

**MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY AND OBE PRACTICES: A CASE
STUDY OF THE HARRISMITH REGION**

LAWRENCE LAUDONN NYAMANE

STD, ACE, B.ED HONS, PGDE

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Supervisor: Prof. BJJ Lombard

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DECLARATION

I, LAWRENCE LAUDONN NYAMANE, solemnly declare this dissertation entitled: MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY AND OBE PRACTICES: A CASE STUDY OF THE HARRISMITH REGION is original and my own work. It has never, on any previous occasion, been presented in part or whole to any institution or Board for the award of any degree. I further declare that all information used and quoted has been duly acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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SUMMARY

Key words: *Outcomes-based Education (OBE), premises of OBE, principles of OBE, multicultural education, diversity, teaching and learning in diverse / multicultural environments.*

The crucial issue in the new democratic South Africa was to change the type of education system that was based on social discrimination to one which is non-discriminatory, unbiased and accessible to all South Africans. However, to teach in a multicultural society and being faced with the challenge of teaching multicultural diverse classes, within an OBE paradigm, demands special knowledge, skills and attributes of teachers. Therefore, this study intended to investigate teachers' OBE practices in multicultural classrooms in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses that could be useful for the improvement of teaching and learning within multicultural contexts. The study was approached from a socio-reconstructivist point of view and focused specifically on schools in the Harrismith region.

The purpose of this study was thus *to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region.*

In order to direct the study towards the intended purpose, a literature study was undertaken to define **multicultural diversity** and to conceptualize **OBE practices** in order to operationalize the concept within the context of the study.

The empirical research was done by following a qualitative research design in the form of a case study. Semi-structured, individual interviews and observations were used as data collection instruments. Interviews were conducted with teachers teaching Grade 8 and 9 learners as well as learners from the same grades, of five purposefully selected schools in the Harrismith region. By using maximal variation sampling, ten teachers and ten learners from the selected schools eventually participated in the research. Observations were recorded by means of anecdotal notes which were used to verify and supplement data obtained through the interviews.

According to the findings of the empirical research, it appears that the research participants' understanding of multiculturalism lack substance. The findings also revealed that multiculturalism is mainly accommodated by implementing the following OBE practices: working together with others, showing respect, cultural sensitivity, acknowledgement of individual learner differences, and by creating positive classroom climates. It was also evident that teachers act as change agents by discrediting discrimination and prejudice.

Teaching in multicultural classrooms also poses some challenges. These included language problems, acceptance of different cultural practices, racial differences and "inherent" segregation.

Though the findings revealed that teachers' OBE practices still need to be refined in order to successfully accommodate multicultural diversity, positive attitudes were reflected in terms of improving their competence with regard to teaching in a multicultural diverse environment.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In February 1997, the South African government announced the introduction of Curriculum 2005, which took the form of the Outcomes-based Education (OBE) approach (Vermeulen, 1997:5). The choice of this approach was aimed at bringing high quality education to everyone; irrespective of age, gender, religion, race and language.

In addition to the changed education approach and its concomitant curriculum changes, education changes also allowed all the citizens of South Africa to enjoy the benefits of democracy. In this regard the South African government has put policies and mechanisms in place to allow communities to have greater inputs in their children's education. To illustrate this point, Cross, Mungadi and Rouhani (2002:171) indicate that South Africa has excelled in setting up a new governance system which encourages local and community participation in schools through School Governing Bodies (SGB) comprising of teachers, learners, parents, and other relevant stakeholders like Psychologists, Police and Social Workers.

Vandeyar (2003:194) concurs that education changes were intended to benefit all South Africans when indicating that the South African government curved a constitution that mandates all South Africans to build a just and free democratic society in which the potential of each person can be developed. This sentiment is shared by Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:5) who state that all people who need and want to learn, not only scholars, but also adults and youth who have already left school, were now given ample opportunities to achieve this aspiration.

Although the above education related changes are highly regarded, it placed extreme pressure on the South African education system and more particularly on schools, teachers and learners. Two of these pressures were in the form of drastic reforms in teaching and learning practices to improve educational performances and adaptations to accommodate the diversity of society by teaching multicultural diverse classes.

With reference to the last mentioned, South African learners from different cultural backgrounds were attending different schools due to the policy of separate development prior to 1994. Since the inception as a democratic society, South African education was characterised by desegregation in an effort to accommodate the diverse nature of society (Meier & Hartell, 2009:180). Yet, notwithstanding commendable attempts to break down multicultural barriers, Coelho (1998:158) argues that many teachers teaching in multicultural classrooms find that lessons that worked before when classes were less heterogeneous are no longer successful. This is supported by Du Toit (1995:212–213) who indicates that the opening of schools to all races did not automatically ensure mutual understanding and acceptance between teachers and learners and amongst learners themselves.

Multicultural secondary schools in the Harrismith region are not excluded from the aforementioned challenges because they form part of state or public schools in South Africa. This implies that learners from different cultural backgrounds can attend any school of their choice in this region. Likewise, it also means that culturally diverse teachers can apply for posts and teach in any of the said schools.

1.2 PURPOSE STATEMENT

As a consequence of the democratic changes in South Africa since 1994, and the implementation of an OBE approach to teaching and learning, many school classrooms are now more heterogeneous than ever before. Amongst others, they comprise of learners from different cultural backgrounds. To teach in a multicultural society and

being faced with the challenge of teaching multicultural diverse classes, within an OBE paradigm, demands special knowledge, skills and attributes of teachers. It would, therefore, be meaningful to investigate teachers' OBE practices in multicultural classrooms in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses that could be useful for the improvement of teaching and learning within multicultural contexts.

The purpose of this study was thus to explore and come to a better understanding of **how** teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the preceding orientation and the purpose of the study as outlined above, the following primary and secondary research questions directed the study.

1.3.1 Primary research question

The primary research question on which this study was based can be formulated as follows:

How do teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region?

1.3.2 Secondary research questions and objectives of the study

Emanating from the primary research question, the subsequent secondary questions and objectives are relevant:

- i. What is meant by multicultural diversity and multicultural education?
- ii. What is meant by Outcomes-based Education?
- iii. What are the appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment?
- iv. How are OBE practices conceptualised and operationalized?

To accomplish the purpose or aim of the research, the study was structured according to the following objectives:

- i. To determine the meaning of multicultural diversity and multicultural education.
- ii. To clarify the meaning of Outcomes-based Education.
- iii. To investigate and determine the appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment.
- iv. To uncover the conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices.

1.4 THE RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Quality education can only be realised through the provision of quality teaching. In this regard the Harrismith region has been overlooked for a long time. The researcher believes that a study on teachers' practices in a multicultural environment within an OBE context not only justifies research in this geographical area but could also assist to elevate the effectiveness of formal teaching and learning in the area in the following ways:

- The study could sensitise education authorities about the challenges faced by teachers when teaching in multicultural environments.
- The study could contribute towards the improvement of teachers' professional development, performance and productivity in the teaching-learning situation, especially within multicultural classrooms.
- The study may generally result in the improvement of teaching and learning in the Harrismith region, and more particularly within multicultural settings.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

This study was founded on the theoretical framework of social reconstructivism. James, Ralfe, Van Laren and Ngcobo (2006:679) are of the opinion that a study on multiculturalism is informed by the social reconstructivist approach when it extends

previous approaches to multiculturalism. In this case multicultural education formed the focus of the study and was viewed from a perspective where education for everyone is supported within environments which are conducive to successful teaching and learning. The researcher thus assumed that within the social reconstructivist approach, teachers could be prepared to make both their formal (content) and informal (pedagogy) curriculum developmentally appropriate and culturally authentic by integrating multicultural education into different academic disciplines (Grant & Gomez, 1996:10).

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

According to the researcher OBE could enhance the development of all individuals regardless of race, culture, gender and religion. In trying to attain the ideals of OBE, James *et al.* (2006:681) suggest that the curriculum should aim to transform the unequal power relations that exist between and among individual and groups. Sleeter (1996:28) supports the above statement by referring to such a curriculum as 'social reconstruction' where individuals are developed to become analytical and critical in their lives and in their social interactions.

The conceptual premise, on which this study was based, is that OBE as educational approach allows all learners, irrespective of race, culture, gender or religion to have access to *quality education* at any school of their choice.

1.7 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design for this study comprised two sections, namely a literature study and an empirical study.

1.7.1 The literature study

A literature study was undertaken to get a clear theoretical understanding of the matters identified in the research questions. It also served to relate the current research to

previous research (Fouché & Delport, 2002:127). To execute the literature study, primary and secondary sources as well as national and international literature which centres on the focal points of the research were consulted.

The following key concepts and phrases were used to retrieve relevant information from databases such as EBSCOhost, ERIC and Google:

Outcomes-based Education (OBE), premises of OBE, principles of OBE, multicultural education, diversity, teaching and learning in diverse / multicultural environments.

1.7.2 The empirical study

1.7.2.1 The empirical paradigm

Derived from the purpose of the study the researcher has to make meaning from the research participants' responses and observed actions. To make meaning or to say one understands what a particular response or action means, requires that one interprets it in a particular way (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000:191). Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004:20) maintain that the interpretive researcher looks at different things in different places in order to understand a particular phenomenon.

It is thus apparent that this study was founded on the interpretative research paradigm since the research participants' responses and observed actions regarding practices within multicultural settings provided for the sources which the researcher could interpret to arrive at an understanding of how teachers' OBE practices succeed in accommodating multicultural diverse learners.

1.7.2.2 The empirical research design

One can differentiate between three empirical research designs, namely quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research designs.

A qualitative research design ensures a close fit between the data and what people actually say and do. Talking about what is on their minds, the qualitative researcher obtains first-hand, unfiltered information from respondents (White, 2004:18). McMillan and Schumacher (1997:372) state that qualitative research analyses and interprets the research participants' individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions.

This study engaged a qualitative research design through the use of interviews and observations to determine how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners.

1.7.2.3 Strategy of inquiry (Research method)

The qualitative case study as a strategy of inquiry or research method was selected as it allowed an opportunity to describe and gain an understanding of a particular case (Fouché, 2005:272). A case study design was employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning of those involved in it (Henning *et al.*, 2004:41).

The aim of the study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in secondary schools in a pre-selected region, which served as the case of study.

1.7.2.4 Population and sampling

According to Senekal (2006:43) the term population refers to a group of elements or cases that conform to specific criteria in which the researcher is interested. In contrast, a sample is a small portion of a population which is selected for research purposes. Ungerer (2009:78) defines sampling as "the process of selecting a sample, the

aggregate or totality of objects or individuals regarding which inferences are to be made in a sample study”.

The population for this study comprised teachers and learners of public multicultural secondary schools in the Harrismith region. Since the researcher intended to include schools that reflect a multicultural environment and teachers teaching Grade 8 and 9 learners as well as learners from the same grades from public secondary schools in the Harrismith region in the study, sampling was done in a non-probability, purposive manner which allowed for maximum variation (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:320). The reasons for the focus on Grade 8 and 9 were two pronged: learners are still in the process of finding their way in an actual multicultural school environment since primary schools are less multicultural than secondary schools in the region; and as opposed to higher grades, the research will interfere to a lesser extent with teaching and learning time.

1.7.2.5 Data gathering and analysis

Semi-structured, individual interviews were conducted with the sampled teachers and learners, while the sampled school and class environments were also observed. In this process data were collected for further analysis and interpretation.

Greeff (2005:286-287) and Strydom (2005:274-275) indicate that semi-structured interviews and observations are useful ways of getting large amounts of data quickly and are especially effective ways of obtaining depth in data.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF TERMINOLOGY

Key terms that were used and which formed the basis of the study, are concisely clarified below.

- **Outcomes-based Education (OBE)** is an education approach which clearly focuses and organizes everything in an educational system around what is essential for all learners to be able to perform successfully at the end of their learning experience (Killen, 2009:50).
- **Multicultural education** refers to the type of education where learners from different cultural backgrounds are in the same school doing the same curriculum (Lemmer, Meier & Van Wyk, 2006:3).
- **Diversity:** Lemmer *et al.* (2006:15) state that diversity constitutes any kind of variety in human kind, geographic origins, socio-economic class and gender. It also includes sexual orientation, disability, learning preference, nationality, educational level, age and many other related factors.
- **Harrismith region** is part of the Maluti-a-Phofong local municipality and is situated in the eastern part of the Free State Province which borders Kwazulu-Natal. It includes towns such as Harrismith, Kestell and Bethlehem. There are 21 public secondary schools in the region of which five are accommodating the widest spectrum of multicultural learners.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Research ethics were observed in line with standard requirements. Ethical considerations will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

1.10 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

As Chapter one was meant to orientate the reader in terms of the study, the subsequent chapters outline the rest of the study.

Chapter 2: As this chapter focuses on the literature study, key matters that form the theoretical basis of the study will be investigated and discussed. These matters include multicultural education, diversity and OBE.

Chapter 3: The empirical study forms the core of this chapter and relevant matters such as the research paradigm, research approach, the research design, sampling and data collection instruments, the administration of the instruments, research ethics, and the trustworthiness of the results will be presented.

Chapter 4: Data obtained from the data collection process will be analysed and interpreted in this chapter.

Chapter 5: In this chapter the findings of the research will be put forward and conclusions and recommendations will be made.

1.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter laid the foundation for the study by briefly outlining the background to the study. In this chapter the study was introduced by indicating the purpose, research questions and objectives, and by introducing the research design that will be followed. The rationale of the study and key terms were also presented and a provisional chapter division was provided.

In the following chapter, the researcher will deal with the literature review on aspects dealing with diversity, multicultural education and OBE.

CHAPTER TWO

MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY AND OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION PRACTICES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This study centres on how multicultural diversity is accommodated through teachers' OBE practices. It is therefore imperative to foreground the study's theoretical premise and to account for the conceptualization of multicultural diversity and OBE practices within the context of the study. In an attempt to address the aforementioned, the first part of this chapter intends dealing with the notions of multicultural diversity and multicultural education, whereas the second part will present a conceptualisation and operational views on OBE practices as derived from the literature and education-related documents.

2.2 MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY

2.2.1 Orientation

Before illuminating what multicultural diversity entails, one needs to take cognisance of its historical undercurrent with regard to education within the South African milieu.

Though South Africa can be typified as a multicultural society since it accommodates a vast range of cultures, languages and religions, the country's history reflects a polarity amongst its people. In this regard Venter (2004:149-160) differentiates between the pre-democratic and the democratic South Africa. In the pre-democratic era, South African legislation was sturdily based on inequality and discrimination. With reference to the democratic South Africa, Vandeyar (2003:194) states that "at the beginning of the 1990s South Africa managed to carve a constitution that orders all South Africans to

build a just and free democratic society in which the capability of each person is freed. In particular it offers a vision of a society based on equity, justice and freedom for all”.

