

**THE EXPERIENCES OF TEACHERS WITH CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IN
GRADE 9 GEOGRAPHY CLASSROOMS**

by

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DEDICATION

To my wife Brenda, daughters Resegofetse and Resolofetse.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1	ORIENTATION: PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY	1
1.1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.2	BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY	2
1.3	PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	6
1.5	RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	6
1.6	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY	7
1.7	THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	7
1.8	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	8
1.8.1	The nature and structure of Geography	9
1.8.2	Continuous Assessment	9
1.8.3	The role of the teacher	10
1.9	THE THEORY OF SITUATED LEARNING AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THIS INVESTIGATION	11
1.10	RESEARCH DESIGN	11
1.10.1	Research method	12
1.10.2	Sampling of participants	13
1.10.3	Data collection strategies	13
1.10.3.1	Literature review	13
1.10.3.2	Questionnaire	14
1.10.3.3	Interviews	14



1.10.4	Data Analysis	15
1.11	DEALING WITH VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	15
1.12	DELIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION	16
1.13	CONCLUSION	17
CHAPTER 2	THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF GEOGRAPHY AS A LEARNING AREA.	18
2.1	INTRODUCTION	18
2.2	WHAT IS GEOGRAPHY?	19
2.3	THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GEOGRAPHY AS A SCIENCE	20
2.4	THE KNOWLEDGE FOCUS OF GEOGRAPHY IN GRADE 9	21
2.5	THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHY, ITS RELEVANCE TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS LEARNER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES	27
2.6	POLICY REQUIREMENTS OF GEOGRAPHY	29
2.6.1	Geography and Curriculum change	29
2.6.2	Continuity and progression in the teaching of Geography	29
2.6.3	Learning outcomes and Assessment standards in Geography	33
2.7	CAREER PATHS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN GEOGRAPHY	37
2.7.1	Environment and Sustainability	37
2.7.2	Physical systems	37



2.7.3	Society	37
2.7.4	The Business World	38
2.7.5	Geographical techniques	38
2.7.6	Development and global issues	38
2.7.7	Settlement	38
2.7.8	Travel, Tourism, Leisure and Culture	39
2.8	CONCLUSION	39
CHAPTER 3	THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CASS IN THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO DIFFERENT TEACHING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES AS WELL AS DIFFERENT ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES.	40
3.1	INTRODUCTION	40
3.2	THE TEACHING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES IN GEOGRAPHY	40
3.2.1	The constructivist teaching strategy	40
3.2.2	Simulations, games and role playing	41
3.3	ASSESSMENT IN THE NCS	41
3.4	MANAGING ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOL	43
3.5	THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND THEIR USES	44
3.6	THE VARIOUS FORMS OF ASSESSMENT AND THEIR WEIGHTING	44
3.7	THE NATURE OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT	45



3.8	CHARACTERISTICS OF CASS	46
3.9	CASS AND EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT IN GRADE 9	47
3.10	THE USE OF CASS	48
3.11	CONCLUSION	49
CHAPTER 4	THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY THAT IS APPLICABLE TO THE INVESTIGATION WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE THEORETICAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUALITATIVE STRATEGIES, THE STRATEGIES ARE LINKED TO THE TECHNIQUES.	50
4.1	INTRODUCTION	50
4.2	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	51
4.3	RESEARCH DESIGN	51
4.4	SAMPLING	53
4.5	DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES AND INSTRUMENTS	55
4.5.1	The questionnaire	55
4.5.2	The interview	58
4.6	ENSURING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY	62
4.7	DATA ANALYSIS	63
4.8	CONCLUSION	65
CHAPTER 5	DATA ANALYSIS	66
5.1	INTRODUCTION	66
5.2	ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-ENDED	68

	QUESTIONS	
5.2.1	Biographic information of the participants	68
5.2.2	The role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography	69
5.2.2.1	Introduction	69
5.2.2.2	Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography	69
5.2.2.3	Discussion of the opinions of teachers about the role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography	70
5.2.3	The requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)	71
5.2.3.1	Introduction	71
5.2.3.2	Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS.	71
5.2.3.3	Discussion of the opinions of teachers about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS.	72
5.2.4	The implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	72
5.2.4.1	Introduction	72
5.2.4.2	Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	73
5.2.4.3	Discussion of the opinions of teachers about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	73
5.3	ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS	74

5.3.1	Biographic information of the participants	74
5.3.2	The role of assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography	75
5.3.2.1	Introduction	75
5.3.2.2	Analysis of the opinions of participants about the role of assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography	75
5.3.2.3	Discussion of the opinions of participants about the role of assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	76
5.3.3	The requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)	76
5.3.3.1	Introduction	76
5.3.3.2	Analysis of the opinions of participants about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS	76
5.3.3.3	Discussion of the opinions of participants about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS	77
5.3.4	The implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	77
5.3.4.1	Introduction	77
5.3.4.2	Analysis of the opinions of participants about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	78
5.3.4.3	Discussion of the opinions of participants about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography	78
5.3.5	The impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process	79
5.3.5.1	Introduction	79

5.3.5.2	Analysis of the opinions of participants on the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process	79
5.3.5.3	Discussion of the opinions of participants about the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process	80
5.4	CONCLUDING DISCUSSION	80
CHAPTER 6	RESEARCH FINDINGS	82
6.1	INTRODUCTION	82
6.2	RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS	82
6.3	THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	84
6.3.1	The main findings of the literature study	84
6.3.2	The main findings of the open-ended questions	85
6.3.3	The main findings of the interviews	89
6.4	IMPLICATIONS	91
6.5	LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH	92
6.6	SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH	92
	REFERENCES AND SOURCES	94
	ADDENDA	
	A. Ethical clearance certificate	
	B. Approval of title: dissertation	
	C. Letters of permission to schools	
	D. Letters of permission from schools	
	E. Letter of permission to the Department	



	F. Letter of permission from the Department	
	G. Questionnaire Instrument	
	H. Coded questionnaire data	
	I. Interview instrument	
	J. Coded interview data	
	K. Declaration of originality	

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Description	Page
1a	Senior Phase Learning Outcome 1 and Assessment Standards	33
1b	Senior Phase Learning Outcome 2 and Assessment Standards	35
1c	Senior Phase Learning Outcome 3 and Assessment Standards	36
2	Possible forms of assessment and their weighting	45
3	The collection and analysis of the questionnaire data	66
4	The collection and analysis of the interview data	67
5	Biographic information of the participants (Questionnaires)	68
6	Biographic information of the participants (Interview)	74

ABSTRACT

The changes brought by the democratic government in South Africa in 1994 have also brought considerable changes to the different sectors of the government and education was not different. There was a need to redress the imbalances of the past and the education system was to be reviewed so as to bring about the new assessment methods and approaches that would improve teaching and learning in the schools. Whenever any new idea enters education, it is usually aimed at improving the old school of thought. The challenge now remains the creation of new knowledge. Continuous assessment (CASS) with its greater weight requires an in-depth understanding by the teachers for correct implementation.

This study was undertaken to determine the experiences of teachers with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms, by determining and exploring the way through which the assessment policy guides and informs the teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography, the way the teachers implement CASS in the teaching, the requirements for CASS in terms of the NCS as well as the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process. CASS is a prominent component of assessment that requires the teacher to understand its implementation in the classroom. It is the responsibility of the individual teachers and schools to read and interpret the assessment policy to ensure the correct implementation of CASS.

A qualitative research design was employed and data was collected through literature review, questionnaires and interviews. The experiences of the teachers with CASS in the teaching of grade 9 Geography learners were investigated. From the literature review, it surfaced that Geography offers some interesting and fulfilling careers that teachers and learners can pursue. Career guidance is necessary to expose learners to these opportunities. Open-ended questions were used in both the questionnaires and interviews with the aim of obtaining an in-depth understanding of their experiences. Based on the findings of the questionnaire and interview data, it appears that the teachers still need support in understanding the policy of the Social Sciences. Though teachers appear to have information about the policy, they often misinterpret its correct meaning. The following are the dominant key words in this dissertation: learning outcomes, assessment standards, continuity, continuous assessment, curriculum, outcomes-based education, national curriculum statement, policy, progression, teaching strategies, assessment strategies. From this investigation, it can be inferred that there is a need for the results of this investigation to be used to guide the development of policies and that future researches be done in the area of CASS at all levels of the senior phase.

ACRONYMS

AP- Assessment policy

AS- Assessment Standards

CASS- Continuous Assessment

C2005- Curriculum 2005

DoE- Department of Education

GET- General Education and Training band

LO's- Learning outcomes

NCS- National Curriculum Statement

OBE- Outcomes-based education

RNCS- Revised National Curriculum Statement

SS- Social Sciences

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION: PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The democratic government, declared in South Africa in the year 1994 has brought about considerable changes in education. According to Schulze (2003:6), education was regarded as the key to change old commonly held values and beliefs. These values and beliefs were based on class, gender and race stereotypes. The apartheid system segregated the people according to gender, race and class. The government of that time believed in separate development where some races and certain classes of the citizens were superior to the others. The people of South Africa were classified according to these stereotypes before 1994 and immediately thereafter, education was seen as a powerful instrument to eradicate these stereotypes. A time arrived when only one system of education had to be implemented for the whole of South Africa with its diverse cultures, values, beliefs, languages and races. Educational change was required to provide equity in terms of educational provision and to promote a more balanced view by developing learners' critical thinking and problem solving abilities. Schulze (2003:6) has further reiterated a need for the education system to be reviewed in order to redress the imbalances of the past and in particular to bring about the new assessment methods and approaches that will improve teaching and learning in the schools.

Whenever any new idea enters education, it is usually aimed at improving the old school of thought; the challenge now remains not betterment but the creation of new knowledge. Assessment has become a basis for change in education because it is an important component of teaching and learning. It is through assessment that teachers are guided in their teaching, so that they can improve their teaching strategies and approaches and bring about positive results in education i.e. good performance.

According to Vandeyar and Killen (2007:102), educators' different conceptions lead to different assessment practices. They identified three groups of educators based on their views about assessment. The first group they identified is of those educators who view assessment as a useful means of gathering data upon which to base decisions about learning and their

own teaching, and such educators will attempt to make assessment an integral part of teaching, emphasize formative rather than summative assessment, frequently use informal assessment and reward academic effort and good results.

The second group is of those educators who view assessment primarily as a mechanism for making learners accountable for their learning, and such educators will favour formal and summative assessment and may tend to distance themselves from the poor learners' performance by blaming the learners' socio-economic conditions or lack of ability.

The other group of educators, views assessment as a necessary (but not as necessarily important) part of educator and school accountability and they favour summative assessment practices that emphasize the generation of marks that can be reported to external agencies. The third and last group is of those educators who view assessment as irrelevant and they take a haphazard approach to summative assessment, thus creating the idea that assessment is a waste of time.

The conception that an educator holds about assessment practice, therefore, influences the quality of teaching and learning in Geography, for instance, an educator who views assessment as useless will struggle in his/her teaching as the attitude will work against him/her as compared to the one who adopts a positive attitude towards assessment. According to the Department of Education (2007:7), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) forms the foundation for ongoing curriculum development, delivery and assessment in South African schools. The Department of Education has thus established the Revised National Curriculum (RNCS) to streamline and strengthen curriculum 2005 (C2005) and continue its commitment to outcomes-based education (OBE).

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Prior to the establishment of the new government in 1994, nineteen departments of education existed across South Africa. South Africa practised an apartheid system and education was separated along racial lines. According to the article titled "Education", (available at <http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/56.htm> and accessed online on 24/06/2008), the Bantu Education Act (No.47) of 1953 widened the gaps in educational opportunities for different racial groups. The black South Africans in particular were given an inferior education so as to limit their employment opportunities. Roux, a National party politician in the above article

wrote, “We should not give Natives any academic education. If we do who is going to do manual labour for us?” This clearly showed that the apartheid system completely marginalized the blacks with regard to education and, as such, no quality education was intended for the black society because of the above attitude.

In the twentieth century, the education system assumed economic importance as it prepared young Africans for low wage labour and protected the privileged white minority from competition” (<http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/56.htm>-accessed online on 24/06/2008). The article further declared that the 1990’s were earmarked as the beginning of the new era in education. When the then president, F.W De Klerk, addressed parliament in 1993, he stressed the need for non-racial school system with flexibility to allow communities to preserve their religious and cultural values and their home language. By 1995 all government departments were officially integrated and the first stage of the transformation in education had begun almost without violence. One education department of education was established with nine (9) provincial departments of education having responsibility for the operational aspects of education in the province.

Beets and Le Grange (2005:190) argue that education systems are globally undergoing continuing change. The change is not only applicable to South Africa but to the rest of the world. In South Africa this shift is seen in outcomes-based education (OBE) curriculum which was introduced shortly after the country’s first democratic elections. Schulze (2003:6) regards education as a key to change old commonly held values and believes. According to the Department of Education (2002:1), outcomes-based education forms the foundation of the curriculum in South Africa. It is therefore here to stay because it strives to enable all learners to achieve to the best of their ability. With OBE the outcomes that are to be attained are clearly stated in the various policies. These outcomes encourage learner-centred and activity - based approach.

In Geography, the three learning outcomes (LO’s) are common for the whole senior phase. The first learning outcome is about enquiry and its assessment standard states that the learner will be able to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes. The second learning outcome is about knowledge and understanding with the assessment standard that the learner will be able to demonstrate geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding. The final learning outcome is about exploring

issues and the assessment standard states that the learner will be able to make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems. The study will focus on all the three learning outcomes mentioned above because they are integrated and create a common platform for teaching and learning in Geography.

The new curriculum was hailed as curriculum 2005 (C2005) and it was introduced in South African schools in 1997 because increased economic competition demands that education and training should enable learners to think ‘smarter’ than in the past. The approach through which this curriculum was to be implemented was outcomes-based. Le Grange (2007:79) reiterates the issues as follows:

“OBE was intended to redress the legacy of apartheid by promoting the development of skills throughout the school leaving population in order to prepare South Africa’s workforce for participation in an increasingly competitive global economy”.

Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was introduced after curriculum 2000 (C2000) could not be implemented by the year 1997. Its implementation started in Grade 9, the exit level of the General Education and Training (GET) band of the National Qualifications Framework. According to Wilmot (2003:313), C2005 has been described in policy documents as a ‘paradigm shift’ because it represents a radical departure from the previous curriculum in terms of theoretical underpinnings, structure and organization, teaching and learning processes and assessment. C2000 was adapted and amended to become C2005 and it was envisaged to replace content- based education with OBE and teacher-centred pedagogies with more learner centred pedagogies. Wilmot (2003:313) argues that C2005 advocates a shift from a system based largely on the tenets of positivist epistemology and behaviourist learning theory to one located within the ambit of constructivist epistemology and learner centred education. Knight (2005:19) also argues that C2005 is a controversial new approach to teaching based on the principles of OBE. She further cited two of the key reasons advanced for the development and implementation of C2005 as follows:-

- OBE has considerable international support as a potentially efficient and educationally sound system of education that focuses directly on helping students achieve clearly defined outcomes.

- OBE con tests the over-emphasis on examination prevalent in the old education system as examinations are summative and allow little opportunity for learners to learn from their mistakes.

Since the gradual phasing in of the new curriculum, it has undergone revision. The revision followed a period of vociferous debate and fierce contestations as to the merits of OBE. The previously disadvantaged schools did not have resources to implement the new curriculum 2005 effectively and as such the review committee made some recommendations after visiting the schools so as to streamline and strengthen C2005.

The outcome of the review process was the development of the Revised National Curriculum (RNCS) for the GET band that was implemented in schools in the year 2002. The RNCS was aimed to transform education and training so that the aims of our democratic society and of the constitution can be realized and achieved. It was built on the vision and values of the constitution and C2005 which were social justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity (accessed online on 21/06/2008).

Though the national curriculum is continuously revised and developed, the underlying approach remained OBE. According to the Department of Education ([s.a]:2), a comprehensive and participatory implementation strategy and plan will be developed with all relevant social patterns to ensure the successful introduction of the RNCS in Grade 9.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

When the new curriculum was introduced in the year 2002, teachers were expected to shift their assessment approach from the traditional summative to the new outcomes-based approach. Continuous assessment has been preached in various policies of the department of education and it has become common knowledge that most teachers are struggling to use CASS in their teaching. CASS has is holding a prominent position in the curriculum by virtue of it taking place on an ongoing basis and continuously throughout the academic year. Vandeyar and Killen (2003:125) have confirmed the position of CASS in the curriculum by arguing that C2005 places a strong emphasis on continuous assessment. According to the grade 9 assessment model, continuous assessment (CASS) constitutes 75% of the final mark i.e. more weight than any other form of assessment, and this makes CASS a very important component of teaching. Class works, home works, tests, assignments, projects, investigations, research tasks and enrichment activities are together consolidated to make up a CASS mark

of 75%. Continuous assessment tasks must therefore be used to improve teaching and learning processes. Based on experience this is not the case, may be because policies focus more on the learners' marks rather than on the whole CASS process.

Truly speaking, teachers give CASS activities (both formal and informal) to satisfy the requirements of the policy and they are not aware that the administration of CASS goes beyond allocation of marks to individual learners. The correct purpose behind the use of CASS should therefore be investigated and findings and recommendations should be made known to teachers so that CASS could be used accurately in the classrooms. The performance of learners in these CASS activities should guide and inform teachers on how they may conduct their lessons. The question for investigation is “what are the experiences of teachers with CASS in the grade 9 Geography classrooms”?

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main research question is:

1.4.1 What are the experiences of teachers with CASS in the grade 9 Geography classrooms?

The secondary research questions are:

1.4.1.1 How does the assessment policy guide and inform teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography?

1.4.1.2 What are the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of NCS?

1.4.1.3 How do teachers implement CASS in the teaching of Geography?

1.4.1.4 What impact does CASS have on the teaching-learning process in Geography?

1.5 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As a Departmental Head for Social Sciences at school, I am currently involved with the monitoring and control of educators and learners. Assessment forms an integral part of my duties and responsibilities and most teachers find it difficult to understand and implement assessment effectively and correctly. I have also noticed how teachers from other schools find it difficult to submit CASS work for external moderation, let alone compiling the assessment tasks according to policy requirements. This experience puts CASS in a position that makes it worth researching. Maree and Fraser (2004:268) argue that informal surveys among classroom teachers and school managers indicate that of all challenges related to the

implementation of outcomes-based education in South Africa, assessment is one of the most daunting. This view is shared by many teachers who believe that CASS must be given the necessary attention it deserves in the curriculum.

According to the assessment policy, CASS takes a greater percentage of weight (75%) of the final mark of the learner. Wilmot (2003:313) also maintains that the grade 9 assessment model advocates a shift to school-based teacher assessment with CASS constituting 75% of the final mark. A need for the study of CASS must, at this stage, be ringing a bell in the ears of many researchers. I have thus taken a decision to study the experiences of teachers with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Policy makers are dependent on the findings of researchers to improve our education system. The findings of this investigation will, hopefully, be used as such by the policy makers. The Geography teachers will also use the findings of the investigation to enhance their teaching and make learning more effective for learners, by adapting their teaching styles and approaches accordingly. Teachers have to understand that CASS implementation is not only about giving tasks and awarding scores but also about analysing and interpreting the tasks and scores so that they can make meaning to both the teacher and the learner. Subject advisors will also use the findings to standardize assessment of Geography in schools. They are the specialists and advisers of the curriculum and must have an in depth understanding of CASS. The study is also aimed to lead to further studies about CASS based on the gaps that may have been exposed in the process of the investigation.

1.7 THE AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Every study must achieve some aim and objectives by answering questions raised so as to come up with solutions to these questions. The aim and objectives of this study are therefore labelled as follows:-

The aim

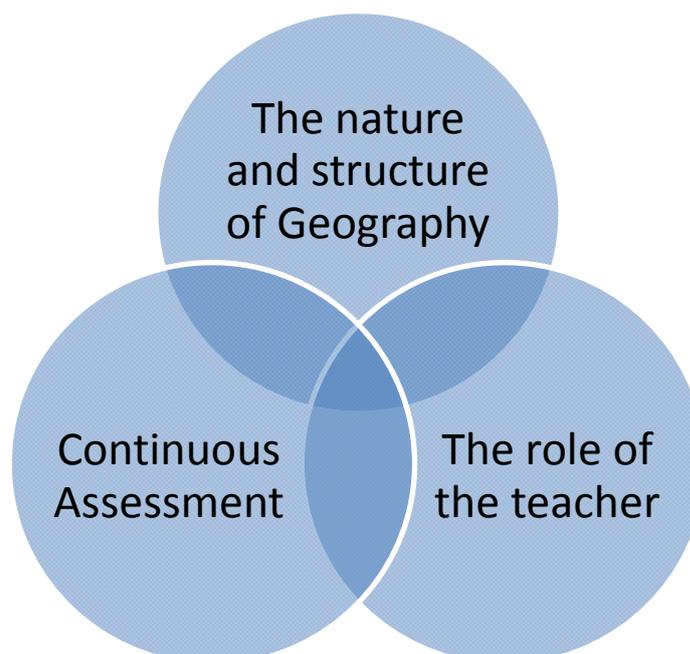
- To study the experiences of teachers with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

The objectives

- To explore how the assessment policy of the DoE guides and informs teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography.
- To explore the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of NCS.
- To investigate how teachers implement CASS in the teaching of Geography.
- To examine the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process in Geography.

1.8 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Vithal and Jansen (2001:17) describe a theoretical framework as a well- developed coherent explanation of event. A theoretical framework is a “lens” by which one views events or phenomena involved. It thus sets up a road map which will guide the investigation. The aim of the investigation is to study the experiences of teachers with CASS. The phenomenon being investigated in this case is: teachers’ experiences, i.e. how teachers use and implement continuous assessment (CASS) in teaching. The model below, with its components, represents the theoretical framework of the research. It has three components which are the nature and structure of Geography, continuous assessment and the role of the teacher.



1.8.1 The nature and structure of Geography

The General Education and Training (GET) phase covered by Curriculum 2005 focuses on providing all learners with the conceptual development and skills that learners require not only as a foundation for future educational choices but that will equip them to function effectively as full members of society.

According to the Department of Education (2002:4), Social Sciences as a learning area (subject) studies relationships between people, and between people and the environment. History and Geography are presented in the Social Sciences as separate but linked disciplines in grade 9. Geography as a discipline is integral to understanding aerial differentiation on the global surface. Geography as a subject is itself a science which is concerned with place. Through Geography, we seek to understand the differences in patterns of human distribution, interrelationships between human society and the physical environment as well as people's use of time and space. The main questions central to the study of Geography are "where (location or space), why and how (explain) as well as what (seeking an alternative).

1.8.2 Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment is an outcomes-based approach which requires the teachers to assess the learners on a continuous and ongoing basis. Mweemba and Chilala (2007:31) emphasize that continuous assessment is an ongoing, diagnostic, classroom-based process that uses a variety of assessment tools to measure learner performance. It is further stated in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) that CASS allows teachers to monitor the impact of their lessons on pupils' understanding.

