



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
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**A STUDY OF TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT OF LEARNERS' WORK  
AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE CULTURE  
OF LEARNING IN SCHOOLS**

**BY**

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**A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree**

**Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

***In the Department of Curriculum Studies  
University of Pretoria.***

**PROMOTER : Professor W.J. Fraser**

November 2002



**This study is dedicated to my only son:  
Sisekelo Performance Vilakazi.**

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My gracious thanks and appreciation are extended to:

1. My promoter Prof. W.J. Fraser, whose underlying support and sympathetic mentoring made this task a success. I wish also to express sincere thanks to his family whose time he sacrificed.
2. Dr F. Kanfer and Dr M. Van Der Linde for their help with the statistics contained in this thesis.
3. The Statistical Consultation Service of University of Pretoria for the statistical processing and preparation of data sheets used in this research study.
4. My daughters Lindiwe, Ayanda, Sisabethe and Zakithi for the time they spent alone while I was doing this research.
5. My colleagues in the Special Educational Needs section in Mpumalanga Department of Education for the compassion they have shown throughout this study.
6. My parents, John Kufa Vilakazi and Isabellah Fakazile Vilakazi.

7. My brothers, sisters and friends for their support.
8. The Malaza and K.V.L. Simelane family for their loving support.
9. The appreciation of the typed work done on the study by Mr. R Boonstra and Mrs. C Boonstra. I wish also to express sincere thanks to their family whose time has been sacrificed.
10. The appreciation of proof reading, spelling checking and editing goes to Mrs. Florence Grobler and Miss. Pamella van Heerden.
11. Thanks for the financial support from the National Research Foundation.
12. Mr. Richard and Mrs. Mndebele, sons and daughters for their loving and caring support.
13. My thanks to Mrs Kim Olbrich who did the language editing, and final typing, formatting and printing of the thesis.
14. My final thanks goes to our Heavenly Father, who gave each one of us the power to continue.



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**DEGREE : DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION**

**DEPARTMENT : TEACHING AND TRAINING STUDIES**

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**SUMMARY**

Since the inception of the Outcomes-based-Education system in South Africa, great emphasis has been placed on assessment of learners' performance, as a strategy to ascertain that learners achieved the desired learning outcomes. However, OBE assessment strategies appear to be contrary to traditional evaluation methods, which are characterized as teacher-centred and authoritarian, which promote rote-learning and are obsessed with content, show a lack of integration between education and training, rigid divisions, and involve punitive formal examinations designed to yield high levels of failure. Given the rhetorical framework, OBE, as a paradigm shift, must represent the opposite of negative aspects often found in the education system.

The review of literature on which this research is based emphasized the importance of assessment in not only focusing on what learners can do, but also on developing learners holistically. In other words, assessment in this study required both teachers and learners to regard assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning activities. In this way

learners could demonstrate learned values, skills and knowledge for the promotion of the culture of learning. If assessment is viewed in this light it will not only enhance learning amongst learners, but it will also ensure that learners gain access to further learning.

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

**Hypothesis 1.** An assessment system built upon the traditional evaluation methods has a detrimental effect on the development of the culture of learning in schools.

**Hypothesis 2.** Assessment strategies built upon an Outcomes-based assessment policy are more effective in contributing toward the development of a culture of learning in schools.

The empirical investigation also tested the following Null hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 3.** No distinction can be drawn between teachers' perceptions regarding the impact or influence of traditional evaluation methods and teachers' perceptions regarding the impact or influence of Outcomes-based assessment strategies on the culture of learning in schools.

The literature survey contributed to the drafting of 84 objective statements. These statements were based on the premise that assessment strategies built upon an Outcomes-based Education policy are more effective in contributing towards the development of a culture of learning than an assessment system built upon the traditional product-driven teaching strategies.

Teachers' opinions or perceptions were then assessed on these item statements by means of a structured questionnaire. The teachers' opinions or perceptions were then subjected to investigative factor analysis, and three prominent factors were revealed by the factor analysis. The first factor related to "Outcomes-based-Assessment strategies", and loaded an eigenvalue of 54.34000251. The second factor was related to "traditional evaluation" and loaded an eigenvalue of 10.8298612. The third factor was linked to "assessment and

its influence on the culture of learning” and loaded an eigenvalue of 7.5540027 from the results of the factor analysis.

The high Cronbach Alpha Reliability correlation coefficient of 0.97 implies that the questionnaire and items were reliable in terms of what they were supposed to measure.

The results of the empirical analysis supported Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, and rejected the null hypothesis, Hypothesis 3.

The limitations of the study are discussed, and a number of recommendations are made for further research. These concern aspects relating to teacher education, how practicing teachers can improve their understanding of assessment, the relationship between formative and summative assessment, and finally, how different assessment strategies should be applied to different learning areas.

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