In terms of education, Chisholm (2005:215) differentiates between the pre-democratic and the democratic South African education system by declaring: “if race separation was the defining feature of schools in the apartheid era, race integration became a defining feature in the post-apartheid era.” Vandeyar (2003:194) indicates that the already mentioned constitutional essentials bind all South Africans and *all schools* to the establishment of a society based on “democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights” (my italics). Lemmer, *et al.* (2006:8) also allude to the fact that a country’s education system is central to its well-being. Rationalised from a democratic stance, South Africa as a multicultural diverse society thus required an education system that acknowledges the need to accommodate and value diversity. Calitz, Fuglestad and Lillejord (2002:93) endorse the above statement by maintaining that “South Africa required a new national system for schools, a system that would provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners, advance the democratic transformation of society and upholds the rights for all learners, parents and teachers”. In corroboration Meier and Hartell (2009:181) assert that it is essential that “the constitutional value of diversity falls within the framework of a unified democratic educational system and is reinforced through provision for and tolerance towards the different languages, cultures and religions in the South African education system”.

To realize the above and by ensuring that the education system became open and accessible to all (Sekete, Shilubane & Moila 2001:vii), the ‘democratization’ of the South African education system is addressed in the following official documents:

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), which “forbid all forms of discrimination” (Meier & Hartell, 2009:184),
- The National Education Policy Act (1996) and
- The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996), which “provide the basis for the

reconstruction of schools in the image of non-racialism and the Constitution” (Meier & Hartell, 2009:184). In the preamble to the South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 (1996:1), it is clearly stated that the democratic transformation of society to protect and advance diversity amongst South Africans is strived for, by fighting racism and sexism and all other forms of discrimination and intolerance.

Against the above backdrop, an elucidation on multicultural diversity follows henceforward. To structure the discussion on multicultural diversity, culture, multiculturalism, acculturation and diversity will be defined.

2.2.2 What is culture?

Although the literature is rich in attempts to define culture, Lemmer and Squelch (1993:11) express the opinion that culture is “a very human phenomenon and in many aspects a misunderstood concept”.

Bhabha (1994:12) argues that culture is “... what we do as human beings. Being alive makes us human cultural beings. It is the collectivity of physical, intellectual and spiritual activities that we engage in, with ever extending boundaries and continual fading of elements to be replaced by new ones”. According to Grant and Ladson-Billing (1997:xxvi) culture can be defined as “the body of learned beliefs, traditions, and guides for behaviour that are shared among members of any human society”. Cushner (1999:4) states that culture “includes the ideas, values, and assumptions about life that are widely shared and that guide specific behaviours”. By referring to the dynamics of culture, Torraine (2000:165) points out that “culture is constantly being transformed as its bearers interpret the old in the light of the new experiences they have”, while Tseng (2002:13) contends that “to understand culture is a process of learning rather than an external knowledge to be acquired”. Lemmer *et al.* (2006:15) concur by referring to culture as “a learned, socially transmitted heritage of artefacts, knowledge, beliefs and normative expectations that provides the members of a particular society with tools for

coping with recurrent problems.” According to Thomas (2009:4), culture is a “set of practices and beliefs that are shared by members of a particular group that distinguishes that group from other groups and it includes all characteristics of human description, including: age, gender, socio-economics, geography, ancestry, religion, language, sexual orientation, physical ability, occupation and other affiliations”. In conclusion, Nieto (2002:109) defines culture as “ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships and worldviews created and shared by a group of people bound together by a combination of factors”.

By using the “onion” metaphor, Hofstede (1991:9), and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005:7) describe culture as a multi-layered concept. These layers are labelled and explained as follows:

- values, which represent broad tendencies of preferences within a specific culture;
- rituals, which represent the collective activities by which a certain culture can be characterized;
- heroes, which represent those people who are respected and admired within a certain culture and
- symbols, which represents the expressive traits of a culture.

In their analysis of culture, Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2000:5-9) conclude that the concept comprises of several elements. These include beliefs, values, norms, sanctions and symbols.

- Beliefs are the convictions of the people belonging to a certain culture on what is assumed to be true.
- Values are the shared agreements within a specific culture on what is considered to be morally correct.
- Norms are the culture’s defined rules of conduct.
- Sanctions are the culture’s agreed upon penalties or rewards applicable to

conduct.

- Symbols are the objects by which meaning is represented in a specific culture.

From the above descriptions, it is evident that *culture* is a multifaceted concept which includes a variety of interconnected elements pertinent to human existence.

2.2.3 Multiculturalism

While May (1994:36) claims that “multiculturalism means different things to different people”, Vandeyar (2003:193) asserts that the concept can be broken down into constituent parts: “multi” which means many, and “cultural” which refers to a specific group’s ways of thinking and living. For Trimpelmann (2003:22) multiculturalism implies that “the individual is constantly refined on a continuous basis through continual interaction with other groups”. Multiculturalism can thus be regarded as the interaction and the socialization among people from different cultural backgrounds.

2.2.4 Acculturation

According to Berry (2008:328) acculturation refers to an all-encompassing change process in individuals of a particular cultural group to identify with and adjust to another culture. To clarify acculturation further, Berry (2008:328-336) suggests that the nature and intensity of the acculturation process usually manifests in one of the following discernible kinds.

- Integration: when the original culture is maintained while interacting on a daily basis with another culture.
- Assimilation: the original culture is not maintained and preference is given to the interaction with another culture.
- Separation: holding on to the original culture and avoiding interaction with another culture.

- Marginalization: little interest in maintaining the original culture or having interaction with another culture.

2.2.5 What is diversity?

According to Lemmer *et al.* (2006:14), *diversity* originates from the Latin word *diversus*, which means more than one; of a different kind or variety. Essentially, diversity denotes the multifarious nature of human kind. Cushner, McClelland and Safford (1992:24) define diversity in the education context of the school as “the ethnic heritage of a distinct subjective culture, including a unique value system, norms of behaviour, modes of interaction, socialisation practices and linguistic patterns”. Sources of diversity, as described by Sanchez and Fried (1997:236), can include language, culture, gender, age, and physical abilities or learning styles. Understanding diversity in the context of the classroom could therefore imply the inclusion of learners from different cultural, racial, ethnic or even socio-economic backgrounds. It could also suggest the accommodation of learners from different age groups, different genders or learners who experience barriers to learning or who are physically disabled.

Derived from the above, it is evident that diversity is a reality in South African classrooms. It is therefore important to take note of how this phenomenon reveals itself in the classroom since it could impact on successful teaching and learning. In this regard, Nieto (1992:20) notes that the underlying guiding principle of diversity is that learners are treated differently and that “the differences that children bring to school have a profound effect on what they gain (or not) from their educational experiences”.

In the subsequent sub-sections, a synoptic overview of four prominent elements constituting diversity will be given. These elements include cultural diversity, language diversity, diversity of religion and racial diversity.

2.2.5.1 Cultural diversity

With regard to cultural diversity, McNergney and Herbert (1995:250) warn against “classification systems such as race, culture and ethnicity” because they are “arbitrary-established, capriciously or by conversion, or left generally ill-identified”. However, since reality shows that the South African society comprises of citizens who originate from racially, culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, these labels are merely used to assist in defining and gaining a better understanding of multicultural diversity.

In the South African school context the desegregation of schools at the beginning of the 1990s, brought about many challenges. This is affirmed by Meier and Hartell (2009:180) who state “In South Africa, with its culturally diverse society, desegregation and the changes in the educational system and educational institutions (e.g. schools, universities) brought great challenges for teachers”. The cultures and cultural activities of others, who were regarded as minority groups during the pre-democratic era, became part of an inclusive education system. Phrasing it differently, Banks (2006:59) notes: “learners from cultures and groups other than the formerly dominant group of the specific school population are accommodated by including aspects of their cultures”.

2.2.5.2 Language diversity

Language is fundamental to successful teaching and learning in a multicultural diverse education environment. Lemmer *et al.* (2006:38) remind us that “language is a crucial means of gaining access to important knowledge and skills and as such it determines academic achievement to a great extent”. In the same text, these authors infer that “language diversity has a powerful influence on the outcomes of schooling in a multicultural society” (Lemmer *et al.*, 2006:38).

According to Du Toit and Potgieter (2008:184), language diversity within South Africa is acknowledged and valued in the constitutional recognition of eleven official languages and the Language in Education Policy (1997b). With reference to the latter, the

Department of Education (DoE) tries to address language problems originating from language diversity by promoting and developing all official languages and to redress the neglect of the historically disadvantaged languages in education. However, the immense challenges posed by language diversity in a multicultural diverse education setting such as South Africa, are documented by authors such as Baker (1996:50) and Meier (2005:170). Amongst others, these challenges include the fact that second language acquisition is not only difficult in cultures where speakers are not exposed to the language on a frequent basis but it also takes place in a mechanical manner, which limits its utility value. Another challenge refers to the fact that double adjustments should be made, meaning that environmental changes as well as language changes need to be accommodated.

2.2.5.3 Diversity of religion

Abdool and Drinkwater (2005:363) point out that an education system should celebrate the diversity of religions within a specific country and that schools should play a significant role in the teaching and learning about various religions. They further suggest that no singular religion should be promoted in a multicultural diverse society, but that knowledge of the major religions should be created in order to “increase understanding, build respect for diversity, value spirituality and clarify the religion and non-religion sources of moral values” (Abdool & Drinkwater, 2005:365). Learners in South African schools thus need to be exposed to and understand the variety of religions of the country’s people in order to have a broad perspective about religions and to respect all people with their cultures. This is affirmed by Kruger, Lubbe and Steyn (2002:22) who state that education which recognizes the diversity of religions will give learners the advantage to broaden their perspectives of the world and its people and will enable them to engage in meaningful inter-religion dialogue by also showing respect for others.

2.2.5.4 Racial diversity

Although the term *race* is powerfully resisted, it is commonly used in physical anthropology to denote a division of humankind possessing traits that characterises it as a distinct human type. For example, humans classified as Caucasoid or Negroid are representative of different racial groups (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, 2010:4). According to Bentley (2005:1), racial difference in South Africa is not only a reality but a primary aspect of inequality amongst the population. With regard to education, this is affirmed by Chisholm (2005:215) who indicates that the South African Constitution and the South African Schools Act (1996) provide the basis “for the reconstruction of schools in the image of non-racialism ... [which] forbade all forms of discrimination”. To put the aforementioned into practice, Meier and Hartell (2009:184) state that “the South African government made provision for the integration of schools, the rewriting of curricula and text books and renewal of support structures in the management of the country’s education”.

In the next section the notion of multicultural education will be explored by defining the phenomenon and by considering its aims and characteristics. This will be followed by highlighting some criticism on multicultural education and by outlining its dimensions as found in the literature. Classroom conditions for effective multicultural education and covert factors opposing its successful implementation will also be deliberated on.

2.3 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

2.3.1 Defining multicultural education

Lemmer *et al.* (2006:3) argue that multicultural education has been defined and interpreted in many ways and from a variety of perspectives. Therefore the same authors conclude that many teachers have come to view multicultural education as “ill-defined and lacking in substance, and have been therefore hesitant to adopt it as a sound educational approach; thus failing to see its value” (Lemmer *et al.*, 2006:3). The

impetus behind this view could possibly be ascribed to the general opinion that multicultural education can be described as a philosophical concept and an educational process (Grant & Ladson-Billing, 1997:xxvi) or as an idea or concept, an educational reform movement and a process (Banks, 1997:3). Through the literature review, the following definitions emerge in which both the philosophical foundations and educational applicability of multicultural education are clarified.

Banks (1999:2) argues that multicultural education is about changing the nature of teaching and learning in order to create a suitable learning environment for all learners from diverse cultural background, whereas Appelbaum (2002:41) defines multicultural education as a type of education where learners from different cultural backgrounds are in the same school doing the same curriculum. Nieto and Bode (2008:44) describe multicultural education as “a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all learners [which] challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in school and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religion, economic and gender) that learners, their communities and teachers reflect”. Thomas (2009:4) view multicultural education is a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for all learners from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups. According to Calitz, *et al.* (2002:182) education can only be termed truly multicultural “when it does justice to diversity, when it contributes to the provision of equal opportunities to all learners, and when it prepares all learners for living together in a democratic, pluralistic society”.

From the above definitions it seems fair to accept that multicultural education is firmly rooted in principles such as freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity.

2.3.2 The aims of multicultural education

One of the aims of multicultural education can be expressed as “the transferring of the recognition of a culturally pluralistic society into an educational system ... in such a fashion that it appropriately and in a rightful manner includes all racial and cultural groups” (Lemmer & Squelch, 1993:3). Banks and Banks (1995:11) outline the aim of multicultural education as the creation of equal opportunities for learners from diverse racial, ethnic, social-class, and cultural groups by helping them to acquire knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to function effectively in a pluralistic democratic society. Moreover, learners should also be assisted to interact, negotiate, and communicate with people from diverse groups in order “to create a civic and moral community that works for the common good”. Banks (1999:3) affirms and re-iterates the aforementioned by stating that multicultural education intends “to reform the schools and other educational institutions so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social groups will experience educational equality.”

Added to the above, the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) (Garcia, 2009:3) also mention that multicultural education aspires to:

- help all learners to develop positive self-images,
- offer all learners equitable educational opportunities,
- allow for the nurturing of multiple perspectives and ways of thinking in educational contexts,
- combat stereotypes and prejudicial behaviour, and
- to educate learners to critique societal well-being in the interest of social justice.

2.3.3 Characteristics of multicultural education

Lemmer *et al.* (2006:4) point out that the concept *multicultural education* signifies a multiplicity of programmes and practices. Yet, according to Lemmer *et al.*, (2006:4/5),

multicultural education is associated with generally acknowledged features such as those listed below.

Multicultural education

- recognises and accepts the rightful existence of different cultural groups,
- encourages acculturation and cultural preservation,
- encourages mutual interaction and cooperation,
- views cultural diversity as an asset rather than a disability,
- acknowledges the equal rights of all cultural groups in a society,
- advocates equal educational opportunities,
- encompasses many dimensions of human differences,
- requires the reform of the total school environment,
- is an approach to education and should therefore permeate the entire teaching, and learning process, and
- is synonymous with effective teaching.

2.3.4 Criticism on multicultural education

Though the aims and characteristics of multicultural education represent a positive image of the phenomenon, the literature also suggests some criticism on multicultural education. According to Onleck (1990:166) “multicultural education serves as a vehicle for social control rather than for social change”. In a more serene tone, McCarthy (1988:269) claims that when considering international experiences, “multicultural education attempts to bring about a sense of tolerance and harmony among different cultures, but ignores and underplays the inequality in power between different cultures”. Sharing the aforementioned view of McCarthy, May (1994:39) argues that “multiculturalism fails to redress the wider societal issues of racism but foster cultural understanding and awareness and changes individual attitudes”.

The above statements indicate clearly that social transformation or social harmony is not warranted by means of the implementation of multicultural education since it sometimes postulate “an unobtainable dream world” (Moodley, 2002:11).

2.3.5 Dimensions of multicultural education

Banks (1997: 20) argues that our understanding of multicultural education is restricted when it is only conceptualized as content related to various cultural groups. In fact, it is a much more complex concept which includes several dimensions. Figure 2.1 illustrates these dimensions as proposed by Banks (1997:20-23).