According to the Department of Education (2007:2), CASS is an ongoing process that measures a learner's achievement during the course of a grade or level, providing information that is used to support learner's development and enable improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process. Educators continuously assess learners to gain an understanding of whether progress is being registered or not. According to Crooks and Black and William as cited in Brown (2004:304), assessment improves students learning and the quality of teaching. Grosser and Lombard ([s.a]:42) argue that educational assessment in South African schools is in a process of transformation. Grosser and Lombard further maintain that assessment has moved away from the traditional examination driven approach to an alternative approach that that is seen to have greater educational value in terms of the

kind of teaching and learning it encourages. Assessment has become purposeful and goal orientated to ensure that the desired learning outcomes are achieved through teaching and learning.

1.8.3 The role of the teacher

It is important to focus some attention on the various roles of the teacher. According to the Department of Education (2000:13-14), there are seven major roles of the teacher. The first is the teacher as the learning mediator. The educator mediates learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners, including those with barriers. The Department further stipulates that the educator should be able to communicate effectively and also demonstrate a sound knowledge of subject matter as well as various principles, strategies and resources appropriate to teaching in South Africa. Secondly, the teacher is seen as an interpreter and designer of learning programme and materials. The teacher will understand and interpret provided learning programme, identify requirements for the specific context of learning and prepare and select suitable resources for learning. The third role refers to the teacher as a leader, administrator and manager. He/she makes decisions appropriate to the level, manages learning in the classroom and carries out classroom administrative duties efficiently and participates in school decision making structures.

Fourthly, the educator's role is stipulated as that of the scholar, researcher and lifelong learner. The educator will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth through pursuing reflective study and research in his/her learning area. The fifth role is that of the educator as a community, citizenship and pastoral care giver. He/she practises and promotes critical relations with parents and other key persons and organizations based on the critical understanding of community and environmental development issues.

The sixth role is that of the educator as an assessor. The educator will understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to integrate it into this process. He/she will have understanding of the purposes, methods and effects of assessment and be able to provide helpful feedback to learners. The educator has to be able to design and manage both formative and summative assessment. He has to keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment and use assessment results to improve teaching and learning. The seventh and the final role is that of the educator as a learning area, discipline or phase specialist. The educator will be grounded in the knowledge, skills, values,

principles, methods and procedure relevant to learning area practice. The educator will have a well-developed understanding of the knowledge appropriate to the learning area.

1.9 THE THEORY OF SITUATED LEARNING AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THIS INVESTIGATION

This investigation is based on the theory of situated learning. According to Lave (as retrieved online on 21/10/2009 available at <http://www.learning-theories.com/situated-learning-theory-lave.html>), learning is situated, that is, it is embedded within activity, context and culture. They argue that knowledge needs to be presented in authentic contexts that would normally involve that knowledge. Teachers' knowledge of CASS does not mean that it is enough to improve and shape the teaching-learning process. According to Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989:33), it is quite possible to acquire a tool but to be unable to use it. Similarly, it is common for teachers to acquire knowledge without necessarily knowing how to use it in a particular situation, that is, to teach and improve learning. It is like having tools without necessarily knowing how to use them. I personally believe that when one knows something, it does not necessarily mean that one will be able to use that knowledge when required to do so.

This view implies that even though teachers may have thorough knowledge of the various forms of assessment as well as the basic content of Geography, it does not necessarily mean that they will be able to use such knowledge when required to do so. To know something is one thing and to use it is something different. One may have knowledge (information about something); in this case CASS but using that information (CASS) means something else. The extent to which teachers have sufficient knowledge of continuous assessment determines how they will use it to improve and shape the teaching-learning process in Geography. Teachers may inappropriately use the information that they may have learned about CASS. This is because while they may possess knowledge of CASS, they may not be aware of how to implement that knowledge effectively in a classroom situation.

1.10 RESEARCH DESIGN

Blanche and Durrheim (2002:83) define a research design as a strategic framework for action that serves as a bridge between research questions and the execution or implementation of the research. They further argue that research designs are plans that guide the arrangement of the conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to

the research purpose with economy in procedure. It is thus very important to plan how the investigation will be carried out. The aspects contained in this section are research methodology, sampling of participants as well as data collection and analysis.

1.10.1 Research Method

Blanche and Durrheim (2002:183) maintain that the method section explains the approach the researcher has used to gather and analyse data. They further argue that the instruments that the researcher uses for data analysis are described in greater detail, sampling strategy is reported and procedures for data collection and analysis are also thoroughly explained.

This research is a study of the experiences of teachers with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms. According to Ary et al. (2002:22), educational research is typically divided into two broad categories: quantitative and qualitative research, with each having its own terminology, methods and techniques. Each method shapes the way the researcher approaches the problem, collects and analyzes data. They further argue that in history, quantitative methodology has dominated education research though in recent years, qualitative research has become more popular.

A qualitative research method was the approach followed during the investigation. Two concepts, method and methodology in research attracted much interest during the investigation and were defined to show the difference in meaning. Cohen et al. (2003:44) refer to methods as a range of approaches used in educational research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and interpretation, for explanation and prediction. Methods therefore may refer to techniques and procedures used in the process of data gathering with the aim of describing and analyzing these methods. Cohen et al. (2003:45) suggest that the aim of methodology is to help us understand not the products of scientific inquiry but the process itself.

According to Ary et al. (2002:22), qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the human participants in the study. The research is aimed at generating theory rather than testing it i.e. the process itself guides the researcher to arrive at a particular theory that will guide his investigation. Ary et al. (2002:22), argue that qualitative research emerged because researchers sometimes found quantitative methods inadequate for investigating many problems in education. It is therefore of interest to know

that it is not enough to know only the number of teachers using continuous assessment in the teaching of Geography but it is also necessary to observe and interview Geography teachers to find out how they use continuous assessment in their teaching. With qualitative method, the researcher gains a deeper understanding of the phenomena that he investigates.

1.10.2 Sampling of participants

Cohen et al. (2003:92) argue that the quality of a piece of research not only stands or falls by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation but also by the stability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted. This emphasizes that sampling is one of the most important aspects of research. Mafikeng and Rekopantswe Area Offices/districts were the focus points for sampling and the target population were the teachers in the seven schools identified for sampling as well as office-based subject specialists where possible. There are a number of middle schools (grade 7-9) and secondary schools (grade 7-12). Seven schools, namely, Boitseanape, Tetlano, Montshiwa-Memorial, Reeme-Batloung, Malefo-Melea, Lecholonyane and Tsoseletso were purposively identified for sampling because they are located in different geographical locations.

The eighth school was Boingotlo, which was used for piloting the research. As such, the data collected was representative of the whole district as it is made up of rural and semi-urban schools. Two to three participants per school (educators with experience or qualification in teaching Geography in grade 9) and a Departmental Head of each school were identified provided he/she was at least either experienced or qualified to teach the subject. A total of 20 participants were sampled.

1.10.3 Data Collection strategy

According to Vithal and Jansen (2001:20), any data collection plan sets out in detail the strategy for collecting data. The researcher reviewed the relevant literature about the topic and used questionnaire as well as interview to collect data. These strategies are briefly discussed below.

1.10.3.1 Literature review

Relevant literature from academic books, journal articles, internet articles and Department of Education policies was accessed, analyzed and interpreted to determine the nature and

structure of Geography as a learning area, the policy requirements of Geography as well as assessment in Geography with particular emphasis on CASS.

1.10.3.2 Questionnaires

According to Cohen et al (2003:245), a questionnaire is a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information, providing structured, often numerical data, which can be administered in the absence of the researcher. They further argue that the questionnaire will always be an intrusion into the life of the respondent because of the time taken to complete as well as the level of threat and the sensitivity of the questions. They, Cohen et al. (2003:247), identify three types of questionnaires namely, structured, semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. The size of the sample selected determines the type of the questionnaire to be used. Less structured, more open questionnaire favours smaller samples while more structured and closed questionnaire favours larger samples. Based on the above discussion, the open ended questionnaire was used to collect data.

1.10.3.3 Interviews

According to Cohen et al. (2003:267), the use of interview in research marks a move away from seeing human subjects as simply manipulable and data as somehow external to individuals. They further argue that knowledge is generated between humans, often through conversations. An interview can therefore be described as an exchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest to achieve a certain purpose.

Cohen et al. (2003:268) argue that purposes of the interview are many and varied, for example, an interview may be used to gather data in surveys and experimental research or sample respondents' opinions in doorstep interviews. They identified the types of interview, namely informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, standardized open-ended interview and closed quantitative interview. In the informal conversational interview, questions emerge from the immediate context and are asked in a natural way.

Secondly, in the interview guide approach topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance. The third one, the standardized open-ended interviews, have the wording and sequence determined in advance and all interviewees being asked the same basic questions in the same order. The fourth, being the closed quantitative interviews, have questions and response categories being determined in advance.

Berg (2001:68-71) has also identified three similar types of interview but he named them as standardized, semi-standardized and un-standardized interviews. Based on the understanding of the interviews as discussed above, the face to face interviews were used to collect data.

1.10.4 Data Analysis

Ary et al. (2006:490) argue that data analysis is the most complex and mysterious phase of qualitative research. They argue that this process is time consuming and very difficult because the researcher has massive amounts of data to examine and interpret. Vithal and Jansen (2001:27) describe the purpose of data analysis as making sense of the accumulated information. According to Blanche and Durrheim (2002:141), there are five steps in data analysis, namely, familiarization and immersion, inducing themes, coding, elaboration and interpretation and checking. These steps will be discussed in detail in the methodology chapter.

1.11 DEALING WITH VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Cohen et al. (2003:105), see validity as an important key to effective research, as a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative research. It thus makes a meaning to argue that an invalid research is not of any importance. They define reliability as a “synonym for consistency and replicability over time, over instruments and over groups of respondents”. Reliability is simply concerned with precision and accuracy. Le Grange and Beets (2005:115) see the definition of validity as being a controversial theory in that it assumes that “a test measures what it is supposed to measure”.

This opinion is informed by the measurement theories from the 1950's. Qualitative researchers often speak of dependability or trustworthiness rather than reliability. They view consistency as the extent to which variation can be explained. In qualitative research, the investigation may not necessarily produce similar outcomes when replicated because circumstances often change. It is rather necessary to justify the variation when explaining consistency. According to Opie (2004:71), the goodness in research is determined by its trustworthiness i.e. for the investigation to be accepted widely, the audience must trust the findings of the investigation.

Cohen and Crabtree (2006:[s.p]) view crystallization as a process of temporarily suspending the process of examining or reading the data (immersion) in order to reflect on the analysis

experienced and attempt to identify and articulate patterns or themes noticed during the immersion process. Cugno and Thomas (2009:113) have cited Ellington who defines crystallization as an in-depth process that goes beyond traditional qualitative methodology. To her, crystallization is a new and refreshing, yet unexplored approach that merits further analysis and evaluation within the qualitative research community. Crystallization can therefore be defined as a formalized modern methodology that can be used to conduct qualitative research using modern approaches. Cohen and Crabtree (2006:[s.p]) define immersion as a process whereby researchers immerse themselves in the data they have collected by reading or examining some portion of the data in detail. The immersion process helps the researcher to be well acquainted with data so that it can be correctly interpreted and analyzed.

Guba and Lincoln, as cited in the article “Qualitative validity”, (accessed online on 16/10/2009 from <http://www.socialresearchmethods.net/kb/qualval.php>) proposed four criteria for judging the soundness of qualitative research. They are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. They argue that credibility involves establishing that the results of qualitative research are credible, that is, they are valid and can be trusted. They also define transferability as the degree to which the results can be generalized. It is therefore the researcher’s responsibility to ensure the sensibility of the results transferred to other contexts.

Thirdly, they argue that dependability emphasizes the need for the researcher to account for the ever changing context within which research occurs. Lastly confirmability, they argue, tends to assume that each researcher brings unique perspective to the study and it refers to the degree to which the results could be confirmed by others. It was the requirement of the researcher to ensure that all the data collected is valid and reliable. The researcher had to adhere to the ethics principles and research professionalism as stated in this section.

1.12 DELIMITATIONS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The study was restricted to the Geography teachers of Rekopantswe and Mafikeng Area offices in Ngaka Modiri Molema District municipality. It also included departmental heads of Social Sciences with specialisation in Geography. The challenge was the shortage of Geography specialists or those with relevant experience in teaching the subject. This situation limited the number of participants expected for questionnaires and interviews.

Furthermore, some principals have become instructors in their management as a result of the pressure put on them to perform by the department and other stakeholders. They were also reluctant to get involved because they viewed participation in the study as consuming the teachers' valuable time of teaching. The interaction was, however, limited to outside school time but still some educators felt that it took some of their valuable private time. The researcher visited the sampled schools to establish a good and healthy relationship with them before the start of the data collection in order to explain the whole idea about the research.

1.13 CONCLUSION

Grade 9 is the exit level of learners from the GET band to the Further Education & Training (FET) band and 75% of CASS mark is viewed seriously because it carries more weight of the learner's final mark which determines his/her promotion to the next phase. There was very little written literature on this topic, especially about Geography, and as such, this investigation will expand the existing body of knowledge and also open more questions for further investigation. Most journals, articles and other sources that were accessed were very outdated and irrelevant to the topic in question. It was on this basis that I viewed this topic worth researching.

CHAPTER 2

THE NATURE AND STRUCTURE OF GEOGRAPHY AS A SECTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The National Curriculum Statement policy for the General Education and Training (GET) band has eight (8) learning areas or subjects. These learning areas are Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Technology, Economic & Management Sciences, Arts & Culture, Life Orientation, Languages and the Social Sciences. History and Geography are presented in the Social Sciences as separate but linked disciplines. An interesting point is that each of the two sections of Social Sciences has its own learning outcomes(LO's) and assessment standards(AS's), which make the Social Sciences as a learning area very unique in nature and structure as compared to the rest of the learning areas. These learning outcomes and assessment standards are, however, integrated and deal with similar skills and knowledge, for example, LO1 focuses on enquiry skills, LO2 on knowledge and understanding and there is a slight difference in LO3 where Geography focuses on exploration of issues and History on interpretation.

The development of skills and knowledge in the Social Sciences as mentioned above has called for the curriculum of the General Education and Training (GET) band to focus on providing all learners with the conceptual development and skills that they require not only as a foundation for future educational choices but that will also provide them with life skills. Geography is strongly influenced by the norms of the Social Sciences. The Social Sciences offer a variety of perspectives and methods of study by which to examine the results of human behaviour on earth.

According to the Department of Education (2002:4), Social Sciences as a learning area (subject) studies relationships between people, and between people and the environment. Geography as a discipline is integral to understanding aerial differentiation on the global surface and equips learners to function effectively as full members of society. The focus of this discussion is on Geography, which together with History makes up the learning area Social Sciences (SS).

2.2 WHAT IS GEOGRAPHY?

According to the article titled “What is Geography?” (accessed online on 10/05/2010 from mhtml: file//D:WikiAnswers.mht), Geography as a discipline can be split broadly into two main sub fields, namely, Human and Physical Geography. The content of this article is analyzed in detail below. The article states that Human Geography focuses largely on the environment and how space is created, viewed and managed by humans as well as the influence humans have on the space they occupy. On the other hand, physical geography examines the natural environment and how the climate, vegetation, life, soil, water and landforms are produced and interact. Because the two fields are engaged with different approaches, a third dimension known as Environmental Geography has emerged. Environmental geography combines both the physical and human geography.

This article then defines Geography as the study of the earth’s landscapes, people, places and environments. Geography as a subject is itself a science which is concerned with place. All life exists in place, people, animals and plants. Through Geography, we seek to understand the differences in patterns of human distribution, interrelationships between human society and the physical environment as well as people’s use of time and space.

We look at various reasons why people tend to crowd in a particular place, why some areas of the earth are not habitable and how people relate to the environment, that is, are they in harmony with their environment. Are the people conserving nature’s resources for the future generations? The main questions central to the study of Geography are “where (location or space), why and how (explain) as well as what (seeking an alternative). Geography is an all-encompassing discipline, with endless potential for both meaning and enjoyment in learning. Geography is all about people, places and environments and that Geography learning opportunity is important to the development of young minds. This is because they view Geography learning as building upon the child’s own experiences to widen learning horizons as well as meeting new people along that journey.

Chow and Taylor, accessed from (www.colorado.edu/geography//giw/hartshorne/ch12html), converted Richard Hartshorne’s text and provided the following conclusions about the nature of Geography. They viewed Geography on the basis of its historical development that it occupies a logically defensible position among the sciences as one of the chorographical studies. Accordingly, Geography considers actual sections of reality which attempts to analyze and synthesize the associations of phenomena as related in sections of reality.

Chow and Taylor further believe that Geography is true to its name i.e. it studies the world, seeking to describe and interpret the differences among its different parts. It must rather be understood that Geography does not share its field with other sciences but it brings together in its field parts of many other sciences.

Geography is a science that integrates the material that other sciences study separately; it puts together complex phenomena that form different parts of the world. Various sciences may contain components that are originally of geographical nature e.g. the OBE content of Natural Science contains among others the content of Astronomy and the Atmosphere. “Geography can conceivably link in a purposeful way to all subjects”. Geography can also borrow knowledge from these sciences and use it within its own context. Based on this integration, there is, thus some mutual relationship between Geography and these other sciences.

2.3 THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GEOGRAPHY AS A SCIENCE.

According to Williams (2008:[s.p]), (available at sciencelay.com/philosophy-of-science/is-geography-a-science), The Penguin Dictionary of Geography defines science as “knowledge gained by detailed observation, deduction of the laws governing changes and conditions and testing these deductions by experiment”. Geography may be viewed as a continuous field that intersects all systematic sciences concerned with the world. I believe that Geography should not be viewed as link between sciences, in particular the natural sciences. Williams (2008:[s.p]) also stated that it is misleading to view the position of Geography as a bridge between the natural and social sciences. It is only proper to understand Geography as a discipline on its own that is mainly made up of two the divisions as already mentioned.

Geographers have strived to make Geography a scientific subject that is acceptable in the eyes of the academics, ever since it was recognized in the 19th century. According to Williams (2008:[s.p]), geographers have for many years followed scientific methods to shape Geography into an academic subject. Fairhurst, Davies, Fox, Goldchagg, Ramutsindela and Khoza (2003:81) argue that Geography is concerned with the study of the phenomena of the earth’s natural environment, its human life and actions and the nature and outcomes of interrelationships within and between these phenomena in functional and spatial contexts over time.

With regard to the National Curriculum Statement, Geography at the senior level is a section of the Social Sciences. Importantly, it has its own learning outcomes and assessment

standards, which emphasize its uniqueness. It therefore suffices to say that Geography is accommodated in various aspects of the curriculum. Fairhurst et al (2003:81), further argue that Geography is increasingly recognized not only as an academic discipline but also as an integrative applied science that offers a range of useful insights and applications in a variety of fields. It is evident when looking at the different sectors that geographers do not only pursue careers in education but they also enter other fields such as businesses, administration, public and private sectors as well as tourism. There is a great demand of labour skilled in geography in these sectors.

2.4 THE KNOWLEDGE FOCUS OF GEOGRAPHY IN GRADE 9

2.4.1 Geography as a section of Social Sciences has three learning outcomes (LO's). These learning outcomes together with their assessment standards guide the teacher in the selection of the content that he/she must teach. The different learning outcomes are supported by the knowledge content that is obtainable from the different sources which include text books, study guides, news paper articles and the internet. The three learning outcomes of Geography and their knowledge focus are discussed below.

2.4.1.1 Learning Outcome 1, its assessment standards and knowledge focus

This LO addresses “Geographical Enquiry, that is, the learner in this instance must be able to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes. According to Bottaro, Visser, Dilley, Cohen and Versfeld (2006:5), the following assessment standards are fundamental when addressing LO1:-

- AS1: The learner carries out independent enquiries about aspects of the interrelationships between people, places and the environment by engaging in field work and using the sources.
- AS2: The learner asks significant questions to evaluate sources analyze them and reach conclusions about information from photos, maps and atlases, graphs, statistics, satellite images or orthophotos. He/she also correlates information from various sources with information from the maps, atlases, satellite images or orthophotos.
- AS3: The learner uses Assessment Standards above to justify the answer, decision or solution relating to the enquiry.

- AS4: The learner reports on the knowledge gained in the enquiry by constructing an interpretation and argument based on the sources of information.

The learner is primarily engaged in using knowledge and skills to analyse and interpret the maps. There are different types of maps, namely, physical maps (those showing the landscapes), political maps (those showing the boundaries), rainfall maps (those showing the distribution pattern of rainfall) and topographical maps (those showing the top part of the features). A study of the topographical map is core to learning map skills in Geography. It is vitally important for the learners at this stage to be able to master the topographical map skills.

The first skill is the use of the lines of latitude and longitude to locate places on the map. According to Bottaro et al (2006:8), lines of latitude are lines which run across a globe or map. They include the equator, which divides the earth into two halves or hemispheres, the Tropic of Cancer and Capricorn as well as the Arctic and the Antarctic circles. Bottaro et al (2006:8) further define the lines of longitude as the lines that join the north and the south poles on a globe or map. The 0 degree line of longitude run through a place called Greenwich, near London in England; hence it is called the Greenwich Meridian line or the Prime Meridian. This line of longitude divides the earth into two the western and the eastern hemispheres.

Both the lines of latitude and longitude form a grid that covers the earth when appearing on the map. We can therefore use them to find the co-ordinates of a place on a map using degrees, minutes and seconds. Understanding the co-ordinates will make it easier for us to find where places are located on the map.

The learners must also be able to measure the distances on the map and convert the measurements to reality. All measurements are done according to the scale of the map. The topographical map series of South Africa use the ratio scale of 1:50 000. This scale implies that one unit on the map represents 50 000 units on the ground. To convert this scale to reality, it must be divided by 100 000 or 100 to work in kilometres and metres respectively. A measurement may then be taken from the map using a ruler in centimetres. It is then multiplied by the converted scale to give the measurement either in kilometres or metres.

The other important skill is the skill to determine direction. According to Blackbeard and Grant (2010:12), direction is an approximate way of describing the position of one place in

relation to another. The learners must be able to use the cardinal points, bearings and azimuths to show direction on the map. It is relevant for the teacher to explain the eight cardinal points of the compass so that the learners can use them to determine direction of features on the map. To use the cardinal points involves the knowledge of the key directions, that is, north, south, west and east on the map and in reality. The north is always at the top of the map, the south at the bottom, the west on the left hand side and east on the right. Blackbeard and Grant (2010:16) define a bearing as an angle between north-south line which runs through the place one is measuring from the line joining the two places in question. A bearing is always measured in a clockwise direction from the north-south line. The learners need a ruler, a protractor and pencil to create a bearing on the map. According to Modungwa ([s.a]:14), when an angle as measured from either True North-South line or the Magnetic North-South line goes beyond the size of a right angle, then the reading is called an azimuth. This implies that all measurements from zero to ninety degrees are bearings and those beyond ninety degrees are azimuths.

Lastly, with regard to the topographical map skills, the learners must be able to make an interpretation and analysis of the features on the map. They must learn the conventional signs to help them to identify the different features on the map and why some features are located at certain positions. The topographical map, the orthophoto map and the aerial photograph must be read and analysed simultaneously, provided they have the same title. The learners must be able to read similar features from the topographical map, orthophoto map and the aerial photograph of the title.

2.4.1.2 Learning Outcome 2, its assessment standards and knowledge focus

This learning outcome addresses “Geographical knowledge and understanding”. The learner must be able to demonstrate geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding through the following assessment standards:-

- Providing a reasoned explanation of some approaches to development (people and places).
- Identifying ways in which science and technology have contributed positively and negatively to development (people and resources).

