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ADDENDUM A

CODE:

QUESTIONS FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS



RESEARCH TOPIC: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HIV & AIDS PROGRAMMES IN SCHOOLS

RESEARCH QUESTION: IN WHAT MANNER DO CONTEXTUAL FACTORS INFLUENCE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF HIV & AIDS PROGRAMMES IN SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS?



Section A: Biographical information

Question 1: What is your position at the school?

Principal	
Deputy Principal	
Head of Department	
Master Trainer	
Teacher	

Question 2: What is your highest qualification?



Question 3: How long have you been a teacher?

0-5 years;	
5-10 years;	
10-20 years;	
20 years or more.	

Question 4: To what extent are you involved in HIV & AIDS programmes in your school?

Directly involved	Indirectly involved	Not involved at all
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SECTION B: Training with regard to HIV & AIDS education

Question 5: Have you attended any training sessions, workshops or information sessions with regard to HIV & AIDS? If so, where, when and by whom were these services rendered?

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Question 9: Which aspects do you regard as important when dealing with HIV & AIDS prevention?

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SECTION C: The school's HIV & AIDS programme

Question 10: Does your school present an HIV & AIDS programme to the learners? If not, ignore question 10 and please answer questions 11a to 11d.

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**ALTERNATIVE QUESTIONS TO QUESTION 10, IN THE INSTANCE OF
NON-PRESENTATION OF THE HIV & AIDS PROGRAMME.**

Question 11a: With reference to question 10, why is your school not implementing the HIV & AIDS programme?

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Question 11b: Do you regard the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme as important? If not, why?

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Question 11c: Do you think the implementation of such a programme can make a difference?

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Question 11d: How can these challenges be addressed in order to facilitate the implementation of such a programme in your school?

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Question 12: Are you aware of the fact that the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme is compulsory?

Question 13: Regarding your school’s HIV & AIDS programme, answer the following questions.

When is the programme presented?	
Who is responsible for the programme?	
How long does the presentation take?	
Where is the programme presented?	
According to your opinion, what is the core message of the programme?	

Question 14: In your opinion, what is the impact of your school’s HIV & AIDS programme?

Question 15: Which resources for facilitating the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme are available in your school?

RESOURCE	AVAILABLE	UNAVAILABLE
Teachers allocated to the HIV & AIDS programme.		
Teachers trained with regard to HIV & AIDS education.		
Classrooms dedicated to the HIV & AIDS programme.		
Textbooks.		
Posters, wall charts.		
Pamphlets, booklets.		
Video player and/or a DVD player.		
Videocassettes and/or DVD material related to HIV & AIDS education.		
First aid kit and supplies.		
Library.		
Internet.		
Computer access for teachers.		
Computer access for all learners.		
Budget allocation for HIV & AIDS education.		

Question 16: How is the HIV & AIDS programme accommodated within the school's timetable?

Question 17: Does your school have an own, unique school policy on how to deal with HIV & AIDS related issues in the school and on the playground?

Question 18: Can you describe the process that was followed for developing the school's HIV & AIDS policy?



Question 19: Are you aware of other sources that were consulted during the development of your school's HIV & AIDS policy, for example experts, departmental requirements, the Internet or books?

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Question 20: Who were the stake-holders that were involved in drafting your school's HIV & AIDS policy?

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Question 21: Does your school's HIV & AIDS policy deal with unforeseen incidences that may occur on the campus of the school (accidents which could lead to bleeding)?

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Question 22: Does your school make provision for/allow outsiders such as loveLife, Soul Buddyz, the Department of Health, community institutions, NGOs or the clergy to participate in or present HIV & AIDS programmes in your school?

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Question 23: Are you comfortable or uncomfortable about talking to learners about sensitive topics such as:

	Comfortable	Uncomfortable	Reasons
HIV & AIDS?			
HIV & AIDS transmission?			
HIV & AIDS prevention?			
HIV & AIDS testing?			
HIV & AIDS status?			
Caring for people living with HIV & AIDS?			
Sex?			
Sexual relationships?			
Sexual activities? (heterosexual; homosexual; bisexuality; oral; anal; group)			
Sexual orientation?			
Sexual reproductive development?			
Sexual abuse?			
Sexually Transmitted Infections?			
Condom availability and use?			
Unwanted pregnancies?			
Substance abuse?			
Prostitution?			