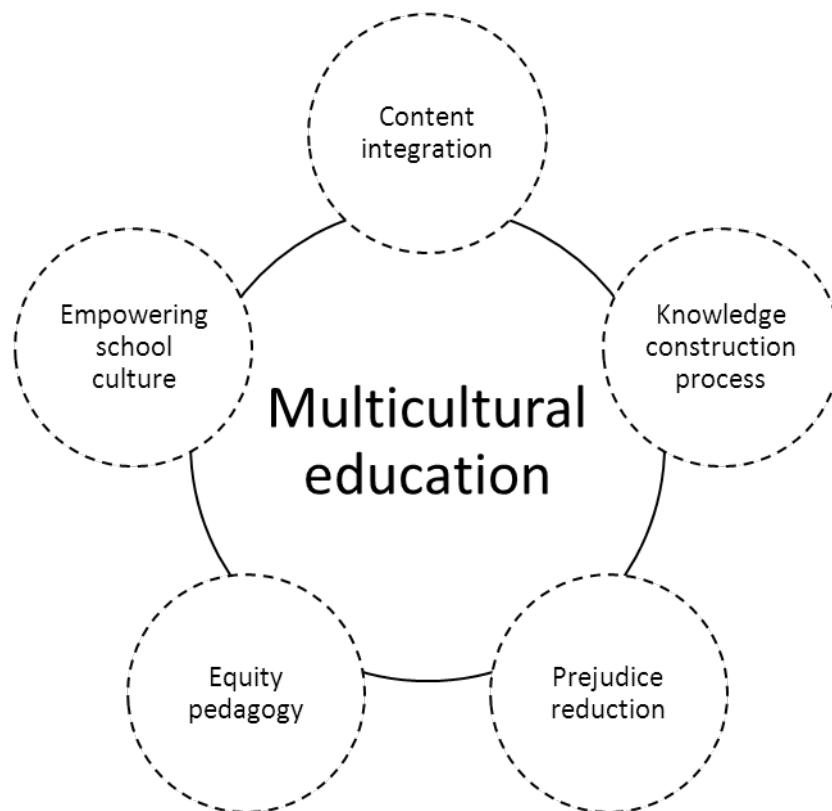


Figure 2.1 Dimensions of multicultural education

Viewed through the lens of content integration, multicultural education suggests the infusion of cultural content into subjects. The knowledge construction process denotes

the extent to which provision is made to guide learners to understand how implicit cultural assumptions and perspectives within a subject influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed within that subject. The dimension of prejudice reduction refers to the lessons and activities used by teachers to develop positive attitudes amongst learners towards people belonging to different groups. Equity pedagogy alludes to the fact that teachers use and modify their teaching skills in such a way that it will facilitate academic achievement of diverse learners. Lastly, the dimension of an empowering school culture requires the whole school as a learning organization to reflect on its practices and to improve on it where expected in order to make provision for cultural, gender, racial, and social equity.

2.3.6 Classroom conditions for effective multicultural education

In order for multicultural education to succeed, favourable school and classroom conditions should be established. Meier (2002:5) suggests several factors that need to be considered when striving to implement multicultural education effectively. Amongst others, these factors include the acknowledgement of the diverse nature of society, the provision of quality education which recognises equity and equality, and social transformation to benefit societal well-being. Inferred from the aforementioned factors, the interface between the school, classroom, and community (Atkinson & Juntunen (1994) as cited by Sanchez, 1995: 5), is not only evident, but needs to be considered as a dynamic factor behind the implementation of effective multicultural education. Meier (2005:5) further indicates that the success of multicultural education in the classroom depends on elements that emanate from cultural values, such as socialisation, communication, and shared social values and world views.

According to Meier and Hartell (2009:184), the teacher “should define the multicultural classroom in such a way that optimal learning will take place in an atmosphere of security, human dignity, impartiality and spontaneity”. Batelaan and Van Hoof (1996:7)

and Lemmer and Squelch (1993) as cited by Calitz, *et al.* (2002:183), identify the following classroom conditions for effective multicultural education.

- A relaxed classroom climate which allows for the accommodation and development of inter-cultural understanding and communication. One obvious way of establishing a positive classroom climate, is to know the names of learners. In this regard Thomas and De Villiers (2000:232) argue that teachers “do not learn the names of the learners or that they cannot pronounce those names” and that “a concerted effort [should be made] to learn and pronounce the names of all learners in the class”.
- Related to the classroom climate mentioned above, is the fostering of mutual respect. Frederick (1995:83) states that the challenge of creating classroom conditions for effective multicultural education lies in the fact that teachers and learners should see each other as individuals while also recognising their differences.
- Teachers should attempt to purposefully create opportunities for learners to communicate and co-operate in heterogeneous groups and all learners should be provided with equal opportunities to participate in the learning processes organised by the teacher. In this regard Thomas and de Villiers (2000:132) remark: “Diversity can be an enhancement to learning rather than a hindrance if it is integrated into the classroom process in an effective way. Learners need to learn to work in a multicultural workforce and their classroom experiences can help them to develop social, cognitive and communication skills necessary to do so”.
- Teachers should take advantage of learners’ cultural knowledge, skills and attitudes to sensitize and inform other learners about the different cultures.
- Teachers should try to contextualise new information in terms of learners’ real-life experiences. In this regard Moahloli and Phooko (1998:67) indicate that “teachers should try to use examples, analogies and materials from diverse

learners' experiences in order to help them to connect with their prior understandings".

- Teachers should signal positive and realistic expectations towards all learners, irrespective of their race, ethnicity, culture, language, religion or socio-economic background. To be able to realize this, teachers should make determined efforts to gain an awareness of the different cultural backgrounds of their learners in order to be in a better position to diagnose learners' strengths, weaknesses and differences in preferred cognitive and learning styles.
- A pluralistic curriculum which reflects the reality of the multicultural nature of a contemporary diverse society. This implies a non-ethnocentric curriculum, which "appreciates diversity in material" (Zafar, 1998:5) and which does not reinforce stereotyping, but displays a fair and balanced image of all the relevant cultural or ethnic groups. All educational efforts should thus be made to do justice to diversity and to combat inequality through the learning content, as well as through the organisation of learning.
- What applies to the curriculum as stated above, should also apply to learners' assessments and evaluations.

2.3.7 Covert factors opposing successful multicultural education

The classroom conditions to advance effective multicultural education do not imply or guarantee that cultural differences in the classroom will be automatically eradicated.

Discrimination and prejudice are two covert factors impeding on successful multicultural education. According to Quinlan (2005:4), discrimination and prejudice are anchored in acts of "treating someone differently, often unfairly, because of the colour of their skin, their religion, their social background, their disability, their sex or other characteristics."

Quinlan (2005:88) further indicates that discrimination and prejudice often result in the isolation of learners belonging to minority groups in a multicultural education setting.

2.4 MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION:

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In South Africa, multicultural diversity and multicultural education are realities. In fact, the education system experiences a rapid increase of cultural diverse learners in schools, (especially in Ex-Model C schools), on a yearly basis. Although the South African Schools Act (1996) demands the integration of all learners from various backgrounds into the school system (DoE, 2002:2) to promote unity among all South Africans (Smith & Oosthuisen, 2006:515-528), Du Toit (1995:212-213) warns that “the opening of schools to all races does not automatically ensure mutual understanding and acceptance between teachers and learners and amongst learners themselves”. For this reason it is imperative to reflect on two prominent matters which are applicable to this study.

The first matter is concerned with teachers’ competence to teach in multicultural education environments. Le Roux and Moller (2002:185) indicate “that teachers cannot be expected to teach multicultural content successfully and work effectively with ethnically diverse learners without being professionally prepared for this task”. This implies that “specific attention must be paid to anti-racist teaching practices in both pre-service and in-service [teacher education] programmes” (Vally & Dalamba, 1999:66). The second matter that warrants reflection is that of social identity. According to Thomas and De Villiers (2000:231) “social identity theory maintain that a person will strive to establish and maintain a positive self-identity and that this identity will have both a social and a personal component”. Since people see themselves as part of a group, social identity is part of how people identify themselves. By dividing the world into “in-groups” and “out-groups”, “the individual perceives others and him/herself as either being from one’s own group or belonging to other groups” (Thomas & De Villiers, 2000:231). This implies that learners from different cultures need to be empowered so as to strengthen their social and self-identity within the social milieu of the school. Khoza (2005:7) refers to empowerment as “a process that enables learners to critically assess aspects of the dominant culture and to select those aspects that they can use

for participation in the school environment, instead of simply serving the existing social order.”

Shaped by the purpose of the study, the first part of the literature study focused on multicultural diversity and multicultural education and concluded that teachers' competence to teach in multicultural diverse classrooms can eventually impact on learners' construction of their social and self-identities. The second part of the literature study will now focus on OBE as education approach within the South African context.

2.5 OUTCOMES-BASED EDUCATION

2.5.1 Orientation

Following the first South African democratic elections in 1994, the education system was one of the main areas earmarked for drastic reform and transformation. A cornerstone of the reform and transformation process was the introduction of Curriculum 2005 in 1997 by the then Minister of National Education, Professor Sibusu Bengu (Cross, *et al.*, 2002:178). The new curriculum was introduced into schools in 1998 which, according to Lombard (2010:2), was based on the notion of OBE which “substantially changed South African education”. Viewed through the lens of OBE the new curriculum visualised the ideals of life-long learning and a shift from content-based education (Van Wyk, 2005:55-56; DoE, 1997a:1). Moreover, it also intended to redress issues of social change. In this regard, Jansen and Christie (1999:134) remark that through the new educational approach and curriculum “high quality education will be available to everyone in South Africa irrespective of age, gender, race, colour, religion, ability or language”. According to Reyneke (2008:1) “OBE would be used as a transformational tool in a new democratic South Africa and aimed at equipping all learners with the necessary skills, values and attitudes to take up their rightful place in society”. The intention of social change is underscored by Hoadley and Jansen (2009:157), who maintain that the new education approach and curriculum is founded on a social reconstructionist ideology.

Over the recent years South African Basic Education was characterised by almost continuing curriculum changes. Which started as Curriculum 2005 (C2005), was revised (Chisholm, 2005) and became the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) and later the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) (DoE, 2002). During the writing of this study, the curriculum was changed yet again to become the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) to be phased into the schooling system as from 2012. Though all these curriculum changes took effect, OBE remained as educational approach. The interrelatedness between the curriculum and OBE as educational approach is noticeable in how this approach displays itself throughout the curriculum.

In the sub-sections which follow, the notion of OBE will be examined. This will be done by defining and considering its philosophical underpinnings, followed by a discussion on the components of and approaches to OBE.

2.5.2 Defining Outcomes-based education

Naicker (1999:87) define OBE as: “An approach of learning and teaching that is learner-centred and [which] is based on the understanding that all learners can learn”. Naicker (1999:87) further states that OBE is a single approach of education that can accommodate all learners, including learners who experience barriers to learning”. Van der Horst and McDonald (1997:7) describe OBE as an approach which requires teachers and learners to focus on two factors. The first is the focus on the desired end results of each learning process. These desired end results are called the outcomes of the learning and learners need to demonstrate that they have attained them. Learners will therefore continuously be assessed to ascertain whether they are making any progress. The second factor is the focus on the instruction and learning processes that will guide the learners to these end results. Teachers are required to use the learning outcomes as a focus when they make instructional decisions and plan their lessons.

Alexander, Le Roux, Hlalele and Daries (2010:16) define OBE as “a learner- centred, results-driven, collaborative, open system, and empowerment-orientated approach to schooling”, whereas Oliver (1998) as cited by De Jager and Nieuwenhuis (2005:255), asserts that the outcomes-based approach focuses on “the mastering of processes linked to intended outcomes, as well as on mastering knowledge and skills needed to achieve the outcome”. According to Malan (1997:10) OBE encapsulates “the process of teaching and learning ... when it accepts as its premises that the definition of outcomes should form the basis of all education, the development of curricula, the assessment of learners and the development of educational structures and institutions”.

By highlighting two key features of OBE, one of its most prominent advocates, Spady (1994:1-2), explain OBE in the following way.

- It is an approach where learners must attain clearly defined and demonstrable end results or outcomes and whereby not only the attainment of the outcome or the end result should be assessed but also the processes towards its attainment.
- Optimal enabling conditions and opportunities should be created to encourage learner participation towards the attainment of outcomes.

2.5.3 The philosophical underpinnings of OBE

OBE originates from and is rooted in a combination of four key philosophical orientations: behaviourism, pragmatism, reconstructivism and critical theory. According to **behaviourist** thinking, desirable human behaviour which is “overt, observable and measurable” (Brennan, 1991:327) is rewarded. With reference to OBE, this implies that outcomes which are expressed in observable and measurable terms represent the end products or desirable behaviour to be achieved by learners. Once these outcomes are achieved, learners are rewarded as being successful. **Pragmatism** assumes the preparation of learners for real-life situations and focuses on what is useful and works in practice. The “usefulness” of a learner’s education in terms of the future and society reveal the pragmatic intentions of OBE (Steyn & Wilkinson, 1998:205). Lombard

(2010:19) states that **reconstructivism** is essentially concerned with “the reconstruction of society and implies social change or transformation through the empowerment or emancipation of individuals who form part of a particular society”. In OBE terms teachers should act as “change agents” (Oliva, 2005:162) to empower learners to construct knowledge and to make positive contributions towards society. **Critical theory** suggests the critical analysis and evaluation of prevailing truths. Related to OBE, learners are encouraged to adopt a questioning attitude in order to improve their own learning but also as a means of improving society.

In order to gain an even better understanding of OBE, its justification can be found in the different components that constitute the phenomenon.

2.5.4 The components of OBE

Founded on the work of Spady (1994) and Lombard (2010), the following components justify the OBE approach: the OBE paradigm, the purposes of OBE, OBE premises and the guiding principles of OBE.

2.5.4.1 The OBE paradigm

OBE as an educational paradigm suggests that learners should be successful in their learning and be adequately prepared for continued learning. Spady (1994:8) argues that *what* and *whether* learners learn should take precedence over *when* and *how* they learn. Learning and “accomplishing results” (Spady, 1994:8) are thus regarded as important.

2.5.4.2 The purposes of OBE

Arising from the paradigm, OBE aspires that all learners must attain success through their learning experiences. To attain this aspiration Lombard (2010:6), in congruence with the features of OBE as stated by Spady (1994), declares that OBE should serve a

dual purpose. On the one hand it should ensure that all learners obtain the necessary knowledge, skills and values to reflect their attainment of the stated outcomes and to succeed in life. On the other hand, favourable learning environments should be created to encourage and enable learners to achieve the required outcomes.

2.5.4.3 OBE premises

Approached from an OBE perspective, successful teaching and learning is founded on three premises. Killen (2009:51) indicates the following premises.

- All learners can learn and succeed, but not all at the same time or in the same way. This implies that learner difference should be considered and accommodated in the planning and development of teaching, learning and assessment activities.
- Successful learning promotes even more successful learning. Any success experienced by learners contributes towards motivation and willingness to strive for further success. Moreover, success also assists in developing self-confidence and an improved self-image.
- Schools (and classrooms) as learning environments, control many of the conditions that determine whether or not learners are successful in their learning. Learning environments are responsible for creating and controlling the conditions under which learners can succeed. Teachers working in an OBE paradigm are therefore charged with the responsibility of creating learning environments which are inviting, challenging and motivating (Van der Horst & McDonald, 1999:7).

2.5.4.4 The principles of OBE

OBE is founded on two types of principles: general principles which reflect the essential characteristics of OBE and guiding principles which direct successful outcomes-based teaching and learning.

The following general principles of OBE are identified by Jacobs (2004: 60-61).

- **Outcomes-based**, since all learning should be founded on outcomes and directed at achieving such outcomes.
- **Value-oriented**, since all learning should be embedded in the values and attitudes inherent in the critical and developmental outcomes.
- **Learner-centred**, since all learning should put learners first in terms of being responsible for their own learning and by being actively involved in learning activities.
- **Relevant**, since all learning should be relevant to individual and societal needs.
- **Integrated**, since all learning should be integrated to form a coherent whole.
- **Based on individual differences**, since all learners should be treated as individual human beings with their own potential.
- **Based on authentic assessment**, since learning should be continuously assessed and in a variety of ways against pre-determined criteria.
- **Non-discriminatory**, since all learning should encourage the development of mutual respect by acknowledging diversity in its many forms.

OBE is also guided by four principles: clarity of focus, expanded opportunities, high expectations and the principle of designing down. These principles are interrelated and are considered to be the heart of OBE since they strengthen the conditions that enable teachers and learners to be successful participants in the teaching and learning process (Spady, 1994:10). Maree and Fraser (2008:26) argue that although applicable to OBE, these principles are didactically sound and can guide successful learning in any teaching and learning environment. Maree and Fraser (2008:26) further indicate that teachers should apply these principles “consistently, systematically, creatively and simultaneously” when constructing teaching and learning environments.

Since Lombard (2010:7) postulates that each of these four principles “signifies distinctive meanings within the OBE paradigm” they will be clarified below.

(i) Clarity of focus

Spady (1994:10) states that this principle is about “helping teachers to establish a clear picture of the learning they want learners to exhibit in a performance demonstration”, while Kramer (1999:25) emphasises that outcomes should be clear to everybody and that there should be no ambiguity about what the outcome should look like when it has been achieved. According to Maree and Fraser (2008:26) this principle helps to clarify what teachers and learners should know about the expected outcome, which implies that outcomes must be worded in clear, measurable and observable language. Killen (2009:53) suggests that clarity of focus helps to organise the teaching and learning events. It can thus be concluded that clarity of focus intends to provide specific information to direct teaching and learning in a focused manner.

(ii) Expanded opportunities

According to Lombard (2010:8) this principle relates to the premise that all learners can learn and succeed; provided that individual learner differences are considered. According to Spady (1997:13) this guiding principle allows teachers to provide their learners with appropriate and differentiated learning opportunities. Spady (2001:4) continues by suggesting that the principle of expanded opportunities makes provision for continued learning and improvement without being restricted by “rigid time frames” (Maree & Fraser, 2008:26). The application of this principle implies that teachers must be flexible in adapting and changing their teaching and learning approaches to ensure successful learning for all.

(iii) High expectations

Van Wyk (2005:63) states that challenging standards of performance should be set in order to “encourage learners to engage deeply with the issues about which they are learning ... and to accomplish them eventually”. Killen (2009:54) argues that teachers should have high expectations for all learners because “without this challenge, learners

are likely to take a surface approach to learning and be concerned with little more than memorising information that they think they might have to reproduce in an examination”. Embedded in this principle is motivation as it is implied that learners should be encouraged to perform to the best of their abilities.

(iv) Design down

Spady and Marshall (1991:70) suggest that learning activities must be planned in such a way that learners will be able to demonstrate their achievement by keeping their focus on the outcomes they are expected to achieve. According to Van Wyk (2005:26) this principle enables teachers not to lose sight of the outcomes their learners are intended to achieve. Killen (2009:53) asserts that design down assists teachers to identify outcomes which are used as starting points for curriculum design and that “all instructional decisions are then made by tracing back from this “desired end result”.

The process of designing down thus allows for the alignment of outcomes, content, teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks.

2.5.5 Approaches to OBE

According to Spady and Marshall (1991:8-71), theory describes three approaches to OBE. These are: the traditional approach, the transitional approach and the transformational approach.

2.5.5.1 The Traditional approach

Maree and Fraser (2004:12) state that this approach is behaviouristic inclined since it is based on narrow outcomes and dominated by content. Both the outcomes and content are divorced from authentic learning experiences which means that learners are not prepared to relate their learning to everyday situations.

2.5.5.2 The Transitional approach

Transitional OBE focuses on qualities that are needed by learners in order to operate competently in society. It is thus concerned with high-order competencies such as critical thinking and problem solving skills, which are regarded as essential for learners to know, be able to do and be like in order to be successful beyond schooling (Reyneke, 2008:28).

2.5.5.3 The Transformational approach

This is the type of OBE that prepares learners for life and work in a rapidly changing society. According to Olivier (1999:17) transformational OBE aims at developing learners to function effectively within a social and economic environment. Transformational OBE challenges existing educational structures and operations and calls for drastic changes within an education system.

Though South Africa approached OBE in a peculiar manner, it was initially realised by means of the transformational approach, which Spady and Marshall (1991:68) typify as a “collaborative, flexible, trans-disciplinary, outcomes-based, open-system, empowerment-oriented approach” and which is embedded in social reconstructivism.

In the following section, OBE as it relates to the curriculum will be attended to.

2.6 OBE AND THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

2.6.1 The entrenched values of the South African OBE school curriculum

By applying OBE as educational approach, the Department of Education introduced the type of curriculum (C2005, RNCS, and NCS) that will accommodate all learners from different cultural backgrounds to have access to quality and equal education. According

to the DoE (2004:2) the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) provides the basis for curriculum transformation and development.

The Preamble to the Constitution states that the aims of the Constitution are to:

- Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights.
- Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person.
- Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which Government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by law.
- Build a united and democratic South Africa able to make its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations.

In addition, ten fundamental values of the Constitution relevant to education are also identified in a Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy (2001). These values include: democracy, social justice and equity, equality, non-racism and sexism, Ubuntu (human dignity), an open society, accountability (responsibility), the rule of law, respect and reconciliation.

The Department of Education (2004:4) aspires to realise the above through the curriculum and to develop the full potential of each learner as a citizen of a democratic South Africa.

2.6.2 Principles underpinning the South African OBE school curriculum

The Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) is underpinned by principles which reflect the vision and values of the Constitution. These principles include the following:

- Social Justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity.
- Outcomes-based Education.
- A high level of skills and knowledge for all.

- Clarity and accessibility.
- Progression and integration (DoE, 2003:5-6).

With the effect of the curriculum change, (RNCS to the NCS), the NCS is based on the following principles:

- Social transformation.
- Outcomes-based education.
- High knowledge and high skills.
- Integration and applied competence.
- Progression.
- Articulation and portability.
- Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice.
- Valuing indigenous knowledge systems.
- Credibility, quality and efficiency (DoE, 2003:1).

In the context of this study the following compilation of the above principles seems to be of particular interest since these reflect the spirit of social reconstruction within a multicultural teaching and learning environment:

- Social Justice, a healthy environment, human rights and inclusivity.
- Social transformation.
- Human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice.
- Valuing indigenous knowledge systems.

2.6.3 Critical and developmental outcomes

Le Grange and Reddy (1998:8) state that critical outcomes are “cross-curricular and generic ... and describe the skills, attitudes and knowledge that all learners should develop”. Developmental outcomes are also generic and describe the attributes of a

life-long learner within the context of the global community. Both these sets of outcomes have an enabling function in the sense that they anticipate learners who “will be imbued with the values and act in the interests of a society based on respect for democracy, equality, human dignity and social justice” (DoE, 2004:4).

The DoE (2003:2) stipulates that the critical outcomes and developmental outcomes envisage learners who are able to:

- identify and solve problems and make decisions using critical thinking and creative thinking;
- work effectively with others as members of a team, group, organisation and community;
- organise and manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively;
- collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information;
- communicate effectively using visual, symbolic and/or language skills in various modes;
- use science and technology effectively and critically showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others;
- demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognising that problem solving contexts do not exist in isolation;
- reflect on and explore a variety of strategies to learn more effectively;
- participate as responsible citizens in the life of local, national, and global communities;
- be culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts;
- explore education and career opportunities; and
- develop entrepreneurial opportunities.

In the section to follow, OBE practices will be conceptualised and operationalized.

2.7 OBE PRACTICES

Though it is acknowledged that preferred teaching, learning and assessment methods advance the effective implementation of OBE, the scope of this study goes beyond these routine practices. In order to uncover the conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices (*cf.* 1.3.2), the matters discussed in the former sections dealing with OBE and which are reflected in Table 2.1, need to be considered.

In the first column, OBE practices are conceptualised in terms of what emerged from the literature study as essential underlying factors contributing towards successful teaching in a multicultural, OBE environment. In the second column, the aforementioned factors were analysed to present more visible actions in order *to come to a better understanding of **how** teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region* (*cf.* 1.2). These matters should also be considered in conjunction with the dimensions of multicultural education (*cf.* 2.3.5) and classroom conditions for effective multicultural education (*cf.* 2.3.6).

Table 2.1 A conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices

Conceptualisation of OBE practices	Operationalization of OBE practices
<p>Social reconstructivism which aims to redress issues of social change (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher act as change agent to empower learners (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.3) • Non-discriminatory actions (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4) • Respect / cultural sensitivity (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.1; 2.6.3) • Valuing indigenous knowledge systems (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.2) • Working with others (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.3)
<p>Learner-centeredness which is based on the understanding that all learners can learn (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner motivation (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.3) • Acknowledging individual learner differences without discrimination (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4) • Encouraging critical thinking / problem solving (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.3)
<p>Optimal enabling conditions to encourage learner participation (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General classroom climate (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.2; 2.5.4.3; 2.5.4.4)

2.8 CONCLUSION

This chapter examined multicultural diversity, multicultural education and OBE from a literature perspective. Derived from the literature, the researcher was able to conceptualise OBE practices in order to continue with the empirical part of the study.

In chapter three, the empirical study will be theoretically justified and outlined.

CHAPTER 3

EMPIRICAL STUDY: OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region. To accomplish this purpose, the objectives below were formulated to steer the study.

- i. To determine the meaning of multicultural education.
- ii. To clarify the meaning of Outcomes-based Education.
- iii. To investigate and determine the appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment.
- iv. To uncover the conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices.

Chapter 2 focused on a literature review which addressed these stated objectives. Henceforth, the study will focus on its main purpose, namely to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region by means of an empirical investigation. To operationalize the empirical methodology, this chapter will focus on the research paradigm, the research design, research method, the population and sampling, data collection instruments, criteria for administering the data collection instruments, quality assurance, the pilot study, ethical considerations and an outline of the data collection process.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

It is important to note that all scientific research is conducted within a specific paradigm, or way of viewing one's research material. Researchers must therefore decide within what paradigm they are working, know the nature of their selected paradigm very well,

and spell it out in their research report in order to keep communication with potential readers clear and unambiguous (Delpont & De Vos, 2005:45).

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:167-168) argue that there are five categories in which research paradigms can be classified: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism and participatory. Henning *et al.* (2004:19) also added the interpretative paradigm.

For the purpose of this study the interpretive paradigm served as foundational research framework. Henning *et al.* (2004:20) state that interpretive research is a communal process, informed by selected research participants and scrutinised and/or endorsed by others. Phenomena and events are understood through interaction in a social context and mental processes of interpretation. Nieuwenhuis (2007a:59) adds that “interpretive studies generally attempt to understand phenomena through the meanings that people assign to them”.

The intention of this research was to explore and capture selected participants’ opinions and actions to come to a better understanding of how teachers’ OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region. This implies that the researcher needed to interact with research participants in a pre-determined social context (the schools and classrooms) and interpret reality as perceived and experienced by these participants in order to construct meaning to eventually address the purpose of the study. Hence the study is founded on the interpretive paradigm.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Raggin (1994:191) asserts that a research design is a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for a researcher to answer whatever research questions are posed. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:85) a research design provides the overall structure in which the research will be conducted and is selected with the central goal of solving the research problem in mind. Hadebe (2008:43) points out that a research design is the plan of procedures for data collection and analysis that are undertaken to address or evaluate a particular perspective. Denzin and Lincoln

(2005:32) describe a research design as the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data, while Babbie and Mouton (2001:55) defines a research design as a plan of how one intends conducting the research. It can therefore be concluded that a research design touches on almost all aspects of the research; from data collection to the selection of the techniques of data analysis.

Three empirical research designs can be differentiated: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research designs. According to Fouché (2005:268) a quantitative research design determines the researcher's choice and actions, while in qualitative research, the researcher's choice and actions will determine the design and strategy. A mixed-methods design constitutes a mixed version of the two main streams.

Quantitative research is largely experimental in nature and is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It uses descriptive or inferential statistics as a method of organising and facilitating the organisation of data and the interpretation of numbers obtained from measuring a characteristic or variable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:30). According to Du Plooy (1995:32) quantitative research manipulates variables and attempt to control natural phenomena.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:133) state that **qualitative research** relies on researchers' ability to interpret and make sense of what they see in order to arrive at a critical understanding of any social phenomenon. In qualitative research procedures are not strictly formalised, while the scope is more likely to be undefined and a more philosophical mode of operation is adopted (Ungerer, 2009:74). According to Winegardner (2004:16) a qualitative research design is more appropriate when the goal of the researcher is to develop theory to explain the data through a process of inductive reasoning, as opposed to the researcher whose aim is to locate data and then match it to theory through a process of deductive reasoning, like in quantitative research. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:372) maintain that qualitative research is typified as a form of naturalistic enquiry, which involves non-interfering data collection strategies to explore the flow of events and how participants interpret them.

Flick (2006:97) indicates that qualitative and quantitative research designs are not incompatible opposites that should not be combined. According to Ibert, Boumard Donada and Xuereb (2007:80) researchers can and do combine both qualitative and quantitative research in order to investigate a particular research problem in more depth. This combination of the quantitative and qualitative designs is referred to as **mixed methods research** designs.

In accordance with the primary research question and purpose of the study as stated earlier (*cf.* 1.2; 1.3.1), this research is approached from an interpretive position (*cf.* 3.2) which requires that data be gathered from selected participants through interaction and observation. It is therefore sensible to follow a qualitative research design to gather and analyse the desired data.

3.4 STRATEGY OF INQUIRY (RESEARCH METHOD)

Strategies of inquiry or research methods are “types of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods designs or models that provide specific direction for procedures in a research design” (Creswell, 2009:11). Lancaster (2005:78) defines research methodology as the research approaches employed to collect data. According to Creswell (1998) as cited by Fouché (2005:269), there are five strategies of inquiry or research methods that could be used to design qualitative research. These include biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies. With the exception of the first, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and cases studies are also mentioned by Johnson and Christensen (2008:305), while Leedy and Ormrod (2005:135-142) refer to ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, content analysis and case studies. Whereas **biography** is used to report on and document an individual’s life (Fouché, 2005:269), **phenomenology** is used to try to understand a research participant’s perspectives and views of social realities (Leedy, 1997:161). Research applying **grounded theory** aims to generate theory by means of inductive analysis, which describes and explains a phenomenon (Johnson & Christensen, 2008:394). Research applying **content analysis** as a strategy of inquiry, focuses on a

detailed and systematic examination of the contents of a particular body of material (Leedy and Ormrod (2005:142).

The **case study** as research method is a qualitative method in which the researcher explores a phenomenon (“the case”), or makes an in-depth analysis of a “bounded system” over a period of time (Creswell, 1998:61). Plano Clark and Creswell (2010:243) add that “the focus of a qualitative study may be a specific issue, with a case (or cases) used to illustrate the issue”. Yin (1984) as cited by Nieuwenhuis (2007b:75) declares that a case study is used to examine “a contemporary phenomenon within a real life context”. According to Henning *et al.* (2004:41) a case study design is employed to gain an in-depth understanding of a phenomenon. Merriam (1999:18-19) indicates that in a case study, the research interest is in the data collection and analysis processes rather than in the outcomes; in the context in which the research takes place rather than in a specific variable, and in discovery rather than in confirmation.

Since the intention of the research is not to generalise the findings to a greater population, but to report on the views and observations of selected research participants, the case study was preferred as strategy of inquiry or research method for this research. The selection of the case study can further be justified by the argument that teachers’ OBE practices and the extent to which it accommodates multicultural diverse learners form the conceptually bounded and contemporary phenomenon to be explored. To further the argument, it can be said that the research will be conducted within public secondary schools in a specified region, which is Harrismith, and which forms a “bounded system”. The case study was also selected for stimulating interaction between the researcher and a selected few research participants in order to understand and perceive reality better from the participants’ points of view.

3.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:119) and Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002:256) clarify the term population as referring to a group of elements or cases that conform to specific

criteria, and to which the researcher intends to generalise the results of the research. The population is also referred to as the universe or target population.

Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (2002:163) define a sample as a “subset of the population” while Cooper and Schindler (2001:185) explain sampling as the application of selection criteria to select a portion of the population or universe to be representative of that population or universe.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005:199) and Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee (2006:100) two major categories of sampling approaches can be distinguished: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, (2000:152) state that with probability sampling every element of the population has at least some chance of being part of the sample, whereas in non-probability sampling the probability of inclusion of each element of the population is unknown. In non-probability sampling there is thus no guarantee that the population will be represented and the generalization of research findings is therefore a risk (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:176).

Walliman (2005:276) mentions a number of different probability sampling methods that a researcher can use. These include simple (single) random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, multi-stage random sampling and panel sampling. Non-probability sampling methods include convenience sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling (Maree & Pietersen, 2007:176-178).

Based on the qualitative nature of the research and on Creswell’s (2009:178) assertion that sampling “that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question”, non-probability sampling in the form of a **purposeful** sampling strategy was initially applied in this study. Plano Clark and Creswell (2010:253) describe purposeful sampling as the intentional selection of research sites or participants by the researcher in order to learn more about or to better understand a central phenomenon. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:319) purposeful sampling is suitable when a researcher “wants to understand something” without generalizing the obtained information. The aforementioned means that research cases

or participants are selected because they display certain characteristics that are significant for the study. In the case of this study, five of the 21 public secondary schools in the Harrismith region which reflect the widest spectrum of multicultural learners (*cf.* 1.9) were purposefully selected to form part of the study.

It was further argued that provision should be made for **maximum variation** (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006:320) regarding the gathering of information on how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region. For this purpose the researcher decided to engage with teachers teaching Grade 8 and 9 learners as well as learners from the same grades from the selected schools. While adhering to the ethical protocol (*cf.* 3.10), teachers and learners were approached to participate in the research. The reasons for focusing on Grade 8 and 9 classes were two pronged: learners are still in the process of finding their way in an actual multicultural school environment since primary schools are less multicultural than secondary schools in the region, and as opposed to higher grades, the research will interfere with teaching and learning time to a lesser extent (*cf.* 1.8.2.4). Based on the selection of research participants by means of maximal variation sampling (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010:254), the researcher was enabled to accommodate diverse perspectives (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2010:254) and make provision for the saturation of information (Greeff, 2005:294). Eventually, the profile of the teachers and learners who participated in the research emerged as displayed in Table 3.1. and Table 3.2.

Table 3.1 Profile of participating teachers

	Population group and total					Gender		Years teaching experience				
	White	Black	Indian*	Brown	Total	Male	Female	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
School A	2			1	3	1	2		1	1	1	
School B	1			1	2		2		1		1	
School C	1	1			2	1	1	1				1
School D	1	1			2		2			2		
School E		1			1		1		1			
Totals	5	3	0	2	10	2	8	1	3	3	2	1

* = No Indian teachers at the schools

Table 3.2 Profile of participating learners

	Population group and total					Gender	
	White	Black	Indian	Brown	Total	Male	Female
School A	1		1	1	3	1	2
School B		2		1	3		2
School C		1			1	1	1
School D	1	1			2		2
School E			1		1		1
Totals	2	4	2	2	10	2	8

3.6 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:103) state that in social science research, the researched person is, for the most part, aware of being studied and reacts to stimuli such as questions presented by the researcher. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:103) further indicate that the most frequently means of gathering information in social science research is by directly asking research participants to express their views; therefore questionnaires and interviews are often used. Following the aforementioned trends, interviews were used as primary data collection instruments in this research. In addition, several other ways of data collection could also be used, either on their own or for verification purposes. In this case the researcher decided on observations as secondary data collection instrument.

3.6.1 Interviews

Interviewing is the method of obtaining information direct from the research respondents. Lethoko (1999:11) views the research interview as face-to-face interaction or oral exchange between the interviewer and an individual research participant or a group of individuals. Ibert, Boumard, Donada and Xuereb (2007:180) argue that the interview involves questioning the respondents while maintaining an empathetic demeanour; that is, accepting the respondent's frame of reference, whether in terms of feelings or relevance.

Denzin and Lincoln (2000:649-658) indicate four different types of interviews. These are structured interviews, group interviews, unstructured interviews and gendered interviews. On the other hand, Flick (2006:149) mentions the research interview, semi-standardised interview, problem-centred interview, expert interview and ethnographic interview, while Nieuwenhuis (2007b:87) cites open-ended, semi-structured, and structured interviews.

According to Greeff (2002:297-299) and Lethoko (1999:111) the interview as a qualitative data collection instrument facilitates the following aims.

- The interview enables the interviewer to find out things from research participants that cannot be directly observed and scrutinised.
- The interview enables the researcher to determine what the interviewee knows, thinks and experiences.
- The interview enables the identification of relevant variables, trends and relationships.
- The interview enables the researcher to account for accuracy, relevance and to verify or refute information gained through other methods, e.g. the literature study.

Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:32) note that interviews are time consuming and more expensive than questionnaires. Due to the following advantages as stated by Greeff (2002:291) and Leedy and Ormrod (2005:184) the researcher favoured interviews as primary data collection instruments for this research.

- Interviews provide the researcher with face-to-face interaction with the research participants which allows the 'reading' of facial expression, emotions, assertions and other behaviours that add meaning to what is spoken.
- Facts can easily be gathered through explanation and it is easy to make an immediate follow-up to get clarification from the research participants.

- Interviews foster mutual respect, co-operation and the sharing of information between the researcher and the participants.
- Interviews could easily be conducted in natural and relaxed settings.

Though many researchers prefer the use of interviews to collect research data, De Vos *et al.* (1998:300) warn about the following when conducting interviews.

- Responses may be subjective because of certain factors like trust, honesty and social distance.
- Participants may feel uneasy and use avoidance tactics if sensitive questions are asked.
- The interview process requires a proficient interviewer.
- A lack of anonymity exists because the interviewer directly observes the interviewee.
- The interviewer's control differs from one interview to another.

For the purpose of this study semi-structured, standardized open-ended interviews were used to obtain in-depth and information-rich data. Greeff (2005:296) postulates that semi-structured interviews are helpful to gain a detailed picture and insight of a respondent's belief or perceptions about a particular topic. On the other hand open-ended questions allowed for flexibility in scope and depth of the required information (Greeff, 2002:297 & 302). Questions, which were phrased in English, were designed by the researcher to ensure a "defined line of inquiry" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:87) and care was taken that all interview questions related to the purpose of the study. For the sake of standardization or consistency, a parallel was drawn between the interview questions for the respective groups of research participants (e.g. teachers and learners). Provision was also made for probing questions when and where required. One-to-one or individual interviews were preferred as it allows for a two-way conversation between the interviewer and interviewees (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:184).

3.6.2 Observations

Observations entail the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviours and artefacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study, without necessarily questioning or communicating with the research participants (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b: 83/84). In order to get more information and an even better understanding of the topic under investigation, observation was used as a supplementary research instrument in this study. Henning *et al.* (2004:82-96) distinguish between participatory observation where the researcher participates in the actions of the research participants in order to be familiarized with their ways of doing; structured, standardized observation where the researcher explores issues that will reveal more about previously acquired data; observing as an ethno-methodologist where observations extends over a longer period of time, and observation for discursive research where the researcher is sensitive to pick up 'templates' during the interaction with research participants. In summary, observational research is especially effective in situations where the researcher wishes to study details or specific areas of human behaviour (Imenda and Muyangwa, 2000:37).

In this study, the researcher's intent was to collect direct information about human behaviour in an indirect manner, such as observation (Ungerer, 2009:77). The researcher therefore opted to use unstructured observations in the form of anecdotal notes (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:85) so as to get a holistic picture to better understand how multiculturalism is 'practiced' in selected public secondary schools in the Harrismith region. For this purpose the researcher acted in the capacity of "observer as participant" (Nieuwenhuis, 2007b:85) where the sampled multicultural educational environments were observed without "influencing the dynamics of the setting" (Ibid., 2007:85).

3.7 CRITERIA FOR ADMINISTERING THE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

3.7.1 Interviews

During interviews the researcher fulfilled the roles of interviewer and listener in the sense that questions were posed to interviewees in a clearly articulated manner and responses were treated with attentive listening.

With reference to Greeff (2002:300) and Ritchie and Lewis (2003:145), the following guidelines were used for conducting the individual interviews with the selected research participants.

- The interview setting was pre-arranged in terms of the agreed upon time and date. The interview venues used were prepared to be quiet, with no interruption.
- Prior to conducting the interviews, participants were welcomed and made to feel at ease through exchange of pleasantries.
- The purpose of the interview was confirmed with the interviewees.
- Participants were reminded of their rights and were assured of the confidential nature of the research. For instance, they were assured of complete anonymity.
- It was explained that the interviews would be recorded for the purpose of data capturing and analysis and consent was sought.
- The interview was initiated. Throughout the interview process, the researcher interacted with the participants, took field notes and noted trends and responses.
- The researcher ensured that rapport was established through attentive listening, showing interest, understanding and showing respect for participant's views without interrupting their contributions.
- Probing questions were asked in a way that demonstrated a quest for clarity rather than argumentation or proving participants' responses as false or vague.
- After the interviews, participants were thanked for their participation and confidentiality of their participation was confirmed.

3.7.2 Observations

In accordance with Nieuwenhuis (2007b:84-86) the researcher observed the following guidelines for successful observation.

- The intention was to get a holistic view of how multiculturalism is 'practiced' in the selected research environments, and therefore the researcher tried to be sensitive about his own biases and attempted to eliminate these.
- The researcher was directed by the purpose of the research to focus on those matters that were earmarked to be observed.
- Though the researcher was guided by information obtained from the literature review to direct the observations, data was not pursued aggressively or in a structured manner, but were allowed to emerge naturally.
- What were seen, heard and experienced was recorded as anecdotal notes in order to make the observations as objective as possible.
- Reflection was done after observation sessions as to consider the contributory value of the researcher's intuitions regarding observed events.

Marshall and Rossman (1995:79) express the opinion that when researchers rely on the use of observations as data collection instruments, no special efforts have to be made to conform to a particular role, but to be tolerated as an unobtrusive observer is often enough. For the purpose of this research, the researcher acted as observer as participant (*cf.* 3.6.2) because the pre-selected research environments were observed in order to understand the 'community' (multicultural education environment) and its dynamics under investigation better, while the researcher maintained an uninvolved and not interfering position.

3.8 QUALITY ASSURANCE

Rigour is the integrity and competence with which a researcher conducts empirical research. According to Twycross and Shield (2005:36) and Tobin and Begley (2004:389) the trustworthiness of qualitative research is based on rigour to assure the reliability and validity as is the case in quantitative research. In order to assure that research is conducted in a rigorous manner, a researcher is compelled to adhere to detail and accuracy for ensuring the authenticity and trustworthiness of the research data, findings and conclusions. De Vos (2005:346-347) endorses the propositions

made by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and indicates that the trustworthiness of qualitative research is signified by credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

- **Credibility** is akin to internal validity which implies that the research question was resolved within the specified boundaries. With regard to this research, the purpose and objectives, the literature study and the research design were all directed to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE classroom practices succeed in accommodating multicultural diverse learners.
- **Transferability** is equivalent to external validity in quantitative research and suggest to what degree research results can be generalized. Though it is not common procedure to generalize qualitative research results, the confidence in the research results also improves the trustworthiness of the research. Triangulation, where multiple measures are applied to examine a particular phenomenon, optimizes confidence in research results. In this research, data triangulation was applied where multiple data sources (teachers and learners) situated in a variety of contexts (five public secondary Ex Model C schools), provided information. In addition, interviews as well as observations were used as complementary data collection instruments. The data was also validated by following a peer review process.
- **Dependability** is described as the alternative for what is known as reliability in quantitative research and is meant to account for changing conditions in repeated research. Although the chances of obtaining the same research results when replicating the current research are small, a thorough description of the research location and research participants could inform repeated research which could possibly produce similar results. To increase the dependability of this research, the researcher endeavoured to provide an overview of the environments in which the research was conducted as well as to provide distinct information about the research participants.
- **Conformability** suggests that research results could be confirmed by similar research. The accuracy of the presentation of data provides for conformability in the sense that data are allowed to speak for itself without interference of the

researcher's orientations. By validating the research data by means of triangulation and by following a peer review process, provision was made for conformability in this research.

The stated criteria to ensure the trustworthiness of the qualitative research process were regarded to obtain reliable and valid information in accordance with the research purpose and did not serve as fixed restrictions (Freeman, De Marrais, Preissle, Rouls & Peirre, 2007:29).

3.9 PILOT STUDY

Strydom and Delport (2005:331) state that in qualitative research the pilot study is usually informal, and few participants possessing the same characteristics as those of the main investigation can be involved in the study, merely to ascertain certain trends.

The pilot study for the current study was conducted in one of the Ex Model C public secondary schools in the Harrismith region which did not form part of the main study. The pilot study was undertaken as a means of final preparations for the actual study with the main purpose of especially avoiding ambiguity in the interview questions during the study. Moser and Kalton (1973) as cited by Strydom (2005:211) also mention that without a pilot study, it is difficult to provide all the alternative responses to a question and thus to code accordingly. In addition, the pilot study served to alert the researcher of possible unforeseen problems which may emerge during the main investigation (Sarantakos, 2000:293).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics includes those factors the researcher should consider to safeguard the interest of respondents and the prevention of irregularities that can negatively affect them during and after their participation in the research. Creswell (2003:64) states that as researchers anticipate data collection, they need to respect the participants and the sites being researched, for many issues may arise during this vitally important stage of

the research. Creswell (2003:64-65) further indicates the following factors to be considered when collecting data from the participants.

- Do not put participants at risk. Develop an informed consent form for participants to sign before they engage in the research.
- The researcher needs to protect the anonymity of individuals participating in the research.
- Eliminate the use of language or words that are biased against persons of gender, sexual orientation, racial or ethnic groups, disability or age.
- Researchers also need to anticipate the possibility of harmful information being disclosed during the data collection process.
- Other procedures during data collection involve gaining the permission of individuals in positions of authority to provide access to research participants at research sites.
- Researchers need to respect research sites so that sites are left undisturbed after the completion of the data collection process.

In this research, consent to conduct the research in the schools situated in the selected region was requested from the Free State Department of Education (**Appendix A**). Once approved by the Provincial Department of Education, the school principals of the selected schools were approached for their approval. During the discussions with principals it was clarified that the identity of no school or research participant will be disclosed and that the data collection process will be conducted within suitable timeframes so as to not interfere with the normal business of the school. After the aforementioned official structures sanctioned the research, selected research participants were requested to give their informed consent to participate in the research by signing the consent forms (**Appendix B**). The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and their role in the research. They were also assured about their anonymous participation and that they may withdraw from the research at any stage. The participants were also informed that their inputs will be tape recorded and that the gathered information will be solely used for the purpose of the research. After

consent was acquired, the researcher and the participants mutually decided on suitable dates and times for data collection.

3.11 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

By considering the information provided in the preceding sections of this chapter, Figure 3.1 provides a visual representation of the essential factors during the data collection process.

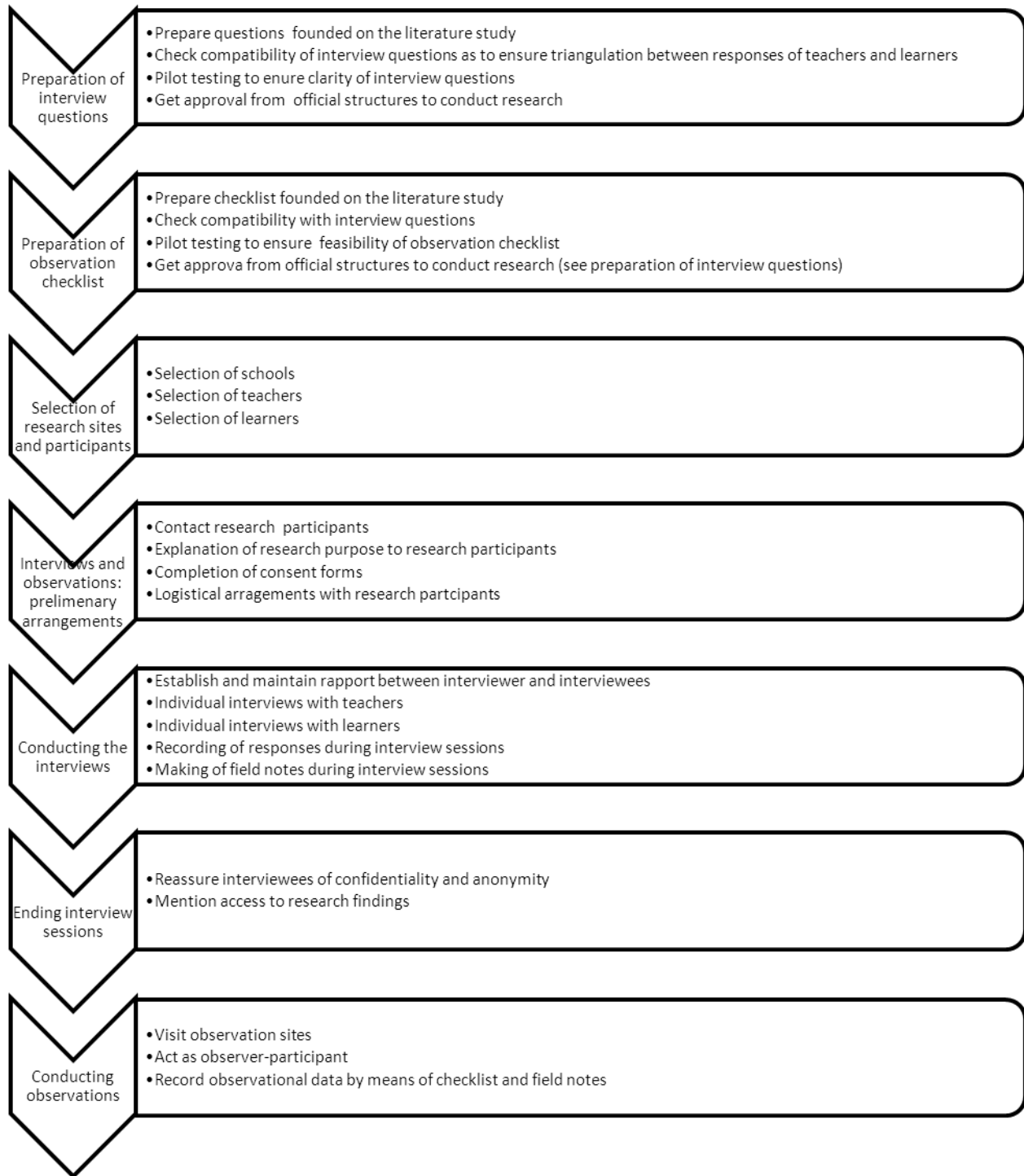


Figure 3.1 The data collection process

3.12 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher provided an overview and justification of the empirical research. The presentation, analysis and interpretation of the research findings will be presented in chapter four.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter substantiated the empirical research design of the study and provided an overview of the considerations applicable to the data collection process. In this chapter the analysis and the interpretation of collected data in order to explore and understand how teachers' OBE classroom practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region, will be presented. The process of data analysis and interpretation will be sketched after which the data obtained through the interviews and observations will be analysed and interpreted.

4.2 MANAGING THE DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION PROCESS

In order to realize the purpose of this research, multiple measures in the form of semi-structured, individual interviews with teachers and learners and observations of selected research sites were used to obtain triangulated data. The interview data, which were captured by means of spoken tape recorded evidence and field notes were transcribed by following the processes of *memoing* (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:104) whereby supplementary information obtained from the raw data were recorded. Thereafter, *open coding* (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:141) was done where meaningful segments of obtained data were clustered together. During the aforementioned processes, the researcher critically and repeatedly read through and reflected on the data in order to consolidate any additional information with the raw transcribed data. Data were coded and connected codes were structured according to broad *a priori* categories (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:99) emanating from an early stage of the literature review and which guided the construction of interview questions and sensitised the researcher about the observations to be made. Since *a priori* categories are pre-determined it also guided the analysis of data. The data were thus analysed by following a deductive approach. The aforementioned processes were checked and verified by a peer who is familiar with and

have experience in the field of qualitative research. The data analysis and interpretation processes of the interviews are represented in Figure 4.1. Since these processes are *iterative* in nature (Nieuwenhuis, 2007c:99), they are mutually inclusive and recurrent.

In the case of observations, anecdotal notes will be considered for verifying or supplementary purposes when interpreting the data obtained by means of the interviews.

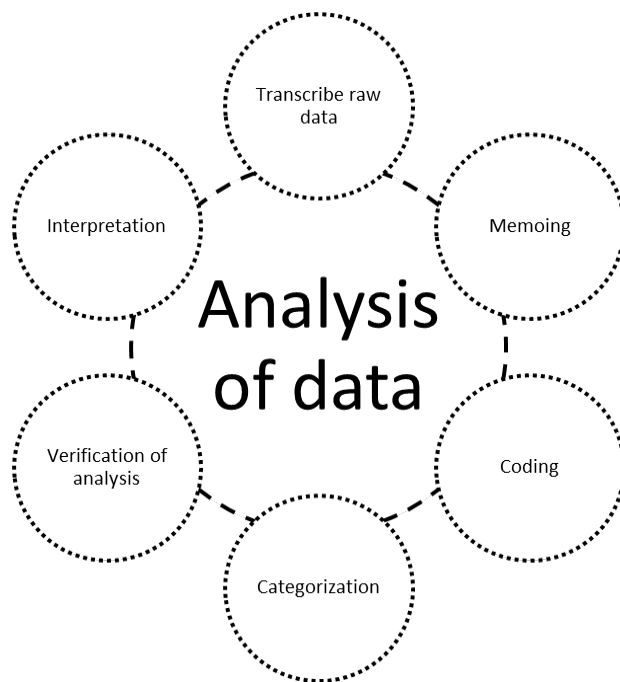


Figure 4.1 Data analysis process of interviews

4.3 PARTICIPANTS' VIEWS ON OBE PRACTICES AND THE ACCOMMODATION OF MULTICULTURAL DIVERSITY

Participants' views on OBE practices and the accommodation of multicultural diversity are presented in terms and sequence of the interview questions (**Appendix C**). It should be noted, however, that although the interview was semi-structured, questions were open-ended, which allowed for more interaction between the interviewer and the interviewees. In some cases more information was derived from the use of probes and prompts as well as from answers given to subsequent questions. The coded versions

of the raw data obtained from the interviews conducted with the respective participants and participant groups in the different schools, are presented below.

School A

Interview question	Teachers' responses	Learners' responses
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All cultures together • More than one culture in a class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different cultures • Lots of different cultures in harmony
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is composed of white and black learners • Different language groups are accommodated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many differences amongst learners • School has Sotho, Zulu, Afrikaans and English learners
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching in both languages (English and Afrikaans), takes a lot of time and preparation • The language of instruction is always problematic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muslims and Africans together; each with their own customs • Language problems
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work; mixing learners • Allowing learners from different backgrounds to share views and beliefs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners from different cultures sit and work together • Learners are free to share
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping of learners • Teaching in both languages (Afrikaans and English) • Discipline problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some learners do not know how to behave
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learnt some words of other languages • Workshops where I learnt to give all learners emotional space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No real problems • Teachers are there to help
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to Grade 9 • Any; English is my subject • Any; 18 years multicultural experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all teachers know how to treat us
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining discipline • Sharing cultural customs and habits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing cultural backgrounds • Teachers explain how to be tolerant
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping of learners • Teaching respect for others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create awareness and respect for others

10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be frank with learners • Respect your own, then you will respect others • Learn from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach us to behave respectful
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Lay down rules; know learners' names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most teachers call us by name to give instructions • Sharing opinions
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to learners • Showing respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't say anything bad about other cultures • Talk openly about differences

School B

Interview question	Teachers' responses	Learners' responses
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People of different cultures living together • Many languages – each with its own culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No racial differences • Different cultures put together
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodating learners of different colour • Showing acceptance for learner differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School consists of a combination of Indian, Zulu, Sotho and Afrikaans learners
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodating learners from Africa and Asia • Teaching respect for others • Help from outside could help us to cope with learner differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some learners think they are better than others
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through discussions • Own beliefs are difficult to understand and need to be shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners sit together • Teachers stress respect for each other
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language problems • Lack of learner discipline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher treats us equally • Can't always understand the language of instruction
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further studies • Discussions with peers • By forming multicultural groups ourselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They teach us well • They treat us well
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of learners determine because they are a major factor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are capable to teach in multicultural classes
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions • By being a role model • Creating trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell us to live in harmony together • Discussions

9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Admits that everybody can learn something from others Drawing parallels with real life situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to learners about different cultures
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutual respect is mainly determined by situational factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talks frequently about respect for others
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working together in groups By allowing every learner to express an opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask about learner opinions and interests Discussion groups
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By showing interest in learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By acknowledging learner differences

School C

Interview question	Teachers' responses	Learners' responses
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of cultures Difference in religion, colour, language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different cultures and viewpoints of life
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect for all Extra classes in English to accommodate learners experiencing difficulties Different religions are accommodated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our school has Zulu, Sotho, Afrikaans and English speaking learners
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No cultural attire is allowed To release some learners on specific days for prayers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School does not always understand cultural habits to accommodate differences
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group work Allowing learners to group themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are not separated and can sit or work with whoever we want
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problems Language problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problems
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University training Years of experience of multicultural teaching 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have to make adjustments sometimes
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any level Feel competent, except for teaching in one of the African languages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> They teach us very well
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address it immediately when it arises No tolerance is showed with regard to prejudice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching us to respect each other

9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address it when it arises • Showing recognition for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and respect learner differences
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead by example • No tolerance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Showing respect for different cultures
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accommodate all learners • Creating a positive classroom climate • Grouping of learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grouping learners • Questions and answers
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realise it is part of our society • Learners should be given guidance about respect and tolerance for others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide equal opportunities for all learners

School D

Interview question	Teachers' responses	Learners' responses
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different groups with different backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences which are accommodated
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing opportunities for all • Language preferences are considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different cultures are welcomed
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language barriers • Life styles and socio-economic backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't know language of instruction • Indians leave earlier on Fridays
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Alphabetical ordering of learners • Information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group work • Mixed groups
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural clashes • English as medium of instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No problems • English as teaching and learning language
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Learn from learners • University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It does not matter as long as they teach me well
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preferably Grade 9 • Any level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers are well trained and good in their work
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No discussions on racial matters • Showing respect for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers always say: show respect to others
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoidance of discriminatory discussions • Show respect when expected to be respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher talk about non-stereotyping

10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Casual remarks about respect Class rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom rules
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Questioning Know learners' names 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group work Questioning
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing about other's cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Don't take others for granted Don't talk bad about others

School E

Interview question	Teachers' responses	Learners' responses
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Combination of cultures Difference in culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several cultures together Differences of religion and traditions
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zulus, Xhosas and Sotho's are accommodated in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Differences are appreciated
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighting respect as core value 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All learners are treated the same
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language is a problem
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshops Live in multicultural community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upset because they don't know my language
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No problem Any level is good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some find it difficult to teach multicultural learners Some are more competent than others
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to learners No tolerance of prejudice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach us that respect starts at home
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing life experiences and trust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers share experiences Some are ignorant
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By showing respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers are models
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group work Learner talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group work Learners can freely express their opinions
12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No tolerance of degrading remarks Putting myself in other's shoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of culture for everybody is emphasised

4.4 ANALYSIS OF DATA ACCORDING TO A *PRIORI* CATEGORIES

In this section, the coded responses obtained from interviews with teachers and learners at the respective schools are combined into a *priori* categories to present an

overall view of the two groups of research participants on each pre-determined category.