The learners must know and understand the issues of development. According to Birkenstock and Gardyne (2010:107), development is defined as a process in which social, economic and

political structures are put in place to improve the well-being of a population. Development is more than just changing from being poor to being rich or changing from traditional to modern methods of farming. It involves a shift to human dignity, where the population has a better quality life. The learners must further be able to differentiate between developed and developing worlds. Developed worlds are those countries where most people are employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors while developing worlds are those where most people are still involved in the primary sector.

Another point of focus is the Gross National Income (GNI). According to Bottaro et al (2006:34), gross national income refers to the value of all goods and services that a country produces. The more goods and services a country produces, the greater is its income. The gross national per capita can be found by taking each person's share of the country's GNI and dividing it by the number of people in the country. The GNI per capita gives an indication of the amount of money in the country if its income is evenly shared. Bottaro et al (2006:36) further reiterates that over the years the number of people employed in the primary sector, especially in agriculture, has decreased considerably with the increase in the number of those employed in the secondary and tertiary sectors. The rural people still rely on agriculture for their survival while the urban people heavily rely on manufacturing and service provision.

Lastly, the learners must understand the issue of sustainable development, with particular reference to South Africa and also globally. South Africa has many parts or regions that are still developing, most of which still have informal settlements (shacks) and rural villages. It seems that the early generations were living more sustainably than the present because they were sensitive to the environment by applying strict community laws, for example, certain trees may only be cut in winter while were prohibited from being cut. The vegetation helps in absorbing the excess amount of carbon dioxide on the earth, thus keeping it cool. Urban development has resulted in the cutting down of trees which further resulted in the increase of the amount of the greenhouse gases because of the removal of the natural vegetation. The ozone layer, according to many studies, has been greatly damaged by human actions such as industrialisation and the development of the urban areas. This is the layer that protects life on earth from the ultra-violet rays of the sun. The learners must be encouraged to change their life style and live a sustainable life.

2.4.1.3 Learning Outcome 3, its assessment standards and knowledge focus

This is the third and last learning outcome of Geography section. It is about exploration of issues, that is, the learners must be able to make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems. This will be evident when the learners are able to perform the following assessment standards:-

- Identifies social and environmental conflicts in South Africa and the rest of the world.
- Identifies factors affecting selected social and environmental disputes including rights, gender, social, political and economic demands in a particular context.
- Analyses the causes of disputes or conflicts.
- Makes informed decisions about various solutions to social and environmental conflicts.

With regard to the knowledge focus, the learners must have a clear understanding of the social and environmental conflicts in South Africa and elsewhere in the world. According to Earl, Keats, Morrison, Maclagan, Roberts and Thraves (2006:78), human history is all about conflict. In Social Sciences, the learners learn about disagreements, opposition and the inability of people, groups and countries to work together peacefully in many different situations. The learners must understand the different types of conflict such as intrapersonal conflict, interpersonal, group, organisational, community and international conflict. The intrapersonal conflict refers to conflict within oneself, that is, a conflict in which a person struggles with personal issues such as the use of drugs, abuse of alcohol, an urge to commit crime or do any other things that are against one's will. The interpersonal conflict refers to a conflict between people, that is, a conflict in which two people feel hostile towards one another for some reason such as two people having a contrasting opinion about an issue of sport, politics, religion, culture or tradition. The third is the group conflict, where the individual members of the group are in conflict with one another. This type of conflict is common in social groups, even though the group in question may be having a common goal through its constitution or policies. Individual differences still occur among the members because of their uniqueness in personality and character.

There is also an organisational conflict, which is, a conflict within an organisation such as a large company. In that case, a dispute may result between the workers and the management

over salaries, conditions of service or contracts, allowances and benefits. There could also be community conflict, where some members may support the idea while others oppose it. Members of the same community may also fight for the use of resources if they do not equally benefit from the resources available. The example is the recent xenophobic attacks on foreigners in South Africa where the locals alleged that the foreigners in their communities are taking away their jobs, businesses and their rights to own the RDP houses. The last but not the least is a conflict within the country, which could be a political conflict or conflict during the elections. Africa has had a terrible conflict of this kind, for example, the president of Egypt has recently been forced to resign, and the legitimate and recognised president of Ivory Coast has also been supported by the International worlds to forcefully take power after the failure of the previous president to peacefully surrender the seat of the presidency after losing the elections. There is lastly the conflict between countries, which could be over boundaries, policies, legislation or economics. The conflict between Israel and Palestine, Iran and Iraq, North and South Korea (Korea Republic) are just but few examples of this type of conflict.

The learners must further know how conflict has caused economic and social damage in many countries in Africa. According to Birkenstock and Gardyne (2010:154), the causes of conflict in Africa are varied and opposing parties will seldom agree on the causes of conflict. They further argue that conflicts in Africa are partly caused by the borders created by the colonial powers. As it was previously mentioned, xenophobia is longstanding and widespread in Africa. According to Birkenstock and Gardyne (2010:154), xenophobia refers to fear of and hostility towards other ethnic groups. The different ethnic groups need to defend themselves. They may have a fear of what they may stand to lose such as jobs, resources and land if they allow foreigners in their areas.

It is proper for the learners to have an understanding of the recent xenophobic attacks in Diepsloot and other parts of South Africa so that they can be able to learn from such events that xenophobia is not welcome in our societies. They must learn to live in harmony with other ethnic groups and display the spirit of ubuntu as a way of life in Africa. The learners must know and understand that the colonial boundaries are not there to kill the spirit of ubuntu but that they resulted from an unfortunate action of the colonists.

The conflict in Rwanda is another example where the Tutsi and the Hutu are in constant conflict with one another even though they are the same people. According to Birkenstock

and Gardyne (2010:154), Professor Izangola was quoted as saying that “people used to be Tutsi or Hutu depending on the proximity to the king, if you were close to the king and owned a lot of cattle you became a Tutsi and if you were far from the king, being a cultivator and not owning much cattle you were a Hutu”.

Finally, it is imperative for the learners to understand the history of South Africa prior and after 1994. They must understand that South African apartheid government introduced and enforced laws to prevent black people from gaining political power or economic equality with white people. They need to know that before 1994, there used to be a homeland system where the black people were divided according to their ethnicity. There were national states of Bophuthatswana, Transkei, Ciskei, Venda, Kwa Zulu, Lebowa just to mention a few. All these states were incorporated into the now Republic of South Africa in 1994 after the first democratic elections in April 27 of that year. There are now nine provinces which were demarcated without being based on race and colour. They are Northern Cape, Western Cape, Eastern Cape, Kwa Zulu Natal, Free State, North West, Gauteng, Mpumalanga, and Limpopo province.

The present government has a commitment to redistribute the country’s resources and wealth in order to redress the imbalances created by apartheid. The government has embarked on several projects such as the supply of water and electricity to all, building houses for the needy people, providing proper health and education services for all, taking care of the orphans and restoring the land to the people who had been forcibly removed during the years of apartheid.

2.5 THE IMPORTANCE OF GEOGRAPHY, ITS RELEVANCE TO THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS LEARNER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES.

The importance of Geography in the curriculum cannot be simply ignored. Life exists in space and time and the study of Geography clearly explains the relationship between these two phenomena. According to the article titled “Geographical Association” (accessed online on the 15/06/2010 from <http://www.geojuice/index.asp>), we all live our lives geographically because the planet earth is our home. We are bound to live our life on earth as it is the only planet where life exists. This home is awesome, diverse, aspiring and ever changing. This article further states that studying Geography provides us with the opportunity to participate more fully in the excitement, enjoyment and challenge of this dynamic world.

Geography draws on our personal experience so that we can better understand the places we live in, why they matter and how they are connected to a globalised world. Studying Geography exposes us to the physical, cultural, economic and political spheres, and as a result, we learn to appreciate the diversity of landscapes, peoples and cultures. Geography is the vital subject of the present generation that enables us to face questions of what it means to live sustainably in an interdependent world. Above all, this article emphasises that Geography helps us to investigate and think critically and creatively about the complexities of places and different views and feelings relating to places. It helps us to acquire skills such as utilizing maps, visualizing images and using new technologies for lifelong learning as responsible citizens. These skills help learners to relate what they learned and experienced in the classroom to the outside world. For example, in the classroom they measure distances on maps and convert them to reality. They can later engage in field work where they measure real distances on the ground and compare them to what they obtained from maps.

The other article is titled “Importance of Geography”. This article (dated 11/06/2008) perceives Geography as a fascinating subject that reveals all the wonderful changes and activities that have been going on in the world since the beginning of time. As a result, we read Geography to learn about our country and those beyond the seas, their mountains, oceans, islands, lakes, volcanoes, winds and other interesting features about the world and its universe. According to the article titled “The School Curriculum and the National Curriculum” (accessed online on 20/06/2010 from www.qca.org.uk), Geography provokes and answers questions about the natural and human worlds, using different scales of enquiry to view them from different perspectives.

According to Stoltman (1991:[s.p]), Geography is the key to understanding and acting effectively in our world. He argues that Geography is a subject that, more than any other enables people to comprehend the earth and the environment, and to appreciate the delicate balances between human and the physical elements that bind people to this planet. To him, knowing the locations of places and peoples is a first step in achieving geographically literacy, for a geographical literate person understands why communities are located where they are, how people have shaped them into distinctive places and how they have, in turn, affected peoples’ lives. Geographically literate person is able to use his/her knowledge to solve problems and make decisions in his/her daily life. This calls for Geography to be taught as a very special and practical subject that can add to one’s knowledge, experience, understanding and appreciation of the world.

Sir Ron Cooke in his presentation at the Royal Geographical Society's annual meeting, on the 11/06/2002 said that Geography is fundamental to understanding issues such as equity, globalization and the relations between environment and society. He emphasized that people need access to Geography and History not only because they are arguably two of the most civilizing subjects, but also because they are the most important disciplines underpinning the new emphasis on citizenship.

2.6 POLICY REQUIREMENTS OF GEOGRAPHY.

2.6.1 Geography and Curriculum change

According to Beets and Le Grange (2008:68), the decade has witnessed several changes to school Geography in South Africa at the level of policy. They cite the General Education and Training band as an example where changes have occurred in three phases. The first phase was marked by the introduction of the interim syllabus in 1996, the second phase by the introduction of curriculum 2005 in 1997.

Curriculum 2005 (C2005) was launched by the National Ministry of Education envisaging that this curriculum will replace the content-based education with outcomes-based education and teacher-centred pedagogies with more learner-centred pedagogies. There was, however, a period of vociferous debate and fierce contestation on the merits of OBE but the government continued to maintain that OBE is here to stay.

The third phase was marked by the introduction of the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2002. This curriculum was launched after the Ministry appointed the Review Committee that came up with recommendations to close the gaps of C2005. There were still concerns among geographers and geography teachers that the distinctive nature and character of Geography will be lost since the aspects of Human Geography were located in the Human and Social Sciences and Physical Geography was located in the Natural Sciences. The rationale behind these changes was to strengthen the Social Sciences as a learning area in South Africa with particular emphasis on Geography.

2.6.2 Continuity and progression in the teaching of Geography

Beets and Le Grange (2008:68) have supported the view by several authors such as Bennets, Chamber and Donert, Leat, Lambert and Ryan as well as Butt that continuity and progression are key elements of Geography learning. Beets and Le Grange (2008:68) define continuity as

the extent to which significant features of a discipline are emphasized as a learner moves through the school system, and progression as the way the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding are deepened in a given knowledge area as the learner moves through the school system. They further argue that good teaching is often associated with a teacher having sound subject knowledge and the ability to do thorough planning and preparation. It is therefore the responsibility of the individual teacher to be engaged in lifelong learning and prepare his/her lessons in such a way that he/she achieves the aims and objectives of the lessons.

Teaching must therefore go beyond what the Geography in the Revised National Curriculum policy states and still maintains as the relevant content at the accurate level of understanding. The idea of progression in Geography Education in the GET band should therefore focus on how learners' learning is advanced in terms of the acquisition of enquiry and map skills and techniques as stated in LO1, how they construct knowledge and understanding as stated in LO2, and how they explore issues (development of values and attitudes) as stated in LO3. The policy of RNCS in Geography actually requires the curriculum to ensure that the next course of study builds on particular aspects of a learner's prior knowledge and experience. The learner must not learn one and the same thing but learning must ensure progression so that the acquisition of knowledge takes into account his/her level of development throughout the school system.

The tables 1a, 1b and 1c on the next pages, adapted from Department of Education ([s.a]:56-58) tabulate the learning outcomes and assessment standards of Geography in grade 7-9. The learning outcomes and assessment standards show how continuity and progression are maintained throughout the senior phase. Further analysis of the tables is done with particular reference to the two concepts.

According to Table 1a, Learning Outcome 1 (Geographical Enquiry) requires a learner to use enquiry skills to do some investigation. The key activity is "identify and select" i.e. from grade 7 to grade 8, a learner must be able to identify and select a variety of geographical and environmental sources. In grade 9, he/she now carries out independent enquiry (Assessment Standard 1) based on the aspects that are already covered in the previous grades. Measurement of distance on maps, atlases and globes is covered throughout the senior phase, though in grade 9, a deeper study is required whereby a learner does not only use sources but he/she must also ask significant questions to evaluate sources, analyses and reaches

conclusions about information from sources, correlates information from various sources with information from maps, photos, atlases and satellite images as well as observe and record information in the field (Assessment Standard 2). The learner is further required to use information to suggest answers and propose alternatives and possible solutions in grade 7, and then continue to presents an original idea as part of an answer to the questions posed in the enquiry in grade 8.

In grade 9 the knowledge gained in the previous assessment standards 1, 2, and 3 to justify the answer or decision relating to the enquiry. Finally, to achieve LO1, the learner must be able to report on the enquiry using evidence from the sources and on the knowledge gained in the enquiry by constructing an interpretation and argument based on sources of information as well as using computers in the presentation where possible.

Secondly, Table 1b, Learning Outcome 2 (Geographical knowledge and understanding) requires a learner to be able to demonstrate geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding. A learner in grade 7 is required to describe and explain how natural hazards such as volcanoes, earthquakes and flooding occur and impact on human lives and socio-economic activities. For continuity and progression purposes, he/she identifies and compares types of settlements in grade 8 as well as provides reasoned explanation of some approaches to development (people and places) in grade 9. The key activities for the learners are to describe, identify, investigate and explain. Here a learner must be able to investigate and explain why some people face a higher risk than others with respect to hazards and identify how risks and hazards can be managed. A learner must further identify factors that influence the formation of settlement patterns as well as identify critical factors that have led to changes in settlement patterns in the world. She/he continues to grade 9 where she/he is expected to identify ways in which science and technology have contributed positively and negatively to development as well as explain how sustainable development could impact on people and environment (Assessment Standards 1, 2 and 3).

The final Table, 1c, is about Learning Outcome 3. Here the learner is required to be able to make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems. The key activities of the learner are to identify, suggest, examine, investigate and analyze. A learner in grade 7 must identify challenges to societies and settlements with a focus on population change and growth, factors that contribute to population growth and change and the processes affecting population growth and change. He/she must also be able to suggest ways of

responding to issues associated with population growth and change. As in previous LO's, continuity and progression are maintained when a learner in grade 8 identifies challenges to societies and settlements, examines the unequal distribution of, and access to resources, investigates possible ways of reducing the consumption of resources and makes decisions to guide sustainable living practices.

Finally, for a learner to have achieved LO3 in grade 9, he/she must be able to identify social and environmental conflicts in South Africa and compare with other contexts, identify factors affecting selected social and environmental disputes including rights, gender, social, economic and political demands in a particular context, analyse causes of disputes or conflicts as well as make decisions about various solutions to social and environmental conflicts (Assessment Standards 1, 2, 3). The policy requires a learner to achieve all the three learning outcomes and their assessment standards in Geography at the end of the senior phase i.e. grade 9 which is an exit level to the Further Education and Training (FET) band.

2.6.3 Learning outcomes and Assessment standards in Geography

Table 1a: Senior Phase Learning Outcome 1 and Assessment Standards			
LO 1	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
<p>Geographical enquiry: The learner is able to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes.</p>	<p>Key question: Formulate questions to guide an enquiry concerning issues and problems.</p>	<p>Key question: Formulate a question to guide an enquiry concerning social and environmental issues and problems.</p>	<p>Key question: Formulate some critical questions about aspects of the interrelationships between people, places and the environment.</p>
	<p>Identifies a variety of geographical and environmental sources relevant to an enquiry. [finds source]</p>	<p>Identifies and selects a variety of geographical and environmental sources relevant to an enquiry (use field work and other enquiry skills).[works with sources]</p>	<p>Carries out independent enquiries about aspects of the interrelationships between people, places and the environment (use field work. [finds sources])</p>
	<p>Organizes and interprets information relevant to the enquiry from simple graphs, maps and statistical sources.[works with sources] Measures distances on globes, atlases and maps using line scales.[works with sources]</p>	<p>Interprets maps and atlas information, graphical and statistical sources. Identifies some physical and constructed features from aerial and/or orthophoto maps of local and other areas. Measures distances on the orthophoto maps and/maps of local and other areas and compare</p>	<p>Asks significant questions to evaluate sources, for example, to identify bias and stereotypes, omissions and gaps. [works with sources] Analyses and reaches conclusions about information from sources such as photos, maps and atlases, graphs</p>



	<p>Use local maps and /or orthophoto maps to locate and investigate the issue and its context (compare with field observations). [works with sources]</p>	<p>map distances with distances in reality. Observe and record information in the field.</p>	<p>and statistics.[works with sources] Correlates information from various sources with information from maps, atlases, satellite images or orthophotos. [works with sources] Observes and records information in the field.[works with sources]</p>
	<p>Use information to suggest answers, propose alternatives and possible solutions. [answers the question]</p>	<p>Presents an original idea as part of an answer to the questions posed in the enquiry.</p>	<p>Uses assessment standards above to justify the answer, decision or solution relating to the enquiry.</p>
	<p>Reports on the enquiry using evidence from the sources including maps, diagrams and graphics. Where possible use computers in the presentation. [communicates the answer]</p>	<p>Reports on the knowledge gained in the enquiry by constructing an argument based on sources of information, in a variety of ways. Uses maps, diagrams and graphics. Where possible use computers in presentation. [communicates the answer]</p>	<p>Reports on the knowledge gained in the enquiry by constructing an interpretation and argument based on sources of information. Uses maps, diagrams and graphics. Where possible uses computers in the presentation. [communicates the answer]</p>

Table 1b: Senior Phase Learning Outcome 2 and Assessment Standards

LO 2	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
Geographical knowledge and Understanding: The learner is able to demonstrate geographical and environmental knowledge and understanding.	Describes and explains how natural hazards such as volcanoes, earthquakes and flooding occur and the impact on human lives and socio-economic activities (people and places).	Identify and compare different types of settlement patterns (people and places).	Provides reasoned explanation of some approaches to development (people and places).
	Investigates and explains why some people face a higher risk than others with respect to natural hazards (people and resources).	Identifies factors that influence the formation of settlement patterns (natural, economic, social/political).	Identifies ways in which science and technology have contributed positively and negatively to development (people and places).
	Identifies how risks and hazards can be managed (people and environment).	Identifies critical factors that have led to changes in settlement patterns in South Africa, Africa and elsewhere (people and environment).	Explains how sustainable development could impact positively on people, places and environments (people and environment).

Table 1c: Senior Phase Learning Outcome 3 and Assessment Standards

LO 3	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9
<p>Exploring issues: The learner is able to make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems.</p>	<p>Identifies challenges to societies and settlements with focus on population growth and change. [identifies the issue]</p>	<p>Identifies challenges to societies and settlements associated with the use and abuse of people and natural resources. [identifies the issue]</p>	<p>Identifies social and environmental conflicts in South Africa and compares with other contexts. [identify the issue]</p>
	<p>Identifies the factors that contribute to population growth and change. [factors affecting the issue] Identifies processes that affect population growth and change in various ways places. [factors affecting issue]</p>	<p>Examines the unequal distribution of, and access to, resources in different contexts. [factors affecting the issue]</p>	<p>Identifies factors affecting selected social and environmental disputes including rights, gender, social, economic and political demands in a particular context. [factors affecting the issue]</p>
	<p>Suggests ways of responding to issues associated with population growth and change in a particular Context. [makes choices]</p>	<p>Investigates possible ways of reducing resource consumption [make choices] Makes suggestions to guide sustainable living practices in a particular context. [makes choices]</p>	<p>Analyses the causes of disputes or conflicts. Makes informed decisions about various solutions to social and Environmental conflicts. [makes choices]</p>

2.7. CAREER PATHS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a discipline that has many career opportunities. Studying Geography opens up a wide range of careers in various sectors such as Environment and Sustainability, Physical systems, Society, The Business World, Geographical techniques, Development and Global issues, Settlement, Travel, Tourism, Leisure and Culture.

2.7.1 Environment and Sustainability

Some factors such as climate change, shrinking energy resources and sustainability, trigger job opportunities in Environment and Sustainability. The nations of the world become concerned about the impact of these factors on life, which makes Geography a very relevant field of study in trying to address these issues. The climatic conditions, for instance, are often reported in the various news papers and television stations. For example, the media often report about the green house gases, effect of the acid rain, distinction of fauna and flora as well as pollution issues. It has to be in the interest of the government to interact with Geographers and policy makers in debating issues of environmental concern and importance. Various popular career opportunities exist in this sector such as environment campaign officer, conservation worker, environmental engineer, pollution analyst, recycling officer, forestry manager and environmental consultant.

2.7.2 Physical systems

Geographers explain and understand the world's weather, oceans, biospheres and landscapes. In this way, they study the way the environment is shaped by the wind, water, ice and tectonic activities. To be successful in the field of physical systems, one needs analysis, report writing and computer skills, a thorough research by geographers. Career opportunities are coastal engineer, soil conservationist, hydrologist, earth scientist, weather forecaster, pollution environmentalist and so on.

2.7.3 Society

Geography as a discipline is also concerned with relationships between people and communities. In this field, Geographers need broad skills to help them enter this field of employment because employment in this field demands an individual to be tolerant and empathetic so that he can contribute to the work of the team or organization. Individuals in this sector must also possess very strong organizational and administrative skills. These

career opportunities are teacher, social worker, youth and community worker, emergency services manager, college and university lecturer, museum explainer, exhibition designer and curator, marketing and human resource manager.

2.7.4 The Business World

Geography graduates have excellent skills which can attract business, law and finance sectors. These sectors require team workers and self starters who are able to work with others and also independently. They also need information technology (IT), literate individuals with good data interpretation and research skills. It is thus necessary for the individual to have a broad knowledge of Geography, for example, if an individual works as a financial risk analyst in a bank, a geographer will benefit from his understanding of factors affecting economic growth in various parts of the world. In addition to banking, other career jobs in this field are financial risk assessor, accountant, insurance, transport and logistics manager, lawyer, economic adviser, location analyst, management consultant and so on.

2.7.5 Geographical techniques

Geographical information Systems (GIS) offer tools to show data on the maps in order to analyze changing patterns in the landscapes. These are technology related jobs such as GIS specialist, census data specialist, location analyst, cartographer, surveyor, military GIS specialist, location analyst, remote sensing analyst, geometrics software designer, aerial surveyor and the like.