SECTION E: Reflection on the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme at a participant's school

Question 24: According to you, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation process followed by your school?

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Question 25: If you would be asked to advise the schools in Soshanguve with regard to improvement of the process of HIV & AIDS programme implementation, what would your advice be?

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ADDENDUM B

**ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE FROM THE RESEARCH ETHICS
COMMITTEE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

DEGREE AND PROJECT

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

CS07/05/01

PhD Curriculum Studies
Contextual factors influencing the implementation of HIV and AIDS
programmes in schools

INVESTIGATOR(S)

Dirk van den Berg - 9527889

DEPARTMENT

Curriculum Studies

DATE CONSIDERED

14 June 2007

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

APPROVED

This ethical clearance is valid for *years and may be renewed upon application*

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE

Dr S Human-Vogel

DATE

14 June 2007

CC

Prof Linda van Rooyen (Supervisor)
Dr Lojiso Jita (Departmental Ethics Representative)
Ms Jeannie Beukes (Student Administration)

This ethical clearance certificate is issued subject to the following conditions:

1. A signed personal declaration of responsibility
2. If the research question changes significantly so as to alter the nature of the study, a new application for ethical clearance must be submitted
3. It remains the students' responsibility to ensure that all the necessary forms for informed consent are kept for future queries.

Please quote the clearance number in all enquiries.



ADDENDUM C

**PERMISSION FROM THE GAUTENG DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION TO
CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS**



UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Date:	12 March 2007
Name of Researcher:	Van der Berg Dirk Nicolaas
Address of Researcher:	Visvangerstraat 250 Montanapark 0159
Telephone Number:	0125489682
Fax Number:	0127998564
Research Topic:	Contextual factors influencing the implementation of HIV and AIDS programmes in schools
Number and type of schools:	3 Secondary Schools
District/s/HO	Tshwane North

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved to conduct the research. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to both the School (both Principal and SGB) and the District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted.

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Director: Knowledge Management and Research
Room 525, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0488 Fax: (011) 355-0286



4. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned, respectively.
5. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, and chairpersons of the SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Persons who offer their co-operation will not receive additional remuneration from the Department while those that opt not to participate will not be penalised in any way.
6. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal (if at a school) and/or Senior Manager (if at a district/head office) must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
7. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year.
8. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
9. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent of all learners that are expected to participate in the study.
10. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
11. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
12. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Senior Manager: Strategic Policy Development, Management & Research Coordination with one Hard Cover bound and one Ring bound copy of the final, approved research report. The researcher would also provide the said manager with an electronic copy of the research abstract/summary and/or annotation.
13. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned.
14. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Senior Manager concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

ACTING CHIEF DIRECTOR: OFSTED

The contents of this letter has been read and understood by the researcher.	
Signature of Researcher:	
Date:	19/03/2007

ADDENDUM D

**REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THE
SCHOOL**

The Principal
Xxx Secondary School
Soshanguve

Dear Mr xxx

RE: PERMISSION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH AT xxx SCHOOL

I am a PhD student at the University of Pretoria and I am currently conducting a research project on contextual factors that influence the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes in secondary schools. For this purpose, I have selected your school as participant in this study. The study will take place during the period April 2007 to June 2007 and the findings will be used to identify, explore, describe and explain the manner in which contextual factors in a secondary school influence the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme.

For the purpose of the study, I kindly request your permission to conduct interviews and discussions with selected staff members of your school. The information provided will be treated confidentially and anonymously. Any participant will also be free to withdraw from the research project at any stage that he/she wishes to do so. The Gauteng Department of Education has granted permission to have the interviews conducted at selected schools. I have also been granted ethical clearance by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Pretoria to conduct the research in schools.

If you are willing to assist me, please complete the form below and return it to me.