Category: Understanding of multiculturalism (Q1)	
Teachers	Teachers' understanding of multiculturalism includes: the inclusion of different cultural groups in one school or the combination of many cultures in one school, and the accommodation of learners from different cultural backgrounds in the school. It was also mentioned that multiculturalism refers to people from different cultures living together. Language was mentioned as defined characteristic of multiculturalism.
Learners	According to some of the learners, the term multiculturalism is used to describe different people who are living together. They continue by indicating that multiculturalism is when many cultures are put together such as in a school where learners from different cultures come together.
Category: Accommodating multiculturalism (Q2, Q4)	
Teachers	<p>According to the teachers all the schools accommodate learners from different cultural backgrounds like English, Afrikaners, Zulus, Xhosas and Basotho's. It was also mentioned that extra classes for English are organised in order to accommodate learners from different cultures. It thus appears as if language is again used as defined characteristic for multiculturalism. In addition, multiculturalism is accommodated in the sense that there are learners with different religious orientations in schools. Teachers furthermore noted the fact that schools create and expose all learners to various opportunities which suggests the accommodation of multiculturalism.</p> <p>With reference to classrooms multiculturalism is often accommodated by grouping learners together in heterogeneous groups. Classroom discussions to exchange cultural differences and which open up learner participation are sometimes used by teachers. Teachers also stated that they occasionally arrange learners according to the alphabet, irrespective of their cultural differences, so as to allow for learner socialization. In this way learners not only socialize but also become aware of the fact that they are all equal and that they must understand and respect other cultures.</p>
Learners	Learners are of the opinion that schools accommodate multiculturalism in the sense that they comprise of learners of different cultural and

	<p>language origins that are respected and treated equally. The different cultures mentioned include Indians, Whites and Africans.</p> <p>Within classrooms a variety of cultures is accommodated in the form of learners sitting together or that the teachers form learner groups consisting of mixed cultures. Though respect for each other's culture is mentioned as a prominent feature of multicultural classrooms, learners are also of the opinion that different cultures in one classroom make it difficult for some learners who do not understand English as it is not their first language.</p>
<p>Category: Multicultural challenges (Q3, Q5)</p>	
Teachers	<p>Though some teachers felt that their school has a lot of experience in teaching multicultural diverse learners, some teachers find it problematic to use two languages for instructional purposes. Added to this, it was mentioned that advice is required from experts to assist learners who are from around the world like Asians and Africans who experience language problems. The challenge of language as instruction was mentioned on several occasions. Another instructional challenge that was pointed out is the cultural practices of certain cultures, for example the fact that Indians need to be released earlier of Fridays for their religious attendance.</p> <p>Challenges in the classroom include the medium of instruction and ill-discipline of certain racial groups. The language of instruction in multicultural classrooms is regarded by the majority of teachers to be a serious obstacle to many learners whose home language is not English.</p>
Learners	<p>According to learners, in schools that are composed of many cultures, the proficiency of English poses a challenge to teachers and learners. Moreover, African learners often complain that they are not allowed to use their home language. Racial differences are also problematic in the sense that some learners undermine other learners' cultures by stating that their own is better. Differences in cultural practices were indicated by the learners as another challenge.</p> <p>Conflicting opinions were expressed in as far as challenges in the classroom are concerned. Some learners indicated that there are no serious challenges in multicultural classrooms and if any problems arise they are promptly resolved by teachers. Though it was mentioned that learners of different cultural backgrounds often segregate themselves according to their cultures, others remark that learners of different</p>

	cultural origin don't sit apart from one another in the classroom. Language was again declared as a challenge in the multicultural classroom.
Category: Teacher capability (Q6, Q7)	
Teachers	<p>Two main sources where teachers received training with regard to teaching in a multicultural environment could be identified from teachers' interviews. These include training received from higher education institutions as part of a formal programme and workshops. There were, however, teachers who indicated that they received no formal training on multicultural education but that they formed discussion groups at their school. Yet, others indicated that their accumulated experiences in multicultural settings formed part of their 'training'.</p> <p>With regard to competency, some teachers felt that they are competent to teach multicultural classes up to a certain level, particularly up to Grade 9. Others were of the opinion that their experience enables them to teach multicultural classes at any level without any difficulties, but that they are not capable to teach any subject, e.g. African languages. A third viewpoint was that competency is determined by learners' willingness to learn and their attitude towards school.</p>
Learners	<p>To be taught by a teacher from another cultural group seems to not really trouble most of the learners. They don't feel discriminated against, but feel rather honoured and respected to be taught by a person from another cultural orientation. Some learners initially experienced it as a problem but within a short time felt more comfortable. Though a learner indicated that he felt upset to be taught by a person from another cultural group than his own because a teacher once offended his language, this can be seen as an isolated case.</p> <p>Most learners indicated that their teachers are competent to teach multicultural diverse classes because they can handle all cultures, they understand where the learners come from and they are sensitive to learners' needs. On one occasion it was mentioned that teachers are not able to cope with teaching multicultural diverse classes.</p>
Category: Control of multicultural beliefs (Q8, Q9)	
Teachers	According to many teachers prejudice is not really experienced, but if behaviour of prejudice crops up, it is dealt with immediately. Most teachers don't allow any discriminatory attitudes and teach learners that all cultures are equal and need to be respected. The teachers try to

	<p>lead by example, by showing respect and appreciation of learners' cultures. In some cases teachers don't allow discussions based on racial issues.</p> <p>Learners are encouraged to learn from each other's cultures in order to understand the commonalities and uniqueness of culturally related matters. Learners are made aware that discrimination is not allowed. In the same way as prejudice learners are taught how to respect each other's cultures, and teachers avoid discussions leading to stereotyping.</p>
Learners	<p>Teachers teach learners about respect for other cultures and teachers act strict towards learners who practice prejudice. The importance of living in harmony with other cultures in a truly multicultural environment is emphasised.</p> <p>Learners are also aware that different cultures have different values and all needs to be respected. Teachers explain to learners that all cultures need respect to avoid stereotyping. If there is any stereotyping matter, the teachers call learners immediately to order.</p>
<p>Category: Imparting multicultural norms (Q10, Q11)</p>	
Teachers	<p>Teachers sensitise learners about mutual respect by making them aware that they have to learn from each other's cultures, that they need to respect other's cultures and that all cultures are equal. Teachers are leading by example by showing learners respect and they expect learners to respect them in return. Learners are not tolerated to disrespect other cultures. Learners are taught simple practices of showing respect such as to raise their hands when answering questions, do not interrupt another speaker, listening while others talk and that girls should be allowed to enter and exit first at the start or end of a class.</p> <p>Learner participation is encouraged by forming groups and by supporting learners when speaking English. The majority teacher participants promote group work where learners from different cultures are grouped together and are allowed opportunities to express their views. Teachers also try to create positive learning environments where learner participation could be ensured through questioning and answering sessions.</p>

Learners	<p>The learners are taught to show mutual respect for cultures different from their own and to avoid discriminatory practices. There are classroom rules to direct mutual respect and the teachers model respect so that learners learn by imitation.</p> <p>As far as learner participation is concerned, teachers ask learners questions and learners respond. Group discussions are organised which enable learners to work with learners having different orientations than their own.</p>
<p>Category: multicultural sensitivity (Q12)</p>	
Teachers	<p>It appears as if teachers encourage learners to share what they bring from their cultures and that they tell them to avoid discriminating language and that they must respect each other. Teachers also try to establish where their learners come from in order to understand their behaviour better. Learners are encouraged to work together in order to become acquainted with cultural differences. Since the South African Constitution compels one to respect every culture, all the aforementioned is founded on the premise of respect.</p>
Learners	<p>Learners are taught how to respect other cultures and the importance of every culture. All cultures at school are given opportunities to practice its cultural activities. Learners felt that they are treated as one big family.</p>

4.5 INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Derived from the coded data obtained from the interviews with the respective participant groups at the sampled schools (*cf.* 4.3) and the pre-determined directory of categories in which data were clustered (*cf.* 4.4), this section offers an interpretation of the data by also incorporating relevant information obtained from the observations where applicable. The findings will be justified by relating it to appropriate information that was found in the literature study and will also be associated with OBE practices as outlined in Table 2.1. where relevant. The discussion which follows is according to the same sequence followed in 4.4.

Category: Understanding of multiculturalism (Q1)	
Interpretation	<p>In accordance with 2.3.1, it appears as if both teachers' and learners' understanding of multiculturalism lack substance, since the concept proves to be much more complex as indicated by the respondents. However, the acknowledgment of certain aspects of diversity (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5), such as cultural (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5.1) and language (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5.2) diversity, is noteworthy.</p> <p>With regard to the possible impact that teachers' understanding of multiculturalism may have on their OBE practices (<i>cf.</i> Table 2.1), the researcher is still uncertain on how understanding will translate into practices. This will most probably be revealed in the categories which follow.</p>
Category: Accommodating multiculturalism (Q2, Q4)	
Interpretation	<p>In agreement with the aims of multicultural education (<i>cf.</i> 2.3.2), diversity is accommodated in the forms of cultural, language and religious diversity (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5). Heterogeneous groupings, classroom discussions to exchange cultural differences, equal treatment of learners, understanding and respect, are all mentioned as features representing the accommodation of multiculturalism in the sampled schools. It was also observed that teachers know their learners' names and by trying to involve everybody in their lessons.</p> <p>The participants' responses and the researcher's observations thus reveal that the accommodation of multiculturalism in the sampled schools is contained in the following identified OBE practices: working with others (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.3), acknowledging individual learner differences without discrimination (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.1 and 2.6.3), and through the construction of an encouraging classroom climate (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3 and 2.5.4.4).</p>
Category: Multicultural challenges (Q3, Q5)	
Interpretation	<p>Challenges that were frequently mentioned included language problems, acceptance of different cultural practices, racial differences and "inherent" segregation. In addition to the participants' interview responses, the researcher observed the following: spontaneous separations in the staffroom during morning caucuses and devotions,</p>

	<p>releasing certain cultural groups early on Fridays to attend their religious activities, and at certain intervals, for example during the changing of classes or during breaks, learners re-group themselves according to their different cultural origins.</p> <p>With regard to language problems, the problematic issue of language diversity (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5.2) is again disclosed and confirmed. With regard to differences in cultural practices, the multifaceted nature of culture (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.2) in terms of its multi-layered and componential composition is proven, while the reality of racial difference (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.5.4) is endorsed. In terms of “inherent” segregation, it is clear that acculturation (<i>cf.</i> 2.2.4) is demonstrated on different levels. When considering all these challenges holistically, it is evident that the accommodation of multicultural diversity in the sampled schools is still in an early stage of a developmental process which is subjected to the criticism on multicultural education (<i>cf.</i> 2.3.4). Furthermore, these challenges can be considered as archetypes of the covert factors that oppose successful multicultural education (<i>cf.</i> 2.3.7). It therefore appears that teachers’ OBE practices (<i>cf.</i> Table 2.1) still need to be refined.</p>
<p>Category: Teacher capability (Q6, Q7)</p>	
<p>Interpretation</p>	<p>Teachers considered training, sharing experiences with colleagues, years of teaching experience and learners’ cooperation as factors contributing towards their capability to teach in multicultural diverse environments. The majority of learners felt that their teachers are competent to teach in multicultural classrooms and were in fact, ‘<i>honoured</i>’ to be taught by someone from another culture. These responses reflect that there are attempts in the sampled schools to realize the aims of multicultural education (<i>cf.</i> 2.3.2). Related to a previously mentioned category (the accommodation of multiculturalism, Q2 and Q4), the researcher also observed the following in terms of teachers’ capability to teach in multicultural diverse environments. Most of the teachers varied their teaching methods to try and include all learners in learning activities. Discussion groups which were heterogeneously compiled and the application of verbal questioning to ensure the participation of all learners, reflected variations in teaching methods.</p> <p>The above information reveals some degree of awareness about the</p>

	<p>dimensions of multicultural education (cf. 2.3.5), especially with regard to equity pedagogy. This is implied through the implementation of OBE practices such as working with others (cf. 2.6.3) and an enabling classroom climate (cf. 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4). Derived from the learners' responses, (<i>feeling 'honoured' to be taught by someone of another culture</i>), teachers appeared to be perceived by some learners as change agents (cf. 2.5.3).</p>
<p>Category: Control of multicultural beliefs (Q8, Q9)</p>	
Interpretation	<p>Both teachers' and learners' responses point to some responsiveness to the aims and characteristics of multicultural education (cf. 2.3.2, 2.3.3) as well as to the restriction of the covert factors opposing successful multicultural education (cf. 2.3.7).</p> <p>Control of multicultural beliefs are encapsulated in the following OBE practices at the sampled schools: teachers acting as change agents to empower learners (cf. 2.5.3), non-discriminatory actions (cf. 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (cf. 2.6.1, 2.6.3), valuing of indigenous knowledge systems (cf. 2.6.2), working with others (cf. 2.6.3), acknowledging learner differences without discrimination (cf. 2.5.4.4), and by creating a positive classroom climate (cf. 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4).</p>
<p>Category: Imparting multicultural norms (Q10, Q11)</p>	
Interpretation	<p>In addition to the interview responses the researcher discovered through observations that teacher instructions play a vital role in instilling mutual respect amongst learners. Instructions like, "don't make noise", "give others a chance to talk", "don't insult others" were common. In many cases, observable classroom rules confirmed these instructions. Respect was also observed in the form of boys waiting for girls to enter or exit the classroom first and learners not interrupting each other while talking.</p> <p>By mentioning "<i>leading by example</i>" and "<i>showing learners to ...</i>" during interviews, it is evident that research participants are confident that teachers act as change agents to empower learners (cf. 2.5.3) through their OBE practices about multicultural norms. In addition, respect and cultural sensitivity (cf. 2.6.1, 2.6.3) as part of non-discriminatory actions (cf. 2.5.4.4) and the acknowledgement of</p>

	individual learner differences without discrimination (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4), figured prominently as OBE practices in this section. A positive classroom climate (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4) and the creation of opportunities to work with others (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.3) are also OBE practices used by teachers in the sampled schools to accommodate, demonstrate and teach multicultural norms.
Category: Multicultural sensitivity (Q12)	
Interpretation	With regard to developing and supporting multicultural sensitivity, both groups of research participants responded positively. Based on the undertones of teachers acting as change agents to empower learners (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.3) and learner motivation (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.3), responses are seated in the following OBE practices as cited in Table 2.1. Non-discriminatory actions (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.1, 2.6.3), valuing indigenous knowledge systems (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.2), working with others (<i>cf.</i> 2.6.3), acknowledging individual learner differences without discrimination (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.4), and the design of an encouraging classroom climate (<i>cf.</i> 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4).

4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the research participants' responses obtained through interviews and the researcher's observational notes where applicable. In essence, it appears as if teachers show an awareness of how to accommodate multicultural diversity through OBE practices. However, the data also reveal that this awareness still warrants refinement in order to function successfully in a multicultural educational environment.

The next chapter will present a summary of the study, where after conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study will be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region. To realize this purpose, the study was structured and guided by objectives (*cf.* 1.3.2). Both the purpose and the objectives enabled the researcher to conduct a literature study followed by an empirical investigation to answer the stated primary research question (*cf.* 1.3.1). This chapter will be arranged according to the following sub-sections:

- An overview of the study
- A synopsis of the findings of the study in relation to the stated objectives and purpose
- Recommendations
- Suggestions for further research
- Limitations of the study

5.2 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The overview of the study intends to provide a brief synopsis of all the previous chapters of the study.

5.2.1 Chapter one

The rationale behind chapter one was to introduce and motivate the study. It provided an orientation regarding the matters as delineated below.

The introductory section (*cf.* 1.1) suggested a broad outline of the problem identified by the researcher which initiated the study. This broad outline is encapsulated in the issue as to whether public schools which are open to accommodate multicultural learners, are capacitated to successfully understand, accept and teach learners originating from a variety of different cultural backgrounds. This broad outline of the problem was then translated into more exact terms which clarified the purpose of the study (*cf.* 1.2) which was guided by a primary research question (*cf.* 1.3.1) and secondary research questions and objectives (*cf.* 1.3.2). Furthermore, the study was motivated by providing a rationale of the study (*cf.* 1.4) after which it was positioned within a theoretical framework (*cf.* 1.5), a conceptual framework (*cf.* 1.6) and a research design (*cf.* 1.7).

5.2.2 Chapter two

Guided by the secondary research questions and accompanying objectives, chapter two explored the literature on what constitutes **multicultural diversity** and **OBE practices** since these two concepts formed the theoretical focus of the study.

To contextualize **multicultural diversity** within the South African milieu, the historical undercurrent was briefly outlined by differentiating between the pre-democratic and democratic education systems (*cf.* 2.2.1). The discussion on multicultural diversity which followed was structured by considering the meanings of culture (*cf.* 2.2.2), multiculturalism (*cf.* 2.2.3), acculturation (*cf.* 2.2.4) and diversity (*cf.* 2.2.5). Closely related to multicultural diversity is the notion of multicultural education which was explored in terms of its definition (*cf.* 2.3.1), aims (*cf.* 2.3.2) and characteristics (*cf.* 2.3.3). Criticism on the phenomenon (*cf.* 2.3.4) was also considered, as was its dimensions (*cf.* 2.3.5), classrooms conditions for its effective implementation (*cf.* 2.3.6) and the covert factors opposing the success of multicultural education (*cf.* 2.3.7). The discussion on multicultural diversity and multicultural education was concluded by emphasizing the complexity of these two phenomena and by indicating that teachers' competence to teach in these environments could impact on learners' construction of their social and self-identities (*cf.* 2.4).

The chapter continued with a discussion on **OBE practices** which was organized as follows. An initial orientation on OBE was given (*cf.* 2.5.1) in order to delineate its position as an educational approach in the South African education system. Thereafter OBE was defined (*cf.* 2.5.2); followed by discussions on its philosophical underpinnings (*cf.* 2.5.3), its components (*cf.* 2.5.4), and approaches to OBE (*cf.* 2.5.5). OBE was then related to the South African school curriculum by considering the entrenched values of the curriculum (*cf.* 2.6.1), the principles underpinning the curriculum (*cf.* 2.6.2) and the critical and developmental outcomes (*cf.* 2.6.3) which not only direct the curriculum, but education and training in general. By reflecting on the aforementioned information, the chapter was concluded by conceptualizing OBE practices and to translate the conceptualization into operational terms (*cf.* 2.7; Table 2.1) to enable the researcher to continue with the empirical study.

As a result of the literature study the researcher is convinced that following objectives were achieved:

- i. To determine the meaning of multicultural diversity and multicultural education.
- ii. To clarify the meaning of Outcomes-based Education.
- iii. To investigate and determine the appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment.
- iv. To uncover the conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices.

Chapter three

Chapter three presented an overview of the empirical study. The research paradigm (*cf.* 3.2), the research design (*cf.* 3.3) and the strategy of inquiry (research method) (*cf.* 3.4) were explained and justified. This was followed by a description of the population and an elucidation of the sampling procedures and the sample of the study (*cf.* 3.5). The data collection instruments were discussed (*cf.* 3.6) after which the criteria for administering the instruments (*cf.* 3.7) were presented.

For ensuring the trustworthiness of the empirical study, evidence of applicable quality criteria (*cf.* 3.8) was provided. A synopsis of the pilot study was given (*cf.* 3.9) and the ethical considerations (*cf.* 3.10) were accounted for. A schematic presentation of the data collection process (*cf.* 3.11; Figure 3.1) brought the chapter to an end.

5.2.4 Chapter four

Directed by the purpose of this study, namely to explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region, chapter four focused on the findings of the empirical study emanating from the data analysis and interpretation.

In this chapter it was firstly indicated how the data analysis and interpretation process was managed (*cf.* 4.2; Figure 4.1). This was followed by a presentation of the coded versions of the raw data obtained by means of the interviews from the respective research participants groups at the different schools on their views on OBE practices and the accommodation of multicultural diversity (*cf.* 4.3). The raw data were then analysed according to *a priori* categories to present an overall view of the two groups of research participants on each pre-determined category (*cf.* 4.4). Structured according to the pre-determined directory of categories, the data were interpreted by also incorporating relevant information obtained from the observations, where applicable. The findings were associated with OBE practices as outlined in Table 2.1 and justified by relating it to appropriate information that was found in the literature study (*cf.* 4.5).

5.3 A SYNOPSIS OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY IN RELATION TO THE STATED OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE

In this section the findings of the study will be structured according to the stated objectives and purpose.

5.3.1 Findings related to the objectives of the study

Objective 1: To determine the meaning of multicultural diversity and multicultural education

Hofstede (1991:9) and Hofstede and Hofstede (2005:7) describe culture as a multi-layered concept, while Mooney, Knox and Schacht (2000:5-9) maintain that the concept comprises of several elements (*cf.* 2.2.2). Added to this, diversity denotes the multifarious nature of human kind (*cf.* 2.2.5). Four prominent elements constitute diversity: culture, language, religion and race. It can thus be concluded that multicultural diversity is a complex and multifaceted concept.

On the other hand, multicultural education is regarded as being “ill-defined and lacking in substance” (Lemmer *et al.*, 2006:3), which makes it difficult for teachers to adopt. However, it seems fair to accept that multicultural education is firmly rooted in principles such as freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity (*cf.* 2.3.1). Furthermore, multicultural education appears to be a multidimensional concept (Banks, 1997:20-23) which includes dimensions such as content integration, knowledge construction, prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy and an empowering school culture (*cf.* 2.3.5).

Objective 2: To clarify the meaning of Outcomes-based Education

Naicker (1999:87) define OBE as: “An approach of learning and teaching that is learner-centred and [which] is based on the understanding that all learners can learn”. It is an eclectic educational approach since it is philosophically rooted in behaviourism, pragmatism, reconstructivism and critical theory (*cf.* 2.5.3). Furthermore, OBE is strongly founded on the beliefs that all learners can succeed provided that enabling conditions and opportunities are made available (*cf.* 2.5.2, 2.5.4.3).

Objective 3: To investigate and determine the appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment

According to Meier and Hartell (2009:184), the teacher “should define the multicultural classroom in such a way that optimal learning will take place in an atmosphere of security, human dignity, impartiality and spontaneity”. It is thus evident that enabling conditions to encourage learner participation (*cf.* 2.5.2) should be created. In this regard, a classroom climate where inter-cultural understanding and communication prevail, forms the basis on which appropriate conditions for multicultural teaching and learning environments should be build. In addition, factors such as showing respect, the purposeful creation of learning opportunities, taking advantage of learners’ cultural knowledge, relating learning to real-life contexts, realistic expectations towards all learners and a pluralistic curriculum (*cf.* 2.3.6) all contribute to appropriate conditions for teaching in a multicultural environment.

Objective 4: To uncover the conceptualisation and operationalisation of OBE practices

It was stated in 2.7 that although *it is acknowledged that preferred teaching, learning and assessment methods advance the effective implementation of OBE, the scope of this study goes beyond these routine practices.*

OBE practices were thus conceptualised in terms of what emerged from the literature study as essential underlying factors contributing towards successful teaching in a multicultural, OBE environment. OBE practices were then operationalized to present more visible actions in order *to come to a better understanding of how teachers’ OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region.* The conceptualisation and operationalization of OBE practices were presented in Table 2.1.

5.3.2 Findings related to the purpose of the study

Purpose: To explore and come to a better understanding of how teachers’ OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners in the Harrismith region

The purpose of the study guided the empirical research and is therefore used as point of departure to illuminate the findings of this part of the study. The discussion on the

empirical findings will henceforth be organised according to the *a priori* categories (cf. 4.4).

(i) Understanding of multiculturalism (Q1)

Although the research participants acknowledged aspects of diversity to define multiculturalism, their understanding of multiculturalism confirmed the claim of Lemmer *et al.* (2006:3) and reflected a lack of substance.

(ii) Accommodating multiculturalism (Q2, Q4)

It was revealed that the accommodation of multiculturalism in the sampled schools is contained in the following identified OBE practices: working with others (cf. 2.6.3), acknowledging individual learner differences without discrimination (cf. 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (cf. 2.6.1 and 2.6.3), and through the construction of an encouraging classroom climate (cf. 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3 and 2.5.4.4).

(iii) Multicultural challenges (Q3, Q5)

The problematic issue of language diversity (cf. 2.2.5.2) was disclosed and confirmed. With regard to differences in cultural practices, the multifaceted nature of culture (cf. 2.2.2) in terms of its multi-layered and componential composition was proven, while the reality of racial difference (cf. 2.2.5.4) was endorsed. In terms of “inherent” segregation, it was clear that acculturation (cf. 2.2.4) is demonstrated on different levels. When considering all these challenges holistically, it is evident that the accommodation of multicultural diversity in the sampled schools is still in an early stage of a developmental process which is subjected to the criticism on multicultural education (cf. 2.3.4). Furthermore, these challenges can be considered as archetypes of the covert factors that oppose successful multicultural education (cf. 2.3.7).

(iv) Teacher capability (Q6, Q7)

Some degree of awareness about the dimensions of multicultural education (*cf.* 2.3.5), especially with regard to equity pedagogy, was revealed. This is implied through the implementation of OBE practices such as working with others (*cf.* 2.6.3) and an enabling classroom climate (*cf.* 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4). Teachers appeared to be perceived by some learners as change agents (*cf.* 2.5.3).

(v) Control of multicultural beliefs (Q8, Q9)

Control of multicultural beliefs were encapsulated in the following OBE practices at the sampled schools: teachers acting as change agents to empower learners (*cf.* 2.5.3), non-discriminatory actions (*cf.* 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (*cf.* 2.6.1, 2.6.3), valuing of indigenous knowledge systems (*cf.* 2.6.2), working with others (*cf.* 2.6.3), acknowledging learner differences without discrimination (*cf.* 2.5.4.4), and by creating a positive classroom climate (*cf.* 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4).

(vi) Imparting multicultural norms (Q10, Q11)

It is evident that teachers act as change agents to empower learners (*cf.* 2.5.3) through their OBE practices about multicultural norms. In addition, respect and cultural sensitivity (*cf.* 2.6.1, 2.6.3) as part of non-discriminatory actions (*cf.* 2.5.4.4) and the acknowledgement of individual learner differences without discrimination (*cf.* 2.5.4.4), figured prominently as OBE practices. A positive classroom climate (*cf.* 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4) and the creation of opportunities to work with others (*cf.* 2.6.3) are also OBE practices used by teachers in the sampled schools to accommodate, demonstrate and teach multicultural norms.

(vii) Multicultural sensitivity (Q12)

Based on the undertones of teachers acting as change agents to empower learners (*cf.*

2.5.3) and learner motivation (*cf.* 2.5.4.3), the following OBE practices were evident: non-discriminatory actions (*cf.* 2.5.4.4), respect and cultural sensitivity (*cf.* 2.6.1, 2.6.3), valuing indigenous knowledge systems (*cf.* 2.6.2), working with others (*cf.* 2.6.3), acknowledging individual learner differences without discrimination (*cf.* 2.5.4.4), and the design of an encouraging classroom climate (*cf.* 2.5.4.2, 2.5.4.3, 2.5.4.4).

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Derived from the findings it appears as if teachers' OBE practices (*cf.* Table 2.1) still need to be refined. In order to facilitate this, the researcher suggests the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1

The Department of Education should make more concerted efforts in their endeavours to sensitise school communities and teachers about multicultural education. In this regard more intensive workshops could be organised so as to illuminate the meaning, importance and practices of multicultural education. In addition experts of multicultural education can visit schools to facilitate the handling of multicultural differences.

Recommendation 2

Teacher education institutions should be made aware of the importance of multicultural education and should be guided to include this in their curricula.

Recommendation 3

The Department of Education should ensure that in all public schools that accommodate multicultural diverse learners, are capacitated to handle language barriers.

Recommendation 4

Schools accommodating learners from a variety of cultural backgrounds should make special efforts to appoint teachers from different cultural backgrounds on their staff as a

means of reducing cultural prejudice and cultural stereotyping within their school environments.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The researcher identified the following as possible opportunities for further research:

- Research can be conducted to better understand teachers' conceptualisation of multicultural education.
- Research can be done in order to evaluate the effectiveness of different teaching methods within multicultural classrooms.
- Research can be done to establish the adequacy of teacher education programmes with the regard to teaching, learning and assessment within multicultural educational environments.
- This research can be extended to include the whole Free State Province, or any other province, in order to understand how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners or to validate the findings of this research.
- The research could also be intensified by incorporating learners from other grades, Departmental officials and parents as research participants in order to understand how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diverse learners better.
- Based on a needs analysis, research can be done to develop a training framework for in-service teachers, in order to improve their teaching and assessment skills within multicultural educational environments.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the researcher made special efforts to ensure the trustworthiness of the study, some limitations, such as those mentioned below, were identified.

- The findings regarding teachers' OBE practices to accommodate multicultural diversity may differ from place to place depending on the immediate influence of the community. For this reason the findings of this study cannot be generalised.
- The research sample was small and included only selected participants within a certain region. Therefore the research cannot report conclusively on how teachers' OBE practices accommodate multicultural diversity.
- The study was conducted by using an exclusive qualitative research design. A quantitative or mixed-methods design may have yielded different results.
- The researchers' interpretation of what constitutes OBE practices may be idiosyncratic and could be reviewed or refined.
- The face-to-face interviewing caused some of the research participants not to express themselves properly; particularly learners who seemed to be shy or scared. In some cases expressive language also proved to be problematic.

5.7 FINAL CONCLUSION

The Department of Education strives to ensure that multicultural diversity is implemented and successfully managed in all public schools in South Africa. In terms of the implementation of South Africa's school curriculum, the education system opted for an OBE approach. This requires that teachers should be conversant with the theoretical underpinnings of OBE in order to translate it into classroom practices for realising each learner's potential. Moreover, within a multicultural educational environment, teachers are also required to be familiar with the best practices of handling multicultural diversity. It is therefore non-negotiable that teachers should not only display the willingness to accommodate multicultural diverse learners, but also the competence to create favourable multicultural teaching and learning environments and to operate successfully in such environments.

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