that assessment consumes a lot of time and energies of educators. Consequently, it could be concluded that currently educators are not able to develop their own assessment instruments.

### **➤ Findings on the second question**

It was discovered that; many educators do not plan their lessons at all. The respondents were doubtful whether educators currently use assessment instruments that are helpful in equipping learners with the required skills and abilities. Raseala (2000:1) (see 1 paragraph 1.2 in chapter 1) stressed that OBE needs assessment instruments that will produce learners who will be "capable of flexible thinking and independent learning". The teaching and assessment abilities of educators in the senior phase have serious shortcomings and they can therefore, not be trusted to be capable of ensuring that

learners gain the required skills and abilities. The current teaching and assessment skills of senior phase educators is lacking in as far as quality assurance is concerned, and the implication is that learner performance is judged and influenced incorrectly by the educators. As stated in paragraph 1.2 in chapter 1 (also see Klenowski in Barry at paragraph 1.2 in chapter 1), senior phase educators need to be able to develop new assessment instruments that will address the legacy of Bantu Education.

➤ **Findings on the third question**

The study found that; it is difficult for educators to get used to the fact that there are now new dimensions in assessment. Although attempts are made by educators to teach effectively, the average educator in the farm schools finds it difficult to incorporate different forms of assessment in the classroom. Instead, many educators in the farms complain about time spent on various assessment dimensions. This reality is confirmed by Luijten's (1991: 61) argument for practicability, as indicated in paragraph 2.2.3.2 of chapter 2. If the application of the new dimensions in assessment cannot be guaranteed, the implication is that, teaching activities are not informed and supported by the new forms of assessment. The quality of teaching and learning can therefore neither be improved nor transformed.

➤ **Findings on the fourth question**

The research found that; while educators at the former DET schools were not confident about the rubrics and other types of assessment instruments they use, educators at the former model C schools felt that their schools have effective and reliable rubrics and other assessment instruments to guarantee good performance, and track the performance and progress of learners. One concludes that while the progress of learners in the former DET schools cannot be effectively tracked, in the former model C schools assessment instruments are helping to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. If, as argued by Darling-Hammond et al. in chapter two, there could be conferences to discuss learner performance and problems that frustrate educators. All heads of departments felt that large classes could make the use of rubrics and other types of assessment instruments to be unreliable. As argued in paragraph 1.6.1 of chapter 1, without pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment



instruments, learners cannot achieve the specific and critical outcomes.

#### ➤ **Findings on the fifth question**

The study further revealed that; in the former model C schools heads of departments felt confident that the feedback they get from their assessment instruments, is enough evidence to prove that their educators use the five different forms of assessment in the learning area. In the former DET farm schools there is no evidence that the five forms of assessment are being effectively used. According to Wilhelms (1967: 4) if assessment instruments do not provide feedback that is needed, when it is needed, then those assessment instruments are failing to meet the criteria. This is particularly true with regard to the former DET farms schools because the heads of departments felt that they do not get the feedback they require from their educators. But, as indicated under the research problem, at 1.3.1 in chapter 1, the problem remains that there is no guarantee that the assessment instruments used by educators are pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic.

### **4.5 FINDINGS ON THE RESPONSES OF CLASS REPRESENTATIVES**

#### ➤ **Findings on the first question**

As stated in paragraph 2.2.32 of chapter 2, the study found that, at least, a few educators involve their learners in the construction of assessment instruments. As stated in paragraph 1.2 of chapter one, stakeholders cannot take ownership of OBE if they are not involved. The majority of learners are not involved in the construction of assessment instruments. Resnick in Darling-Hammond et al. is of the view that assessment instruments can have a demoralizing effect on learners. Although class representatives were satisfied with the assessment instruments constructed and provided by their educators, it was found that learners gain interest and get motivated to participate in the learning and teaching activities if assessment instruments were constructed in consultation with them.