2.7.6 Development and Global Issues

The world has challenges of global peace and security, economic and social development, human rights, humanitarian issues and international law. These challenges have created opportunities for demanding but also fulfilling careers for geographers. There are interesting career opportunities in this field such as aid workers, charity officer, charity fund raiser, armed forces, HIV education officer, refugee and asylum adviser, economic adviser and analyst, diplomat as well as the UN terrorism prevention officer.

2.7.7 Settlement

With regard to settlement, Geographers look at how and why the areas we live in develop and change. Career opportunities can be found in both the public and private sectors. The change and development is evident when small towns develop into big cities. Challenges from urban

and rural environments require an individual to have administrative and strategic management skills. Popular careers in this field are housing manager, surveyor, urban regeneration officer, local government services, estate agent, town planner, transport officer, environmental engineer, construction or property lawyer, environmental consultant and conservation officer.

2.7.8 Travel, Tourism, Leisure and Culture

This sector has career opportunities for people who are fond of travelling. An individual needs to be hard working, outgoing and adaptable. He also needs to possess a great deal of the ability to think. Some interesting career opportunities in this sector include expedition leader, travel agent, exhibitions coordinator, leisure centre management, heritage site manager, eco tour guide, tourist information officer, travel writer, television researcher and holiday representative.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that the importance of Geography cannot be overemphasized. Geography paves the way for different careers as it has been evident in the above discussion. It is of utmost importance for learners to be exposed to the various dimensions of Geography as a science in their career choice. Learners in particular have to be carefully guided at an early age so as to be able to choose a relevant career. There is the need for schools and other stakeholders in education to arrange career exhibitions for learners so that they can explore the rewarding careers in Geography.

CHAPTER 3

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CASS IN THE TEACHING OF GEOGRAPHY WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO DIFFERENT TEACHING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES AS WELL AS DIFFERENT ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is common knowledge that a teacher is the key figure in the process of teaching and learning. As such, his/her role is critical because the strategies and approaches he/she applies in the classroom determine the success of his lesson. After the introduction of the new curriculum, the Department of Education started to focus on the development of teachers through workshops, seminars, conferences, bosberaads and in service training activities so that they could cope with new strategies and approaches in teaching. According to Pretorius (2008:165-182), teacher education has been central to the reform of the education systems. The different teaching strategies and approaches as well as assessment strategies are discussed below.

3.2 THE TEACHING STRATEGIES AND APPROACHES IN GEOGRAPHY

The teaching strategies and approaches that may be used in the teaching of Geography in grade 9 are constructivist teaching strategy, simulation, games and role playing. The constructivist strategy, simulations, games and role playing are discussed below with particular reference to their application and their contribution to learning.

3.2.1 The Constructivist teaching strategy

According to Richardson (1997:3), constructivism has arrived. She argues that constructivism is a descriptive theory of learning that prescribes the way people learn, not a prescriptive theory of learning, the way people should learn. With constructivism, individuals create their own new understanding based upon what they already know and believe and the ideas with which they come into contact. Constructivism is a positive way of learning that promotes interaction between prior knowledge and new knowledge by making learners active participants in the classroom and rejecting the traditional way of transmitting knowledge, with the learners being passive participants. This argument is endorsed by Killen (2006:[s.p]) who argues that constructivist teaching involves getting learners to use what they know to figure out what they need to know.

Constructivists actually claim that learning must be an active process that involves learners, teachers, parents and other relevant stake holders. The examples of constructivist activities that may be used in the classroom include experimentation, whereby individuals do experiment and discuss results in groups; research projects, where individuals investigate a topic and present findings; field trips, putting classroom concepts in real world context; and lastly, class discussions, where the learners actively engage in discussions and debate issues.

3.2.2 Simulations, games and role playing

Simulations, games and role playing are creative, participatory teaching techniques. Simulation is a controlled detailed mode intended to reflect a situation found in the real world. Learners may be given roles, for example, they can simulate the summit of the Green Revolution whereby leaders of states meet to discuss the issues pertaining to the green revolution. They can choose a relevant topic and deliberate on it as members of the summit. Learners must, however, not be forced to participate so that competition can be positive and player discovery can be encouraged.

Games on the other hand may be used as ice breakers with new groups of any age. Games normally serve to draw the attention of learners into the lesson of the day. They may be used as warm ups to change peoples' attitude and ease communication.

According to Fox (2005:1), role play is a type of active learning which depends on simulating actual experiences in an intensive game experience. He further argues that game cycle starts with a preparatory phase where learners are introduced through readings to role playing and game simulations in the generic sense. The learners play a game and their experience is related to theory and their understanding, for example, they could be farmers, traders, industrialists, urban workers, refugees, Minister of Water, Home Affairs and so on.

3.3 ASSESSMENT IN THE NCS

According to the Department of Education (2003:1), assessment in the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) is an integral part of teaching and learning and should be included at all levels of planning. Assessment has to be seen as a continuous process that must not only be handled at the end of the learning process. The DoE further states that each learning area has the assessment standards that define the minimum requirement for achieving a particular learning outcome.

The first learning outcome of Geography, whereby the learner will be able to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes, is achieved when the learner is able to perform the following activities in grade 9:-

- Carries out independent enquiries about aspects of the interrelationships between people, places and environment i.e. uses field work and finds sources.
- Asks significant questions to evaluate sources, for example, to identify bias and stereotypes, omissions and gaps i.e. the learners must be able to work with sources.
- Analyses and reaches conclusions about information from sources such as photos, maps and atlases, graphs and statistics.
- Correlates information from various sources with information from maps, atlases, satellite images or orthophotos.
- Observes and records information in the field works with sources.
- Uses the Assessment Standards above to justify the answer, decision or solution relating to the enquiry i.e. the learner must be able to answer questions.
- Reports on the knowledge gained in the enquiry by constructing an interpretation and argument based on sources of information; uses maps, diagrams and graphics; where possible uses computers in the presentation i.e. the learner must be able to communicate the answer.

The second learning outcome is about geographical knowledge and understanding. Here the learner's achievement is evident when he/she is able to perform the following activities as based on the learning outcome:-

- Provides a reasoned explanation of some approaches to development i.e. people and places.
- Identifies ways in which science and technology have contributed positively and negatively to development i.e. people and resources.
- Explains how sustainable development could impact positively on people, places and environments i.e. people and environment.

The third and last learning outcome is about exploration of issues, whereby a learner will be able to make informed decisions about social and environmental issues and problems. The

assessment standards are achieved when the learner is able to perform the following activities:-

- Identifies social and environmental conflicts in South Africa and compares with other contexts i.e. identifies the issue.
- Identifies factors affecting selected social and environmental disputes including rights, gender, social, economic and political demands in a particular context i.e. factors affecting the issue.
- Analyses the causes of disputes or conflicts i.e. makes choices.
- Makes informed decisions about various solutions to social and environmental conflicts.

3.4 MANAGING ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOL

According to the Department of Education (2002:98), the school and the teachers have overall responsibility for the assessment of learners. The Department of Education further reiterates that teachers are expected to create a valid, reliable and credible assessment process. It also states clearly how the different provinces should ensure the involvement of learners, school assessment teams, district support teams, support services and parents. Based on the national and provincial policies of assessment, each school develops an assessment programme, also known as school assessment plan and establishes assessment team to facilitate the implementation of this policy. The team is supposed to have representatives from each phase and each learning area. The Department of Education (2002:98) views a school assessment programme as a very professional approach that must outline the following:-

- The way continuous assessment is planned and implemented
- How record books are to be kept, their accessibility and security
- The assessment codes determined by the province
- Internal verification of assessment
- How moderation takes place in the school
- The frequency and method of reporting
- The monitoring of all assessment processes
- The training of staff in areas of assessment

3.5 THE VARIOUS TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND THEIR USES

The Department of Education (2003:2) mentions various types of assessment apart from continuous assessment. These are baseline, diagnostic, summative, formative, systematic and they are briefly discussed below:-

Baseline assessment usually takes place at the beginning of a grade or phase to establish what learners already know so as to assist educators to plan learning programmes and learning activities. Diagnostic assessment is a very specialized procedure. It is much more comprehensive and detailed, because it probes the underlying causes of student learning difficulties. Diagnostic assessment is used prior to teaching or at the beginning of a lesson to provide the educator with planning information. It may also be used to identify the nature and cause of barriers to the learning experienced by specific learners. The aim is to provide guidance, support and intervention to learners.

Summative assessment is usually conducted at the end of the term or year. It involves judgment about marks, achievement of outcomes and the overall performance of learners and educators. Formative assessment is conducted during the teaching-learning process and may either be formal or informal. It provides feedback to the learners and the educators about progress of learning. Systematic assessment is the external way of monitoring the performance of the education system. It is thus conducted at the end of each phase and regarded as a process of quality assurance.

3.6 THE VARIOUS FORMS OF ASSESSMENT AND THEIR WEIGHTING.

Social Sciences comprise five forms of assessment, namely investigations/projects, map reading and map analysis tasks, assignments (including research tasks), case studies (contextual analysis) and tests and examinations. All the forms of assessment are covered over a period of a year by being spread over the four terms. The Department of Education warns teachers against the overuse of tests and examinations as formal forms of assessment. The other forms should have equal chance of being selected for use so that learners can also develop in the skills and attitude. Apart from these forms of assessment the teachers are also allowed to use debates, demonstrations, role plays, presentations and quizzes as long as they contribute to the achievement of the learning outcomes and attainment of the assessment standards.

The Department of Education ([s.a]:21) tabulates the various possible forms of assessment and their weighting as follows:-

Table 2: Possible forms of assessment and their weighting

Forms of assessment	Weighting: % of CASS
Tests/examinations	40
Research /Assignment	15
Investigation/Project	15
Map reading and analysis	10
Case study	20

3.7 THE NATURE OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

Continuous assessment, an outcomes-based approach, requires that learners be assessed on a continuous and ongoing basis. This means that a learner's progress is determined not only by examination, but by all the work that he/she has done during the course of the year. Mweemba and Chilala (2007:31) emphasize that continuous assessment is an ongoing, diagnostic, classroom-based process that uses a variety of assessment tools to measure learner performance. It is further stated in USAID that CASS allows teachers to monitor the impact of their lessons on pupil's understanding.

According to the Department of Education (2007:2), CASS is a process that measures a learner's achievement during the course of a grade or level, providing information that is used to support a learner's development and enable improvements to be made in the learning and teaching process. Continuous assessment is actually a formative evaluation method where each student is monitored throughout the year on a variety of activities, including tests. Students are given tasks to enable learning skills such as communication, logical thinking and creativity. Such skills cannot be assessed through examinations and as such CASS is a more reliable and accurate system of monitoring learners performance on an ongoing basis. Continuous assessment is thus of benefit to learners who are unable to deal with the pressure of the formal examinations. It is therefore necessary for teachers to be able to use their knowledge of assessment to improve their teaching.

The knowledge and use of continuous assessment by the teachers in the teaching of Geography is essential to make teaching and learning more effective and meaningful. Educators continuously assess learners to gain an understanding of whether progress is being registered or not. According to Crooks and Black and William as cited in Brown (2004:304), assessment improves students learning and the quality of teaching. Grosser and Lombard ([s.a]: 42) argue that educational assessment in South African schools is in a process of transformation. Teachers also need to be aware of new trends in assessment. Grosser and Lombard further maintain that assessment has moved away from the traditional examination driven approach to an alternative approach that is seen to have greater educational value in terms of the kind of teaching and learning it encourages. Assessment has become purposeful and goal orientated to ensure that the desired learning outcomes are achieved through teaching and learning.

3.8 CHARACTERISTICS OF CASS

According to the Department of Education ([s.a]:5), Continuous Assessment (CASS) involves assessment activities that are undertaken throughout the year, using various kinds of assessment, methods and tools. The DoE further views CASS as the chief method by which assessment takes place in the National Curriculum Statement. CASS covers all assessment principles. The Department of Education (2002:97) stipulates the characteristics of CASS as follows:-

- CASS takes place over a period of time and is ongoing. Learners are assessed regularly through class work, home work, assignments, projects, research, tests and investigations. According to the Department of Education ([s.a]:7), six formal tasks are required in the Social sciences over the first three terms of the year, at two tasks per term.
- It supports the growth and development of learners. In this case learners are actively involved in their own learning and assessment. They have to understand the assessment criteria in advance and they are often involved in self and peer assessment, based on the given criteria. As such they are able to reflect on their own learning so as to raise their self esteem.
- CASS provides feedback from learning and teaching. Feedback is the most important aspect of teaching and learning because if done immediately it serves as motivation to learners. They are able to measure their performance and do

corrections when activities are still fresh in their minds. The teacher should therefore mark any assessment tasks as soon as possible and return the books to learners.

- It allows for integrated assessment. Various learning outcomes may be assessed in a single activity, for instance, when one assesses the first learning outcome in Geography, he/she can integrate it with first learning outcome in History which are both about using enquiry skills in their respective fields.
- CASS uses strategies that cater for a variety of learner needs. The Department of Education has introduced a policy on inclusive education. It is therefore necessary for the teacher to be sensitive to every learner's language, physical, psychological, emotional and cultural needs. Moreover CASS allows the teacher to be flexible in his approach so that he/she can easily manage diverse needs of his learners.
- CASS allows for summative assessment. CASS in grade 9 makes seventy five percent (75%) of the learner's final mark, which is a great deal of weight. The final CASS result therefore gives an indication of the performance at a given time. All CASS activities i.e. class work, home work, projects, assignments, test, investigations, case study and research are carefully planned and cover a variety of skills.

3.9 CASS AND EXTERNAL ASSESMENT IN GRADE 9

As mentioned above, CASS makes up 75% of the learner's final mark and external assessment marks the remaining 25%. The Department of Education ([s.a]:7) further reiterates that in grade 9, the CASS component consists of tasks undertaken during the school year (term 1, 2 & 3) and counts 75%, while externally set assessment tasks (Common Tasks for Assessment (CTA) and/or Examinations) make up the remaining 25%. The Common Tasks for Assessment have been phased out and they are replaced by the examination. The National Department of Education sets the common examination question paper of Social Sciences which are written by all learners in the country in June and December of every year. The Geography section constitutes half of this question paper. This paper is supervised and written under controlled conditions on the date and time determined by the department.

3.10 THE USE OF CASS

Ellington (1997:[s.p]) argues that Continuous Assessment is based on a radically different premise, namely, that the best and fairest way to assess students' performance is to assess its stage of a course as soon as it is completed or even while the work is done. This, he argued, is much more useful to the learners because it provides them with an ongoing feedback on their performance. He further viewed the advantages of Continuous Assessment as follows:-

- Continuous assessment can provide much more extensive syllabus coverage than terminal assessment; indeed, in some cases (e.g. competence-based courses) it covers virtually all aspects of the students' work, thus greatly increasing the face validity of the assessment process and permitting the use of tools appropriate to the workplace.
- Since it allows the use of a far wider range of assessment techniques than terminal assessment, continuous assessment can be used to test a correspondingly wider range of skills, including non-cognitive skills of various types. It thus makes it easier for tutors to match their assessment methods with the learning outcomes being assessed and to step assessment through different levels.
- Continuous assessment places less emphasis on pure memory (particularly comparatively short-term memory) than terminal assessment, and correspondingly more emphasis on worthwhile learning in the deepest sense of the word. True education has been described as 'what is left after the facts have been forgotten', and continuous assessment certainly facilitates such education.
- As we have seen, continuous assessment encourages regular, systematic study and discourages last-minute cramming, thus rewarding students who work steadily and conscientiously throughout their courses. It also reduces the domination of both teaching and learning by the requirements of the final examinations. It is like a film, rather than a single snapshot.
- By enabling on-going monitoring of student performance to take place, continuous assessment can provide early warnings of which students are having problems with a course, thus enabling the appropriate remedial help to be provided in time for it to do some good.
- Continuous assessment can provide early indicators of the likely performance of students, something that can be of great help to the students themselves, for example, in recognising that they have made a mistake in their choice of course and would be

better transferring to another, or in helping them to make informed choices of routes and options.

- Such assessment also provides an on-going picture of how individual students develop and mature as they work their way through a course, something that can again be of considerable use to both students and staff. It can also provide evidence of exactly what has been learned by a particular stage of the course, information that can prove extremely useful in cases where a student wishes to take an early exit award such as a Certificate or Diploma of Higher Education.
- Continuous assessment also constitutes an extremely useful vehicle for on-going course monitoring and evaluation, providing course tutors with early warning of any problems or weaknesses, thus enabling them to take appropriate measures to improve matters.
- It is generally agreed that continuous assessment reduces the intense stress that many students experience when preparing for and sitting terminal examinations - particularly so for dyslexic students or in the case of honours degrees.
- Continuous assessment generally provides a more natural assessment environment that is better matched to the situations in which students will find themselves working in later life, particularly if the assessment is of the 'open-book' variety.

Based on Ellington's views above, the use and advantages of CASS cannot be ignored. Continuous Assessment affords, in particular, the slow and dyslexic learners an opportunity to cope with the extensive demands of the curriculum, and the teachers to assess their own teaching on an ongoing basis for the achievement of the curriculum goals and objectives. CASS as argued by Ellington saves learners the intense stress of spending more time preparing for summative examinations.

3.11 CONCLUSION

It is very imperative for educators to have a thorough knowledge and understanding of CASS so that they can implement it correctly and efficiently in their teaching. They also need to understand the different teaching strategies and approaches used in Geography in order to apply them in teaching. Geography, as previously mentioned, is a unique section of the Social Sciences that requires particular teaching strategies and approaches. For the achievement of learning outcomes and assessment standards, the subject also uses various methods that are unique to it as stated in 3.8 above.

CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY THAT IS APPLICABLE TO THE INVESTIGATION WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON THE THEORETICAL DISCUSSION OF THE QUALITATIVE STRATEGIES, THE STRATEGIES ARE LINKED TO THE TECHNIQUES.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Ary et al. (2002:22), educational research is typically divided into two broad categories: quantitative and qualitative research, with each having its own terminology, methods and techniques. Each method shapes the way the researcher approaches the problem, collects and analyzes data. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:33), the third category is mixed research also commonly known as mixed methods, which involve the mixing of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Johnson and Christensen (2008:33) have referred to the three categories as research paradigms. They have further reiterated that a research paradigm is a perspective about research held by a community of researchers that is based on a set of shared assumptions, concepts, values and practices. In simpler terms, research paradigm could be explained as a way of thinking, planning and doing research.

This research is an investigation of teachers' experiences with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms. It is therefore aimed at collecting valuable data from the teachers with the sole aim of oozing their experiences on this subject. Of the five types of qualitative research, which are ethnography, case study research, grounded theory, historical research and phenomenology, the latter has been chosen for the investigation. The research topic was about the experiences of teachers and hence phenomenology was a relevant approach of qualitative research because it allowed the researcher to attempt to understand how individuals (participants) experience a phenomenon from their own perspectives, in this instance, continuous assessment. Ary et al. (2002:22) have argued that, in history, quantitative methodology has dominated education research though in recent years, qualitative research has become more popular; hence my investigation mainly followed the qualitative approach. The information obtained from the teachers was mainly based on their experiences in teaching Geography, though, their academic knowledge, training and background on this subject was not ignored.

4.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Main research question

4.2.1 What are the experiences of teachers with CASS in grade 9 Geography classrooms?

- This question aimed to determine the experiences of teachers in the implementation of CASS. The results of the investigation will be used to improve teaching and learning in the Geography classrooms.

Secondary research questions

4.2.1.1 How does the assessment policy inform and guide teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography?

- This question aimed to investigate the way the assessment policy informs and guides teachers in the implementation of CASS. The knowledge of teachers in this regard was tested regarding policy directives in order that continuous assessment could be implemented within the policy frame work.

4.2.1.2 What are the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of NCS?

- This question aimed to establish what the teachers view as the requirements for CASS in terms of NCS. It was expected of teachers to possess a thorough knowledge of CASS for its proper implementation in teaching.

4.2.1.3 How do teachers implement CASS in the teaching of Geography?

- With this question, the researcher aimed to understand teachers' experiences with regard to the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography. Teachers were expected to logically explain how they ensure that CASS is integrated in teaching.

4.2.1.4 What impact does CASS have on the teaching-learning process in Geography?

- Since CASS can impact both positively and negatively on the teaching and learning process, it is important for teachers to understand these dimensions.
- This will enable him to use the positive dimension to enhance his strengths in teaching and then manipulate the negative dimensions into challenges that can lead to new questions for exploration.

4.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Punch (2009:112), a research design means all the issues involved in planning and executing a research project from identifying a problem through to reporting and

publishing the results. Cohen et al. (2003:73) argue that research design is governed by the notion of fitness of purpose. They further argue that the purposes of the research determine the methodology and design of the research. A qualitative research approach was followed during the investigation. Qualitative research has its roots in Social Sciences; it is rooted in phenomenology and sees social reality as unique because the individual is interconnected to his or her environment. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:33), qualitative research relies on the collection of qualitative data, that is, non-numerical data such as words and pictures. According to Conrad and Serlin (2006:407), qualitative research is interpretive, focussing on gaining meaning and understanding and building concepts and theories. The data collection is mainly through field work, where the participants give their understanding and interpretation of the issue under investigation.

Social Sciences as a learning area in the national curriculum statement, is made up of two sections of Geography and History. Each of the sections has its own learning outcomes and assessment standards, with Geography mainly concentrating on the people and environment as mentioned above. There is mutual existence between the individual and the environment. The existence of each individual is dependent on the environment around him/her as much as the environment requires sustainable use by its inhabitants, in particular, people.

Qualitative research is mainly concerned with understanding why people behave the way they do i.e. their knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and fears, for example, why do learners prefer to be involved in decision making about their own learning or why do teachers prefer to be involved in decision making about the policies in the field of education? “Qualitative research focuses on understanding social phenomena from the perspective of the human participants in the study (Ary et al., 2002:22).

The research aimed at generating theory rather than testing it i.e. the process itself guided the researcher to arrive at a particular theory that guided his investigation. Ary et al. (2002:22), argue that qualitative research emerged because researchers sometimes found quantitative methods inadequate for investigating many problems in education. It is therefore of interest to know that it was not only enough to know the number of teachers using continuous assessment in the teaching of Geography but it was also necessary to observe and interview Geography teachers to find out how they use continuous assessment in their teaching.

This engagement placed the researcher in a better position to physically mix with the participants and have a direct experience of how they view the topic under investigation.

With qualitative method, the researcher gained a deeper understanding of the phenomena that was being investigated because he was able to explore, ask questions or even make a follow up when the information he got was vague or did not make sense.

4.4 SAMPLING

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:222), sampling is the process of drawing a sample from a population. “All research, including qualitative research, involves sampling because no study, whether quantitative, qualitative or both can include everything” (Punch. 2009:251). To sample, the researcher has to study the characteristics of a sample, which is a small representation of the larger population in order that he can generalize his findings. A representative sample was considered for the purpose of this investigation to allow for the generalization of the findings and recommendations. This process is in simpler terms referred to as probability sampling.

Ngaka Modiri Molema District of the North West province is made up of five (5) area offices, namely, Rekopantswe, Mafikeng, Lichtenburg, Zeerust and Kgetleng. Two area offices formerly referred to as districts, which are Rekopantswe and Mafikeng, were sampled because they were more accessible for investigation and conveniently close to each other in terms of geographical location. The two area offices operate in the same premises located in Montshiwa Township though in some instances schools may be stretching to the outskirts.

