

**TEACHING TOWARDS OUTCOMES AND ITS
EFFECT ON ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN A
LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND
COMMUNICATIONS CLASSROOM**

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research documented in this report was to consider the tensions that exist between a change in curriculum policy and the resultant methodological and assessment practices. An input-process-output model (Shavelson and Taylor, 1999) was used to identify the elements of the educational system pertinent to the study. These were identified as: policy as an input and teaching methodology and learning and assessment as the process of the educational system. Thereafter a single-respondent case study was selected to focus the purpose of the research by considering how the perceptions, understanding and experience of the changed curriculum policy of teaching towards outcomes has affected the nature and purpose of assessment, as viewed by an educator teaching at Grade 9 level in the General Education and Training (GET) band.

An educator teaching at Grade 9 level in an Independent secondary school in South Africa was selected as the single-respondent case study. The study was defined as an *instrumental case study* operating within the Interpretive paradigm. An educator teaching at the Grade 9 level was selected as a result of Grade 9 becoming a possible exit point in education as well as being the final year of the senior phase of the GET band. For this reason, the impact of a changed curriculum is felt most acutely at this point due to the implementation of the Common Tasks for Assessment (CTAs). In addition, an Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) teaching methodology as well as an Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) methodology is required at this level because of the portfolio of evidence that is required to be gathered for each learner in Grade 9.

The study is referred to as policy-orientated as it seeks to understand educational change by examining an educational model of provision and operation without the intention to generalise the results. The results indicate that

the change in curriculum policy does not necessarily alter teaching methodology. However, in the instance of this research, teaching methodology and assessment, relating to the respondent's teaching process, are linked and can be seen as aspects of the learning process. Lastly, the research does not clarify to what extent assessment methodology influences the outcome of learning; however, it does seem that assessment impacts on the learning process.

Key words:

assessment; curriculum reform; education system; knowledge; Outcomes-Based Education; policy; skills; teaching methodology; teaching style; teaching practice.

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