In most cases boys felt that if they are not involved in the construction of assessment

instruments, the implication is that assessment processes are not transparent. Circular 41/2001 confirms that where there is transparency there can be no favours. The majority of the class representatives felt that educators involve them in the construction of assessment instruments only when the district officials will be visiting their schools. This confirms the researcher's argument stated at 2.2.1.3 in chapter 2, that educators are not well trained to give learners the required support. The implication is that many educators play OBE to impress district officials but as soon as the district officials leave, teaching and learning activities revert to the old content driven practices. In the researcher's opinion, training for the implementation of new trends in assessment and the new forms of assessment should start with school principals, as managers of the curriculum in the senior phase, so that they can monitor the implementation of assessment processes on an on-going basis. In that way, principals would ensure that learners are involved because the learners, felt that it would be good to be involved so that they could understand the assessment processes in the classrooms.

#### ➤ **Findings on the second question**

Although some learners were frustrated that their parents could not assist them with projects, the majority of class representatives were enthusiastic about the assessment instruments used by the educators. There were also those class representatives who felt that the current assessment instruments created too much work for them and their parents. The class representatives felt that it is easier for them to learn because they always know what they are going to learn next. According to Hanson (1978: 50) as quoted at 2.2.9.3 in chapter 2, learners need to feel that the instruments used are their own. Both boys and girls felt that their educators were committed to their work and attempt to make lessons to be very interesting. Although enthusiastic about the assessment instruments used, some boys and most girls did not like working in groups with the rest of their classmates. The implication could be that, as stated at 2.2.1.3 in chapter 2, educators are not skilled and knowledgeable enough in using group work effectively, as a result, group work method is avoided most of the time. A further implication could be that it is not all learners who are able to work in groups and should therefore be given space to work as individuals, as well. If not managed properly, group work can therefore impact negatively on the education of the learners.

### ➤ Findings on the third question

All the class representatives were excited about the new continuous assessment approach and felt that the new system of assessment benefited them. The study found that learners saw the value of learning and attending school on a daily basis because everything they learnt contributed towards their progression at school. Contrary to the principle of objectivity stated in paragraph 2.2.2.1, in some isolated cases educators also use continuous assessment to discipline some culprits. The study further found that in the former model C schools learners who are absent on the days when certain assessment processes take place are given an opportunity to go through the process the day they come to school. With the former DET schools, this was not the case because all twelve learners from former DET schools confirmed that they are never given a second chance. According to Luijten (1990: 126) as stated at 2.2.6.2 in chapter 2, there should be no great deal of flexibility in the interpretation of assessment instruments. The implication is that there is no consistency in the application of assessment instruments between former TED and former DET schools.

## 4.6 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

According to Wilhelms (1967: vii) assessment instruments should focus on "the fundamental needs of learners, educators, curriculum designers and policy makers". To this end, the analysis of the responses in Chapter Three showed that the current assessment instruments used in the senior phase, lack pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity required to prepare learners for either the FET or the world of work. In accordance with the findings, stakeholders are still marginalized in the new education system because they are not fully involved in the construction of assessment instruments in the senior phase. In spite of Sooklal's (1995: 108) warning at point 2.2.5.3 in chapter 2 (also see point 4.2.5.1 in this chapter), parents and other stakeholders are not able to play a supportive role in the education of their children. This chapter revealed that educators and other stakeholders in education are committed to playing their part in equipping learners with the required skills, knowledge, attitudes and values but there are no pedagogically valid, reliable and authentic assessment instruments to enable them to do so effectively. In addition, the study revealed that

some schools practice OBE only when district officials are visiting the schools, afterwards they revert to the old educator-centered approach. The implication is that lack of constant monitoring by district officials will impact negatively on the implementation of the new trends in assessment and the new forms of assessment in the senior phase.

# **CHAPTER FIVE**

## **RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSALS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

It was stated in paragraph 3.2 of chapter three and 4.1 of chapter four that the purpose of chapter four was to interpret the findings of the respondents with regard to the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of the assessment instruments used in the senior phase. Therefore, the purpose of chapter five is to make suggestions and proposals with regard to the findings that were discussed in chapter four. According to Matseke (2000:129) "suggestions and proposals are preferred because they can be accepted as they are or modified". The researcher is confident that the suggestions and proposals made in this chapter will make a valuable contribution towards addressing problems faced by educators and stakeholders with regard to the pedagogical validity, reliability and authenticity of assessment instruments used in the senior phase.

### **5.2 SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSALS IN RESPECT OF DISTRICT OFFICIALS, GIED CONSULTANTS, HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AND LEARNER REPRESENTATIVES**

#### **5.2.1 Suggestions And Proposals On The Findings**

As stated at 1.7.2 in chapter 1, the terms proposals, suggestion and recommendation are not used interchangeably. It is suggested that special attention be paid by the GDE to the development of assessment instruments that will guarantee that the senior phase learners are covering the sixty-six specific outcomes and the twelve critical outcomes. The efficient use of uniform assessment instruments can guarantee that senior phase learners are indeed being equipped with the required skills, knowledge, attitudes and values before they exit the system. This suggestion is prompted by the findings that emerged from responses to questions for district officials in chapter 3. If, as argued by

Bebell in Wilhelms (1967: 18), assessment is the “sick man” of education, the implication is that unless all principals and educators are forced to comply with National Assessment Policy Act (1996), the Senior Phase Policy Document of 1997, and the Assessment in Grade Nine in 2002 (May 2002), assessment processes in the senior phase are going to produce citizens who are going to be misfits in society.

Without valid, reliable and authentic assessment instrument the new trends and forms of assessment (Assessment of Grade Nine Learners in 2002) will not be applied correctly. The further implication is that the senior phase will not be preparing learners for the FET and the world of work. Without a valid assessment instrument, educators and learners in the senior phase will be wasting time assessing wrongly and missing both the specific outcomes and the critical outcomes. Currently educators may be distorting assessment processes and busy producing wrong products that will not be consumed by employers in the form of labourers or employees (also see paragraph 2.2.1.1 of chapter 2). Educators should be skilled in constructing their own assessment criteria with learners, and assessment rubrics as valid, reliable and authentic instruments of assessment in the senior phase.

## **5.2.2 SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTIONS AND PROPOSALS**

- 5.2.2.1 It is recommended that an assessment instrument/examination agreed to by all stakeholders be constructed based on valid, reliable and authentic values and principles.
- 5.2.2.2 It is suggested that educators receive ongoing workshops meant to develop their skills and knowledge of assessment techniques and instruments and compatible with Outcome Based Educational way of promoting learners from one grade to the next.
- 5.2.2.3 It is a proposal that schools in one circuit be made to adhere to a standardized/uniform system of promoting learners from one grade to the next to avoid possible discrepancies regarding assurance in the learning teaching situation.

- 5.2.2.4 It is recommended that the role of continuous assessment and of examination should be clarified and also put into proper perspective as there seems to be confusion about the two concepts.
- 5.2.2.5 It is suggested that the Gauteng Department of Education should give clear guidelines as to what to assess, how to do so, and with what to do it and when to do so, as teachers complain that they are now doing is to assess and not to teach.
- 5.2.2.6 Finally, it is proposed that a team of officials with the appropriate knowhow regarding to assessment techniques be created to bring former TED schools and DET schools into harmony with what OBE demands unlike the present situation in which both school systems are far apart like the case used to be in the apartheid SA.

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87 Nicolas Smit Street  
Monument, 1739  
14 May 2001

The Principal and  
Chairperson of School Governing Body

.....  
.....  
.....

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT AT  
YOUR SCHOOL: P.S. SKOSANA

I am conducting a research study for M.ED degree at Vista University: Mamelodi Campus, entitled: "The pedagogical Validity of Assessment Instruments Used in Outcomes-based Education: in the Senior Phase".

I have obtained permission from the District Director, Gauteng West (D2) district to interview district officials, heads of departments and learners at your school for completion.

I shall therefore be grateful to you if you could grant me the above permission. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Your co-operation in this regard will be highly appreciated

Yours truly

P.S. Skosana



# ANNEXTURE A

87 Nicolas Smit  
Street  
Monument, 1739  
2 May 2001

The Senior Manager  
Gauteng West District – D2  
Private Bag X2020  
Krugersdorp  
1740

Dear Madam

**APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY IN YOUR  
DISTRICT: SKOSANA P.S.**

I am conducting a research study for M.ED degree at Vista University, Mamelodi Campus, entitled: 'The Pedagogical Validity of Assessment Instruments Used in Outcomes-based Education: in the senior phase'.

I am asking for permission from your office to interview learners and Heads of Departments in the Magaliesburg area as well as five district officials from your office for completion.

I shall be very grateful to you indeed if you could be so kind to grant me the above permission. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Your cooperation in this regard is highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

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**P.S. SKOSANA**