In total seven secondary or middle schools from two area offices were selected for sampling as this was a manageable sample size which was representative of the whole population and the schools concerned are reasonably located in terms of travelling distance. These schools are Boitseanape, Tetlano, Montshiwa-Memorial, Reeme-Batloung, Malefo-Melea, Lecholonyane and Tsoseletso. In terms of geographical location, these schools are spread in both the rural and semi-urban areas, and this is what made this sampling to be representative of the whole district. It was therefore, justifiable to generalize the findings to the whole district and even the province. These seven schools were representative of the two area offices which also consisted of rural and semi urban schools.

From each of the schools, two to three teachers including the respective Departmental Heads where possible were selected as participants simply because the average number of three teachers/educators was what I expected to get from these schools. In total I expected twenty participants for the study, but ended up with only 18. Even though the principals of the

schools gave the researcher permission to conduct the investigation, some teachers were reluctant to complete the questionnaire and participate in the interviews because they felt that the questionnaire was too long and the interview needed more time to prepare. The participants were selected based on their qualifications or experience in teaching Geography in grade 9. Participants were afforded the opportunity to volunteer to participate in case they were more than the expected number of three from each school. In some instances the teachers were not willing to participate and the researcher was forced into a personal interaction with them to explain how the process was going to work, that is, no names will be attached to the instruments and the report. Schools which enrolled a small number of children did not have the minimum of three participants as required, in that case, additional teachers were selected from other schools that were not initially included for sampling but were willing to participate to make up for the shortage of participants. All participants were requested to complete the questionnaire, and five (5) of them participated in the interview. Only 18 copies of the questionnaire were received back.

The questionnaire and interviews were meant to complement each other in terms of data; they contained different sets of questions which demanded different responses from participants. The interview was mainly used to give additional information to the investigation so that the data collected could be rich and valuable for the research. The main aim of completing the questionnaire and conducting the interviews was to help the researcher to answer the questions under investigation or provide solutions to the problem being investigated. The interviews were relevant and the researcher did not only stick to the questions pre-established but was also able to probe for further responses depending on the situation or on the new dimensions brought about by the participants at that time. In an instance where the researcher experienced a situation where a new dimension was discovered to the investigation, he acted flexibly and technically, because the objective was to gather as much relevant data as possible from the participants.

The question that surfaced was to determine the participants' views about the minister's media pronouncement that learners' portfolios would be discontinued from January 2010 and that the weighting of CASS would be reduced from 75% to 60% in future. The participants felt that this pronouncement was long awaited to encourage learners to take their examinations more seriously. Since this was a qualitative investigation, the five participants for the interview were a reasonable sample size, and enough data was gathered through the open-ended interviews. To ensure that this research was ethically approved, permission was

requested from the schools concerned to ensure that participants were available for interviews and for the completion of the questionnaire. Permission was also requested from the Department of Education to allow the findings to be accepted to serve the purpose of improvement in Geography teaching. The permission letter clearly stated the topic for the research, and that the questionnaire was to be completed and interviews conducted in terms of the time frame stated. The letter of permission contained a pledge of confidentiality which is a requirement that must be seriously considered by the researcher in order to gain the trust and confidence of the participants.

Boingotlo Middle School, a school where the researcher is currently teaching was used as a pilot for the research. This is one school that was left out during sampling for ethical reasons to avoid any influence of the researcher on the data collection process. As this was just a pilot, the school served the researcher an advantage in terms of accessibility, efficiency and time. Three teachers completed the questionnaire and only one volunteered to participate in the interview. The data gathered from the pilot study was analyzed and added to the findings of the investigation. The pilot data and findings were used to fill up the gap in the formal investigation.

4.5 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES AND INSTRUMENTS

Based on the need to gain an in depth knowledge of the research problem, it was necessary to employ questionnaire and interviews as data collection strategies. Additional data was obtained through the literature review.

4.5.1 The questionnaire

According to Wilson and McLean (quoted in Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003:245) a questionnaire is defined as a widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information. Johnson and Christensen (2008:170) have also defined a questionnaire as a self report data-collection instrument that each research participant fills out as part of a research study. A questionnaire usually aims at getting information about participants' feelings, attitudes, thoughts, beliefs, values, perceptions and personality. It can also be administered without the presence of the researcher and can be straightforwardly analyzed. It was necessary to pilot and refine a closed and structured questionnaire before any formal investigation could commence to enable patterns to be observed and comparisons to be made. According to Bell (2000:127), all data-gathering instruments should be piloted to test how

long it takes recipients to complete them, to check that all questions and instructions are clear and to enable the researcher to remove any items which do not yield usable data.

The questionnaire is always regarded as an intrusion into the life of the respondent in terms of time required to complete, the threat that it places on the respondent as well as the sensitive private information the respondent has to give. The use of the questionnaire is thus based on the respondents' informed consent, the right to withdraw at any stage of the research and not complete certain sections if they feel uncomfortable, the guarantee that the information obtained will not be used for any other purpose other than the one it is intended for and so on.

There are various types of questionnaires, namely structured, semi structured and unstructured questionnaires. The size of the sample determines the type of the questionnaire selected for use. The more structured questionnaires are suitable to deal with large data sample because frequencies of response amenable to statistical treatment and analysis can be generated. Comparisons can also be made across the groups selected for sampling. On the other hand the less structured questionnaires are suitable when a case study of a specific site is required because they can easily explain the specifics of a particular situation. "The larger the size of the sample, the more structured, closed and numerical the questionnaire may have to be, and the smaller the size of the sample the less structured, more open and word-based the questionnaire may be" (Cohen et al. 2003:247).

The questionnaire is divided into two sections, namely, the section on the personal particulars of the respondents and the section that deals with questions for the collection of data. The first section contained the sex category of the participant, age and teaching experience. It was important to determine whether the respondent was male or female because there could have been a significant difference in attitude between male and female teachers towards the questionnaire. Age was also an important category as it could influence the response of the participant. Lastly with the degree of experience, the teachers' responses were significantly different. The more experienced teachers responded more accurately to the questions as compared to the less experienced teachers. The data may thus be correlated based on that difference. This, however, does not rule out any possibility of similarity irrespective of sex, age and experience of the respondents. The second section contained questions ranging from semi-structured to unstructured questions. All questions were based on the research questions so that these questions could be decisively answered at the end of the investigation.

The first question was: Based on your classroom experience of CASS, how important is CASS in the teaching of Geography? This question required each participant to justify the importance of CASS, as based on his/her experience in teaching. The participant was therefore expected to apply his/her experience to explain the importance of CASS in the teaching of Geography. He/she was expected to state advantages of using CASS in their own teaching, for instance, they stated that CASS makes teaching and learning more effective, guides a teacher in planning for the next lesson, helps the teacher to identify the weaknesses in his/her own teaching and helps him to identify barriers to learning, which must be remedied through intervention.

The second question was: How is CASS unique as compared to all other forms? This question required the participant to demonstrate his/her understanding of the policy of the Department of Education on assessment and the participants showed the uniqueness of CASS as compared to the other forms of assessment, namely, baseline assessment, diagnostic assessment, summative and formative assessment etc. The participants stated that CASS in grade 9 takes seventy five percent (75%) of the learner's final mark, thus showing how much weight CASS contributes to the pass mark.

The third question required the participant to explain his/her philosophy/belief about CASS as a specific component of assessment that tracks the performance of learners on an ongoing basis. With this question, the researcher expected each participant to re-affirm his/her belief that CASS helps the teacher to track the performance of learners on an ongoing basis, thus indicating the amount of progress being registered in learning. This characteristic gives CASS a special position in outcomes-based assessment, where the learners are assessed on a continuous basis without focusing only on summative tests that are administered at the end of the month, term, semester or year.

With the fourth question, the participant was expected to state that CASS must be administered at all levels of planning, since it is a continuous exercise. There was, however, a lot of misinterpretation that showed that some participants did not understand the three levels of planning. Few of the participants however stated all three levels of planning i.e. meso planning, macro planning and micro planning and indicated how CASS could be administered at each of the three levels.

The fifth question aimed to determine the teacher's personal preference of assessment activities in terms of importance e.g. home work, class work, speed test, assignment, oral

presentation, field work etc. These activities depended on the individual teacher's preference based on the requirements of Geography as a learning area.

Assessment questions have shifted from simple straight forward questions to cognitive questions that require the learners to think and reason, as well as apply their knowledge to situations. With the sixth question, the researcher required participants to choose between open-ended and closed-ended questions. The participants were expected to favour open-ended over closed-ended questions as they are types of questions that meet the above stated criteria. However, some participants preferred to use both open-ended and closed-ended for their tasks in order to address the different abilities of the learners. Majority of the participants favoured open-ended questions. The reasons advanced for this choice included the fact that today's curriculum demands critical thinking and reasoning and as such open-ended questions allow learners to express themselves freely.

The objective of the eighth question was to gather information about how the teachers practically consolidated (brought together) CASS marks of different assessment activities. Here, participants stated the various forms of assessment with their weighting and the number of tasks per assessment form. They also explained how conversions are made to get the final mark that is, show how the total percentage for CASS is converted to 75%.

The final question explored the purpose for which CASS results are used. With this question the researcher aimed to establish the purpose for which the participant uses CASS results. As expected, the participants stated that CASS results are used for assessing learners' progress, to report to parents and to calculate individual learner's final mark.

4.5.2 The Interview

Apart from the questionnaire, interviews were reliable strategies for collection of data. According to Lichtman (2006:116), interviewing is most common form of data collection in qualitative research. This is because many if not all the people have experienced being interviewed at some time of their lives. The interviews experienced by the people may have not been the academic interviews but individuals may have visited the doctor, who asked questions about how they feel, or visited someone and were asked questions of how their families were doing. In one way or another such an individual was in an interview though it was in an informal way. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:203), another way to collect data is to interview research participants. They further define the interview as a data-

collection method in which the interviewer (the researcher or someone working for the researcher) asks the interviewee (the research participant) questions. According to Greenfield (2002:209), interviews play an important part in the lives of most people. Patton (in Greenfield, 2002:209) has also argued that the purpose of interviewing is to find out what is in and on someone else's mind. The reason for interviewing people is thus to ooze out of their minds those things that the researcher cannot directly observe. A decision to choose interviews for data collection was endorsed by Bell (2000:135) who argued that a major advantage of the interview is its adaptability.

Interviews are recognized as knowledge and conversation generated between human beings where views are exchanged between two or more people on a subject of mutual interest. The interview usually provides an opportunity for the interviewers and interviewees to share their own interpretations of their world as well as their situations. The interview is not only about collecting data but it is also about interacting with one another in a real life situation. The research interview is very different from other forms of interview, such as promotion related interview, assessment of an individual, psychiatric interview and so on. The research interview was used as a major means of gathering information with the research objective in mind.

Like in the case of the questionnaire, there are various types of interview. Cohen et al (2003:271) quoted Patton (1980:206) that the four types of interview are informal conversational interview, interview guide approach, standardized open ended interview and closed quantitative interview. Johnson and Christensen (2008:203) have also identified four similar types of interview as mentioned by Cohen et al. (2003:271).

With regard to informal conversational interview, questions can emerge during the process and as such the interview can be matched to the individual and circumstances. This action may however bring an element of inconsistency between the candidates as a result of different questions being asked. The conversational interview was not an option in this case.

The interview guide approach specifies topics in advance and it makes data collection and analysis systematic and consistent. The gap with regard to this approach may however be that questions that emanate during the interview are left out and consistency may also be overruled by the fact that the interviewer decides on the sequence of the questions asked. The other type, standardized open-ended interview allows all interviewees to answer similar questions that are predetermined and asked in the same order. This allows the analysis of data

to become simple and comparison is also possible. This approach is not flexible because the wording is standardized.

The last type, the closed quantitative interview, has questions and responses being determined in advance. The respondents choose answers from the given lists. Data analysis is thus simple and comparison is also possible. It is, however, a stagnant approach whereby a respondent's interpretation may be misquoted or misunderstood.

For the purpose of this investigation, the data was collected through face to face interviews. As previously mentioned, the data collected through the questionnaire was enriched by data from the interviews. An unstructured interview instrument was used and follow up questions were asked to generate further responses. The process of the interview was recorded on the voice recorder for further review and clarification. This was of assistance when the data became ambiguous and needed clarification during the analysis stage. Initially ten (10) respondents were aimed for the interview but the number was reduced to five (5) due to time factor and many interviewees excusing themselves from the process.

It however surfaced that educators appeared reluctant to participate in the investigation, as it was evident when permission was requested to conduct research, because of their tight work programme or fear of thinking that the information they provide would be made known to third parties. Even after explaining that the information they provided was solely for research, some were still reluctant. The other factor could have been that most of them were never involved in this kind of investigation and lacked experience of how the data would be used.

The following questions appeared in the interview instrument though additional questions were asked when probing for further information through follow up questions during the interview session. The first question of the interview required the participant to interpret the assessment policy of Geography and then link it to CASS. The interviewee was required to show his or her own understanding of the concept "assessment policy" and provide interpretation to show how he/she understood it. He was also required to interpret it with regard to own teaching, to indicate the learning activities that this policy stipulated as well as the objectives for using these activities for assessment.

Additional information was prompted by including follow-up questions, such as, what do you think are the main aspects of the assessment policy?, how often do you assess the learners?, and how does CASS link to the policy? The interviewee was also expected to explain how the

assessment policy was used to inform the daily planning of the lessons, that is, how they addressed the assessment policy through their lessons.

The second question aimed to explain how the assessment policy informed teachers in their teaching. In other words, how it guided teachers in carrying out their classroom practices effectively. It was thus expected that teachers should use the guidelines as stipulated in the policy concerned in their teaching. This policy stipulated five forms of assessment, namely, tests and examination, research or assignment, investigation or project, map reading & analysis as well as case study.

The third question was about the implementation of CASS, that is, how and why teachers implement CASS in teaching. The interviewees brought forward issues such as CASS must be implemented on an ongoing basis, show the integrity of Geography, must be structured in such a way that it identifies the needs of learners, enables teachers to reflect on their own practice, identifies learners' strengths and weaknesses as well as motivate and encourage learners.

The fourth question required the interviewee to state the goals he wanted to achieve through CASS. The interviewee stated the goals that he wanted to achieve through CASS in teaching Geography and how CASS contributed towards achievement of these goals as based on his/her experience. In responding to this question, the participants stated that with CASS in Geography, he/she wanted to expose the gaps in teaching and learning, thus allowing himself/herself an opportunity to intervene in the learning process. The intervention remedied the situation in case learners did not perform as expected.

With regard to question 5, each interviewee was required to explain how learners benefitted from completing CASS activities. The interviewee further explained that CASS activities and their results could be analyzed so that conclusions could be used to guide the teacher in planning the next lesson. The results would make meaning to teachers, provided they were interpreted and analyzed and used to inform the next lesson.

The seventh question required the interviewee to explain the requirements for CASS in Geography. This question was linked to the research sub-question two (2) of the investigation. The respondents touched issues such as "CASS should take place over a period of time, support growth and development of learners, provide feedback from learning and teaching, allow for integrated assessment, use strategies that cater for variety of learner needs

and allow for summative assessment”. This shed light on how much the respondents knew about the requirements for CASS in terms of the NCS. The interviewee was further prompted to clarify his/her own perception of CASS in terms of these requirements; explain why he/she thought his/her assessment approach met these requirements and how he/she ensured that assessment in Geography achieved the desired outcomes.

The final question of the interview required the interviewee to explain how he/she ensured that assessment in Geography achieved the outcomes. Most interviewees argued that CASS could bring about very positive outcomes to teaching and learning if used correctly. They also explained the extent of the impact of CASS on teaching and learning.

4.6 ENSURING VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

According to Cohen et al. (2003:105) validity is an important key to effective research because if a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless. Validity must be addressed through honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved. It is therefore of ethical importance for the researcher to be honest with his findings, to ensure that the data he collects is rich and that it covers a wide scope to allow for generalization. Cohen et al. (2003:105) further argued that reliability measures consistency and replicability over time. It is concerned with precision and accuracy. If the research has to be repeated at a later stage, under similar conditions, with similar participants it is expected that similar results will be obtained if at all the procedure followed is reliable.

According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:144), validity refers to the accuracy of the inferences or interpretations you make from the test scores while reliability refers to the consistency or stability of a set of test scores. According to Silverman (2000:175-176), validity is another word for truth and he further explained that sometimes one doubts the validity of an explanation because the researcher has clearly made no attempt to deal with contrary cases. He, however, did not give his own definition of reliability but he quoted Hammersley who argued that reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions. The literature was carefully selected in order that only relevant information could be used to support the investigation. The questionnaires were also carefully planned so that the data collected could be of use to the investigation. Open-ended questions were used because they allowed the participants an opportunity to express their views. Lastly, the interviews added much needed value to the investigation because they allowed the

researcher a precious opportunity to interact with the participants on a face-to-face basis and in a real life situation. This research can safely be declared valid and reliable and the results can be generalized for educational purposes.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Once all the data had been collected, the next process was analysis. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2007:131), analyzing the data consists of examining the database to address the research questions or hypothesis. They further argue that qualitative analysis begins with coding the data, dividing the texts into small units (phrases, sentences, paragraphs) and assigning a label to each unit. The interview data was transcribed from the recording tape to the hard copy. Johnson and Christensen (2008:534) define transcription as a process of transforming qualitative research data such as audio recordings of interviews or field notes written from observations into typed text. In terms of questionnaires, transcription involved typing the handwritten text into a word processing file, that is, the data was converted into a more usable form. As previously mentioned, no person or school's name was attached to the instruments but all schools and participants were awarded numbers for identification.

Ary et al. (2006:490) argue that data analysis is the most complex and mysterious phase of qualitative research. This view is endorsed by Drew, Hardman and Hosp (2008:50) who argue that data analysis carries more negative connotations than any other single part of the research process. The process of data analysis is time consuming and very difficult because the researcher has massive amounts of data to examine and interpret. Vithal and Jansen (2001:27) describe the purpose of data analysis as making sense of the accumulated information. Interpretation of data is the most important component of analysis that needs to be accurately done so as to achieve the objectives of the investigation. According to Blanche and Durrheim (2002:141), there are five steps in data analysis, namely, familiarization and immersion, inducing themes, coding, elaboration and interpretation and checking. The first step, familiarization, was the stage whereby the researcher read through the texts as many times as possible while making notes, drawing diagrams and brain storming data as much as possible. The aim was for the researcher to acquaint himself with the data before the actual analysis and interpretation was done.

The second step, inducing themes, was a stage whereby the researcher organized the data into the main themes as well as sub-themes. The themes that were selected were relevant to the language level of the participants and they addressed common issues of the phenomenon

under investigation without losing focus of the research questions. The information that was gathered through the interviews and questionnaires was sorted into categories and themes for analysis e.g. for the research question such as what impact does CASS have on the teaching-learning process in Geography, the themes were list of impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process, the results or outcomes of these impacts as well as solutions. Each of the themes was further subdivided, for instance impacts were classified as either positive or negative.

The third step of data analysis was coding. Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen (2006:492) argue that the coding and recoding process is the core of qualitative analysis. They further argue that coding is a process that involves a series of steps. They refer to the first step as open or preliminary coding. According to Johnson and Christensen (2008:534), coding is a process of marking segments of data (usually text data) with symbols, descriptive words or category names.

During this step the researcher read and re-read all the data, then sorted them out into units of meaning which must be readily understood i.e. words, phrases, sentences, patterns of behaviour, regular events and so on. The second step was the development of tentative categories, which were refined and re-conceptualized as the process continued. All the units as established during the coding process were marked with an appropriate code. The development of the codes allowed the researcher to notice the frequency with which the codes appeared. The third step was grouping; all the units with the same coding were placed together. This was done by grouping categories in a tabular form in order to connect similar categories.

The fourth step was elaboration. During this stage the researcher explored data to verify the grouping of themes. Some of the themes that were originally detached from each other were seen to be interrelated while some new themes also arose. The researcher played around with data until he was confident enough that the data addressed the research questions.

The fifth and final step was interpretation and checking. According to Blanche and Durrheim (2002:144), during this stage the researcher puts together his/her own interpretation. The researcher gave some indication of how his personal involvement might have influenced the collection of data and its analysis, for instance, the fact that a researcher might have a similar experience as the participants and might have re-directed the interviews, observations and interpretation of questionnaires into the researcher's own experience.

4.8 CONCLUSION

After the results had been analyzed, the researcher had to make sense of them, by interpreting them. It was time for the researcher to finally verify if the research questions had been successfully and satisfactorily answered. If all the research questions were not answered, then the effort for undertaking research would have been a futile exercise. The data or results are however not the end of the process but a means by which educational behaviour and social descriptions may be made. This is, according to researchers, the huge task of making the beginning of the interpretations and inference. Drew et al. (2008:50) define inference as the interpretive process a researcher uses to construct a descriptive statement from the data. This is a process of explaining and interpreting the results. The results must make meaning to the researcher and the rest of the audience. Recommendations were then made for future studies based on the findings that must be very well related to the questions that prompted the research. The findings and recommendations are discussed in detail in chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Ary et al. (2006:490) argue that data analysis is the most complex and mysterious phase of qualitative research. They agree that this process is time consuming and very difficult because the researcher has massive amounts of data to examine and interpret. Vithal and Jansen (2001:27) describe the purpose of data analysis as making sense of the accumulated information. To the researcher, this process must allow him/her an opportunity to make sense of the data. The data must be reduced into themes, organised into categories, synthesised so that its important components can be deduced. According to Ary et al. (2006:490), the researcher must organize what he or she has seen, heard, and read and try to make sense of it in order to create explanations, develop theory or pose new questions.

The data was collected through questionnaire-and-face to face interviews. A comprehensive process was followed in the collection and analysis of data. The following tables (table 3 & 4), show the logical steps that were followed by the researcher in this regard.

Table 3: The collection and analysis of the questionnaire data

Step 1	The questionnaires were duplicated.
Step 2	The questionnaires were distributed to schools.
Step 3	The questionnaires were collected from teachers with the help of departmental heads of respective schools.
Step 4	All the questionnaires were numbered for identification purpose.
Step 5	The questionnaires were browsed through to acquaint the researcher with their contents.
Step 6	The data was coded in a tabular form under the headings, respondents' views, codes and respondents' numbers.
Step 7	The coded data was revised to eliminate any overlaps and repetition.

Step 8	The coded data was typed and copies were printed for safe keeping.
Step 9	The data was analysed using the format agreed to with the supervisors.
Step 10	The data was interpreted.
Step 11	The data was discussed.

Table 3 above, explains how the researcher chronologically collected and analysed the questionnaire data. The researcher began by making copies of the questionnaire for each participant. The copies were then distributed to the selected schools. The heads of department of Social Sciences were helpful because they assisted to collect the completed copies from the participants in their respective schools. After all the copies of questionnaire were received, the researcher numbered all of them for identification. The data was coded in a tabular form under the headings: respondents' views, codes and respondents' numbers. The data was then typed and the copies were printed for safe keeping. The next step was the analysis of data, which was followed by its interpretation and discussion.

Table 4: The collection and analysis of the interview data

Step 1	The interviewees were consulted and appointments were made with participants to conduct the interviews. The date and time were scheduled for each participant.
Step 2	The quality voice recorder was purchased and used in this regard.
Step 3	The interview data was transferred from the voice recorder to the laptop and later to the recordable CD's.
Step 4	Each interview was transcribed and typed immediately after it was completed.
Step 5	The tape was re-played to ensure that the transcription was done accurately.
Step 6	The transcribed interview data was coded using predominant themes.
Step 7	The coded data was typed in a tabular form which was agreed upon by the researcher and the supervisor.
Step 8	The coded data was read over and over again to make meaning out of it.