Kind regards

Dirk van den Berg



Dear Mr Van den Berg

Having read your above letter, I hereby grant / do not grant you permission to do research at xxx Secondary School, by conducting interviews and facilitating discussions with selected members at my school.

Name and surname: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



ADDENDUM E

PARTICIPANT'S INFORMATION LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Researcher's name: DN van den Berg

Student number: 9527889

Department of Curriculum Studies

University of Pretoria

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the researcher has sufficiently informed me about my role in the research, about what he will expect of me, as well as regarding the fact that there are no foreseen risks of participating in this research. I understand that the interview will take approximately one hour, and that I shall receive no remuneration for participating in this research.

I therefore wish to give my written informed consent regarding my participation in the research of the bearer hereof, Mr D N van den Berg. I acknowledge that the latter is an enrolled student in the Faculty of Education at the University of Pretoria. I understand that I shall be required to answer questions during an interview, which will be tape-recorded.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may discontinue my participation at any time. I also understand that, should I wish to withdraw my participation, I shall not be discriminated against in any way. I am cognisant of the fact that the findings of this research project will be disseminated, for which I give my approval.

Participant

Date

ADDENDUM F

FIELD OBSERVATIONS AND REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

1 August 2007: Case study 1 – School visit 1

Today I was extremely excited and anxious at the same time. I was to have my first two interviews for data collection, after the disappointment of being forced to postpone my interviews due to the national public servant strike action that continued for six weeks from May until July. I was very fortunate to be able to re-schedule my field visits and interviews for August and September. Although the three principals were very helpful in assisting me to rearrange all my interviews, I still could not help feeling a bit despondent because of the delay in my data collection, but most of all because of the effect that the strike had on the delivery of education to the learners who I felt needed it the most. Well, I had to move forward and put my personal feelings aside to focus on the aim of my study, that is to identify and investigate contextual factors that influence the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes. Undoubtedly, the industrial action must have had a serious influence.

On entering the first school where I had the first two interviews scheduled with the school principal (C1:P) and the head of department for human and social sciences (C1:HOD), I suddenly felt very nervous – although I was well-prepared and well-organised, the uncertainty of how I would be received made me anxious. These feelings aside, I noticed that the school buildings appeared neat and tidy, characterized by red face-brick and small windows. I noticed a faded emblem of the school that had been painted on the wall of the administration block, indicating that once there was possible pride and a certain ethos in the school. The surroundings of the school were not the same though. The school premises were littered with paper, and the lawn

not mowed. I could see that the few plants and trees around the buildings desperately needed attention and water. It made me curious to see what the classrooms were like, as the surroundings were not very conducive to learning and created a negative and uncaring impression (refer to Figure 7 in Addendum G).

I met the principal, and he was indeed very friendly, which made me feel welcome and at ease. Our interview started on time and he shared a lot of information with me. In the office I noticed several trophies that the school had won in music and drama competitions, as well as photos of the president and the minister of education. I got the impression that this principal must be proud of his school's achievements, and apparently a proud South African. Even though the principal appeared to be well-informed with regard to HIV & AIDS, as he had attended departmental workshops, I got the impression that his knowledge with regard to the HIV & AIDS programme was limited, and that he reported positively regarding his school, in order to impress me. The school reportedly had an HIV & AIDS school policy, although the principal was unable to provide me with a copy. This would definitely have provided me with valuable information with regard to the implementation efforts of the school. In addition to this, I was sure that I would be able to collect information from the other participants at the school. The principal appeared to be unsettled when discussing sensitive issues such as sex and condoms, and ascribed this to his culture and his age. I considered the interview a success and was eager to listen to my first data recording. After the interview, I felt more confident, and looked forward to the next interview with the head of department.

The head of department (C1:HOD) was also an older male teacher with an apparent vast experience in education. He was also very friendly and welcomed me into his office where the interview was to be conducted. The office was cluttered with numerous text books and stacks of documents that

needed filing. The HOD apologised friendly that all the NCS (National Curriculum Statement) documents were overwhelming, and that he did not have enough files for everything. I also noticed musical instruments and sport equipment that were packed in the office. These apparently were resources intended for Life Orientation (LO), and the school still had to decide on how to utilize them (refer to Figure 1 in Addendum G). The interview went smoothly, and the HOD provided me with relevant information, although I found it interesting that he regarded himself as not directly involved in the HIV & AIDS programme at his school, even though he was teaching LO. This participant was clearly concerned about the continued sexual relationships between male educators and female learners, as well as the influence that the behaviour of political figures has on the message of prevention. Although he spoke openly about sensitive topics during the interview, he regarded it as unprofessional to discuss these topics with learners. I found it strange that the HOD was not aware of any HIV & AIDS school policy that had been drafted at their school, and I wondered if the other participants would be able to confirm my suspicion that no such policy existed. The interview was concluded, and I felt more confident about my questions and interview procedures.

Although only the first two interviews had been concluded, it seemed as though I had already gathered a lot of data, and I was looking forward to transcribing from my recordings. I met the two teachers that I was going to interview during the next field visit, and secured the time and venue for the interviews with them. They were two female teachers, and I was anxious to obtain a possible different perspective regarding the school. I was still not clear about the exact manner in which the school implemented the HIV & AIDS programme, but I was confident that, by listening to the recordings and obtaining more information from the teachers, I would be able to shed more light on the subject. I had to remind myself that this was only the first school

and the first two interviews, and that, although I could anticipate certain outcomes, I should guard against early interpretations and conclusions.

6 August 2007: Case study 1 – School Visit 2

Today I returned the transcripts to the principal and the HOD of the school. They verified the correctness thereof, which made me feel more confident and motivated for the interviews that followed. I then conducted interviews with the two teachers at school 1 (C1:T1 and C1:T2). I obtained a lot of valuable information from both teachers, and I was very fortunate to be able to conduct the interviews in their classrooms. I believe this gave me the opportunity to obtain a better picture of the set-up in which the HIV & AIDS programme was being implemented. I also managed to take photos of the loveLife billboards in the school and community which illustrates the possible involvement of the organisation in the schools and community (refer to Figure 4 in Addendum G).

The first interview was with an elderly female teacher who had several years of experience in education (C1:T1). She was very knowledgeable with regard to HIV & AIDS, although I sensed a lack of enthusiasm with regard to LO and the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme. Even though the classroom was without any litter, I did not find it very clean, as the walls and learners' desks were covered with graffiti (slogans of how the learners hated school), and some window panes were broken. The room was only furnished with a teacher's desk, and a number of (+/- 50) desks and chairs for learners, as well as a steel cupboard for the teacher. There were no posters or educational material displayed; this made the room look impersonal, cold and empty. The teacher was teaching LO to grade 10 and 11 learners, as well as History and Geography to several classes up to grade 12 level (refer to Figure 2 in Addendum G). Her view was that LO did not receive much attention, because it was not examinable, and therefore the management and learners

apparently did not focus on the subject that much. I also gained the impression that the parents of the school were not that much involved in the school's activities, as many of them reportedly did not even know in which class their child was, or who the subject teachers were.

The second interview was also conducted with a female teacher (C1:T2) who was teaching LO as well as a First Language for grades 10, 11 and 12 classes. The teacher had been trained as a "Master Trainer", and I could sense that she had a real interest in the topic of HIV & AIDS (especially with regard to the girls). The appearance of the classroom was quite similar to that of the previous teacher, except that I noticed some posters with regard to HIV & AIDS, puberty and physical development, on the one wall. Even though the teachers reported about several events that the school had organised in the past, I could not confirm any such events with the other participants, but I was delighted about the possibility that someone was at least trying to do more than what is expected according to the prescribed curriculum. I found it disturbing, that according to the teacher, LO and HIV & AIDS related issues at the school were regarded as the responsibility of the female teachers, and that the males of the school were not that involved. Only the females were apparently sent for workshops and training in this regard. I wondered if this phenomenon could be ascribed to some cultural taboo or to gender-stereotyping. I decided to include a question in this regard during informal discussions with the other participants.

Reflecting on the interviews that I had today, I felt more confident that my questions were focused on the real issue at hand, although I had to guard against early interpretations and conclusions. Despite the encouraging response of the participants, that their school was implementing the HIV & AIDS programme in LO, I pondered the question whether the programme extended beyond the classroom. The possibility may exist that the teachers mainly transferred factual knowledge to learners, in order to cover the scope

of the curriculum. This impression was also created by the two participants being unaware of any policy that had been developed by the school in respect of HIV & AIDS related issues.

13 August 2007: Case Study 2 – School visit 1

The school that I visited today was in the same vicinity or block as the previous school (the areas in the township have been divided into blocks, with no street or 'suburb' names). Although the building appeared to be much older than that of the previous school, I got the impression that it was well-maintained. There was no littering, the school had a fresh coat of paint, and the garden was neat and cared for. I also noticed a painting on the school entrance wall, depicting the red HIV & AIDS ribbon and a slogan "HIV kills" and "My friend with AIDS is still my friend" (refer to Figure 3 in Addendum G). This excited me, and I expected to obtain more data than just a reflection on LO requirements from this school.

Even though I planned to interview the principal first, I started with the HOD (C2:HOD), as the principal was occupied in an emergency meeting with some staff members. In the school library, it was apparent that they had prepared for my visit, as I was escorted there to find a table and two chairs ready. This made me feel most welcome and left a good impression, although I would have preferred conducting the interviews in a classroom, in order to be able to observe more of the surroundings. I found it extremely upsetting that, although it was not functional, due to shortage of teachers, the school library was piled with numerous stacks of books, and mainly served as a staff room.

The HOD was a female teacher with qualifications in psychology and counselling, and I got the impression that she was well-informed and spoke English very well. She appeared to be a very proud person, and spoke highly

of the teachers in her department, and the manner in which they worked together. She confirmed that the school presented HIV & AIDS education mainly as part of the LO curriculum, with an additional HIV & AIDS awareness day during the year, although such events were not supported by the management with regard to funds. The male teachers at the school apparently also regarded the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes as a “woman’s job”, and the men who had been allocated to LO were not taking the subject seriously. I wondered whether the perceptions of other teachers might not have had a negative influence on the efforts of those who were aiming to implement the programme. I was disappointed to learn that the school did not have an HIV & AIDS policy, and that they were lacking resources for supporting the implementation thereof.

Eventually I got to interview the principal (C2:P) after his meeting, and I was concerned that he might be in a hurry and rush through the interview, as it was getting late. The principal was very friendly, and apologised for the delay, although he seemed to be a bit distant and troubled during the interview. I got the impression that he was not well-informed with regard to HIV & AIDS education, as he frequently referred to it as the responsibility of the HOD. I understood that an HIV & AIDS policy had been developed by the school, although the principal only provided me with a copy of the departmental requirements for a school’s HIV & AIDS policy (refer to Figure 6 in Addendum G). This was the second principal to report the existence of such a policy, despite other teachers stating that they were not aware of the policy. This concerned me, and I wondered whether the principals were trying to impress me during the interview, or whether the policy had just not been communicated to other staff members. I was a bit disappointed, as the principal’s responses to the questions were short and not very informative. I probed him for additional information, but he seemed unwilling to share too much.

Reflection on the two interviews that I conducted today, I am beginning to enjoy the different responses of the participants, that clearly provided me with various perspectives regarding implementation efforts at schools. I realised today that appearances can indeed be deceiving. . . I was looking forward to interviewing the two teachers from this school.

20 August 2007: Case Study 2 – School Visit 2

The principal and HOD of the school were satisfied with the transcripts of their interviews, and this assured the credibility of the data that I had collected from them. The interviews with the two teachers (C2:T1 and C2:T2) that I had today were extremely informative. Both of them were very friendly, and participated open-heartedly in the interviews.

I requested to conduct the interviews in their classrooms, but it was not possible. This disappointed me, as the teachers at the school did not have their own classrooms, due to a shortage thereof. The learners remained in the same classroom throughout the school day, and the subject teachers then rotated between the classrooms. I considered this as not conducive to learning, although I appreciated the manner in which the teachers apparently coped with this frustrating situation. The interviews were then conducted in the library, which also served as a staff room (refer to Figure 5 in Addendum G).

The one female teacher participant (C2:T:2) was very young and enthusiastic, and this made the interview dynamic and informative. Although she had received no training with regard to HIV & AIDS, she taught LO as a subject, and regarded HIV & AIDS as a serious problem. I got the impression that the management of the school were not very supportive regarding the efforts that the LO teachers were making to enhance the subject. The teacher was also unaware of any policy or programme that the school might have developed

with regard to HIV & AIDS, except for what was required in LO. I realised that the schools regarded LO as the only HIV & AIDS programme, and, even if this is the case, there appeared to be little effort at schools to involve other people or organisations, to assist with presenting the programme – the LO teachers “are undermined”. The schools apparently wait for HIV & AIDS experts, organisations and events to be organised for them, with little or no initiative by the schools.

The other participant (C2:T1) was also a female teacher, whose interest in HIV & AIDS related issues was quite apparent. She had been trained as a counsellor and was involved in the community as a life-coach. Her contributions during the interview made me realise that HIV & AIDS was having an effect on the community and in their school. The school apparently had a number of AIDS orphans, and possibly learners who were living with HIV & AIDS. The teacher confirmed that the HIV & AIDS programme was limited to LO, and, although they made some efforts to have other people and institutions involved, the school management decided that these efforts were disrupting the school programme. The teacher also highlighted the fact that myths with regard to HIV & AIDS in the school and the community were confusing learners and causing them not to take LO (and HIV & AIDS) seriously.

The two interviews that I had today convinced me again of the dire need for HIV & AIDS education. I also felt disturbed about the apparent neglect of the HIV & AIDS programme by education managers, and about the unsupportive attitude of some teachers and learners towards the efforts of LO teachers. Could it be that LO as a replacement for Guidance as a subject has inherited the same inferior status as its predecessor? Today I have been convinced that contextual factors were definitely having an influence on the implementation of the HIV & AIDS programme. I have already started identifying some categories and themes for my data analysis.

27 August 2007: Case Study 3 – School Visit 1

Today I visited the third school to conduct my interviews, and was once again surprised at the different perspectives and experiences that teachers have with regard to the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes in their schools. As I entered the school, it was obvious that the school was old, with buildings quite similar to those of the school in Case Study 2. Although the school appeared old and needed some renovation, it was neat and clean. I specifically looked for murals depicting “AIDS awareness” messages, but there was no sign of them.

The principal was an elder lady who welcomed me and invited me into her office, where the interview was conducted. My first impression was that this principal was strict, and it appeared as though she had everything under control. I was excited about obtaining the perspective of a lady principal, as the previous two principals were men. I was offered tea and sandwiches, and realised that this was an example of “a women’s touch”. Despite her being very candid and open in her perspectives and opinions on HIV & AIDS, she appeared uncomfortable when we discussed sensitive issues such as sexual relationships, condoms and teenage pregnancies. The interview was very insightful, as the principal clearly had strong religious convictions that made it challenging for her to discuss sensitive topics with learners and teachers. I wondered what possible influence this might have on the manner in which teachers perceive the HIV & AIDS programme. The principal (like the previous two principals) stated that the school had an HIV & AIDS policy and was implementing HIV & AIDS programmes as part of LO. I also decided to validate the existence of such as policy with the other participants from this school, as the principal was unable to provide me with a copy.

The interview with the HOD was conducted in her office, which was neat and tidy as well. The HOD was very welcoming, and shared her opinions without

hesitation. My impression was that the HOD had serious concerns with regard to the lack of involvement of parents who should be talking to their children about HIV & AIDS, and teachers who had not been trained with regard to HIV & AIDS. The HOD could not confirm that the school had developed an HIV & AIDS policy. Apparently the HIV & AIDS programme was dealt with as part of LO, and by means of occasional visits from the local clinic. I experienced the HOD as pessimistic with regard to the HIV & AIDS programme, and some of her responses displayed apathy towards the implementation of the programme, for example I would expect an HOD to be aware of the number of periods that had been allocated to LO. In this school, the learners also remained in the same classroom for the whole day, while teachers rotated from classroom to classroom. I was really concerned about the effect that this might have on teaching and on the creation of an appropriate atmosphere, especially when dealing with sensitive topics in LO. This was definitely a contextual factor to keep in mind during my data analysis.

I felt quite satisfied with the data that I collected today, even though I expected the HOD to be more enthusiastic and up to date with regard to the programme and the implementation thereof. I have to remind myself that these are my personal, subjective expectations. The participants were willing to share and express their personal opinions, and this gave me a general idea of the context in which the HIV & AIDS programme is perceived and implemented. I also started considering the influence of the perceptions and attitudes of the community (parents) towards HIV & AIDS education, and came to regard this as a possible contextual factor that influences the implementation of the programme.

3 September 2007: Case Study 3 – School Visit 2

Today I conducted my last two interviews, and, after returning the transcripts to the previous two participants for verification, I realised that, except for some unfortunate re-scheduling at the start of my data collection process, all had gone well and I had enjoyed the interviews tremendously. Although I felt a bit tired of all the listening and transcribing in an effort to return transcripts to the participants on time, the excitement of completing this crucial part of my data collection invigorated me.

My last two participants (C3:T1 and C3:T2) were again both ladies, and I got the impression that HIV & AIDS related issues and LO as a subject may be viewed in schools as the responsibility of only female teachers. Is this possibly because of a cultural perception that the responsibility of discussing sexuality with learners lies with women, or is this about a possible societal stereotype that influences education as well? Nevertheless, the interviews were conducted in the staff room that was shared by all the teachers in the school. This resulted in a few interruptions during the interviews, as other teachers entered or left the room. I was still amazed at the manner in which teachers coped with not having their own classrooms and moving about from classroom to classroom. Was this arrangement due to a lack of classrooms, or an excuse to avoid certain classroom management responsibilities?

The one participant (C3:T1) appeared to be slightly inhibited at the start of the interview, but later on relaxed and shared valuable information with me. The participant appeared to be frustrated that parents and some male educators were not involved in HIV & AIDS related issues, and regarded them as someone else's problem. Several issues, such as a lack of trained LO teachers, insufficient resources, a shortage of classrooms, and learners not being serious about the programme, were discussed. The participant was also unaware of any school policy with regard to HIV & AIDS.

The other participant (C3:T2) was also a young lady who had specialised in LO at a tertiary institution. I was surprised that during the last interview I would come across a participant with specialised training, and I was looking forward to informative responses. The participant shared some interesting myths with regard to HIV & AIDS, condom use and sexual practices with me. We enjoyed the laugh, but realised the serious consequences of these myths for the school, and considered the possible influence thereof on the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes. I found the enthusiasm of the participant, with regard to the role that education might fulfil in the prevention of HIV & AIDS, encouraging. I realised that, despite the apparent negative influence that contextual factors might have on the implementation of HIV & AIDS programmes, there are also positive factors (motivated teachers) that influence the implementation of programmes. I regard these teachers as the “jewels” in schools, that need continuous support. Cultural taboos, such as talking to children about sex, and that men were not supposed to discuss such a topic with children, were of great concern for this participant, and I believe that this might be a critical contextual factor that influences the implementation of the programme in schools.

Reflecting on the interviews that I conducted during the past weeks, I must admit that I would never have imagined them to be such a learning experience. My initial anxiety and uncertainty grew into confidence and fulfilment as a researcher, and this was a wonderful experience. It was a journey filled with surprises. The views, perspectives and opinions of different participants sometimes frustrated me, but always provided me with something to learn, not only about others, but also about myself and the way that I perceive reality. This has indeed been a lived-experience, in which I was able to construct a fresh view of reality, by means of interpreting the lived-experiences of others.