Step 9	The data was analyzed in paragraphs.
Step10	The data was interpreted.
Step 11	The data was discussed.

Table 4 above, explains the chronological steps that the researcher followed during the collection and analysis of the interview data. Each interviewee was consulted and the appointment was made with each of them for the interview. The date and time suitable for each, was scheduled. The researcher used the quality voice recorder and recordable CD's to use for recording and storing of the data. Each interview data was transcribed and typed after every interview session. It was later coded in a similar style as that of the questionnaire. The coded interview data was analysed, interpreted and discussed.

5.2 ANALYSIS OF THE RESPONSES TO THE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONNAIRE

5.2.1 Biographic information of the participants

Table 5 below shows the biographic information of the participants in the open-ended questionnaire. There were 18 participants who responded to the questionnaire. They included eleven (11) males and seven (7) females. Sixteen of the participants declared that they were above the age of 36. Only two participants were in the age bracket of 31-35 years. The ages of participants did not link directly to their experience, some participants, as it appears on the table above, started to teach Geography later in their career. The participants, however, had the vast experience in the subject.

Table 5: Biographic information of the participants (Questionnaires)

Participant	Sex	Age	Experience in teaching Geography
1	Male	36+	20+
2	Female	36+	1-10
3	Male	36+	1-10
4	Female	36+	16-20
5	Male	31-35	11-15
6	Female	36+	11-15
7	Male	36+	11-15

8	Male	36+	11-15
9	Male	36+	16-20
10	Male	36+	20+
11	Female	36+	16-20
12	Female	36+	11-15
13	Male	36+	11-15
14	Female	36+	20+
15	Male	31-35	11-15
16	Male	36+	1-10
17	Male	36+	16-20
18	Female	36+	1-10

5.2.2 The role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography.

5.2.2.1 Introduction

The assessment policy of geography is the most important document to guide the teachers in the implementation of CASS. This policy elevates the importance of CASS in the teaching of Geography. The question of the questionnaire required educators to provide their experience in attaching the importance of CASS in the teaching of Geography in grade 9 classrooms. The opinions of teachers in this regard are analysed below.

5.2.2.2 Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography

The teachers' opinions about this question are that continuous assessment gives shy and slow learners ample time to be assessed because those that do not achieve get a second opportunity through re-assessment tasks and other remedial activities. Assessment is done on an ongoing basis and it takes place throughout the year. This view is shared by eight (8) of the participants who have repeatedly mentioned it. The educator can determine whether the learners understand the subject or not. The importance of CASS is also seen as reflecting whether learners are able to cope with educator's methods or not. As a result, each individual teacher is able to do an introspection so as to check if his/her teaching methods are working to the advantage of the learners or if the objectives of teaching are obtained.

CASS supports the growth and development of the learners; they gain skills and knowledge that help them to achieve the necessary learning outcomes and assessment standards for their grade. Moreover, assessment techniques can complement each other when administering CASS; a single task can contain various forms of assessment such as case study, project, assignments and test. A wide spectrum of learning activities and tasks are therefore covered. Integration of assessment into teaching through ongoing feedback is encouraged because assessment is infused into the daily teaching routine to enhance teaching and learning. As a result, an educator can identify the weaknesses of the learners so that they can assist them where necessary.

Continuous assessment helps teachers to gather valid and reliable evidence about learners' ability. The CASS results are made known to parents, Department of Education and other relevant stake holders to provide an overall picture of learners' progress at a particular time. In case learners did not perform well, CASS provides a platform for intervention by the relevant stake holders such as parents, departmental heads and professional support services. The stake holders function together as a unit to help each learner perform to the best of his or her ability.

5.2.2.3 Discussion of the opinions of the teachers about the role of the assessment policy in guiding them in the implementation of CASS in Geography

Based on the opinions of the teachers from the questionnaire, it is clear that they value CASS. The value of CASS is clearly stated in the assessment policy to guide teachers in its implementation. CASS is used for various valuable purposes such as identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the learners and of the teaching methods. CASS helps learners to gradually develop to their full potential as high achievers. In this regard they are able to develop skills and knowledge for life and future career paths. Through CASS educators are able to apply the necessary intervention strategies to help those learners who did not achieve the stipulated outcomes. Intervention is, however, a complex process that requires involvement of the parents, respective departmental heads, deputy principals and principals, cluster managers as well as social workers and psychologists in case of extremely crucial conditions that may account for poor performance. Records of all intervention actions are safely kept by the school and may be accessed during progression and promotion. In such extreme cases social workers and psychologists do some assessment on learners, identify those who require special attention and make recommendations for placement at relevant

institutions. The dyslexic learners may be put under therapy for a certain period or channelled for certain careers at an early stage. The same is done for those with poor family background, who may be unable to cope because of unstable or incomplete families.

5.2.3 The requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

5.2.3.1 Introduction

The first question required the teachers to respond by explaining if they think CASS is unique to other forms of assessment in terms of comparison. The participants were also to motivate why they think CASS is unique to other forms. The other question was to determine the belief of the participants about CASS. They responded in different ways by affirming their positive views towards CASS. They stated their beliefs about CASS and their opinions are analysed below.

5.2.3.2 Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS

The participants are of the opinion that CASS is unique to other forms of assessment because it supports the growth and development of the learners; it helps them to accumulate marks on an ongoing basis. They agree that CASS is an inclusive form of assessment that caters for all learners of different abilities. Furthermore, CASS enables every school to track its own performance by monitoring the learners' performance on an ongoing basis as previously stated. The teachers are able to gather valid and reliable information about the learners, a possibility that is not common with summative tests and examinations. A few participants do, however, believe that CASS is not very unique to other forms because both are intertwined and integrated.

The participants are of the opinion that CASS gives both the teacher and learner the opportunity to change their styles of teaching and learning respectively so as to adapt to a simple way of teaching and learning. They further believe that it helps demonstrate learners' ability through a wide range of opportunities and enables the teacher to diagnose barriers to learning at an early stage while it indicates the strengths and weaknesses of a learner as well as allowing for summative assessment. To them CASS needs to be thoroughly maintained and controlled to achieve its educational aims, to foster learners to take every work into cognisance so as to supplement their examination and gives learners the opportunity to

progress or be promoted to the next grade or phase. Some few participants however believe that CASS may make the learners to ignore the examination knowing well that the marks that they have already accumulated in CASS will be enough to take them through to the next grade or phase. The other valuable opinion gathered is that CASS is a transparent form of assessment whereby educators' comments evoke learners' interest and inspire the spirit of competition among them on an ongoing basis.

5.2.3.3 Discussion of the opinions of the teachers about the requirements of CASS in terms of the NCS

According to the questionnaire data, not too many common opinions were discovered. Five (5) of the participants reiterated that CASS must be administered on a continuous basis to accelerate the learning process. As expected, the teachers viewed CASS as being unique to other forms of assessment in terms of its advantages. To them, CASS remains a very important component of teaching and learning that is highly favoured. As highlighted only a hand full believe that its uniqueness is not very distinct because both CASS and other forms are intertwined.

The participants have differing philosophy about CASS but all their opinions affirmed the value of CASS as a form of assessment that enhances teaching and learning. There are many positive attributes of CASS in teaching and learning. Its contribution in this regard cannot be ignored. Based on the participants' opinions, it is evident that though each participant has a unique view about CASS, such beliefs are based on the policy which remains the teacher's guide towards effective teaching and learning.

5.2.4 The implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

5.2.4.1 Introduction

CASS needs a good administration for it to be effectively implemented and to achieve the desired results. It must be planned, administered to learners, controlled, marks recorded and feedback provided to the learners. The objective of this question was to determine how the teachers administer and implement CASS at the various levels, which are the macro, meso and micro levels; which assessment activities they regard as the most important; which types of questions they regard as the best to use, the step by step explanation of how they consolidate the CASS marks of the different assessment activities. The following opinions were gathered and are analysed below.

5.2.4.2 Analysis of the opinions of teachers about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

According to the questionnaire data, the participants were of the opinion that the administration of CASS must be implemented at all the three levels of planning as mentioned above. Majority of them fumbled and it appeared as if they did not know the three levels of planning, that is, the macro, meso and micro levels. Only seven (7) of the participants responded accurately, by basing their responses on the three levels mentioned above. Their reasons for this included ensuring that the learners achieve the desired results as well as allowing the schools to evaluate the relevant skills and knowledge.

Secondly, they regarded the following assessment activities as the most important in the implementation of CASS, home work, class work, tests, examinations, assignments, debates, projects, presentations, case studies, investigation and research.

Thirdly, between the open-ended and closed questions, participants favoured the use of both types of questions in all activities. Majority of the respondents, twelve (12), favoured open ended as they were of the opinion that these questions gave learners the opportunity to use their enquiry and investigative skills, to express themselves, explain their thoughts and ensure their holistic development. A few participants, however, favoured the use of both the closed and open ended questions because they seemed to believe that by so doing they would be able to cover all learners according to their different abilities. According to the participants the different forms of assessment addressed the various skills and knowledge of the learners.

Fourthly, the participants provided the different opinions of the way they consolidated the CASS marks of different activities. Majority of the participants correctly stated that they recorded marks for each form of assessment and converted the percentage to the correct weight as suggested by the policy. They also indicated that the total CASS mark must finally be converted to 75%.

5.2.4.3 Discussion of the opinions of the teachers about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

From the responses provided by the participants it was evident that the implementation of CASS was still a challenge to many of them. The theory behind the implementation of CASS appears to be a simple exercise but the practical implementation remains a challenge. The participants provided very different ways of how they consolidated CASS marks. Many of

them, except three (3) could not be very explicit in showing that they understand how consolidation is done. They generalised how they consolidated and sometimes confused the consolidation in lower grades with that of grade 9. It was of utmost importance for the teachers to understand that the implementation of CASS must take place at all the three levels of planning, that is, macro level (learning programme), meso level (work schedule) and micro level (lesson planning) as previously mentioned.

The participants opted for the use of both closed-ended and open-ended questions. They argued that both types of questions address the different abilities of all learners. When a teacher prepares a task, he is able to gradually increase the level of difficulty until the most difficult tasks are completed. This exercise prevents the gifted learners from getting bored by the simple tasks.

5.3. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERVIEWS WITH PARTICIPANTS

5.3.1 Biographic information of participants

Table 6 below shows the biographic information of participants in the interview. There were five (5) participants. The participants included three (3) females and two (2) males. They all fell in the age bracket of above 36. The two participants had 15-20 years of experience and the other three had over 20 years.

Table 6: Biographic information of the participants (Interviews)

Participant	Sex	Age	Experience in teaching Geography
1	Male	36+	15-20
2	Male	36+	15-20
3	Female	36+	20+
4	Female	36+	20+
5	Female	36+	20+

5.3.2 The role of the assessment policy in guiding teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography.

5.3.2.1 Introduction

To enhance the data collected through the questionnaire, the face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants in order to get more from their responses. In order to address this question, the first question of the interview required the participants to provide their own interpretation of the assessment policy of Geography and explain its link to CASS. The participants also responded to how the policy informs their teaching. The data obtained from the interviews are analysed below.

5.3.2.2 Analysis of the opinions of participants about the role of the assessment policy in guiding the teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography

The participants provided the following responses that the assessment policy must always cover the various forms of assessment such as projects, assignments, research, map reading and analysis, case study, presentation, tests and examination. They further responded that assessment policy must guide the formal and informal tasks. The participants were able to clearly differentiate between formal and informal tasks and they also indicated that they always used the informal tasks to prepare learners for the formal tasks. They interpreted the assessment policy as a guideline in which a teacher gets to understand his/her learners in a way of helping them on an ongoing basis. The participants cited the following as reasons why they use the assessment policy. Firstly, that the assessment policy provides them with the structure of the assessment components. Secondly, that it provides schools with a common frame work for administering assessment to learners. Lastly, that it provides the examples of the forms of assessment, techniques, methods and topics to be used in the activities.

The participants also linked the assessment policy directly to CASS. They gave the following reasons, that there is a link because the policy addresses the learning outcomes and assessment standards that must be achieved through CASS activities. These activities could be tests, examination, projects, assignments, case studies, map reading and analysis tasks as previously mentioned.

Lastly, the data gathered have shown that assessment policy informs teachers in their teaching. The participants responded that they use the assessment policy to inform them on how to track learner performance, how to use the different assessment strategies and how to

identify learners with special needs. The assessment policy they argue, guides them in teaching because it helps them to assess whether they reached their objectives or not. The assessment policy is seen as an important document that stipulates topics that have to be treated and the assessment activities that can be given to the learners since it contains the learning outcomes and assessment standards that need to be addressed.

5.3.2.3 Discussion of the opinions of participants about the role of the assessment policy in guiding the teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography

From the data collected, it must be noted that the correct and accurate interpretation of the policy is very important because the policy is the basis for the implementation of CASS in the classroom. The assessment policy is the important document that stipulates which learning outcomes and assessment standards to consider when teaching, which activities to give to learners, which forms of assessment to cover, which topics to treat and in which context as well as the guidelines for bringing together the marks of the various forms of assessment. The policy also gives guideline of the various assessment activities, both informal and formal that must be covered at the various intervals.

5.3.3 The requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS)

5.3.3.1 Introduction

CASS is a particular form of assessment that has to meet certain requirements in order to achieve the desired objectives. The objective of this question was to analyse the policy requirements of CASS in Geography since it carries more weight than any other form of assessment. The participants responded as follows.

5.3.3.2 Analysis of the opinions of participants about the requirements of CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS

According to the interview data, the participants stated that CASS must be administered over a period of time as the name suggests and that it must be a continuous process. CASS must be seen to be supporting the growth and development of the learners for them to develop to their full potential. It must provide feedback for learning, allow for integrated assessment, and cater for the variety of learners' needs and different learner abilities. The learners must receive feedback for every task that they do or write. This will make them aware of the

progress that they have already made in their learning and how much they still need to do to achieve the LO's and AS's of Geography. Assessment need to take variety of forms in Geography, that is, the learner must be assessed on their ability to write assignments, research, tests as well as answering the questions based on case studies and other sources. CASS in Geography must also allow them to do projects, for example the learners can do a project on sustainable development with specific focus on the topic "The protection of the natural forests". The learners have the different abilities and they will perform differently in Geography tasks. Some will do well in assignments, some in projects, some in tests and so on.

5.3.3.3 Discussion of the opinions of participants about the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of the NCS

Based on the responses by the participants, the administration of CASS must be based on the policy. The policy of Social Sciences stipulates how CASS must be administered to achieve the required outcomes. The outcomes are measured by assessing the learners on the assessment standards. The different tasks must therefore address the LO's and AS's of Geography. According to the Department of Education ([s.a]:1), assessment in the General Education and Training) GET band should achieve at least one of the following purposes:-

- Development of learners' knowledge, skills and values.
- Identify the needs of learners
- Enable teachers to reflect on their own practice
- Identify learners' strengths and weaknesses
- Provide additional support to learners.
- Revisit or revise sections that learners have difficulties with.
- Motivate and encourage learners.

The policy document of the Social Sciences is like a hand book, it is the teacher's companion in the classroom. It contains all guidelines for the teacher regarding teaching and assessment.

5.3.4 The implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

5.3.4.1 Introduction

The most challenging step in CASS process is the implementation. This question required the participants to explain how they implement CASS in teaching, why they implement it, what

goals they want to achieve and CASS benefits to learners. The opinions of the participants are analysed below.

5.3.4.2 Analysis of the opinions of participants about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

According to the responses of the participants, both informal and formal CASS activities of Geography such as home works, class works, assignments, case studies, projects, map reading and analysis and data handling are given to learners in order to assess the learners. They also indicated that they implement CASS because it is the policy, it takes greater weight of the final mark, it indicates performance and it enables teachers to gauge the effectiveness of their teaching while identifying learners who need special attention.

The participants also indicated how CASS benefits their learners. They stated that when learners perform well, their good performance boosts their moral. They also stated that it serves as a preparation for summative assessment; it gives the under performers time to improve while promoting a healthy competition among the learners.

Learners further benefit from CASS by gaining more knowledge, enquiry and interpretation skills from completion of activities because it provides them with the opportunity to get involved in their own learning by finding information themselves.

5.3.4.3 Discussion of the opinions of participants about the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography

Based on the analysis of the opinions of the participants above, the implementation of CASS is done by administering the tasks, both formal and informal in Geography. The implementation of CASS is seen to benefit learners since it contributes to effective learning. Through CASS they are able to test if they grasped what was taught i.e. testing if they understood the content, if they attained particular skills in the content taught and if they could attach value to the content. The administration of CASS should be such that learners can get a chance to explore information themselves, for instance, they can be given the opportunity to investigate a phenomenon when teaching sustainable development of resources. This could be done by visiting an exhausted mine such as Gold Reef City which has been sustainably converted into a tourist centre. The learners could be asked to investigate why the mine was closed and converted into a tourist centre as well as determining the degree of sustainability

of this centre over the years. It is necessary for the teachers to have a full understanding of the CASS process in order that it can achieve the required success in teaching and learning.

5.3.5 The impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process

5.3.5.1 Introduction

Based on the views of the participants, the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process cannot be ignored. Its impact on the lesson preparation, teaching time, lesson activities and teaching strategies is analysed below.

5.3.5.2 Analysis of the opinions of participants about the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process

The opinions of the participants are that CASS impacts positively on the lesson preparation because it enhances teaching and learning by addressing the learning outcomes and assessment standards that a teacher has to address in planning a lesson. These learning outcomes and assessment standards are clearly stated in the lesson plan. It thus informs the teacher on how to plan the lesson. In his/her planning the results of the CASS activities are used to guide the planning of the next lesson. This is where the concepts continuity and progression feature. The learners' new knowledge will build on the existing one so that they can quickly master the content of the lesson. This is done by using the information gathered from the assessment.

In the case of teaching time, the participants believe that CASS has a negative impact. They are of the opinion that they spend too much time on the administration of CASS activities involving planning activities, giving them to learners, monitoring them, marking activities, analysing results and re-assessing them where possible.

The participants also indicated that the impact of CASS is evident on the learning activities. They believe that it informs the teaching activities because it guides the teacher to plan the next lesson based on the previous results as already mentioned.

Lastly, the participants are of the opinion that the impact of CASS on the teaching strategies are that it informs the teacher's strategies. It calls for him/her to change the strategies when necessary and depending on the achievement or performance of the learners. It sometimes results in an unfortunate situation where the new strategies may not work to the advantage of

the learners because the teacher may have not been well prepared to employ them in his/her teaching.

5.3.5.3 Discussion of the opinions of participants about the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process

Based on the analysis above it is evident that the impact of CASS can be both positive and negative on the teaching - learning process. It may be positive in the sense that it can provide feedback to the teacher on whether to change his teaching strategies or not based on the results of the CASS activities. The teacher can therefore change his/her strategies and approaches accordingly to suit his/her learners. On the negative side, changing the approaches may force the teacher to use strategies and approaches that make him/her uncomfortable when not planned and prepared in advance. The execution of such impromptu strategies may be taboo to the inexperienced teacher.

5.4 CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

According to Ary et al. (2006:512), the purpose of report in research is to make clear to others what the researcher studied, how he or she studied it, what he or she observed and how he interpreted it. In the following paragraphs, the researcher has explained his creative opinions about the data gathered during the investigation. The interpretation and implication of the data from both the questionnaire and interviews are correlated and compared to determine the similarities and differences in the findings.

The researcher expects the findings from both the questionnaire and interviews to complement each other in order that rich data can be obtained. From the analysis of the questionnaire and interviews, CASS has been featuring positively in all the interactions with the participants. The purpose for which CASS is administered and implemented has been evocably mentioned, that it is mainly used for tracking the performance of learners and for supporting their growth and development. CASS is seen to fulfil dual purposes for both the learner and teacher since they both benefit from its administration. AS it has been repeatedly mentioned by the participants in the questionnaire and interviews, the learners are able to benefit from CASS. It is used to help them track their own performance, identify their own strengths and weaknesses, prepare them for summative assessment and motivate them to have a healthy competition among themselves.

The implementation thereof requires teachers to have the understanding and ability to administer CASS for a good purpose of making teaching and learning more effective by achieving the learning outcomes and assessment standards. As it was also mentioned, teachers use CASS to refine their teaching strategies and approaches with the aim of using it to the benefit of the learners. The implementation is not about giving tasks and doing nothing about them but about using the results to inform the next lesson. The inexperienced teachers need to be mentored by the experienced ones so that they can cope with the demands of the new system of education and its curriculum, especially the process of assessment. CASS, as mentioned in the policy document, takes a greater weight, that is, 75% of the learner's final mark. It is on this basis that it maintains its prominent position in the curriculum.

CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Based on the review of the literature, questionnaire and interview data, some interesting findings have surfaced. These findings are discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

6.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND AIMS

As previously stated, the new curriculum which was introduced in the year 2002 did not achieve immediate results. This curriculum was phased in too early without proper research and consultation. The teachers who were expected to implement the new curriculum found it really hard to deal with the changes. It has actually surfaced that the teachers were not involved in the making of the new policies that directed the implementation of the new curriculum. They have only been the implementers who were trained on short workshop courses on the new curriculum. An intensive training for teachers was needed for the successful implementation of the curriculum. Geography, as a section of the Social Sciences learning area in the GET band, is characterised by similar challenges. The teachers have become the implementers of the curriculum without voicing their discontent with these challenges, mainly because the changes have been regarded as a policy which they cannot dispute.

The teachers must plan all assessment activities very well so that they support teaching and learning in a positive way. Assessment must help the learners to understand the subject content better and the teachers to identify shortfalls in their own methods and strategies. The results of the assessment activities must also help the teachers to understand each individual learner's performance. It is therefore necessary for the teachers to analyse the performance of the learners in each question or instruction given so that he/she can be in position to know the type of questions that may be left out or included in the next activities. This will have a bearing in the planning of their next lessons because they will be able to reflect on the previous ones. Assessment is the most challenging and its contribution in teaching and learning cannot be ignored. Continuous assessment in particular, takes 75% of the learners' final mark and this fact isolates its position as a form of assessment that carries great weight.

As previously stated, Maree and Fraser (2004:268) have argued that of all challenges related to the implementation of outcomes-based education in South Africa, assessment is the most daunting. It was therefore necessary to investigate in particular, how Geography teachers use CASS in the grade 9 classrooms.

The main research question is what are the experiences of teachers with continuous assessment in the grade 9 Geography classrooms? This main question required the researcher to investigate the teachers' experiences with CASS.

The following are secondary questions:-

- How does the assessment policy inform and guide teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography?

This question required the researcher to investigate the way that assessment policy informs and guides teachers in the implementation of CASS. The knowledge of teachers in this regard was tested regarding policy directives so that continuous assessment could be implemented within the policy frame work.

- What are the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of NCS?

This question required the researcher to establish what the teachers' views are about the requirements for CASS in terms of NCS. It is expected that teachers must possess a thorough knowledge of CASS for its proper implementation in their teaching.

- How do teachers implement CASS in the teaching of Geography?

With this question, the researcher intended to understand teachers' experiences with regard to the implementation of CASS in the teaching of Geography. The participants were expected to explain logically in steps how they ensure that CASS is integrated in their teaching.

- What impact does CASS have on the teaching-learning process in Geography?

Since CASS can impact both positively and negatively on the teaching and learning process, it is important for teachers to understand these dimensions. This will enable teachers to use the positive dimension to enhance their strengths in teaching and then manipulate the negative dimensions into challenges that can lead to new questions for exploration.

The following was the research aim:-

- To study the experiences of teachers with Continuous Assessment in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

The objectives were as follows:-

- To explore how the assessment policy informs and guides teachers in the implementation of CASS in Geography.
- To explore the requirements for CASS in Geography in terms of NCS.
- To investigate how teachers implement CASS in the teaching of Geography.
- To examine the impact of CASS on the teaching-learning process in Geography.

6.3 THE MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

6.3.1 The main findings of the literature study

After perusing through the literature related to this research, it was evident that a lot still needs to be done in Geography. It has to be in the interest of the Department of Education to encourage the teachers specialising in this subject to further their studies with the aim of adding to the existing body of knowledge. Beets and Le Grange (2008:68) have argued that the decade has witnessed several changes to school Geography at the level of policy. These changes have been evident in the school system whereby different curricula have been phased in and out with the ultimate aim of getting a suitable curriculum that will meet the needs of all South Africans. As these curricula change, it remains in the interest of the researchers to pursue investigations in this direction. The researchers may, however, not spontaneously do this, but may need a motivation and encouragement from the policy makers and curriculum developers to investigate curriculum changes. Education systems do change and so are the policies. This calls for new dimensions in research and investigations to keep abreast of the changes. The literature has also exposed the other important dimension in Beets and Le Grange (2008:68). They argue that continuity and progression are key elements of Geography learning. They view continuity as the extent to which significant features of a discipline are emphasised as a learner moves through a school system and progression as a way in which the learner's knowledge, skills and understanding deepen in a learning area as he/she moves

through a school system. Continuity and progression factors have been isolated by the researcher as the positive aspects that ensure effective teaching and learning in Geography. The knowledge focus of the Geography content is not isolated at different grades. All knowledge focus as previously discussed under the section Continuity and Progression in the teaching of Geography is integrated. The teacher must consider these two important aspects when planning the lessons in Geography as this will help the learners to build new knowledge on the existing one.

6.3.2 The main findings of the open-ended questions

It has emerged from the analysis of the questionnaire that even though the teachers find it hard to cope with the new approaches in teaching, they value CASS. CASS, as it is repeatedly stated, takes 75% of the learner's final mark and its importance must therefore be considered.

It has emerged from the findings that the two respondents, respondent one (R1) and respondent six (R6) are of the opinion that CASS gives shy and slow learners ample time to achieve in Geography. This is made possible by the fact that the learners have the opportunity to be assessed and re-assessed with the aim of offering support to individuals who find it hard to achieve the desired outcomes. Some of the learners are also shy and tend to be reserved in the classroom. When given the task individually they will be able to complete it at their own time and pace without any pressure from the others.

Respondent one (R1) was also of the opinion that CASS reflects on whether the learners are coping with the educators' methods or not. Each learner is unique and therefore, the geography teachers must take into consideration the uniqueness of these learners in the classroom. The teachers use the different methods in their teaching, which ranges from the commonly known question and answer method, the lecture method, and the group discussion. The question and answer method also known as the Socratic method allows the learners an opportunity to answer the questions in order to determine if they understand the subject content or not. The lecture method has the teacher as the central figure in the classroom. The teacher is the source of all knowledge and the learners become the passive participants in the lesson. This method is however not always ideal in the new curriculum because this curriculum demands that the learners must be the active participants in the classroom.

Lastly, the group discussion is often ideal even though it has its own shortcomings. In this case, the members of the group choose the leader and the scribe. The leader directs the

discussion while the scribe takes the notes. Some shy learners may however, not actively participate in the discussions and hide behind the others. It is necessary to encourage them by allowing them to be the leaders and the scribes during the discussions. In this case, they will also contribute something to the group. They will take this opportunity to show up in the discussion and participate in the presence of their peers.

It has also emerged from the findings that CASS motivates the learners to study throughout the year. This was the view of respondents two (R2), three (R3), five (R5) and seventeen (R17). The CASS activities are given on a continuous basis. This makes the learners to be continuously involved in their studies through home works, class works, projects, presentations, assignments and tests. The view that CASS motivates the learners to study throughout the year is supported by the following respondents, R3, R7, R8, R9, R12, R14, R15, R17 and R18. These respondents are of the opinion that CASS allows the teachers to assess the learners on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, it emerged that CASS supports the growth and development of the learners. This was a view shared by respondents two (R2), eight (R8) and eleven (R11). The learners need to grow and develop academically as they progress through the different grades. A learner's academic maturity is viewed differently at each grade, that is, the cognitive thinking level of a grade 9 learner is assumed to be higher than that of a grade 8, that of a grade 8 higher than that of a grade 7 and so on. Simply translated, for instance, the interpretation skills of maps of a learner in grade 9 will be more advanced than that of a learner in lower grades.

The individual respondents had unique opinions about CASS. It emerged from the findings that respondent four (R4) was of the view that CASS determines whether an educator/teacher attained the objectives of the lesson or not. This view was supported by respondent five (R5) who argued that CASS helps the teacher to cover the learning outcomes and assessment standards. When a teacher plans his/her lessons, he sets down specific objectives in the form of the learning outcomes and the assessment standards to measure his/her success of the lesson. The learners must achieve these learning outcomes and assessment standards. The performance results of the learners in the CASS activities can be used as a yard stick to determine if particular objectives of the lesson were achieved. If for example, the assessment standard of Geography states that the learners must be able to measure the distance on the orthophoto maps, the instruction to learners in the activity must be, measure the distances on the maps and convert them to reality using the given scale. According to respondent eleven (R11), there are two important dimensions, that CASS helps the teachers to gather valid and

reliable evidence about the learners' abilities and that its results provide the overall picture of the learners' progress at a given time.

The other respondents (R7 and R9) concurred that CASS allows the teacher to use the various assessment techniques so that they can complement each other. The success of every lesson depends on the ability of the teacher to vary his/her assessment techniques. The teacher must be able to use a variety of methods in his/her lesson. If for instance, he/she teaches the topic sustainable development, he/she must allow the learners to master the subject content, identify the environmental problems and suggest the solutions to such problems. The lesson can further be enhanced through field work. Areas of environmental degradation can be visited to identify problems and find solutions to such problems. Report writing skills are also necessary as the learners may be required to provide feedback on their field trip. They may also be required to present their findings in class. As it was previously mentioned, the learners are individually unique and must be catered for as such when applying the assessment techniques. The different performance skills must be assessed, for example, the learners must be able to use the Geography based sources such as maps, photographs, satellite images, atlases and articles to extract information, interpret it and analyse it.

Respondent eight (R8) raised two vital points that CASS encourages integration of assessment into teaching through ongoing feedback and that it allows the teachers to be sensitive to the learners with special needs. The following respondents (R16, R17 and R18) were close to this view when they stated that CASS helps the teacher to identify the weaknesses of the learners so that they can be able to assist them where necessary. Assessment complements teaching, that is, where there is assessment there is teaching and where there is teaching there is assessment. All assessment activities must be based on the content taught and all the content must be taught with assessment in mind. The teachers continuously assess the learners through informal and formal activities and give regular feedback to the learners and the parents on an ongoing basis. In the instances where there are learners with special needs, the teacher provides remedial support. This can be done by re-assessing the learners and by providing individualised attention to them. According to respondent seventeen (R17), this is the process of intervention where the relevant stake holders such as peers, parents, Departmental Heads, Deputy Principals and Principals as well as the departmental officials must play a role when the performance of the learners is consistently low or is not improving.

In terms of the uniqueness of CASS in comparison to the other forms of assessment, it emerged from the findings that majority of the respondents (R3, R6, R7, R8, R9, R11, R12, R13, R14, R16, R17, and R18) are of the view that CASS is not very unique. They stated that CASS and other forms of assessment are intertwined, that is, they complement each other. The other respondents (R1 and R2) agreed that it is unique to other forms of assessment. Respondent one (R1) argued that CASS is unique because it supports the growth and development of the learners and that it allows them to accumulate marks on an ongoing basis. According to respondent four (R4) and seventeen (R17) learners' performance is monitored on an ongoing process or on a continuous basis. Respondent two (R2) regarded CASS as an inclusive form of assessment that caters for all learners of different abilities through variety of tasks.

In terms of the philosophy of the respondents about CASS, the following respondents (R5, R6, R8, R13, and R16) argued a repetitive idea that it must be administered on a continuous basis to accelerate the learning process. It was respondent fifteen (R15) whose philosophy about CASS was that it is a transparent form of assessment whereby the teachers' comments evoke the learners' interest and inspire the spirit of competition. Respondent twelve (R12) further added that CASS improves the learners' performance because they know in advance what is expected from them.

From the findings of the questionnaire it emerged that the respondents did not know the three levels of planning, the macro, the meso and the micro level. It was only respondent four (R4), sixteen (R16) and seventeen (R17) who stated that administration of CASS must take place at all levels of planning to determine if the learner achieved the desired outcomes. These respondents were also able to correctly mention the three levels of planning. The other respondents (R3, R7 and R8) indicated that the administration of CASS must take place when planning the learning programmes, work schedules and lessons to give the details of assessment activities to come. These respondents argued that the assessment activities must be planned in advance to allow for transparency and consistency.

In terms of which types of questions are regarded as the best to use in CASS activities, majority of the respondents (R2, R4, R5, R7, R8, R9, R10, R12, R13, R14, R16 and R17), favoured the use of both open and closed ended questions. They argued that the use of both types of questions caters for different learners with a range of abilities. The other respondents (R1, R6, R11, R15 and R18) favoured open ended questions only. They range from simple

questions where the learners extract the information from the sources to where they make simple analysis and intensive interpretation of the sources. The open ended questions give the learners the opportunity to freely express their opinions about an issue at hand. These questions require a high level of cognitive thinking from the learners. According to majority of the respondents, the open ended questions enable the learners to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes, they cater for creativity on the part of the learners to complement closed ended questions and develop the learners problem solving and thinking skills. None of the respondents favoured the use of closed ended questions only. The closed ended questions do not stimulate the learners' cognitive thinking because they only require the learners to recall the information or extract it from the sources.

It was unfortunate to realize that most respondents did not know how to consolidate the CASS scores of the different activities. It was only respondent ten (R10), fourteen (R14) and (R15) who were clearly and logically able to explain how they arrived at the 75% CASS mark. In the researcher's opinion, the respondents still use raw scores to consolidate the CASS mark instead of using the weighting in percentage of the various forms of assessment and converting the total to the average percentage of 75%. The learners' results are the most important final product of CASS. They must be used to report the progress of the learners to the parents and other stake holders in education.

In conclusion, the teachers can use CASS to apply the necessary intervention strategies in helping the learners who cannot cope with their school work. It has also emerged that teachers have enough knowledge of CASS, mainly theory, but the greatest challenge is its implementation in teaching. The three spheres of planning appeared to be a foreign language to most teachers. Planning takes place from the macro level, where all learning areas are integrated into a single plan, then meso level, where all learning outcomes, assessment standards and main themes for a learning area are stated and, lastly, the micro level, where the learning programme and work schedule clearly state the content that needs to be covered for every grade.

6.3.3 The main findings of the interviews

Based on the analysis of the interview data, the teachers still need support in understanding the policy of the Social Sciences. It appears that they have information but most of them do not interpret the policy requirements accurately. The assessment policy (AP) is the most

important document, a teacher's companion in teaching and must always be consulted and interpreted accurately. It must be the responsibility of the teachers to acquaint themselves with the contents of the policies in question with the assistance of the Department of Education. The whole process of CASS administration must be based on the policy of the Department of Education, so that proper guidelines can be followed. Both participant one (P1) and two (P2) have argued that the assessment policy must always cover the various forms of assessment as well as guide the formal and informal tasks in Geography. Participant three (P3) and four (P4) regarded the assessment policy as a guideline in which a teacher gets to understand his/her learners in a way of helping them to achieve. Participant five (P5) had a different view, he/she interpreted the assessment policy as a method or mechanism which can be used to develop awareness and influence future and challenge economic and social aspects of life.

All the participants believed that the assessment policy links to CASS. Participant one (P1) and four (P4) stated that the assessment policy links to CASS because it addresses the learning outcomes and assessment standards. All CASS activities are planned around the particular learning outcomes and assessment standards that the learners must achieve. Participant two (P2) also agreed that the assessment policy links to CASS because the forms of assessment such as projects, tests, assignments, presentations and research are guided by the assessment policy of Social Sciences. The other participants (P3 and P4) argued the link between the policy and CASS on the basis of the formal and the informal tasks as well as the baseline, diagnostic and summative assessment. The way they linked the two did however not convince the researcher very much that formal and informal tasks as well as the baseline, diagnostic and summative assessment may be the reasons for linking the two.

The teachers use the assessment policy to provide themselves with the structure of the assessment activities. All geography assessment activities are founded on the policy of Social Sciences. These activities, formal and informal are used to assess learners and also to give the assessor (teacher) the opportunity to assess if he/she achieved the objectives of his/her lesson. The policy is a teacher's hand book and too often cannot be disputed. The most important is the correct implementation of the policy and the assessment of its success.

The participants have provided various reasons why the assessment policy informs their teaching. According to participant one (P1) and two (P2), the assessment policy informs their teaching because they can use assessment to track the performance of the learners. The policy

guides the teachers in applying the various assessment techniques. The recognition of the learners' individuality is of the utmost importance. The teacher's knowledge and application of the assessment techniques will play a very important role in learners' assessment in meeting the individual needs of the learners. This will help him/her to offer individual attention to all learners, especially those with the learning barriers. According to participant one (P1) and two (P2), the assessment policy helps the teachers in identifying those learners who need special attention.

All the participants were of the opinion that the requirements for CASS as stipulated in the policy document of Social Sciences must be adhered to. They all argued that the administration of CASS must take place over a period of time and on an ongoing basis. As it has been repeatedly stated in this report, CASS activities are given to the learners on a regular basis to enrich the learners' understanding of the learning content. It is through these activities that the learners test their understanding of the learning area/subject. In the event that the learners do not achieve they may be given the second opportunity in the form of re-assessment tasks before the correction is done under the supervision of the teacher. Participant two (P2) also argued that CASS support growth and development of learners for them to develop to their full potential. It is through CASS that learners can be assessed and re-assessed through the formal and informal activities until they develop to their full potential. Participant two (2) further argued that CASS must allow feedback for learning. The results must be purposefully used to provide feedback to the learners, in order to give them the idea of how they performed in Geography tasks. CASS needs to allow for integrated assessment, enable the teachers to use the strategies that cater for variety of learners' needs and abilities.

In conclusion, the implementation of CASS appeared to be well understood, the teachers were aware of the use of both the formal and the informal tasks of assessment. They were also able to explain how the informal tasks inform formal ones, in terms of their individual function. The administration of CASS should afford both the teachers and the learners the opportunity to gauge their performance in their respective fields. The teachers can use CASS results to inform and guide their strategies and approaches, so that they can adapt them to different situations with the aim of benefitting the learners.

6.4 IMPLICATIONS

According to Drew et al. (2008:364) implications are where the researcher suggests directions for the next study or next series of studies based on the results of the present study. According

to Drew et al. (2008: 364), the implications for practice are where the researcher interprets what the results might mean for practical application or practice such as teaching. The researcher recommends that the results be used by the stake holders in the Department of Education as guidelines to develop policies that will be used by the geography teachers in their teaching practice. The stake holders include policy makers, curriculum developers, curriculum advisers, area office managers, departmental heads in schools and subject teachers. The importance of policies was reiterated by the participants in the study who highlighted that policy documents are the teacher's companion. Teachers are required to understand the theory of assessment with emphasis on CASS, so that they can convert their knowledge of theory to practice, that is, classroom teaching and learning. The participants maintained that the assessment policy itself is elevated to guide the implementation and administration of CASS in the classroom.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The qualitative research method was followed during the investigation. As it was previously anticipated, it was very hard and difficult to get participants for the questionnaire and interviews. Most of the participants expected the tick questions and they were not willing to sacrifice their time completing the questionnaire and prepare for the interview. Often they felt threatened by the face to face interview hence I only managed to get 5 participants. Some felt that even though they teach Geography they are not specialists in this field but in History.

The time for data collection coincided with the midyear examination session and many of the participants were reluctant to participate. Having expected 20 participants for the questionnaire, some schools only had one educator for Geography and my sample became very small. The number of participants anticipated for sampling was below the minimum number of 20, and for convenience, additional schools had to be identified in order that the researcher could get a bigger sample.

6.6 SUGGESTED FUTURE RESEARCH

This research has exposed some gaps in the teaching and assessment of Geography. The literature on this research is very limited. This was evident during the literature search where most references available were mostly outdated or even irrelevant for the study. It appeared that researchers in the field of Geography are few and as a result further researches are needed in this field. Future research is suggested in the career fields in Geography, where the students

can be encouraged to pursue careers in this subject. The literature has exposed interesting career opportunities in the field of environment and sustainability, physical systems, society, business world, development and global issues, settlement, travel and tourism as well as leisure and culture. As far as the teaching and learning are concerned there is a need for future research in the various aspects of teaching such as remedial or intervention teaching of Geography. In many instances the participants mentioned the need for teachers to use CASS to enhance learner performance, identify their strengths and weaknesses, identifying learners with barriers to learning so that they can be assisted to perform to the required level. Future research may also focus on using CASS results in teaching or even the impact of CASS on teaching and learning.

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Wilmot, D. 2005. The development phase of the case study of the outcomes-based education assessment policy in the Human and Social Sciences learning area of C2005. *South African*



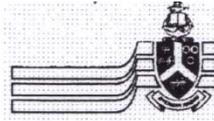
Journal of Education, 25(2): 69-76.



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM A

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE



UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

DEGREE AND PROJECT

INVESTIGATOR(S)

DEPARTMENT

DATE CONSIDERED

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE

CLEARANCE NUMBER :

SM10/04/01

MEd

The teachers' experiences with CASS in the grade 9 Geography classrooms

D.R. Mokotedi

Department of Science Mathematics and Technology

23 September 2010

APPROVED

Please note:

For Masters applications, ethical clearance is valid for 2 years

For PhD applications, ethical clearance is valid for 3 years.

CHAIRPERSON OF ETHICS COMMITTEE Prof L Ebersohn

DATE

23 September 2010

CC

Dr L.D. Beukes
Ms Jeannie Beukes

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.



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM B

APPROVAL OF TITLE: DISSERTATION



Student No.: 24497704
Our ref: Mrs EC Van Baalen
Tel: 012 420 5695
Fax: (012) 420-3951
Email:



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Pretoria 0002 Republic of South Africa
Tel 012 420 3111 Fax 012 420 4555
<http://www.up.ac.za>

2010-09-16

MR DR MOKOTEDI
PO Box 50296
Mafikeng South
2791

Dear Mr Mokotedi

APPROVAL OF TITLE: DISSERTATION

DEGREE: MEd: Assess.and Quality Assurance in Educ.& Train.

I have pleasure in informing you that the following has been approved:

TITLE: The experiences of teachers with continuous assessment in the Grade 9 Geography classroom

SUPERVISOR: Dr LD BEUKES,

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof WJ FRASER

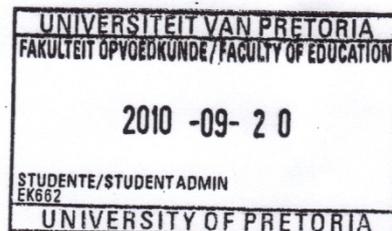
The requirements for dissertations are listed in the General Information and Regulations of the University. Consult Regulations G.30 to G.61 which are related to dissertations and the assessment thereof.

Summarised guidelines for the submission and technical details of dissertations, a checklist as well as a "Notice of Submission" are attached. Kindly note that, in accordance with Regulation G.60 1(a), your written "Notice of Submission" should reach the Student Administration three months prior to submission.

Your registration as a student must be renewed annually before 28 February until you have complied with all the requirements for the degree. You will only be entitled to the guidance of your supervisor if annual proof of registration is submitted.

Yours sincerely

for DEAN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
NAG02E





UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
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ADDENDUM C

LETTERS OF PERMISSION TO SCHOOLS



100
1908-2008



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
William.fraser@up.ac.za
012 420 2207
6 January 2010

The Deputy Principal
Mrs PPP Majatladi
Boingotlo Middle School
PO Box 3099
Mmabatho
2735

Dear Mrs Majatladi

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

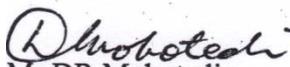
I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

Please note that I have received permission from the North West Province to have access to your school.

I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



100
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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education

William.fraser@up.ac.za

012 420 2207

6 January 2010

The Principal
Boitseanape Technical Secondary School
P/B X13
Mmabatho
2735

Dear Mr LL Sedia

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

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I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully

Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



100
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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
William.fraser@up.ac.za
012 420 2207
6 January 2010

The Principal
Lecholonyane Intermediate School
PO Box 348
Ratshidi
2739

Dear Mr Sebaeng

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

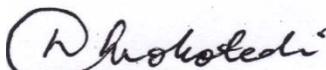
I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

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I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



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1908 - 2008



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
William.fraser@up.ac.za
012 420 2207
6 January 2010

The Principal
Malefo-Melea Middle School
Botshabelo Cluster
Mafikeng
2735

Dear Mrs Lenkwe

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

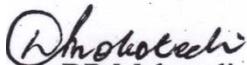
I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

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I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



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1908-2008



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
William.fraser@up.ac.za
012 420 2207
6 January 2010

The Deputy Principal
Montshioa Memorial Middle School
PO Box 151
Mafikeng
2745

Dear Mr ZT Marumo

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

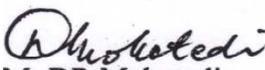
I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

Please note that I have received permission from the North West Province to have access to your school.

I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education

William.fraser@up.ac.za

012 420 2207

6 January 2010

The Principal
Reeme-Batloung Middle School
Botshabelo Cluster
Mafikeng
2735

Dear Mr Songwane

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

Please note that I have received permission from the North West Province to have access to your school.

I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



100
1908-2008



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
William.fraser@up.ac.za
012 420 2207
6 January 2010

The Principal
Tetlano Middle School
Mmabatho Cluster
Mafikeng
2735

Dear Mr P.P Chabaemang

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I hereby request permission to undertake research in your school.

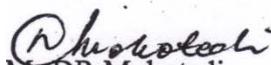
I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

Please note that I have received permission from the North West Province to have access to your school.

I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of geography at your school. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully


Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM D

LETTERS OF PERMISSION FROM SCHOOLS



BOINGOTLO MIDDLE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LEFAPHA LA THUTO
NORTH WEST PROVINCE

P.O. Box 3099
Mmabatho
2735

Tel: 018 392 1579
Fax: 018 392 1579
870 Ramatong Str.
Montshiwa
2735

08 January 2010

Mr. D.R. Mokotedi
Faculty of Education
University of Pretoria
Groenkloof

Dear Sir

Re: Permission to conduct research

Permission has been granted for you to pilot your research at the above mentioned school. We wish you all the best with your research and hope that it will not only develop you but also the rest of the school community.

Yours truly,

P.P.P Majatladi (Deputy Principal)

P.P.P Majatladi

08 January 2010



BOITSEANAPE TECHNICAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

Private Bag X13
Mmabatho
2735
Tel: (018) 384 1529
Fax: (018) 384 1342

Date: 29/01/2010

To: Whom it may concern

From: Principal

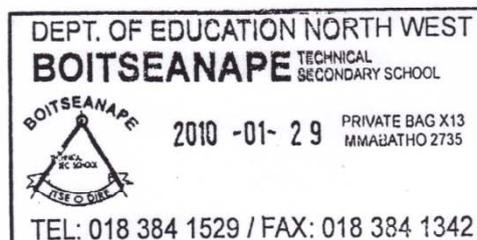
Subject: Permission to conduct research

Permission is hitherto granted to you (Mr. D.R. Mokotedi) to conduct educational research as envisaged in your correspondence dated 04/01/2010. Strict adherence to ethics (confidentiality) as purported in your correspondence is required.

You are further requested to ensure that the exercise does not take our teachers out of their classes.

Thank you

L.L. SEDIA





LECHOLONYANE INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

ENQ:SEBAENG .S.S
CELL:083 7143 666

P.O.BOX 348
RATSHIDI 2739

MR MOKOTEDI .D.R
Faculty of Education
Social Development
Groenkloof Campus

Subject: Permission to conduct an educational research

Dear Sir

We hereby wish to confirm the receipt of your letter dated 19-02-2010 of the above subject. We therefore kindly inform you that the request for Mr. Mokotedi to conduct the research is unconditionally granted. We realized that its main aims and objectives will benefit our school to promote the good culture of learning and teaching geography, since it will correctly position our approach in par with other learning institutions.

Hence our full cooperation in this research exercise at our learning site/school is guaranteed.

Yours truly,

The Principal

Sebaeng.S.S.

Social Studies Educators

Mogongwa.A.

Mookise.V.



Sekolo sa bogareng sa Malefo Melea
Malefo Melea Middle School
Department of Education

Tsetse Village P.O Box 4802 Mmabatho 2735
Tel/Fax: (018) 395 0172 cell: 073 779 4403

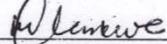
*D.R. Mokotedi
Faculty of Education
University of Pretroria*

Sir

Granting of permission

Permission have been granted to D.R. Mokotedi to conduct an institutional research on experiences of teachers in the grade 9 Geography classroom.

Hope you'll find this in order.

*Yours truly
M.M. Lenkwe

Site Manager*





MONTSHIOA MEMORIAL MIDDLE SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NORTH WEST PROVINCE



P.O.BOX 151
MAFIKENG 2745
e-mail: montshioamemorialmiddleschool@gmail.com



TEL: (018) 3822 475
FAX: (018) 3823 772

University of Pretoria
Department of Social Studies Education
Faculty of Education
Groenkloof Campus

Dear Sir/Madam.

Re: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH: D.R. MOKOTEDI.

The above-named learning site's Department of Social Sciences confirms that it has granted permission for a research to be conducted by D.R. MOKOTEDI.

The research is based on CASS in grade 9(nine) Geography classrooms. The research will be conducted between 1 March and 30 April 2010.

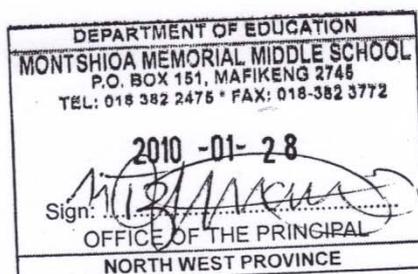
All the requested assistance will be provided to the student.

Thanking you.

Yours in Education.

Z.T. MARUMO - Deputy principal.


.....

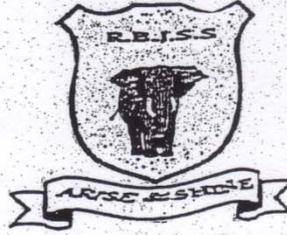




REEME BATLOUNG JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL



Enq: Mr. S.E. Songwane
072 687 6229
Mr. T.J. Nchoe
078 4399 172



P.O. Box 4959
Mmabatho
2735

Faculty of Education

Groenkloof Campus

13 April 2010

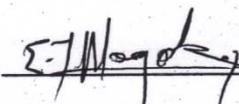
Dear Mr. R. Mokotedi

RESEARCH PROJECT

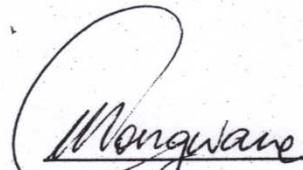
Your request to conduct research for your studies at our school has been granted.

We wish you the best in your studies and therefore welcomed in our school.

Yours in Education


Secretary




Principal



TETLANO MIDDLE SCHOOL

"There is dignity in labour"

TeleFax : 018 – 3921462

Private Bag X 2064, MMABATHO, 2735

SUBJECT: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

The above-mentioned school wish to inform you that you granted permission to conduct interviews with Geography educators for your educational research.

We wish you all the best and success in your studies

Yours truly

P.P. Chabane
PRINCIPAL



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM E

LETTER OF PERMISSION TO THE DEPARTMENT



100
1908 - 2008



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education

William.fraser@up.ac.za

012 420 2207

10 March 2010

The District Director
Ngaka Modiri Molema
Department of Education
North West province

Dear Mr B.E Monale

APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I hereby request permission to undertake a research.

I am a masters student with the University of Pretoria researching the topic "Teachers' experiences with CASS in the Grade 9 Geography classroom" and request your kind participation in the study. The research is conducted to meet the requirements pertaining to my studies at the University of Pretoria.

I wish to seek permission to conduct interviews with the educators who are currently involved in the teaching of Geography. They will also have to complete a short questionnaire.

Thanking you in anticipation

Yours faithfully

Mr DR Mokotedi
Cell: 0837726942

Dr LD Beukes
(Supervisor)

Prof WJ Fraser
(Co-supervisor)



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM F

LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM DEPARTMENT



NGAKA MODIRI MOLEMA DISTRICT

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR

ENQUIRIES : Vuyani Mabusela
018 397 2001/2

TO : MR. D. R. MOKOTEDI
SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION

FROM : MR. B. E. MONALE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

DATE : 11 MARCH 2010

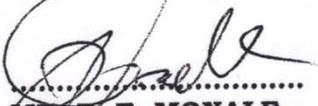
SUBJECT : RESPOND ON PERMISSION TO CONDUCT AN
EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

With reference to your letter dated 10 march 2010 on which you request permission to conduct an educational research.

Permission is granted on condition that there will be no disturbances to teaching and learning and that prior arrangements are made with each school.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely


.....
MR. B. E. MONALE
DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Cc - **S. M. SEMASWE**
DISTRICT EXECUTIVE MANAGER



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM G

QUESTIONNAIRE INSTRUMENT



Questionnaire Instrument

The experiences of teaches with Continuous Assessment in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

For Office Use Only

Participant number V1

--	--	--	--

Card number V2

Repeat number: V3

1. Personal particulars (Mark the relevant column with an X)

1.1 Participant is a

Male	
Female	

1.2 Age in years

20-25	26-30	31-35	36+

1.3 Experience in teaching Geography in years

1-10	11-15	16-20	20+
------	-------	-------	-----



2. Survey questions (Please answer these questions to the best of your ability).

2.1 Based on your classroom experience of CASS, how do you see the position of CASS in the teaching of Geography in grade 9?

2.2 The policy of the Department of Education stipulates the various forms of assessment in Social Sciences. How is (Continuous Assessment) CASS unique as compared all other forms?

2.3 What is your philosophy/belief about CASS as a component of assessment that tracks the performance of learners on an ongoing basis?



2.4 At which level of planning do you think CASS must be administered and Why?

2.5 State in terms of preference the assessment activities that you regard as the most important in the administration of CASS.

2.6 Which types of questions do you regard as the best to use in CASS activities? Open-ended or closed ended questions or both?

2.7 Please motivate your choice in 2.6 above.

2.8 Briefly explain, step by step, how you would consolidate (bring together) the CASS marks of different assessment activities.



2.9 For what purpose do you use CASS results in Geography?



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UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

ADDENDUM H

CODED QUESTIONNAIRE DATA

Coded transcription of the questionnaire data

The experiences of teachers with Continuous Assessment in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

2.1 Importance of CASS in the teaching of Geography in grade 9	Codes	Respondents
1. Give shy and slow learners ample time to be assessed.	ICL1	R1,R6,
2. Reflects on whether learners cope with educator's methods or not.	ICL 2	R1
3. Learners study throughout the year.	ICL 3	R2,R3,R5, R17
4. Supports growth and development of learners.	ICL 4	R2, R8,R11
5. Learners are assessed on an ongoing basis.	ICL 5	R3, R7, R8, R9, R12, R14, R15, R17, R18
6. Does away with summative evaluation.	ICL 6	R4, R7
7. Determines whether an educator attained objectives.	ICL 7	R4
8. Allows for various assessment techniques to complement each other.	ICL 8	R7, R9
9. Encourages integration of assessment into teaching through ongoing feedback.	ICL 9	R8
10. Allows teachers to be sensitive to learners with special needs.	ICL 10	R8
11. Covers a wide spectrum of learning activities and tasks.	ICL 11	R9
12. Helps teachers to cover learning outcomes and assessment standards.	ICL 12	R10
13. Helps teachers gather valid and reliable evidence about learners ability.	ICL 13	R11
14. CASS results provide overall picture of learners' progress at a given time.	ICL 14	R11
15. Educator can determine whether the learners understand the subject matter or not.	ICL 15	R15
16. Educator can identify the weaknesses of the learners so that they can be able to assist them where necessary.	ICL 16	R16, R17, R18
17. Provides a platform for intervention by relevant stake holders in case performance of learner is consistently low.	ICL R16	R17



2. 2 Uniqueness of CASS in comparison with the other forms of assessment.	Codes	Respondents
1. Yes, it supports growth and development of learners.	IDL 1	R1
2. Helps learners to accumulate marks on an ongoing basis.	IDL 2	R1
3. Inclusive form of assessment that caters for all learners of different abilities.	IDL 3	R2,
4. Not very unique, other forms of assessment are part of CASS (both are intertwined).	IDL 4	R3, R6, R7, R8, R9, R11, R12, R13, R14, R16, R17, R18
5. Learners are monitored on an ongoing basis.	IDL 5	R4, R17
6. CASS enables the school to track own performance.	IDL 6	R5
7. Gathers valid and reliable information about learner performance.	IDL 7	R9



2.3 Philosophy/belief about CASS.	Codes	Respondents
1. Gives both a teacher and learner an opportunity to change their styles of teaching and learning respectively so as to adapt to a simple way of teaching and learning.	IEL 1	R1, R6, R9
2. Helps demonstrate the learners' ability through a wide range of opportunities.	IEL 2	R2, R11
3. Enables the teacher to diagnose barriers to learning at an early stage.	IEL 3	R3, R7, R17
4. Needs to be thoroughly maintained and controlled to achieve educational aims.	IEL 4	R4
5. Must be administered on a continuous basis to accelerate the learning process.	IEL 5	R5, R6, R8, R13, R16
6. Indicates strengths and weaknesses of a learner.	IEL 6	R6
7. Allows for summative and formative assessment.	IEL 7	R8
8. Not effective, learners disregard examination knowing that CASS alone can progress them to the next grade.	IEL 8	R9
9. Helps learners to interact prior and new knowledge	IEL 9	R10
10. Improves learners' performance because they know in advance what is expected of them.	IEL 10	R12
11. Fosters learners to take every work into cognisance so as to supplement examination.	IEL 11	R14
12. Transparent form of assessment whereby educators' comments evoke learners' interest and inspire the spirit of competition.	IEL 12	R15
13. Gives learners an opportunity to pave their way to progress or be promoted to the next grade/phase.	IEL 13	R17
14. Keep stake holders informed about learner performance.	IEL 13	R17
15. Useful and effective tool that that tracks the learner's progress.	IEL 14	R18

2.4 Administration of CASS at various levels with motivation.	Codes	Respondents
1. When planning learning programmes, work schedules and lessons to give details of assessment activities to come.	IFL 1	R3, R7, R8
2. At all levels of planning, to determine if the learner achieves the desired outcomes.	IFL 2	R4, R16, R17
3. School level to evaluate relevant skills and knowledge.	IFL 3	R11



2.5 Important assessment activities regarded as the most important in administration of CASS in terms of preference.	Codes	Respondents
1. Tests and assignments.	IGL 1	R1
2. Class works, home works, assignments, debates, tests, projects.	IGL 2	R2, R11
3. Tests, assignments, projects.	IGL 3	R3
4. Class works, assignments, projects, home works, tests & examinations.	IGL 4	R4, R5
5. Research, investigation, case study activities.	IGL 5	R6
6. Assignments, tests, investigations.	IGL 6	R6
7. Research projects, assignments and presentations.	IGL 7	R7
8. Research projects, assignments, presentation, debate, tests.	IGL 8	R9
9. Research tasks, investigations, tests and examinations, case studies.	IGL 9	R12
10. Projects, presentations, home works, assignments, group research.	IGL 10	R13
11. Projects, Assignments, Investigation.	IGL 11	R14
12. Research and Projects	IGL 12	R15

2.6 Types of questions regarded as best to use in CASS activities.	Codes	Respondents
1. Open ended questions	IHL 1	R1, R6, R11, R15, R18
2. Closed questions	IHL 2	0
3. Both open ended and closed questions	IHL 3	R2, R4, R5, R16, R7, R8, R9, R10, R12, R13, R14, R17



2.7 Motivation for choice in 2.6 above.	Codes	Respondents
1. Inform the teacher about his/her teaching techniques.	IIL 1	R1
2. Enable learners to use enquiry skills to investigate geographical and environmental concepts and processes.	IIL 2	R2, R9, R11
3. Open ended questions cater for creativity on the part of learners to complement closed ended questions.	IIL 3	R3
4. Caters for all learners with different abilities.	IIL 4	R4, R13
5. Enable the teacher to cover all aspects of assessment.	IIL 5	R5
6. Allow the learners to freely express themselves and explain/reason what they think.	IIL 6	R6, R7, R12
7. Open ended questions prepare learners for investigative learning and nurture their understanding, while closed ended focus on cognitive development.	IIL 7	R10
8. Learners can elaborate their opinions and justify them.	IEL 8	R15
9. Ensure a holistic intellectual development of a learner.	IEL 9	R16, R17
10. Build learners' expressive ability to bring out their problem solving and thinking skills.	IEL 10	R18

2.8 Step by step explanation of how to consolidate CASS marks of different assessment activities.	Codes	Respondents
1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tasks for various forms of assessment. • Record marks for each learner. 	IJL 1	R1, R6, R13, R17, R18
2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the learning area policy to guide consolidation. 	IJL 2	R2, R11
3. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use various forms of assessment with each carrying the allocated weight. 	IJL 3	R2, R7, R8, R9
4. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine averages for all activities written and assessed. 	IJL 4	R4, R5,
5. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocate raw mark to each learner for each activity. • Add all the raw marks together for each form of assessment. • The sub totals for all forms of assessment are added together. • The total percentage of 100 is then converted to 75% (CASS). 	IJL 5	R10, R14, R15
6. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concentrate on activities that are better performed by learners. • Consult the assessment plan on how many activities must be recorded for each term. • Add all the raw marks (multiply or divide) to get the required mark/percentage for a learner. 	IJL 6	R12



2.9 Purpose for which CASS results are used in Geography.	Codes	Respondents
1. To determine the skills and competencies demonstrated by learners.	IKL 1	R1
2. To recognise the strengths and weaknesses of learners.	IKL 2	R2, R6, R7, R11
3. To track down/determine learners' performance.	IKL 3	R3,R4, R5, R6, R11, R14 R17
4. To give feedback to parents on learner performance.	IKL 4	R3, R7
5. To account to the Department on learner performance.	IKL 5	R3, R17
6. To give an indication to the teacher if he/she has to change methods.	IKL 6	R6
7. To determine learner progression and promotion.	IKL 7	R8, R9, R10, R13, R15, R17
8. To track down learners who play truancy and do not do their work.	IKL 8	R12
9. To determine any need for remedial lessons/intervention	IKL 9	R16, R17
10. To report to stake holders and make recommendations.	IKL 10	R16
11. Determine whether learners' performance improves throughout the year.	IKL 11	R18



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ADDENDUM I

INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

Interview Instrument

The experiences of teachers with Continuous Assessment in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

1. How do you interpret the assessment policy of Geography? Does this link to CASS?
2. How does the assessment policy inform teachers in their teaching, that is, does the assessment policy guide you in your teaching? How?
3. How do you implement CASS in your teaching? Why?
4. What goals do you want to achieve through CASS?
5. What do you think learners benefit from completing CASS activities?
6. What impact does CASS have on your teaching with regard to the following:-
 - 6.1 Lesson preparation
 - 6.2 Teaching time
 - 6.3 Lesson activities
 - 6.4 Teaching strategies
7. Explain what you think the requirements for CASS are in Geography in terms of the NCS.
8. How do you ensure that your assessment in Geography achieves the outcomes?



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ADDENDUM J

CODED INTERVIEW DATA

Coded transcription of the interview data

The experiences of teachers with Continuous Assessment in grade 9 Geography classrooms.

1. Interpretation of the assessment policy of Geography.	Codes	Participants
1.1 The assessment policy must always cover the assessment forms.	AA1	P1, P2
1.2 Guides the formal and informal tasks.	AA2	P1, P2
1.3 It is a guideline in which a teacher gets to understand his/her learners in a way of helping them on an ongoing process.	AA3	P3, P4
1.4 It is a method or mechanism which can be used to develop awareness and influence future and challenging economic and social aspects of life.	AA4	P5

2. The link of the policy to CASS.	Codes	Participants
2.1 Yes, it links to CASS because it addresses learning outcomes and assessment standards as it carries a bigger weight of 75%.	AB 1	P1,P4
2.2 Yes, because it addresses projects, tests, assignments and other forms.	AB2	P2
2.3 Yes, because as a teacher you do informal and formal tasks to address the learning outcomes and assessment standards relevant to Geography.	AB3	P3
2.4 Yes, because it deals with baseline, diagnostic, summative and formative assessment.	AB 4	P5

3. How the assessment policy informs teachers in their teaching.	Codes	Participants
3.1 It does inform me because I can track learner performance.	AC1	P1, P2
3.2 It leads me to use different assessment techniques.	AC2	P1, P2
3.3 It helps me to identify learners who need special attention.	AC3	P1,P2
3.4 It guides me in my teaching because it helps me to assess myself to check whether I reached my objectives.	AC4	P3
3.5 Guides me to change in changing my strategies when learners have not understood what I was teaching.	AC5	P3
3.5 It stipulates particular assessment activities to be treated and even topics to tackle.	AC6	P4
3.6 It stipulates learning outcomes and assessment standards that enable me to teach relevant topics.	AC7	P5



4. Why teachers use assessment policy.	Codes	Participants
4.1 To provide them with the structure of the assessment components.	AD1	P2
4.2 To provide schools with a common frame work for administering assessment to learners.	AD2	P2
4.3 It provides examples of forms of assessment, techniques, methods and topics to be used in assessment activities.	AD3	P2

5. How teachers implement CASS in teaching.	Codes	Participants
5.1 CASS activities are given to learners, both formal and informal such as home works, class works, assignments, case studies and data handling in order to assess them.	AE1	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5

6. Why teachers implement CASS in their teaching.	Codes	Participants
6.1 CASS is a policy and must be there.	AF1	P1
6.1 CASS takes 75% of the learner's final mark (bigger weight).	AF2	P1
6.3 To see learners' performance.	AF3	P2, P3,P4, P5
6.4 To identify those learners who need special attention.	AF4	P3
6.5 To gauge effectiveness of teaching.	AF5	P5
6.6 To prepare learners for tests and examination at the end of the term or year.	AF6	P5
6.7 To check if methods and strategies are working to the advantage of the learner.	AF7	P5

7. The goals that teachers want to achieve through CASS.	Codes	Participants
7.1 To improve my teaching.	AG1	P1
7.2 To help me track learner performance	AG2	P1,P2, P3, P4
7.3 To determine any need for remedial work.	AG3	P3,P4
7.4 To determine the effectiveness of the teaching methods.	AG4	P3,P5
7.5 To ensure that learners attain skills and development.	AG5	P5
7.6 To make learners recognise their strengths and weaknesses encompassed through teaching and learning situations.	AG6	P6



8. How CASS benefit learners.	Codes	Participants
8.1 When learners perform, it boosts their moral.	AH1	P1,P4
8.2 Serves as preparation for summative assessment	AH2	P1, P2,P3
8.3 Help learners to achieve better results at the end of the quarter or year.	AH3	P2
8.4 Give under performers time to improve.	AH4	P3
8.5 Promotes a healthy competition amongst learners.	AH5	P3,P4
8.6 They use CASS as a yard stick to measure performance.	AH6	P4
8.7 They gain more skills and knowledge.	AH7	P5
8.8 They benefit in terms of interpretation and enquiry skills	AH8	P5
8.9 Provides learners with an opportunity to get involved in their own learning by finding information themselves.	AH9	P5

9. Impact of CASS on lesson preparation.	Codes	Participants
9.1 It enhances teaching and learning by addressing the relevant outcomes and assessment standards.	AI1	P1,P2
9.2 It informs a teacher of how to plan a lesson; CASS activities guide the teacher in the next lesson.	AI2	P3
9.3 Learning outcomes and assessment standards are clearly stated in the lesson preparation and will be used for CASS activities.	AI3	P5

10. Impact of CASS on teaching time.	Codes	Participants
10.1 Negative impact, too much time is spent on marking and administration of CASS activities.	AJ1	P1,P2
10.2 Use CASS for some of the teaching days by giving assessment tasks, doing corrections and re-assessing them.	AJ2	P3,P4,P5

11. Impact of CASS on lesson activities.	Codes	Participants
11.1 Use home works to achieve my lesson activities	AK1	P2
11.2 CASS informs the teaching activities, makes a teacher to plan a lesson based on the previous results.	AK2	P3
11.3 It makes learners to realise their performance and understanding.	AK3	P4

12. Impact of CASS on teaching strategies.	Codes	Participants
12.1 It informs teaching strategies, how to implement and change them depending on the achievement of learners.	AL1	P1, P2, P3,P4,P5
12.2 May force the teacher to use methods and strategies that he/she is uncomfortable with.	AL2	P5



13. Requirements for CASS in terms of the NCS.	Codes	Participants
13.1 Administration over a period of time and on an ongoing basis.	AM1	P1,P2, P3,P4,P5
13.2 Support for growth and development of learners for them to develop their potential.	AM2	P1,P2
13.3 Feedback for learning.	AM3	P1,P2
13.4 Integrated assessment.	AM4	P1,P2,P4
13.5 Strategies that cater for variety of learners' needs.	AM5	P1,P3
13.6 Cater for different learner abilities.	AM6	P4,P5

14. How teachers ensure that assessment in Geography achieves the results.	Codes	Participants
14.1 Base assessment tasks, both formal and informal on learning outcomes and assessment standards.	AN1	P1,P2,P3,P5
14.2 By giving oral assessment after every activity, followed by formal and informal tasks and remedial work.	AN2	P4



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ADDENDUM K

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY



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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

FULL NAME OF STUDENT: DINGAKE REGINALD MOKOTEDI

STUDENT NUMBER: 24497704

DECLARATION

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this **DISSERTATION** is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.
3. I have not used work previously produced by another student or any other person to hand in as my own.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

Signature of student:

Signature of Supervisor: