

**RETHINKING ABET IN THE RURAL AREAS OF THE
LIMPOPO PROVINCE: ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR
DESIGNING RELEVANT ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES.**

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(ADULT EDUCATION)**

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**Rethinking ABET in the rural areas of the Limpopo Province: Establishing criteria
for designing relevant adult Education programmes.**

by

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(M.Ed, B.Bibl.Ed)**

**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Adult Education in the Faculty of Education at the North West
University, Mafikeng Campus.**

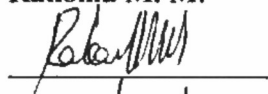
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Date submitted: November 2006

STATEMENT OF DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the North West University, Mafikeng Campus, hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and execution and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Signed: Rakoma M. M.



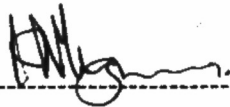
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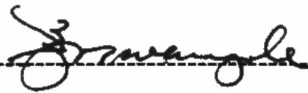
STATEMENT OF ACCEPTANCE FOR EXAMINATION

This thesis, "Rethinking ABET in the Rural Areas of Limpopo Province: Establishing criteria for designing relevant Adult Education programmes," written by Maletsepe Monica Rakoma of the Academic Development Centre, is hereby recommended for acceptance for examination.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my late grandmother Malepo Sarah Rakoma, and the late uncle Jimmy Rakoma who used to tell me “perseverance is the mother of success”. May their souls rest in peace. To my mother Mokgadi Elizabeth Moloisi, as well as my beautiful daughter Onthatile Shatadi Rakoma, I would like to say, may the good Lord God bless and keep you.

ABSTRACT

The dawn of the new era in 1994, in South Africa, brought with it a number of changes, one of which is education. Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) was seen as a vehicle to address the alarming rate of illiteracy. This made ABET to become a matter of great concern in South Africa. Limpopo as one of South Africa's provinces was earmarked as one of the regions that need thorough redressing and restitution of equality.

This study investigated the type of ABET programmes that are offered in Limpopo. It was specifically aimed at establishing the quality criteria that should characterise adult education programmes in the rural areas of the Limpopo Province.

40 adult educators, 152 adult learners and 12 area coordinators from the Greater Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts, in Limpopo, participated in this study. Data was collected through questionnaires, individual and focus group interviews.

It emerged from this study that the focus of the ABET programme, in the Limpopo Province, is basic reading, writing and numeracy skills. The missing element in the design of relevant adult education is a balance between basic literacy and numeracy skills and the provision of income-generation programmes and other programmes that equip adult learners with knowledge, skills, values and competencies that are relevant for the challenges of the 21st century.

On the basis of these findings, it was recommended that an effective needs analysis procedure should form the basis for the design of relevant adult education programmes in the rural areas of Limpopo.

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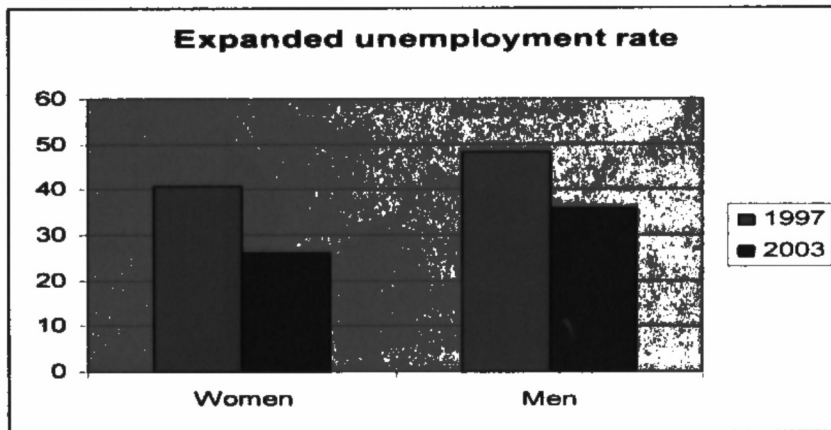
CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa has a long history of apartheid that contributed, to a larger extent, to its limited development in a number of areas. According to the National Education Policy Investigations report (NEPI) (1992) the majority of the people, in the country do not have jobs, proper houses and infrastructure. These people live in abject poverty and occupy the larger part of the country that is mainly rural. It is important to note that the apartheid era led to millions of black people receiving little or no education at all (NEPI, 1992). In its report, the South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE, 1999) also stresses that many people in South Africa have, for various reasons, been deprived of an initial formal education or have received limited or inadequate education. In fact, the 2001 Census report shows that “at least four million South Africans aged 20 years and above had no schooling at all, and that a further four million had limited primary school education” (Megoamere, 2005). This means that a lot of these people live below the poverty line.

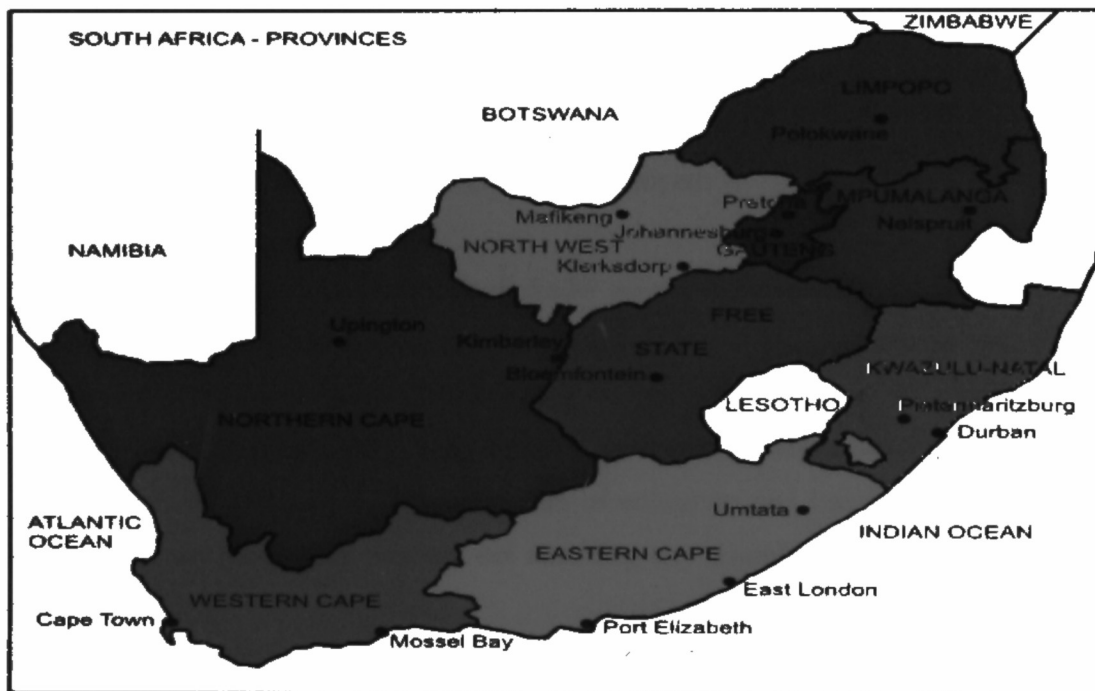
Budlender (in Amalungelo, a bi-monthly Gender Justice Barometer Magazine for Southern Africa, 2004) gives a clear picture of the unemployment situation in South Africa in 1994. This magazine shows that South Africa’s economy has not been particularly good. “Growth and development has been quite slow - only marginally more than inflation” (Budlender, 2004: 52). The table on the next page presents evidence to what is alluded to in the introductory paragraph. Although the statistics range between the year 1997 and 2003, the period after the democratization of South Africa, an inference can be made that the situation might have been worse than before 2003.



Source: Budlender in Amalungelo, 2004

Many people with low or no income cannot extricate themselves from a hopeless existence because of inadequate amounts of education and training. Although increased education does not automatically mean a better life, nor is education a panacea to cure all social ills, adult education should provide programmes that are more relevant to address the needs of learners, especially in rural areas where the problems are enormous. Adult Education practitioners and educators should also be equipped to help people sharpen their learning skills by providing the best possible facilitative environment for learning.

The dawn of the new era in 1994 in South Africa brought with it a number of changes, one of which is education. Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) was seen as a drive to address the alarming rate of illiteracy. This made ABET to become a matter of great concern in South Africa. The map of South Africa is presented on the next page to provide a clearer picture of the country and its provinces and indicate the province where the study was conducted.



Map of South Africa

Limpopo as one of South Africa's nine provinces has been identified, through a number of researches that were conducted by the Department of Adult Education at the University of the North, as a province characterised by a high level of illiteracy. Studies by Stevens (1994) and Hulst and Kerkhof (1996), showed Limpopo as one of the regions that need thorough redressing and restitution of equality. Limpopo is South Africa's northernmost province that borders onto Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana, making it the ideal entrance into Africa. It is named after the great Limpopo River that flows along its northern borders.

The Limpopo Province report, in South Africa's Reconstruction and Development magazine (1998:6), indicates that, Limpopo contributes 52% literacy rate out of an overall of 61% literacy rate for South Africa. In other words, Limpopo Province has 48% illiteracy rate. These statistics therefore, clearly suggest that many people in South Africa, particularly the Limpopo Province, need to participate in ABET programmes. Further, the Census figure indicate that almost 20% of South Africans aged 20 years and above, have no formal schooling, while only 24% have some or completed primary

education. In addition, approximately 40% have received secondary education, but only about 6% have postsecondary qualifications (The South African Institute for Distance Education, 1999). People might have acquired some form of education but that does not necessarily enable them to study further or get employed.

The former Minister of Education, Prof. Kader Asmal (1999) prioritised the eradication of illiteracy in his Nine-point plan. This showed some commitment on the part of government to fight against the illiteracy problem that may ultimately lead to the solution of other related problems of poverty and unemployment. Information such as the one presented above, underscores why provision of education and training opportunities to adults and those youngsters who are not attending any schools, should be regarded as a national priority.

It is important that people in South Africa become literate because of the rapid technological changes that occur in the country due to globalisation and other factors as well. Bown (1983) very helpfully highlights some key contextual elements when considering the education for adults. There are connected issues of poverty, economic and social development as well as politics. These call for a country such as South Africa to recognize that there are longstanding and continuing inequalities in economic, social and political relationships among people and communities. The Limpopo Province, for example, is characterised by adverse poverty (GDP, 3.6%) and high unemployment levels (49%) that lead to theft, a high crime rate and instabilities in families. It has a population of about 4.9 million (12.1% of National), 97% of whom are blacks (South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Magazine, 1998). Most of them reside in rural areas. The majority live below the poverty line, that is, they earn an income that is insufficient to meet their basic needs of food, housing, water and education. Adult Basic Education and Training should therefore be seen as a vehicle to eradicate some of these disparities. In his thesis on policy implementation in adult education, Rampedi rightfully asks, "What could be the future role of adult education in changing or just improving the situation?" (Rampedi, 2003:7). His concern is that adult education, if properly provided, may be able to uplift the rural communities in Limpopo.

In the course of their continuing development, and also due to the situation alluded to, adults find that they need specific skills or knowledge and understanding to enable them to address their current needs. The Limpopo Province, in particular, needs to concentrate on provision of services that will help in developing, improving and enhancing the literacy and other functional skills of adult learners. The largest part of this province is constituted by rural areas that are characterised by abject poverty, unemployment, lack of proper housing and infrastructure. Many middle-aged and young adults are illiterate because, some never went to school in their formative years and others dropped out of school. It is therefore important that given the situation in the province, ABET centres and relevant programmes should be established to address the problems of illiteracy, poverty and social exclusion.

There have been a number of barriers during the apartheid era for people to participate in the education system that resulted in the majority of black South Africans being excluded from the rest of the country and the world at large. A lot of them were deprived of the right to education, therefore minimising the chances for participation in the labour market and the society. The results are well known: dependency that leads to financial deprivation, unemployment, unstable households due to poverty and other factors. Poor eating habits and poor living conditions that may also lead to HIV/AIDS taking its toll and damaging the health status of the people. This culminates in a vicious circle: children grow up without examples of the normal status of work in the society, or any display of other functional skills that are needed in everyday life. For example, children who stay with their parents who work in farms, tend not to continue with their education either because there are no schools to go to or because they assist their parents by working in the farms. However, it should be noted that even in the new dispensation, there are still problems in the education system of the country. For instance Streek (Mail & Guardian, 2002) argues that, after eight years of democracy, gross inequality largely racial and poverty-based, remains in the schooling system.

Since the beginning of the democratic order in the country, doors have been opened for people to take part in adult basic education and training programmes. South Africa is

undergoing a dramatic change as a society, including the transformation of its education for adults. The challenges are formidable.

There are policies in Adult Basic Education and Training that are formulated at both National and Provincial Departments of Education. For example, the following policy documents are available: The Policy document on Adult Basic Education and Training (1997) and the Multi-year Implementation Plan for Adult Basic Education and Training (1997). The first policy served as a political strategy to ensure that each individual acquires basic education. The Multi-year implementation Plan was aimed at increasing the number of learners by focusing on programmes and quality assurance issues as well as mobilization of learners. This is an indication that there is an increasing recognition of the problem of education and the potential role of adult education in combating exclusion. However, this provision in adult education seems to be more formalized, moving in the direction of levels that come as packages. These packages contain programmes that are almost highly structured and prescriptive, and often run for a long duration that is pre-specified. The programmes have a resemblance of materials offered in primary and secondary schools. To some extent, these packages restrict adult learners from following certain career paths, or even not acquiring the necessary skills that will enable them to generate their own income. Adults, particularly those living in conditions described earlier, need programmes that will equip them with skills for immediate use.

Learning should open access to economic activities and resources. It should play an instrumental role in promoting many aspects of social, cultural and personal life. Given the extent and speed of change today, learning is essential to adjust to the dynamic nature of societal change. The renewal of knowledge skills is also a prerequisite for meeting basic needs, for participation in economic activities and for full participation as active citizens.

Learning for adults should be seen as an integral part of wider measures to help to reduce exclusion and to build pathways to inclusion. It may not provide all the solutions to the problems associated with exclusion but it can be one way of addressing the problems that

are experienced due to unemployment and poverty. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, OECD, (1999:20) stresses the fact that in today's "knowledge economies and learning societies" it is important for individuals to acquire knowledge and skills in all aspects of modern life.

There are a number of centres offering adult basic education and training programmes in South Africa and in the Limpopo Province in particular. There are Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs) that provide programmes most of which are a replica of the formal schooling system in the sense that the curriculum is almost the same as that offered in primary and secondary schools, therefore there are minimal differences in the curriculum. In many PALCs, the educators teach the same content and use the same approaches/methods of teaching.

Project Literacy (PROLIT) introduced and offered the *Ikhwelo* (Xhosa word for a call) Project in 1999. This project was initiated as a response to provide support in the area of adult education in two elective sub-fields of Agriculture and Small, Medium and Micro-enterprise (SMME). This pilot, that was located in 24 PALCs, was later reduced to 11 and came to an end in 2002. The initial goal of the *Ikhwelo* Project was to enhance the social and economic capacity of adult learners in the Limpopo Province. It seems as if nothing is being done to continue with the implementation of the piloted sub-fields since the pilot period expired.

Besides the PALCs, there are NGOs and other institutions that offer community oriented adult education programmes. NGOs also play a pivotal role in offering such programmes. It is important to note that most of them focus on rural development issues like, Agriculture and SMME. Some of the programmes that are being offered are on local governance, Water and Sanitation, Community Development. NGOs are known to have the best asset of flexibility and freedom to run their own affairs and focus on grassroots level. Mabasa (2002) concurs by saying NGOs are even able to experiment and try different approaches in adult education because of their flexibility.

These provisions are some of the strategies that are being implemented in order to fight against illiteracy that, of course, leads to exclusion: exclusion from society, from the labour market and education.

It is evident, given all the developments, that the literacy and education for adults is receiving renewed attention through adult education programmes. However, it is imperative to note that in South Africa in general and the Limpopo Province in particular, adult education provision is formalised in such a way that it is contained in levels which form part of the National Qualifications Authority (NQF) structure.

In a developing context, a formal adult basic education and training system will only be available to or used by the minority of the adult population. Hence, there exist already in the Limpopo Province, a high rate of dropouts and minimal participation in such a system. Learning and education represent not only the means to enhance access to knowledge, skills or certification, but also to prepare individuals who can actively take part in their immediate situations. Learning and education should be seen as direct vehicles for social inclusion. People meet others through learning and develop confidence and new networks, communities organise themselves through learning activities and thus create their own viability. Above all, the adult population needs to break out of the isolated poverty shell and live meaningful lives.

A province such as Limpopo should recognize ABET as a necessary and specific component of its entire education system, and as a permanent element of its social, cultural and economic development policy. It should, consequently, promote the creation of structures, preparation and implementation of programmes and the application of educational methods that meet the needs and aspirations of all categories of adults without any restriction. Measures should be taken with a view to promoting full and meaningful participation in adult education and community development programmes by members of the most underprivileged groups, especially in the rural areas.

The development and design of new programmes and the strengthening and improvement of existing ones may lead to the positive change of the province and achievement of the government's objective of addressing, adequately and effectively, the imbalances of the past. ABET programmes should impart new skills and build on existing ones in order for adults to know how to read, write and count as well as able to cope and survive in their daily life situations. The world is ever changing and as it does, other people should not remain on the periphery forever.

The South African Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) (1999) indicates that education should provide services to help adults improve their technical and professional qualifications, increase their knowledge and skills or change attitudes and behaviour. On the same note, UNESCO indicates that the International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA, 1997) stresses that adult education is expanding in ways that are already outpacing traditional means of delivering education. The needed expansion should, in both quantity and quality of adult education activities, be guided by the key principles of relevance and quality. Learning opportunities must be presented in ways that interest and welcome adult learners in all aspects of life, that is, both individual and collective. Megoamere quoted the Education Minister Naledi Pandor, in the Sowetan (2005) when she identified the following needs as being key to redressing adult basic education and illiteracy:

- ABET programmes need to be reconceptualised to meet the basic learning needs of adults;
- Appropriate funding models;
- Adequate conditions of service for ABET tutors need to be determined; and
- Better coordination and collaboration schemes need to be introduced and sustained.

All these continuing endeavours are an indication that the field of ABET still needs rigorous and aggressive intervention. People will only engage in educational activities if the ministry is clear about what it wants to provide. The important element is the one

regarding relevant programmes that will address the needs of adults, especially in rural areas.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Limpopo Province, hereafter referred to as Limpopo in South Africa, is characterised by a high level of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. It is still the case that men and women are unable to read and write even in this post-apartheid era. A number of programmes have been established to eradicate this illiteracy. However, it appears that most of the existing programmes do not necessarily cater for the needs of adult learners. The programmes put a lot of emphasis on reading, writing and numeracy.

This situation and provision does not necessarily alleviate the problem that is experienced by adult learners, especially in the rural areas. Adult learners should be equipped with knowledge, skills and competencies that will enable them to tackle daily issues of survival. This means that adult learners should acquire functional skills that will enable them to take an active part in sustaining their private lives, as well as making a contribution to the communities they find themselves in. These skills should make them feel confident to participate in issues that affect their lives, be it socio-cultural, economic and political. Given the scenario as described above, it is imperative that adult learners should acquire skills that will either help them to find jobs or to create jobs in order to generate income, as well as survive in their daily activities.

The division between economic and community development may be problematic. It is therefore imperative for adult educators to take up the challenge of developing or offering an integrated approach that addresses personal, political, economic and community development aspects. Education and training programmes designed for adults should, therefore, be conceived in a broader context. If adult education is to play a major role in the broader social, political and economic context, then basic reading, writing and numeracy, important as they are, will have to be seen as constituting one element of what may be needed for socio-economic development.

It is therefore crucial to develop or propose strategies that define relevant and meaningful criteria that should characterize ABET programmes in Limpopo and in South Africa as a whole. Ideally, this would involve the description and critical analysis of existing adult education programmes. Ultimately, the whole process will attempt to contribute towards the improvement and development of intervention strategies for adult education provision in Limpopo.

It is important to start asking searching and challenging questions and to look at the current policies and the way adult education is practised and offered in order to establish useful criteria for the design and implementation of relevant adult education programmes.

1.2.1 Research Questions

Adult Basic Education and Training programmes in South Africa, and in Limpopo in particular, should offer programmes that are responsive to the needs of the target group: that is, the adult population, especially in the rural areas. This study addressed the following research question:

What qualities should characterise the design of ABET programmes in the rural areas of the Limpopo Province?

The following supporting questions were used to guide the elements of the research question:

- (a) Which types of Adult Basic Education and Training programmes are offered in the Limpopo Province?
 - What are the objectives of such programmes?
 - What competencies and skills do these programmes develop in adult learners?
 - To what extent do the programmes address the needs of adult learners?
 - To what extent do adult learners benefit from these programmes?

- (b) What intervention strategies can be put in place to best address the situation?

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

The dawn of the new era brought with it a number of changes and transformation of different systems, education included. There are a number of endeavours to offer adult education programmes in Limpopo, however, it is important to note that research must be conducted that will inform policy and development of learning programmes for adults in the rural areas.

Reading and writing and counting may be some of the basic skills that are required, but are inadequate in addressing the current problems faced by adults. These skills are a necessity towards developing other competencies and skills such as generating income or improving one's job or being able to take part in aspects that affect human life. Adults need to acquire skills that will enable them to fight against the plight of poverty, unemployment and other crucial threats such as the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This study identifies clear guidelines for the design and development of ABET programmes in Limpopo and South Africa as a whole.

The following groups will benefit from the study:

Policy makers (Limpopo Department of Education – ABET Directorate): Policies have been developed in ABET. This means that for them to be realised, there should be relevant programmes offered. This study therefore, provides guidelines that are relevant for the formulation of effective policies for ABET.

Adult Educators: They are responsible for the implementation of the ABET programmes. Therefore they should be informed by this type of study about the types of programmes that are meaningful for adult learners. Most educators have not been trained on how to teach adults and may, therefore, be unable to operate within adult education principles by offering irrelevant content and teaching methods that are not appropriate for adult learning. Adult educators will receive useful insights on the selection of outcomes,

content and teaching strategies for adult learners. This study highlights issues of consultation and involvement of educators in such processes. Through the study adult educators should feel empowered enough to participate in curriculum/programme development for adult learners.

Adult Learners: These are the direct recipients of ABET programmes. If relevant programmes that address their needs are developed, then they will be able to apply and use the skills acquired in order to improve their situation. Further, if such programmes appeal to adults, there will be an improved participation. More learners will be attracted to the programmes since one of the major problems is that adult learners drop out or do not even attend. This should have an impact on the literacy levels and also the socio-economic development of the province and the country.

1.4 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted in Limpopo province. There are a number of institutions offering adult education programmes. First, there are NGOs that offer adult education and community development programmes and other development programmes. Second, there are Ikhwelo centers that are part of the PALCs. Third, there are PALCs. There are approximately 500 PALCs in the province. These are located in four districts namely, Sekhukhune, Mopani, Vhembe and Capricorn.

For the purpose of this study, only two districts were targeted, that is, Sekhukhune (South of Polokwane) and Vhembe (North of Polokwane). The reasons behind this choice were that they are the most rural compared to the other two districts. They have the biggest number of centers, and are located at the two vertical extremes of the city of Polokwane which is the center of the province. Furthermore, the other districts were left out for pragmatic and financial reasons that the researcher anticipated.

1.5 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

The terms that will be used in this study are defined below:

Adult Education

Adult Education is a process that encompasses Adult Basic Education, Continuing Education and enrichment activities for the highly educated. Historically adult education in South Africa has been construed as literacy education. However Brookfield (1983:1-4) argues that adult education provides educational services to help adults improve their technical or professional qualifications, increase their knowledge and skills or change attitudes and behaviour. He further maintains that learning occurs throughout the developmental stages of adulthood and in a variety of settings, only some of which can be designated educational in terms of formal adult education provision.

This assertion therefore highlights that the much-evoked term lifelong learning can be said to describe an empirical reality rather than summarising an adult education philosophy. Therefore it is not necessary to advocate the introduction of lifelong learning since it already exists. Adults are continually acquiring new skills and knowledge in familial, recreational and occupational settings.

Adult education in this study would be limited to basic education and training for people in Limpopo, who have missed schooling and would like to improve their literacy, numeracy and other life skills that will enable them to generate their own income and live a meaningful life.

Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)

ABET is a system which was introduced by the South African government to promote literacy and numeracy among adults. It is the general conceptual foundation towards lifelong learning and development, comprising of knowledge, skills and attitudes required for social, economic and political participation and transformation applicable to a range

of context. This system was developed and implemented mainly to address the past imbalances that resulted in high levels of illiteracy, high rates of unemployment and abject poverty.

This area of ABET is still a very broad and difficult area. As indicated, because of the legacy and inequities of the past, the black learner from the age of 15 may enter a ABET programme and therefore be defined as an adult learner. This definition is also endorsed by the Provincial Multiyear Implementation Plan for Adult Education (1998). On the same note, in their survey on adult basic education in South Africa, Harley, Aitchison, Leyster and Land (1996) emphasise that ABET is education provision for people aged 15 and over who are not engaged in formal schooling or higher education and who have an educational level of less than Grade 9. This means that the discourse about ABET replaced the previous one in which the literacy was dominant. As a result ABET in this study will be used to refer to basic adult education and training. That is education for equipping adults with basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as income-generation skills.

Rural Areas

Statistics South Africa (2002), in the 2001 Census, provides a definition of rural areas in South Africa as primarily community owned areas and formal rural areas that are primarily commercial farms. It should be noted that South Africa has diverse rural areas and therefore certain social, economic, educational and cultural factors need to be considered in enhancing the definition of rural areas. The following features are examples of the rural profile:

- Distance to towns
- Topography
- Access to communications and information technology
- Transport infrastructure
- Access to facilities and services such as water, electricity, sanitation
- The health, educational and economic status of the community

- Access to lifelong learning opportunities
- Social conditions in the community
- Activities of political and civil society organisation

All these features as presented by Statistics South Africa (2002) pose a serious problem and challenge to delivery of quality education in rural areas. As a result it is imperative that they need to be taken into consideration in order to deliver relevant programmes that will address the needs of people residing in such areas. In this study, therefore, rural areas refer to all areas that fall outside urban areas and are characterised by the features highlighted above.

Relevant Programmes

Van der Host and McDonald (2003:49) define a learning programme as structured and systematic arrangements of activities that promote the attainment of learning outcomes and assessment standards for a phase or level in the case of ABET. Learning programmes consist of relevant specific outcomes as well as possible learning materials and methodology by means of which learners can achieve upon agreed learning outcomes.

Relevant programmes therefore are necessary for adult learners to achieve specified outcomes. Relevance is a measure of how closely the programme match the needs of learners. In this it is meant that adult basic education and training programmes should address the needs of adult learners.

1.6 ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

Chapter 1: This chapter introduces the reader to the research by providing a background about adult education in South Africa, and Limpopo province in particular. A brief outline of the type of projects available in the province and the types of adult education programmes that are offered is made, followed by the aims of the study and research questions. The significance of the study is then presented and as well as the scope of the study.

Chapter 2: This chapter presents the review of related literature. The theoretical framework of the study is presented and discussed to provide a conceptual model that focuses on the provision of adult education for rural areas. A number of assumptions that are supported by literature and other studies are discussed and argued in this chapter.

Chapter 3: The chapter presents methodological aspects of the study: design of the study, instruments and data collection, data analysis and interpretation. Worth noting is the fact that concentration was on three levels, that is, the organizational level, the educator level and the learner level. Emphasis was also placed on the programmes that are offered, because they form the gist of the teaching and learning process and how it was conducted.

Chapter 4: Data are analysed and presented in this chapter. It takes the reader through the field of ABET in the Limpopo province. As a point of departure, the exposition of the type of adult education programmes in the province is given, followed by the responses that were sought from the participants. In fact, some of the responses are presented in the form of life-stories in order to give the reader a living picture of the lives of adults in the rural areas. Not just their lives in general but their lives as adult learners. Having exposed the reader to the prevailing situation in adult education in the rural areas of Limpopo, a discussion on the findings is presented.

Chapter 5: It is the closing chapter. It presents conclusions, recommendations and reflections on the subject under discussion. It was important to make recommendations for the different stakeholders who are actively involved in adult education practices. Besides, as planned, most of the recommendations came from the people who participated in the research process. As a researcher I saw it important that I should also reflect on the whole process that I undertook by adding few ideas and perceptions regarding adult education provision in the Limpopo province.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on theories and literature that are related to the study, especially on Adult Basic Education and Training programmes. The first part focuses on the theoretical framework. Research studies on adult education are presented. Critical issues related to adult learners and their reasons to take part in educational programmes are explored in this chapter.

Tight (1996) defines Adult Education as a broad field in the sense that it includes basic and continuing education, vocational and technical education, higher education and professional development. It is offered through formal, non-formal and informal means, and by a variety of actors. Without getting into too much detail of each offering, it is imperative to indicate that, in this study, focus is on Adult Basic Education and Training. Training is included because its idea is most usually associated with preparing someone for performing a task or role. Tight (1996) and Brookfield (1983) agree that training may be seen as a specific element or outcome of a more general process of education. However readers will be aware that sometimes the concept of Adult Education is used throughout or in some sections of the study. The concept is used deliberately because the context and setting of the study in itself, clarifies the level of adult education referred to in this study: Adult Basic Education and Training.

Brookfield's contention (1983: 1) is that it is imperative to advocate for lifelong learning since most educational programmes attempt to address it. Adults are continually acquiring new skills and knowledge in familial, recreational, social clubs and occupational settings. In her research Torres (2002:10) argues that, while this basic adult education and training can play a remedial role for those who did not have a chance to go

to school or to meet some critical basic learning needs at an earlier age, it cannot be equated with remedial or second-chance education.

ABET is valid and important in its own right. It is not necessarily self-targeted to the poor(est) and /or the illiterate because all adults have basic learning needs to meet and because not all the poor are illiterate. Of course, priority must be given to those facing the most disadvantageous circumstances, both in terms of unsatisfied basic human needs and unsatisfied basic learning needs to meet such needs.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Education in general, and adult education in particular, is believed to be one of the most important instruments to set a fundamental and harmonious development in motion, which is necessary to be able to combat poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and other issues. Walters (1996:129) argues that whichever educational strategy is chosen to deal with these anomalies, those who are poor and have little or no education, must always be given the opportunity to form their own capital: economic and human capital through education. In order to achieve this, adult education programmes must be relevant and address the needs of adult learners; those that are poor, unemployed and illiterate. Brookfield (1995:2) presents learning theories in adult education. He argues that despite the plethora of journals, books and research conferences devoted to adult education across the world people are still far from understanding adult teaching and learning. He further asserts that all the myths about adult learning comprise something of an academic hold, that adult learning is inherently joyful, that adults are self-directed learners, that a good educational practice or programme always meets the needs articulated by learners themselves. Nevertheless, all these areas, taken together, constitute an espoused theory of adult teaching and learning that informs how a great many adult educators practise their craft. The following are the four areas in adult learning: Self-directed learning, Critical Reflection, Experiential Learning and Learning how to learn. These will be discussed below in details.

2.2.1 Self-directed learning

Self-directed learning in adulthood has always been described as a learning process, with specific phases, in which the learner assumes primary control. Brookfield (1995:20) presents the phases by indicating that self-directed learning, focuses on the process by which adults take control of their learning, in particular, how they set their own goals, locate appropriate resources, decide on which learning methods to use and evaluate their progress. Although using a related concept of the “autonomous learner”, Moore (1980:23) concurs by saying that a learner identifies his/her learning need when there is a problem to be solved, a skill to be acquired or information to be obtained.

It is believed from these contentions that a self-directed adult learner should be able to articulate the need and, therefore gather, information that is desired, collect ideas, practise skills, work, resolve and achieve the set goals. After all the learner should be able to evaluate all the phases described, to check the appropriateness of the acquired skills and the adequacy of solutions as well as the quality of formulated ideas and knowledge acquired.

Brockett and Hiemstra (1991:14) give a rounded conclusion about self-directed learning by saying that it has three stages namely: planning, implementing and evaluating. They further assert that it is about instructional method and personality characteristic. This means that although adults engage in all the phases of self-direction, they also assume full responsibility for their learning and ownership of their thoughts and actions. Therefore, they should be accountable for the outcomes. The implications for self-direction are that adult educators need to support learners in going through the process of planning, implementing and evaluating. They should be there to provide guidance and motivation.

However, Brookfield (1995:67) warns that by citing self-direction, adults may deny the importance of collective action, common interests and their basic interdependence in favour of an obsessive focus on the self. Indeed this caution must be taken into consideration especially with contexts such as that of South Africa.

2.2.2 Critical reflection

Critical reflection has been the idea for many adult educators who have long been searching for form and process of learning that could be claimed to be distinctively adult. As an idea, critical reflection focuses on the following three interrelated processes:

- The process by which adults question and then replace or reframe an assumption that, up to that point, has been uncritically accepted as representing commonsense wisdom,
- The process through which adults take alternative perspective on the ideas, actions, forms of reasoning and ideologies that have been previously taken for granted, and
- The process by which adults come to recognize the hegemonic aspects of dominant cultural values and to understand how self-evident renderings of the natural state of the world actually bolster the power and self-interest of unrepresentative minorities (Brookfield, 1995:68).

On the same note, Mezirow (1991:4) conducted research where he focused on the idea of perspective transformation, which he understood as the learning process by which adults come to recognize and reframe their culturally induced dependency roles and relationships. The Adult and Continuing Education website indicates that in his theory of critical transformation, Mezirow still stresses that adults should be able to critically reflect on their learning and thus be able to transform initially conceived beliefs, practices and notions.

"A definition of human being is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience. For some, any uncritically assimilated explanation by an authority figure will suffice. But in transformative societies we must learn to make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgments, and feelings of others."
(Mezirow, 1997:5)

The cardinal goal of ABET is facilitating these understandings. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking. According to Mezirow (1997:5) the role of the adult educator is to do the following:

- Help the learners focus on and examine the assumptions that underlie their beliefs, feelings and actions
- Assess the consequences of these assumptions
- Test the validity of assumptions through effective participation in reflective dialogue.

Imel (1998:3) adds on what Mezirow says by stressing that the educators, as members of the same communities, should set the stage for critical reflection by serving as role models and demonstrate willingness to learn and change, by expanding and deepening understanding of and perspectives about both the content and teaching and learning activities. This notion of Imel can be substantiated by what the Social Learning Theory propagates. This theory emphasises the importance of observing and modeling the behaviours, attitudes and emotional reactions of others. Bandura (1977:22) for example, maintains that learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them on what to do. However, note should be taken that adults can easily make their own decisions about what type of behaviour they want to model. The bottom line, here, is that individuals are more likely to adopt a modeled behaviour if it results in outcomes they value.

On that note Mezirow (1997:5-6) goes further to outline the role of adult learners as being:

- more open to perspectives of others,
- to act less defensive but more accepting new ideas, and
- more reflective and critical.

Imel (1998:1) says that the learners also have a responsibility of creating the learning environment. They should create conditions under which this form of teaching and learning should occur.

Given all that has been discussed above, Imel (1998:4) sums it up by saying that transformative learning may not always be a goal of adult basic education and training, but its importance should not be overlooked and that all educators should actually strive to understand it.

2.2.3 Experiential learning

Simply put, experiential learning means learning by experience. This is a concept used frequently in adult education in general. Brookfield (1983:16) mentions that there are two types of experiential learning. On the one hand, it refers to a direct encounter with the phenomena being studied rather than merely thinking about it and on the other hand it occurs as a direct participation in the events of life. Jarvis (1995:75) then summarises by saying experiential learning is actually about learning from primary experience, that is, learning through sense experience.

Effective learning in adult education should draw from the experiences of the learners. Brookfield (1995:5) expresses Lindeman's frequently quoted aphorism that "experience is the adult learner's living textbook". Almost every textbook on adult education practice affirms the importance of experiential methods such as games, simulations, case studies, role-play, etc. On the same note the Department of Education states that "the key roles of an ABET practitioner are not only to enable adult learners to gain new skills, knowledge and attitudes, but also to recognize and organize prior knowledge and skills which all learners bring to the learning process, thereby, enabling learners to make sense of their experience within the context of the rapidly changing world" (1997:11).

Rogers, together with Freiberg (1994:23) feel that all human beings have a natural propensity to learn. The role of the educator is to facilitate such learning. The educator needs to do the following:

- Set a positive climate for learning;
- Clarify the purpose for learning;
- Organize and make resources available;
- Balance emotional and intellectual components of learning; and
- Share feelings and thoughts with learners without dominating the learning environment.

According to Brookfield (1995:7), David Kolb has been the most influential scholar in developing a model on experiential learning. Kolb, assisted by Fry (1975:17) created a famous model on experiential learning out of the following four elements, namely:

- Concrete experience;
- Observation and reflection;
- Formation of abstract concepts; and
- Testing of new situations.

These four elements are presented in a cycle, and it is argued that the cycle can begin at any one of the four points, therefore, they should be regarded as a continuous spiral. Although Kolb and Fry (1975:17) put their argument like that, it is common sense that learning will begin with a person doing something and seeing the effect or reaction thereof, followed by the understanding of the effect or reaction and then the application thereof in new circumstances. Kolb (1984:21-24) stresses that two things are noteworthy from his model on experiential learning: the use of concrete experience to test ideas and the use of feedback to change practices and theories.

It now becomes important to draw in the theory of constructivism as it propagates the issue of experience. Von Glasersfeld (1987:108) talks of constructivism as a theory of knowledge and his definition can be paraphrased as follows:

- knowledge is actively constructed by the learner, not passively from the environment, and
- coming to know is a process of adaptation based on and constantly modified by a learner's experience of the world.

It seems that for adult education, the power of constructivism is encapsulated in the second definition, that if there is pre-existing body of knowledge, adult learners cannot know it, except through their own experience. Learning results in increased self-awareness, changed behaviour and the acquisition of new skills that must actively engage the learners in their learning process. In particular, adults have been found to learn more effectively by doing or experiencing. Unless what is learned applied to the actual work or life situations the learning will not be effective or long lasting.

2.3 LEARNING AND PROGRAMMES IN ADULT EDUCATION

As mentioned earlier there are centres offering Adult Basic Education and Training programmes. Most of these are supposed to be transformative in the lives of the adult learners. In essence, this education should provide adults with a tool-box which is necessary for developing existing skills and acquiring new skills. Adult learners and those who are still out of the system, as well as young adults, need to acquire skills that will help them to develop strategies and power in order for them to escape from the periphery, and be left powerless. Hence Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) should be seen as an equipping weapon to fight against exclusion. People should be empowered through education. Therefore, adult learning centres should not just be seen as buildings, and education for adults should not just be regarded as working on literacy. It should be a process of empowerment. Literacy should not be seen as a goal in itself. It should be an essential component of the tool-box that offers adult learners the

opportunity to liberate themselves from their often increasingly deteriorating living conditions. Freire (1974:13) puts it clearly that education should be a cultural action for freedom and therefore an act of knowing. Accordingly, Freire implies that every person should learn in order to transform his or her environment. When participating in educational programmes, adults should acquire the role of active participants, instead of spectators; functional participants in their own social, economic, cultural and political environment.

The following points are some of the conclusions that constitute the reasons why adult learners should participate in learning programmes:

- To be able to read and write and count (numeracy);
- To develop full capacities;
- To live and work with dignity;
- To participate fully in development, in their communities and the world around them;
- To improve the quality of life;
- To be able to make informed decisions; and
- To continue learning (Life-long learning).

These are actually some conclusions that were made at the end of the needs analysis conducted in some areas of the Limpopo Province (Rakoma, 1999). It is very important that adults do not always participate in ABET programmes for reading and writing purposes only. There should be other benefits to the whole endeavour. Adult learners should be equipped with necessary skills that will help them to fight against dependency and financial deprivation. ABET programmes in a region such as the Limpopo Province, should develop programmes that are job-oriented, that will also help to cultivate traditional activities and restore the local pride. Adult Education should be seen as an instrument for socio-cultural advancement.

These conclusions as formulated in the preceding page, do not differ much from those described by the OECD (1999) that there should be links between learning and exclusion:

- Learning to meet basic needs. Most adult learners participate in learning programmes in order to improve literacy and basic skills that are very vital for their existence. Many communities in the Limpopo Province are impoverished and people may be struggling at a subsistence level and desperate for even rudimentary information and support to improve their poverty status, health, welfare and other basic needs. In this case the learning needs of an individual may be just as important as those of the community. Therefore learning may help to explore and encourage a variety of activities, through self-employment and co-operative endeavour; what is normally referred to as 'group schemes'.
- Learning for labour participation. Many people believe that education, training and learning enhance employment chances. This is the ideal, but how far realistic it can be is another question for the people in South Africa. But it is also the case that low levels of attainment can bar access to the labour market. It is therefore, important to stress that adult education programmes should have an effect of employability. Of course, for rural areas, employability may not mean entering the formal labour market. The concept of employability should be based upon people's ability to create their own jobs or establish income generation projects. Therefore adult learners should be equipped with skills that will enable them to work on the land that they are so much fighting for in this era. They should be able to think of how they can use the beautiful cultural materials for selling. They should be aware of strategies on how they can make money from tourists visiting their areas. For example they can use their thatched houses as exhibitions to tourists, and also to explain their culture and tradition. This means that work for them will not be defined in terms of being employed by some company or firm; which hardly exist anyway, in the rural areas. Participation in learning programmes may be explained in terms of adults wishing to enter the labour market, but should be understood as a way of improving their current situation of

poverty and unemployment. For such reasons, most adults who participate in such learning programmes, hope to acquire skills that will enable them to find a job elsewhere or initiate small-scale businesses.

- **Learning to foster social action and participation.** Most adult education programmes should be broadened and moved beyond economic activities. They should include social activities related to citizenship and culture. Successful participation in different social, community and cultural activities can also contribute towards building skills, confidence and social capital that lead to labour market participation. In its strategies to fight against illiteracy, the Russian country, for example, provided skills that enabled adults to participate actively and with confidence in their local communities (Kljutchvarev, 1997:68).

2.4 UNDERSTANDING ADULT LEARNERS

Before introducing some of the underlying factors and theories about adult education and its participants, it is imperative to understand who adult learners are in order to understand some of the postulations made about them and their education. Therefore it becomes necessary to define who these people are and what characterizes them so that the programmes that are proposed and designed for them are concrete, life-related and constantly changing to meet new or emerging needs. As such, if the target group is well defined, efficiency and effectiveness may be ensured.

Many definitions exist as to who an adult is. The question is what do we mean when we call someone an adult? The answer to this question will, of course, help in distinguishing adult education, adult training and adult learning from education, training and learning in a more general sense. Some definitions of the concept “adult” are literal whereas others are figurative, some are contextual in the sense that they are restricted to cultural and societal appreciation of what an adult is. Włodkowski (1995:5) says that a person is adult to the extent that, that individual is performing social roles typically assigned by culture to those it considers adults. The roles referred to are those of a worker, spouse, parent,

responsible citizen, soldier, and the like. Titmus (as quoted by Tuijnman, 1996:11) adds by saying that a person is regarded as an adult when the society to which that person belongs, views such a person as an adult. Thus, the definition does not confine adulthood to age, because no single age can define an adult even within societies. For example, some traditional societies believe that a person becomes an adult after s/he has gone through circumcision school.

Tight (1996:14) agrees with the idea that the concept "adult" should not be directly connected to age, but that it should be related to factors such as achieving physical maturity, being capable of providing for oneself, moving and staying away and from parents, exercising a much greater role in making one's own decisions and choices. This definition, therefore allows people to see an adult as chiefly a status distinction.

On the same note Rogers (1986:7) contends that full development, perspective and autonomy are traits that mark off an adult from a non-adult in most societies. The idea of full development is one that people acknowledge as being associated with adulthood. It is one that incorporates things like personal growth, the expansion and utilization of all the individual's talents and the process of moving towards maturity. Perspective on the one hand has to do with reasonable judgment, being able to achieve a more balanced approach to life. On the other hand, autonomy has to do with being a responsible decision maker.

It is on the basis of these definitions that the South African Directorate of Adult Education and Training in its policy document (1997) defines adult learners as out-of-school individuals, aged 15 years and older, who have had no or inadequate schooling. It seems, though, that most definitions of adults take age as their point of departure, but they consider responsibility and accountability, and full development.

Rogers (1986:6) believes that a better sound definition of adult learners may be to identify some of their characteristics as follows:

- They are adults by definition – showing aspects of self-development, perspective and autonomy;
- They are engaged in a continuing process of growth – physical, intellectual and emotional growth;
- They bring a package of experience and values in which they have a great deal of emotional investment;
- They usually come to education with set intentions – they find that they need a specific skill or knowledge or understanding to enable them to fit more easily into some existing or new situation;
- They bring certain expectations about education itself;
- They have competing interests; and
- They possess set patterns of learning.

The central assumption underlying this characterization is that learning in adulthood means growth in self-direction and autonomy. According to Merriam (1993:29) recognition of this fact helps adult education practitioners to allow adults (and in some cases teach them how) to take more responsibility and control in the learning process. Smith (1982:38) mentions four other characteristics of adult learners. These characteristics also distinguish adults as learners from school children, and are closely related to those mentioned by Rogers.

Smith (1982:38) argues that, firstly, adults have a different orientation to education and learning as compared to children. This means that as children enjoy playing or being at school, adults have multiple roles, tasks, responsibilities and opportunities. Their different orientation towards life and their broader experiences make them approach learning differently from children. They can identify what they need to learn.

Secondly, adults have an accumulation of experience. The accumulated experience usually includes many events of impact and stress. Despite similarities in adult roles and responsibilities, the sum of each person's experiences makes for uniqueness. It is this different experience that calls for different learning needs, learning styles, personalities

and so forth. At the same time, it is past experience that determines what information, meanings, values, strategies and skills should be dealt with first.

Thirdly, adults are characterized by special development trends. Adults appear receptive to education and learning related to reassessing personal goals, reasserting themselves as valued members of the society, and reconfirming their self-esteem. Adults may react by feeling overwhelmed, withdrawing, seeking assistance or even forming and activating plans for using their potential. However, major events can produce such positive effects as increased motivation for education; it is also true that such events may result in something negative.

Lastly, many adults experience anxiety and ambivalence when they enter educational programmes. Adult learners may typically confront the educational opportunity and participate in learning with mixed feelings and even with fear. If adult educators understand these reactions, they can help learners to learn more effectively.

Against the foregoing background, an adult learner may be defined as an adult person who is involved in organized learning activities. That person is physically and mentally developed, and is able to make reasonable judgments and is responsible for him/herself and others. The adult learners to which this study pertains to are people with little or no schooling, who have obligations to their families and societies, who can define their goals when participating in educational programmes.

2.5 ADULT LEARNERS' MOTIVATION FOR PARTICIPATION

This section concentrates on some aspects of motivation for participation in ABET programmes by adults. This is one of the most important considerations because it forms part of the decision on the type of programmes that should be offered to the adults. Emphasis is put on why adults become involved in educational programmes, their intentions and perhaps the possible deterrents that exist. Adults will continue to learn and acquire new skills and maintain them only if there is need (the section on needs will be addressed later) and they are motivated to do so.

2.5.1 What is motivation?

In order to have (potential) adult learners attending education programmes, there is need to motivate them or, at least, a degree of curiosity has to be raised. This can be done by designing and developing programmes around issues that are within the core of the adult learners' cultural, social or economic interests. According to Rogers (1986:61) motivation is usually defined as those factors that energise and direct behavioural patterns organized around a goal. It is frequently seen as a stage within the individual that moves him or her to act in a certain way.

Although not differing with Rogers, Walklin (1990:1) regards motivation as the arousal, control and sustenance of behaviour necessary to satisfy a need or to obtain a goal. This implies that a favourable attitude to learning can be developed in adult learners, provided they are motivated to achieve some goal that they have set themselves. Witkin and Altschuld (1995: 10) on the other hand, regard motivation as an incentive, something that has a tendency to move, to act or to spur on. In the case of adult education, this will imply something that drives or motivates individual learners to participate in learning programmes. Motivation in adult education, therefore, is that compulsion which keeps a person within a learning situation and encourages that person to learn.

The concept of motivation is also intertwined with needs. Adults are motivated to learn as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy (Knowles, 1973:31). On the same note, Mwamwenda (1995:261) advocates that needs serve as the source of motivation. There is no way that adult learners can go through all this "trouble" of learning if there is no need to fulfill. A question can then be asked as to what motivates adults to attend educational programmes? Many reasons are found in literature on Adult Education and will be discussed in the next section on aspirations and intentions.

It is further indicated that adult learners may be "confronted with a wide variety of learning situations and yet walk away with little or no change in their state of knowledge" (Walklin, 1990:1). Why would that be? If the situation appears to have no bearing on the

needs of their societies, or is considered to be irrelevant to their daily work or future prospects, then they will definitely attend to other matters that seem more profitable. It is therefore the role of adult educators to try and provide a learning environment, designed to attract the learners' attention and interest and provide inputs and resources with which their needs may be fulfilled.

Motivation is related to the needs of adult learners in the sense that if programmes do not address the needs of learners, then there will be no motivation to participate. The motivation can either be extrinsic (from external incentives or pressures) or intrinsic (inner pressures or rational decisions). It is of course, necessary to indicate the fact that all adults have an ability to learn and on that note, Van der Kamp (in Tuijnman and Van der Kamp, 1992:192) contends that adults want to learn and will learn effectively when they have a strong inner motivation. Clearly, Van der Kamp emphasizes the fact that intrinsic motivation is a key factor in effective learning.

2.5.2 Aspirations and intentions

If people already have aspirations and then intentions, the task of increasing motivation in those people will substantially be easier. Adult learners with realistic aspirations will be relatively more easily motivated to take action than those without.

Edwards, Siemiski and Zelding (1993:22) identify three categories of adult learners, that is, those who participate to fulfill conscious objectives (goal-oriented), those who pursue knowledge for the love of it (learning-oriented) and those whose reasons for participation are not connected to the programme purpose or content. These categories are orientations to learning. Henry and Basile (1994:65) quote Houle as one of the influential contributors who divided adult learners into three categories based upon their motivation for participation. However, adults may still come with different expectations to adult education programmes, and these will be discussed in the section below.

2.5.3 Expectations and motivation

It is important for adult education providers to know what motivates adults to attend and also what they expect from the programmes. It is this expectation that spurs some drive and therefore participation. It is this overall idea that leads Van der Kamp (1992:193) to adopt the view that adults learn effectively if they consider the relevance of the material to their daily needs and interests. Adults have needs and would, therefore, expect something from ABET programmes. If their expectations are not met, they become demotivated to attend and ultimately, drop out of the programme.

Rubenson (as quoted by Titmus, 1989:150) adopts the expectancy-valence theory to account for motivational problems manifested in dropout cases. It is maintained in the theory that adult learners persist if a programme or learning activity satisfies an important need (positive valence) and if they expect to be able to cope with and complete the programme (positive expectation). Although emphasis is placed on the importance of expectations, the model does not specify factors that can be manipulated to enhance valence and expectancy. Therefore adult educators should create an adult-oriented learning climate that is relaxed, informal but responsive to the needs of adult learners. Learners will only persist to attend programmes that meet their expectations. At the same time they have goals that they want to meet or accomplish. The next section will therefore outline few motives that adults have for attending educational programmes.

2.5.4 Motives for learning

Motives for joining or not joining Adult Basic Education and Training programmes are sometimes unexpected and Verhoeven (1994:415) mentions a scenario in which women participated in a literacy group because of its social nature. For those women it was nice being there, on the other hand they knew the stories that were told. Therefore, it is important for adult educators to determine motives for participating in ABET programmes.

Adult educators should be concerned with understanding the motives of their learners. If they identify some of the reasons that have brought them into their classes, there will be a valuable point of contact and that will give them access to a most powerful stimulus to learning. Boshier, as quoted by Titmus, (1989:149) argues that motives for learning in adults are associated with the extent to which participants have satisfied the lower order in Maslow's hierarchy of needs. However, as discussed previously, it is important to note that adults do not have only one motive for joining ABET programmes. For instance, a man who comes to such a programme hoping that it will help him get promotion at work might, also be interested in finding a captive audience for his political views.

It has been mentioned that there are a number of motives that attract adults to attend ABET programmes. The section below will attempt to outline some of the motives that are described in literature.

- **Vocational motive**

Rogers (2001:11) says that the most important reason for undertaking further education at all appears to be the vocational one. This is because a vocational motive is the one that might improve prospects of promotion and help in other ways at work. Perhaps it is important to mention that one other reason for this motive, especially for people in a province such as Limpopo, is that people may acquire skills that will enable them to generate their own income. On the same note Dubbeldam, as quoted by Verhoeven, (1994:412) adds that a vocational motive can be equated to the motive to achieve economic development, to increase chances of finding employment, or to enable people to run their own small enterprises so as to improve their personal and/or family income.

- **Self-development motive**

The whole area of vocational motives often blurs imperceptibly into motives that can be roughly grouped together as desire for self-development or personal enrichment.

These may include the wish to improve one's general education, or a desire to pursue an interest in a particular subject or creative hobby. Sometimes, adult educators who expect their learners to have primarily vocational motives may be surprised to find those learners who seem to be stirred and sustained by a genuine wish to extend and improve themselves.

As is increasingly recognized in adult education, one of the most easily diagnosed and best-publicized social problems has been the fact that young mothers/women and wives feel trapped in their families and homes. For that reason Rogers (2001:19) argues that they clearly realize the need for self-development and that they certainly provide an increasing clientele for Adult Basic Education and Training. Looking at the situation in South Africa in general and Limpopo specifically, most women attend Adult Basic Education and Training programmes. This could be triggered because they have been deprived and disadvantaged than their male counterparts, or indeed because of what Rogers argues for. This category of women is usually anxious to improve its general education; the only way in which they can still be independent individuals, capable of intelligent thoughts.

- **Social motive**

Some adults may attend programmes for social reasons. Certainly, it is not difficult to see that the isolated housewives may have social as well as intellectual motives for attending programmes; that many other adults may have some social hopes for attending. However, given the problems described in the first chapter, the social motive may appear to be far from being the most commonly given reason for participation in programmes. Rogers (2001:21) warns that the social motive may be treated as the least, only to find that it is the main. Given the situation in South Africa in general, people appreciate collaborative initiatives and cooperatives, especially those in the rural areas. It does make sense that most of the adults may feel compelled to take part in educational programmes mainly to meet others and socialise. Black South Africans, especially, believe and rely on extended relationships and belonging.

For those who are not employed and poor, and therefore find themselves isolated in one way or the other will seek refuge in programmes that bring them closer to other people.

- **Cognitive motive**

Rogers (2001:21) still contends that adults may participate out of cognitive interest, that is, merely enjoying learning for its own sake. They may only want to satisfy an enquiring mind or seek knowledge.

No matter how motivated adults may be or what their aspirations are, they meet a number of obstacles along the way. These barriers will be discussed in the following section.

2.6 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

A number of elements as mentioned in the literature review section may be seen as some important factors in adult learners' participation in educational programmes. This suggests, therefore that the type of programmes should be geared towards equipping adults with skills that will enable them to move beyond reading and writing, and be responsible citizens, who will generate their own income and acquire survival skills. Provision of relevant and responsive programmes for adults therefore, locates itself among a number of considerations and aspects; those that have been alluded to in the preceding chapter and some themes that will be discussed in this chapter, that is the type of education, type of skills imparted and the type of learning that occurs, just to mention but a few.

2.6.1 Basic assumptions with regard to adult education programmes

It is the key assumption of the study that most of the programmes offered to adult learners do not necessarily address the problems experienced by the learners. Mphahlele (2003:97) examined into Adult Basic Education and Training programmes in Limpopo, mainly identifying problems related to the dropout issue. The results of the study have shown that most participants were not satisfied with the programmes offered. They indicated that the programmes do not equip them with skills to be self-sufficient and deal with everyday problems.

In South Africa not much has been done about the type of programmes that address adult learners problems, particularly those in the rural areas. South Africa, supposedly, has been attempting to shift towards the direction of programmes that integrate basic reading and writing with vocational skills. This move was along adult education policies (Department of Education, 1997) that advocate for a system that will equip learners with survival skills: those skills that will also enable them to generate income and be able to participate in the labour market and other areas as well. This means development of programmes that will be responsive to the needs of adults in the rural areas. For example, the Ikhwelo project was piloted in Limpopo and the Eastern Cape as an attempt to come up with an integrated approach in ABET.

The Mozambique's National Human Development Report (2000:51) indicates that the literacy rate in Mozambique increased dramatically after the war in 1983. Furthermore, it provides other reasons why this was the case and, among others, is that adult education was excessively formalized, the programmes for learners and training for educators were defective. As a result, the report stresses the fact that it is urgent for the country to find a way out which can rekindle the enthusiasm that prevailed. It is urgent to come up with programmes and the content that will respond to real needs and aspirations of adults. Hoppers (1999:47) indicates that Cuba also put emphasis on adult education programmes that will assist in eliminating economic, political and cultural dependence of its people. This approach and thinking about adult education may surely be a move towards the right

direction of addressing the past imbalances in South Africa and other countries. According to Van der Kamp (1995:14) research revealed that post 1980/1990 European countries also changed their conceptions of literacy and leaned more towards development of functional literacy and skills.

Adult Basic Education and Training should enable people to be more self-reliant. This should be done by creating an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning processes and by providing relevant teaching and learning materials as well as adequately trained educators. Pillay (2003:4) highlights the fact that India increased its literacy rate to 65,38% in 2001 by implementing the elements highlighted above. In his state of the nation address, President Mbeki (2003) also stressed that, to deal with poverty and unemployment issues, South Africa will have to resort to adult basic education as well as vocational training.

It is therefore vital that South Africa reflects upon efforts being made in providing adult education and, perhaps, even learns from the past mistakes, if any, so that it can achieve its target of sustainable level of adult education. The country should seek new horizons.

There are a number of aspects or issues that should be taken into account when developing ABET programmes. These issues are very interrelated and interdependent. Such pertinent and relevant aspects should guide all endeavours towards provision of adult education in order to eradicate illiteracy and therefore do away with unemployment and poverty.

2.6.2 Identification and analysis of the needs of adult learners

All activities related to adult teaching and learning should be based on the needs of those involved. Adult learners have a different orientation to education and learning than children. These differences make them approach learning differently. Besides, they have an accumulation of experiences, and are also characterized by special development trends. It is therefore, very important that whatever provisions are made for adult

learners, in terms of learning, there should be a clear understanding of their characteristics and therefore their needs. Malale (1996:114) and Rakoma (1999: 85-90) presents a list of needs for illiterate adults in Mpumalanga and the Limpopo Province, respectively. These needs are job-related, health-related and education-related. Some are for personal enhancement, communication with husbands and relatives who stay far and establishment of small enterprises that will assist in generating income.

Adult learners come to ABET “as a way of satisfying some, if not all, of these deeply felt needs” (Minton, 1991:102). It is on the basis of this background that (potential) adult learners should be allowed to formulate their own needs so that relevant provisions can be made. Vella (1994:12) makes a similar point by saying that adults desire to be subjects and decision makers. The needs of adult learners appear to be a very important step to consider before planning for educational programmes. It is therefore, imperative that adult education providers should determine the needs of adult learners within the context they exist.

Adult Basic Education and Training programmes should be relevant and demand-driven, and not supply-driven. They should be available in forms, times and locations that are genuinely accessible for all who want to participate. For example, specified short courses on plumbing, entrepreneurship, building, carpentry, sewing and cookery, to mention just a few. Non-formality of learning should not mean tolerating “second-best” programmes that are less than fully serious (OECD, 1999:10).

One of the recommendations made in the Third International Conference on Adult Education (1972) is that adult education activities in general, viewed as forming part of lifelong education and learning, have no theoretical boundaries and should meet the particular situations created by specific needs of development, of participation in community life and of self-fulfillment. They should cover all aspects of life and all fields of knowledge and be addressed to all people irrespective of their level of achievement.

The preceding background is just but a framework that may help in developing and offering relevant programmes that will address and satisfy specific needs of adult learners. However, there are a number of issues or aspects that still need attention, such as the training of educators and availability of resources for ABET provision, and the type of education that should be given to adults.

2.6.3 Resources

The issue of human and financial resources is very vital. Financial support, on the one hand, should be at the center of all educational activities. Adult Basic Education and Training programmes should rest on the shoulder of a financially viable system. A system that will ensure that all the much-needed and relevant facilities for effective teaching and learning are provided.

On the other hand, there needs to be a stable human resource to utilise the facilities effectively and efficiently. Adult Basic Education and Training should be regarded as a highly specialised area. This therefore, calls for a formal and rigorous training of educators. Most adult educators in the Limpopo Province received little or no training in this field. Those who have any recognized qualification are qualified to teach in either Primary or Secondary schools. Besides, most of those who are trained are not trained to deal with the non-formal provision of Adult Basic Education and Training and the connection between adult education and community development aspects.

This lack of relevant and proper training may have a lot of negative consequences in programme development for adult learners. It has been said earlier that the curriculum of adult learners should be negotiated with the learners themselves. A well-trained adult educator can carry out such a negotiation process. A lot of investment should be made to train educators in dealing with Non-formal and Community Oriented Adult Education. In their move to combat social exclusion and also empower communities through adult education, the Portuguese made sure that adult educators were offered rigorous training (OECD, 1999:15). Adult educators were sent for training and their training was paid for. All this was done in order to have qualified adult educator corps that can run adult

education programmes effectively and efficiently. For instance the University of Limpopo has developed a curriculum in an attempt to deal with the issue of training adult educators in Limpopo. However, the responsibility should still lie with the Adult Education Directorate in making sure that the educators are supported financially towards their professional development.

It should be recognized that adult education calls for specific skills, knowledge and attitudes on the part of those who are involved in providing it, in whatever capacity and for any purpose. In his thesis on policy implementation, Rampedi (2003:88) quotes Nelson Mandela saying, *"we were taken from the bush, or from underground in the country, or from prison, to come and take charge. We were suddenly thrown into this immense responsibility of running a highly developed country."* This quote is associated with the disillusionment faced by most ABET practitioners in Limpopo province. Most of them were seconded or redeployed to adult education offices and centers without the necessary information and knowledge of what the field is all about. The department might have had good intentions but the move itself crippled, to some extent, the (smooth) running of adult education activities.

Most ABET practitioners feel that they do not know exactly what to do. Mabasa (2002:85) quotes a coordinator in one district of Limpopo saying *"Educators are not sure of what they are doing. They are not adequately trained to teach adults"*. It is therefore desirable that adult educators should be recruited with care according to their particular functions and be given initial and in-service training.

Training of adult educators should, as far as possible, include all those aspects of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attitudes which are relevant for various functions undertaken. The general background against which Adult Basic Education and Training takes place should also be referred to as a point of departure. By integrating these aspects, training will in itself be a demonstration of a sound adult education practice and would therefore be much meaningful.

2.6.4 Non-formal and community oriented adult education

Having alluded to all the above issues, one may emphasise the importance for non-formal adult education in the rural areas. Non-formal adult education, while not constituting a parallel system, covers any organised, systematic, educational activity, carried on outside the framework of formal system, to provide selected types of learning to particular sub-groups. Gorard, Fevre and Rees (1999:67), although emphasizing informal adult education, define non-formal adult education as the type of education that consists of forms of education that although they may not be institutionalized, do not lead to a diploma or certificate. Non-formal education includes, for example, agricultural extension and farmer training programmes, adult literacy programmes, occupational skill training given outside the formal system, however including training in the formal system, such as youth clubs with educational purposes, and various community programmes of instruction in health, nutrition and cooperatives.

Tight (1996:69) regards non-formal adult education as education for which none of the learners is enrolled or registered. This perception locates non-formal adult education even outside of educational institutions. This means that it does not need more restrictive frameworks and accreditation systems of the formal sector, just as they exist now. He further argues that it is closely linked to problems within society or needs of particular groups within communities. On the same note, dating back to the sixties, Coombs (1968:11) made an observation that formal education was failing to meet the needs of the poor, the majority of which reside in the rural areas. In stressing the importance of non-formal education, Siaciwena (1991:88) adds that it is the type of education that attempts to focus on teaching people to improve their basic level of subsistence and their standards of nutrition and general health. That is why it becomes very important for a country such as South Africa, to consider non-formal education in addressing the illiteracy and poverty rate of its citizens. It is important to reiterate the fact that non-formal adult education facilitates the acquisition of skills, knowledge and attitudes for the rural poor.

Mumba (1989:48) talks about diversification of non-formal adult education in Zambia. She indicates that by diversifying it, planners hope to alleviate poverty and reduce the growing rural-urban socio-economic gap occasioned by earlier incomplete development efforts and ineffective education policies. The situation in Zambia, and maybe in other African countries, is not very different from the one in South Africa. The economy continues to decline and therefore, very aggressive and rigorous intervention should be sought to address the situation.

It should be noted that no one is refuting the fact that formal education is still vital. This is because there are still people who missed out on school but still aspire to go through the NQF ladder to fulfill their educational needs. It is important to argue that non-formal adult education should be seen as complementary to formal education especially because there is limited capacity and resources in the country.

Non-formal Adult Education and also Community Oriented Adult Education should be viewed as relevant in addressing the needs of the adults, more especially those in the rural areas, who are illiterate, poor or are working in the traditional sector. The focus should then be to improve their basic level of subsistence and their standards of living. Seen in these terms, non-formal adult education has clear linkages not only with ideas of community education, but also people such as Freire (1972:101) who extend the literacy of adults beyond basic skills, to broader themes of individual emancipation.

Most adult educators are not familiar with locating the concept of community development within adult education and *vice versa*. Churches and social services have mainly done community development. However, Hamilton (1992:6) maintains that the cardinal principle of adult education is that programmes should be embedded within the communities. That is why it is also important that during their training, educators should also be taught about community development issues. As stated earlier, Freire (1972:101) believes that adult education should be seen as a way of transforming communities by starting with the individual. Lyson and Hirsch (1990:13) for example, argue that the social, economic and political changes in rural communities make adult education

imperative. Adults acquire literacy skills to function as individuals in their respective communities.

In this type of a system the curriculum must ensure that the adult learners' skills are developed for income-generation at home or cooperatives. Adult learners will have skills that enable them to uplift fellow members of the community as well. Provision of non-formal and community oriented adult education can be more viable. The programmes should provide a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Such a curriculum should be flexible with individualized learning that can be transferred to the community at large.

2.6.5 Adult Basic Education and Training for empowerment

The concept of empowerment was briefly alluded to earlier on. Education for adults should be seen as a tool for empowerment. Van't Rood (1997:40) says that empowerment should actually be seen as the aim of all education programmes in general and especially basic education. The reason for this is that, in changing communities, people should learn how to anticipate change in order to prevent being marginalised. Adult learners require tools that will help them develop skills needed to empower themselves and so that they may also contribute to the development of their communities.

Adult Basic Education and Training programmes in a region such as Limpopo should have this element of empowering people. Empowerment relates to acquiring the skills whereby people get the chance to play an active role and participatory role in their own environment. It also means that people take control of their lives. Adult education in all its forms, should therefore play a role in helping people to acquire empowerment. It is the type of programmes developed and offered which will ensure that adult learners are indeed empowered. Achieving empowerment should be one of the final objectives in adult education. This means that adult learners should acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes and insight necessary to transform their lives and the environment within which they find themselves, and to actively participate in a changing world. It should be noted, though,

that empowerment in this case should not focus only on the individual learner. There should be a connection between the individual and the community: a collective element, for example, project management.

2.6.6 Adult Basic Education and Training and the socio-cultural context

Many a time, reasons given for promoting adult education are only given in economic terms, and nothing or little is said regarding issues of social or cultural aspects. Could this be as a result of globalisation? Globalisation cannot function in a vacuum, without taking into consideration the socio-cultural background and practices of adult learners. Adult Basic Education and Training should be placed in the context of the communities. The question 'what is the environment of the adult learner?' should be at the back of the minds of those who plan education programmes.

The social and cultural background of adult learners is important because educators are able to glean a sense of origin of ideas and inputs and to challenge these in some way if it seems appropriate.

There is a shift towards Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS), which is a move to recognize all the cultures and origins of people. It is this knowledge that can serve as a springboard for further learning in adult education programmes. The World Bank (1997) contends that Indigenous Knowledge (IK) encompasses the skills, experience and insights of people, applied to maintain or improve their livelihood. In their learning, therefore, adults should be allowed to use this local knowledge that they have acquired before. According to Grenier (1998:34) this local knowledge serves as the basis for decision-making in various activities such as agriculture, health care, food preparation, education and a host of other activities especially in the rural communities.

The inner circle of someone's social and cultural environment is the family, a larger unit may be the village or ward that a person lives in, still further a city, then a province. Within this are other spheres that are part and parcel of a person's environment: the

workplace, women's social club, political party, and other similar social groupings. No teaching and learning environment is an isolated box. It is part of a wider community that has cultural and social norms. Lave and Wenger (1991:56) are socio-cultural theorists who talk of a community of practice to encompass the customs, social and cultural activities, of a particular community and its ways of operating it.

It should be noted, therefore, that Adult Basic Education and Training should adopt an approach that takes the current living conditions/environment and cultural background of the adult learners as a starting point. From this background, therefore, Adult Basic Education and Training should work towards achieving empowerment. According to Dubbeldam (in Verhoeven, 1994:411) Adult Education in general, will be functional if it is integrated into at least, part of the culture of the people involved. From the context of their own living environment, adult learners may become aware of their positions and will therefore, learn to develop skills to sustainably improve those positions. For the educational programmes, this may mean that development of such should not always maintain a top-down approach, but *vice versa*. This means that adult educators should stimulate adults to formulate their own positions, needs and opportunities through engaging in a dialogue. In his presentation, on 'Education in the 21st Century' during the Spring lectures at UNIN, Prof. Eskia Mphahlele (2000) alluded to the fact that the curriculum for adult learners should be negotiated between the learners and the educators. It should not be preplanned.

Added to the above proposals is that adult education activities should promote cultural development. Artistic creation to encourage appreciation of existing cultural and artistic values can work. For example, Limpopo is rich with cultural materials; materials that can be promoted through Adult Basic Education and Training and therefore be developed and utilized for economic development while enriching the culture at the same time.

The other concept worth mentioning is that of Ethnomathematics. Ethnomathematics readily recognises that all cultures have and all people have developed unique and sophisticated ways of explaining, knowing and modifying their own reality. For a long

time, especially in the rural areas, people have been involved in calculations, measurements, *et cetera*. of some sort. They were able to build solid mud houses without any measurements; they were able to weave baskets with various decorations. If one looks at those activities closely, there is a lot of mathematics used enthusiastically and realistically. Adult educators need to take into consideration these competencies acquired outside the classroom.

Noss and Hoyles (1996:01), for instance, maintain that Ethnomathematics is a programme that looks into the generation, transmission, institutionalization and diffusion of knowledge with emphasis on the socio-cultural environment of individuals. Much of the work in this field was initiated in Brazil. They further argue that much of the formal mathematics, as traditionally taught in schools, does not readily allow for prior knowledge and experiences of learners. What these authors are saying is that there should be a connection between the academic teaching and the outside world.

This kind of approach will also assist the people in creating new values and works, by releasing expressive capabilities inherent in themselves. Adult learners must be encouraged to build their own experiential context using a variety of modalities. The products made out of the whole exercise will also contribute towards the economic development of activities because they can be sold to people who do not reside within the communities. They can be used for tourist attraction as well. Now it becomes even more beneficial to use this kind of approach.

Coombs (1985:43) carries a torch for a flexible educational system, which is directly related to local practices, needs and opportunities. In this context, Coombs considers adult education programmes with different methods that address specific needs and opportunities as vital. On the same note Dubbeldam (in Verhoeven, 1994:476) implicitly shows that irrelevant programmes for adult learners, which are not related to the cultural setting of the participants, may yield negative results than anticipated. Therefore, the cultural environment of the adult learners should serve as a point of departure for every intervention in the field of education, and possibly in other fields as well.

2.7 BARRIERS TO ADULT LEARNING

Adults may wish to attend or take part in educational programmes but may be hindered by a number of elements. Citing lack of motivation as a reason for nonparticipation in educational programmes or dropping out can be problematic as it may lead to a tendency of blaming individuals for not participating, rather than enabling or disabling conditions surrounding them. It must be made clear, then, that the use of the term “motivation” is not meant to imply that individuals actually make a choice based on personal preferences about whether or not to participate. Indeed, the individual condition of being motivated depends much on the contextual and situational factors and conditions, and perhaps other factors as well. This implies that, although people may be motivated to take part in educational programmes, there may be a number of factors that can deter them from doing so.

A number of authors; Hirsh and Wagner (1995) and Henry and Basile (1994) have grouped the deterrents into four categories, namely: the situational, institutional, dispositional and informational factors. Each of these factors will be highlighted below.

2.7.1 Situational factors

Situational factors involve circumstances that are related to an individual's external situation at a given time. According to Henry and Basile (1994:67) financial constraints can be a barrier to learning for adults. They may not be able to afford to pay for the programmes no matter how relevant they are. As a result, they will not be able to take part. Looking at the situation of poverty, unemployment and poor housing in Limpopo, it is reasonable to assume that money may be one of the biggest problems.

Lack of childcare facilities, for instance, can also be a problem, especially for women. These factors are, as Hirsch and Wagner (1995:164) state, relatively uncontrollable demographic features. They also include circumstances such as age, gender, level of prior learning, the number of children in the household and so forth.

The following is an excerpt from a speech given by one adult learner at Confintea V in the AETASA Newsletter (Adult Education and Training Association in South Africa, 1997:1):

"I want to continue to learn and progress with my learning but there are many difficulties for us as adult learners; for example we learn under conditions that are not conducive to learning and we also do not have money to pay for ourselves to continue our education".

The above quote indicates that there could be such problems and even more. Funding for Adult Basic Education and Training programmes has been a problem for quite some time. This problem disables more adults to continue learning because of their impoverished backgrounds.

2.7.2 Institutional factors

All circumstances about the institution that discourage participation of adult learners are referred to as institutional barriers. Hirsch and Wagner (1995:164) regard these as those factors that include the features of a particular adult learning programme. One may give an example such as a place where classes are located, the content of the programmes, qualities and gender of the educator or fellow participants and funding available to keep the programmes running smoothly. To stretch these examples further, this means that sometimes in the rural areas, classes are attended far from home, or the content may not be relevant for adults who want to attend or most crucially men may not feel comfortable to attend with one another in the same class. Other examples would be the absence of childcare facilities for those women who have children or are taking care of their grandchildren. The availability of transport to and from class when needed may also pose as a major problem.

The Report on the conference on ABET on Trial (2000:7) quotes Miller, the Chief Executive Officer of PROLIT, saying that there has been "massive hemorrhaging", that shrinking in ABET is a reality. He reiterates that ABET is faced with a growing number

of adult learners who cannot pay for the services they need, and therefore government should acknowledge that ABET is in crisis. If there are no sufficient funds for programmes, then it becomes clear that learners will not be interested in participating in such programmes. It further indicates that learners will not get programmes that appeal to their daily needs.

Gender is also a very crucial issue in adult education. For instance, in the findings of a research conducted by Malale (1996:111), one adult educator indicates that male adult learners have a tendency of not attending classes if female educators teach them. The same goes for those men who do not want to attend with their female counterparts because of their manhood.

These institutional factors become serious hindrances for participation in adult education programmes. Most of the time classes are conducted in the afternoon/evenings in areas where there is no electricity or where classes are a bit far from the learners' homes. This makes it difficult for learners to attend regularly. In a pilot study on Basic Teaching Skills for Adult Educators at the University of the North (1997), one of the educators mentioned that some men do not allow their wives to be out at night to attend classes. This in itself contributes to the minimal attendance in programmes.

2.7.3 Dispositional factors

Dispositional factors entail lack of confidence or guilt about conflict with domestic responsibilities, for example. Hirsch and Wagner (1994:67) regard these as internal beliefs and attitudes about educational programmes that impede participation. These factors are also referred to as "psychological" obstacles, by Merriam and Caffarella (1991:88). These are beliefs and values, attitudes and perceptions about education or about oneself as a learner. One commonly known example is the one where perhaps people associate education with the past experiences of Bantu Education. This was the under-funded and ill-equipped official education offered in all homelands meant for all the black people in South Africa. In one way or the other, adults unconsciously do not

want to see themselves subjected to the same kind of treatment they experienced some time ago.

2.7.4 Informational factors

Informational factors involve not only the institutions' negligence in communicating information about available programmes, but also the adults' failure to seek out and use the available information, for without it, potential participants will not be aware of the existence of the programmes. These factors may be called structural barriers such as poor access to information and guidance as well as the absence of suitable training opportunities. That is why the issue of recruitment in adult education becomes a very crucial component.

Information and awareness must be viewed in a slightly different way. This means that those who register an interest in a specific Adult Basic Education and Training programme, must in a sense be aware of the programme beforehand. Henry and Basile (1994:64) propose that educators should try and employ more sources of information to inform people about adult education activities in their communities.

2.7.5 Images and perceptions about Adult Basic Education and Training

In the presentation of preliminary research findings on implementation problems in ABET, Mabasa and Rampedi (2000) came across different puzzling metaphors with regard to the Adult Education field in general and mainly the formal provision in Adult Education in the Limpopo Province. Of course, these reactions may be spotted countrywide. The following are some of the metaphors:

- Adult educators are regarded as the Principals of 'bakgekolo' (old grandmothers);
- Adult education coordinators regard themselves as 'hose pipes';
- ABET is regarded as a legitimate cousin (whose cousin?); and
- When the budget is over, all ABET activities come to a halt.

These are just but a few of what may be called 'beliefs' of different people about what ABET is all about. These negative images and perceptions are enough to indicate to us where other people (adult learners, communities and adult education practitioners) place adult education. The metaphors mentioned above do not come as a total surprise. During the needs analysis conducted by Rakoma (1999:89) in Region 5 of the Limpopo Province, some of the adult learners mentioned that other members of the community ridicule them. They see them as failures, foolish and incompetent. Could it be because of the structure of ABET and the levels; that people are seen to be in their first years of schooling, sitting in small chairs and tables like children, using almost the same curriculum as the one used in formal schools?

These issues cited above can, on the one hand, be the problem. On the other hand, educators also see Adult Basic Education and Training as a 'stepping ladder', something that connects them to better jobs or promotions. For the unemployed educators, it could be a way of creating job opportunities for themselves.

What implications are there for Adult Basic Education and Training programmes development with all these beliefs and perceptions? Could it be that adults are taught for the sake of being taught? Could it be that practitioners are involved in ABET activities so that they can earn money and nothing more? What about the communities? Are they actually aware of what adult education is all about? Perhaps they only attach the reading and writing aspects to it and nothing more, which they feel, may not be so very important. Of course the people in these communities are poor and unemployed. But they should also value the importance of being able to read and write, also as a way of moving towards other spheres of life. All these images that are portrayed contribute negatively towards developments in the field of study. They also serve as barriers to adults' participation in the programmes.

2.7.6 Other deterring factors

In general, looking at the overall adult education context, implies a comprehensive consideration of the various factors that, influence learning and the application thereof. Crucial factors that go beyond the four may include the opportunity available for an individual learner to benefit from the learning offered, the social or community support an individual receives, and the ability to perceive benefits that exist, all of which interact to form motivational force that influence adult life.

Another fact to note is that adults may not participate in educational programmes because of anxiety that may cause some resistance. Van der Kamp (1992:192) argues that anxiety and resistance can hinder the learning of initially poorly educated people, who after a long time return to school or participate in Adult Basic Education and Training programmes. For example, negative memories may emerge and it is possible that acquired knowledge gets unsettled. Added to this is that there can be fear of failing in front of the group and that may lead to poor self-confidence. For example some adults fear to approach adult centers because they feel they may be ill-treated.

“Everyday we can see the university buildings. We always wonder if this big institution with all its knowledge cannot help us. But we do not know how to ask, we are afraid they will send us away” (Stevens, 1994:35).

The foregoing pronouncement is quoted from a research report on functional (il)literacy, in Ga-Mothapo village in Limpopo. It may be possible that men and women suffer from confused national and even provincial policies and attempts which, on the one hand, seek to encourage increased participation in adult education, while on the other hand, create bureaucratic barriers that prevent adults from gaining access to and pursuing education.

All what has been discussed above can be summed up by Tennant’s contention (1993:35-36) who maintains that the task of adult education is to design programmes that promote the following:

- Voluntary participation;
- Respect for self-worth;
- Collaborative learning;
- Praxis-activity/reflection;
- Collaborative analysis;
- Spirit of critical reflection; and
- The nurturing of self-directed empowered adults.

Adults should see themselves as proactive, initiating individuals who are engaged in a continuous recreation of their personal relationships, work worlds, and social circumstances, and not as reactive individuals buffeted by uncontrollable forces of circumstances.

The following section focuses on policy development for Adult Basic Education and Training provision in Limpopo.

2.8 ABET PROVISION IN LIMPOPO

It has been mentioned in the first chapter that Limpopo is one of the provinces that need thorough redress through adult education programmes. To achieve this goal, both the national and provincial departments of education formulated a number of policies. Following is an outline of some key policy issues. The presentation of the policy in this section of the chapter is intended to provide a zooming lens, through which we can later look at the data as presented in the analysis and discussion sections.

Besides the direct ABET policies, South Africa has a constitution that serves as a basis for a number of policies. This constitution (1996:1) seeks, among others, “to *improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person...*” The South African government intended to redress the past imbalances by making sure that people are given opportunities and can gain access to education. Noting that most of the citizens are illiterate and live in abject poverty, adult education was then seen as one strategy to

rectify the situation. These realisations, of course, led to the development of educational policies in general and ABET in particular.

First, there is the National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996) that is based on the necessity to adopt legislation to facilitate the democratic transformation of the national system of education into one that serves the needs and interests of all the people of South Africa and upholds their fundamental rights.

Secondly, is the Policy Document on ABET (1997:9). This document states the vision for ABET as follows:

“ A literate South Africa within which all its citizens have acquired basic education and training that enables effective participation in socio-economic and political processes to contribute to reconstruction, development and societal transformation”. The challenge facing the ABET sector is to ensure that it retains its significance and importance as part of reconstruction and development and as a basic human right. Further to this challenge is to fight against the tendency of regarding ABET as a second chance schooling system and opportunity.

The following are the key components of the ABET policy:

- **Institutional infrastructure:** This is the first component that the department of education needed to establish. This structure would mainly service the needs of all South Africans, in particular, the needs of the poorest and most disadvantaged communities in society. The four forms of the institutional structure that needed to be established were the national, provincial Education and Training Councils and the ABET sub-councils thereof, the National Institute of Lifelong Learning Development, the ABET Quality Assuror and the Adult Education and Training Directorate in both the national and provincial departments.

- **Lifelong learning:** It has been stated in chapter two that lifelong learning principles should be integrated into the ABET system. Therefore, “the department sees ABET as both parts of and as a foundation for lifelong learning...” (p.v).
- **Curriculum, assessment and materials development:** As with all learning programmes and educational systems, it is vital to ensure effective and relevant curriculum development and assessment strategies for ABET. ABET is also influenced by SAQA in terms of levels, critical cross-field outcomes, organising fields and learning areas, unit standards, National Standards Bodies, Standards Generating Bodies, Education and Training Quality Assurors, credits and qualifications.

Further educators should be trained on how to develop teaching and learning material, especially that there is poor collection in adult education. Besides, it is pivotal to provide relevant and contextualised materials that are tailored to meet the needs of adult learners. In this regard the policy clearly states that by saying:

“The development of learning and support materials will receive strong departmental support, including an annual audit of ABET materials” (p.vi).

- **Practitioner development:** Given the fact that adult education practitioners are recruited from all angles of the education system, some from other sectors, the department makes provision for an organised training system for adult education practitioners.

“All ABET practitioners (educators, trainers, education managers, curriculum and materials developers) at all levels of the system should be equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required to implement ABET programmes...” (p.31).

For this it is required in the policy that new programmes geared towards pre and in-service training be developed.

- **Professional, technical support and research:** ABET is one of the areas which are under-researched. At the same time there is a need to systematically develop and promote the ABET sector in order for it to become a profession in its own right like other sectors. In this regard the department formulates the objective as follows:

“The Department will support these processes by strengthening professional and technical support and research in cooperation with other role-players” (p.vii).

- **Monitoring and evaluation:** According to the policy educators are seen as the primary source of evaluation information and primary players in formative evaluation. As a result the department is committed to support all training programmes geared at monitoring and evaluation.
- **Funding:** The policy states that funding for out-of-school youth and adults who need basic general education, cannot be carried by public funds alone, shared among a variety of partners coordinated through the ABET sub-council of the national council for Education and Training.

The Limpopo Department of Education had also formulated its Provincial Multi-year Implementation Plan for ABET (1998). This is a plan and policy that takes its point of departure from the national policy that has been outlined earlier. The components addressed in the provincial policy are basically similar to those in the national plan.

The vision of the plan is the same as the national policy document. The overall goal of the plan is to improve both the quality and the quantity of ABET provisioning. The objectives are then formulated and can be broken down as follows:

- Enrolling the greater number of learners;
- Increasing greater choice for learners;
- Increasing the range of offerings and expanding the services offered;

- Introducing an appropriate and accessible Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) system;
- Ensuring high quality programmes;
- Increasing the number of qualified and professional practitioners;
- Ensuring adequate and sufficient finances and resources; and
- Putting in place a management, monitoring and evaluation systems in place (p.13-47).

2.9 LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning is high on the agenda of government and is therefore encouraged in all learning spheres. According to Payne (2000:260) lifelong learning is a deliberate progression throughout the life of an individual, where the initial acquisition of skills and knowledge is reviewed and upgraded continuously, to meet challenges set by an ever-changing society. The issues surrounding lifelong learning are that individuals should assume responsibility of their learning, not just at school, college or adult learning center, but also throughout their lives. Adults need to constantly review and update their knowledge and skills.

Given this background, it is clear that the type of programmes that are developed for adults should prepare them to be lifelong learners. The current situation in the world and locally is ever changing, and would therefore require or even force individuals to reconsider and rethink their skills and learn new ones in order to keep up with the changing needs.

Tight (1998:110-119) also propagates for lifelong learning for adult learners by arguing that it provides them with equal open access to quality learning opportunities, and to a variety of learning experiences. The education system therefore has a key role to play in making this type of learning a reality through the type of programmes that are being developed or designed.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The vignette about ABET, which has been alluded to in the foregoing discussions, directs our attention to the need to break out of the straight-jacket which identifies Adult Basic Education and Training with institutionalized provision and course-taking.

Although Foley (1999:3) focuses on Informal Adult Education and Learning, he argues that many misconceptions about Adult Education equate it with organized provision by professionals only. However true this may be, similarly, adult education research has focused largely on learning in institutionalized settings. There should be more to Adult Education, especially in the rural, poverty-stricken areas, than what happens in formalized programmes or Adult Education system. The latter is also needed for those adult learners who aspire to climbing up the NQF ladder and making it to other levels of learning.

It is important to indicate that the criteria discussed above are not at this stage regarded as the only absolute ones. There is still space for improving on them or developing even new criteria during and even by the end of the study.

A number of questions arise: How, then, does non-formal, community adult education and training feature into the whole scenario? Could there be better quality criteria that will define adult education in the rural areas of Limpopo? Is it possible perhaps to develop a model that can be used in the provision of adult education and training for rural areas?

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research was aimed at establishing relevant and meaningful criteria for ABET programmes in the Limpopo province. This chapter therefore, discusses the research design and the methods that were employed during the empirical stages of the study.

3.1 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The study was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. There have been a number of debates by researchers with regard to which approach is more suitable than the other. This led to Miles and Huberman's argument (1994:6) that this back and forth banter among qualitative and quantitative researchers will not lead us anywhere. They and many other researchers concur that the two approaches, more often than not, need each other. Myers (1997:59) contends that quantitative approach mainly deals with numbers whereas qualitative approach helps the researcher to understand people and the contexts within which they live. Thorne (1997:118) further explains that what makes a study qualitative is that it usually relies on inductive reasoning processes to interpret and structure the meanings that can be derived from data. The use of the quantitative and qualitative approaches was triggered by the fact that the study used interviews, questionnaires and review of documents as data collection methods. Further, some researchers like Mogotsi (2004:44) have successfully used both approaches. More important is the fact that the population and target group for this research called for the use of both quantitative and qualitative approach (Morse, 1995:520) in order to provide a broader picture of the situation as well as giving more pointed information in a more explorative sense.

A combination of the two approaches also yielded what is called "methodological triangulation" (Mingers, 2001:251). Hughes, MacKintosh, Hastings, Wheeler, Watson and Inglis (1997:415) argue that triangulation refers to more than one approach to the investigation of a research in order to enhance confidence in the ensuing findings. By

triangulating the researcher addressed issues of reliability and validity. In his description of the “art of fieldwork” Wolcott (1995:67) argues that reliability ensures consistency while validity looks at whether a researcher has measured what research purports to measure.

It was helpful, on the basis of the elements identified in the theoretical framework, to look at the outcomes and see whether there has been a change in the lives of the adult learners, as compared to the initial social problem they had before participating in the programmes. The gist of this exercise was that people should be encouraged by their good experiences and practices and to learn from the pitfalls. The impact of programmes would be checked to provide reinforcement by whatever follow-up activities that are most appropriate to given conditions. The main idea was to determine what the quality criteria for ABET provision, in terms of programmes, should look like, taking, as the point of departure, experiences of existing practices in Limpopo Province. However, it is important to mention that the intentions of evaluating the programmes did not succeed. This was because learners who were busy writing examinations at the time of data collection echoed views of disappointment about fellow learners who have completed ABET level four. At that time, educators also did not have any mechanism in place for tracking them down except for few cases.

According to De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:76) the most important role of evaluation should afford the participants a learning experience to give them further opportunity for capacity building and improvement on existing programmes. Such an evaluation would assist in finding better ways to deal with the social problems of illiteracy, unemployment and poverty. On the same note Hopkins (1989:1) regards evaluation as the process of determining to what extent educational objectives of programmes are being realized. However, he continues to argue that education needs to be linked to change and development. This argument obviously, suggests that educational evaluation should have utility in so far as its outcomes enables ABET coordinators and educators and other stakeholders to rethink and attempt to improve the substance of their programmes and the

quality of the teaching and learning process. This might even help in sustaining the programmes.

The suggested approach to evaluation therefore, intended to introduce a tiny element of action research approach because already other actors are involved. The study also made use of feedback loops. Boog, Coenen and Lamberts (1996:29) assert that information collected about the day-to-day realities of people should be processed and used. It was hoped that the ultimate process would be to formulate and enrich the quality criteria that should guide ABET in the rural areas of Limpopo Province.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE

This section presents the population of the study and the size of the sample.

3.2.1 Population

The study was conducted in the Limpopo Province. Limpopo Province is the amalgamation of the former Northern Transvaal homelands namely, Lebowa, Gazankulu and Venda. It also includes the coloured, Indian and White administration structures. Limpopo is the fifth largest province in South Africa with a population of about 5.5 million. The Africans make about 96% of this population. About 90% of them reside in rural areas. 53% of the total population is women. This province is the third most densely populated in South Africa after Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal (Department of Education: 1998).

Limpopo is divided into seven districts that are further subdivided into areas. However, the population of this study was drawn from the Greater Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts.

Table 3.1 on the next page presents the names of the districts and the areas in Limpopo:

Table 3.1 Limpopo Districts and Areas

Name of District	Name of Areas
Capricon	Bochum, Konekwena, Mankweng, Mogodumo, Plokwane, Zebediela.
Waterberg	Bakenberg, Mahwelereng, Lephalala, Belabela.
Vhembe	Malamulele, Mutale, Sekgosese, Soutpansberg, Thohoyandou, Vuwani.
Mopani	Giyani, Phalaborwa.
Mopani	Bolobedu, Hlanganani, Ritavi, Thabina.
Greater Sekhukhune	Apel, Bohlabela, Denilton, Magakala, Nebo, Sekhukhune.
Bohlabela	Acornhoek, Bushbuckridge, Mkhuhlu.

Limpopo Province constitutes the population of the study (See Appendix A). Fowler (1993:44) indicates that a population is a large group of individuals to whom the results will be generalized. Fowler further refers to what is called a sampling frame, which is the group from which the actual sample will be drawn. The sampling frame in this study was the Greater Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts of the Limpopo province. Within this sample frame the targeted people were adult educators, adult learners as well as area coordinators.

3.2.2 Sampling procedure and size

It is important to select a sample for research purposes mainly because it is difficult to get in touch with all the people within a selected population. Besides, not all people who constitute the population are relevant to the research focus. According to Fowler (1993:45) sampling means selecting a given number of subjects from a defined population as representative of that population. This means that the results of data from a sample may not be generalized outside the population from which the sample was taken.

This study used both the purposeful and maximum variation sampling. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989:178) purposeful sampling entails selection of respondents for a particular purpose. For this study respondents were required to provide specific information on specific issues. It was required that respondents should be selected from centers based in the rural areas, and that they should also have participated in the programmes for a longer period. Therefore, respondents were selected on the basis of their knowledge about adult education programmes and the number of years they have taught or participated in the programmes. It was expected that their vast experience would provide more informed data.

Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts have 120 and 104 Public Adult Learning Centres (PALCs), respectively. From the total of 224 centres, only 20 were purposefully selected for the study. There are 198 educators and 554 learners in the 40 centres. 100 educators and 200 learners were selected for responding to the questionnaire. From the total of 198 educators only, 40 were selected purposefully for in-depth data collection through interviews.

Maximum variation sampling was used to “identify information-rich participants” (Fowler, 1993). When using this type of sampling, it is required that the sample be selected serially, which means that it is not possible to select, in advance, respondents until data has been collected from preceding ones (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:178). To do this appropriately assistance was sought from the area coordinators and experienced educators in selecting respondents for the research.

3.3 INSTRUMENTS DEVELOPMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The study made use of documents, questionnaires and interviews for collecting data. The use of these methods and procedures followed are discussed below. It is imperative, at this stage, to mention that permission to conduct this research was granted by the Head of the Limpopo Department of Education. Before gaining entry into the selected districts, meetings were held with the provincial ABET official to discuss in detail the research and

what it intended to achieve. Further, the official also helped in contacting the two district coordinators in order to introduce the research and to make appointments with them.

3.3.1 Review and analysis of documents

It was imperative for me to go through the policy documents on ABET as presented in the previous chapter. The reason was, on the one hand, to understand what preparations and considerations were made for ABET programmes. On the other hand, it was to have a lens with which data collected from questionnaires and interviews would be analysed and understood.

Data were also collected from existing documents about the PALCs and the programmes that are being offered. The main focus at this stage was the type of programmes offered, the intended outcomes, delivery modes, assessment, teaching and learning materials as well as learners' records.

This phase was followed by an administration of a questionnaire on both learners and educators and later by individual interviews.

3.3.2 Questionnaires

A questionnaire was used as one of the instruments to collect data from both adult learners and educators in this study. It contains structured questions to obtain data from respondents. According to Walonick (1993:23) a questionnaire is one of the most popular methods of conducting scholarly research. It provides a convenient way of gathering information from the target population. However, there should be careful consideration when using this instrument. For instance using a questionnaire will depend solely on the type of research question a researcher wants to answer, the research approach and target respondents.

3.3.2.1 Development of and administration of the questionnaires

Two structured questionnaires were developed and administered to gather data: one for the learners and the other for educators (See **Appendixes B and C**). The formulation of the questionnaire was guided by the research questions and theoretical framework of the study. The questions formulated required information mainly on the following aspects:

- Demographic information of both learners and educators;
- Planning and organization of programmes;
- Content and relevance of programmes;
- Articulation, progression and portability;
- Perceptions and socio-cultural matters; and
- Opinions on impact of programmes.

However, it is imperative to note that a questionnaire may not be suitable for certain groups of people. For instance, some people are not educated enough and would therefore not be able to read it accordingly. This may lead to misunderstandings and misinterpretations that ultimately affect the reliability and validity of the data collected. It is also important to use simple and direct language that will be understood by all the respondents.

As Borgers and Hox (1999:46) suggest, there are three factors that should be considered when using a questionnaire to collect data and these are as follows:

- Motivation to answer the questions;
- Difficulty of the questions; and
- Cognitive ability to answer the questions.

The three factors may affect the manner in which respondents answer questions. It becomes vital to indicate that, for this particular study note was taken of these factors, especially taking into consideration one group of the sample, that is the adult learners. Krosnick and Fabrigar (1997:14) also caution that respondent characteristics and questions characteristics can affect the reliability of responses in a questionnaire. This

was in fact true for this study because the level of education of the adult learners is low, and therefore they were not able to read and understand some of the questions. However, as a researcher I was aware of that and took necessary precautions to deal with the situation by involving educators to assist learners in filling in the questionnaires. Still, this was not necessarily the most reliable way of addressing the problem because learners would not be completely honest in providing their responses, especially when assisted by their educators. This shortcoming was, however, reinforced by in-depth interviews.

3.3.3 Interviews

Interviews are regarded as “a good supplement of questionnaires” (Mckillip, 1987:71). Interviews are a face-to-face interaction between the researcher and the respondents during data collection. In the description of an interview process, Mckillip (1987:71) argues that interviews allow for longer and detailed responses. Although it is argued that they are time-consuming, Rubin and Rubin (1995:17) emphasize that the researcher is able to make a follow-up and probing questions where necessary.

In this study individual semi-structured interviews were used as the main method of data collection, especially for educators (**See Appendix D**). These interviews, held with educators in the selected centers, were about the development of the programmes and their relevance, about the outcomes and target group, and also about the impact of such programmes on the lives of the learners. However, such information was also verified through document reviews and observations in and around the centers.

Adult learners (current) were interviewed through focus groups to get their ideas about the running of the programmes, but also to find out what their ideas about adult education in their area (**See Appendix E**).

Focus group interviews typically involve small, non-randomly selected sample. According to Dean, as quoted by Wholey, Hatry and Newcomer (1994:339) a focus group interview is a small group discussion designed to obtain in-depth qualitative information. These focus groups constituted of five adult learners each and were very

useful in conducting exploratory research. In these groups, learners made deliberations, asked questions and responded to comments made by others. They were very informative. However, Rubin and Rubin (1995:140) caution that this type of technique, requires a researcher to be watchful on those respondents who may be talkative and those that are afraid to speak.

The last group of interviews was supposed to be held with adults who had gone through the programmes and were out there applying the skills that they had acquired. The purpose of these interviews was to determine the impact of the programmes on the lives of these adults. The main aim was to see if these adults were able to establish small businesses and generate income, and live as independent adults, or if there was perhaps any other skill that they feel was very useful to them in their daily lives. Unfortunately this session was not conducted due to pragmatic reasons. There was no time to contact these learners and besides, educators did not even have an idea of where most of the learners were and what they could be doing. Some of the learners indicated that such learners were doing nothing and were not really a good example for people who want to go for ABET programmes.

3.3.3.1 Conducting the interviews

The researcher visited one centre at a time, and then provided by a mini-workshop where the tentative findings were presented, verified and confirmed. So each phase had feedback loops. At the stage of mini-workshops contributions were made towards formulating quality criteria that should govern AET provision in Lompopo.

At the end of the planned data collection process, and during interim data analysis, I felt it necessary to interview area coordinators of the Vhembe and Greater Sekhukhune districts. This decision was prompted by discussions with the Vhembe district coordinator, who also suggested that it would be better to interview the area coordinators to get more information from people who are much closer to policy development. They were able to provide more information especially on resources, development and

implementation of programmes, recruitment and training of educators, progression within the ABET system as well as sustainability of programmes.

3.4 DATA PROCESSING AND ANALYSIS

The quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used in this study. For the quantitative analysis the researcher relied solely on the statistical packages such as the SPSS and other experts in quantitative research methods.

For the qualitative part, Miles and Huberman (1994:7) argue that data analysis consists of three concurrent activities that is, data reduction, data display and data verification.

Information collected about the type of organizations and centers involved in adult education was explored and therefore described. This data provided an overview of the activities taking place, by which organizations and for which purposes.

As for the interviews, data collection proceeded simultaneously with data analysis. The interviews were recorded for transcription later, however in most instances learners and educators refused to be recorded because they argued that they did not want to open up. In this case, notes were taken even though the exercise was tedious.

Transcripts were read thoroughly in order to derive units of meaning that would be in line with the theoretical concepts that were formulated in the preceding chapter. The derivation of the units assisted in providing reasonable construction of the data collected. The location of interview questions within the theoretical framework, also helped in reducing complications during data analysis. This is because the theoretical framework forms, to a large extent, the basis for interviews and therefore analysis.

Interim reports were written after interviews at each centre to avoid the process of writing one massive report at the end of the study. It should also be noted that simultaneous data collection and data analysis served as an eye-opener in approaching subsequent interviews or any other form of interaction with the adult education field.

3.5 PROJECT ORGANISATION AND FEEDBACK

There needs to be constant interaction with the research respondents for feedback and communication about the study. This approach enables different people in one's area of research to participate in the study, give valuable inputs, and also to feel as part of the study. It also gives a sense of ownership of whatever outcomes will be achieved in the study.

For the reasons stated above preliminary meetings were held with relevant stakeholders in order to set the scene for the study. For instance, in this study meetings were held with the district and area officers of Vhembe and Sekhukhune. It was after such a fruitful discussion about my intentions that a feedback committee was formed. In fact this committee also served as a validation body of the data that was gathered from the centers, hence the suggestion that area coordinators be interviewed to get more information. On this note Wolcott (1995:167) stresses that reliability and validity are complementary aspects of objectivity. As indicated earlier, it also provides the stakeholders with some feeling of ownership about the research activities which aim at contributing towards the improvement of ABET programmes in Limpopo Province.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a presentation of the empirical data collected to investigate the adult education programmes offered in Limpopo. The following research question and supporting questions were answered in this study:

What are the quality criteria that should characterise the design of adult education programmes in the rural areas of the Limpopo Province?

- (a) Which types of adult education programmes are offered in the Limpopo Province?
 - What are the objectives of such programmes?
 - What competencies and skills do these programmes develop in adult learners?
 - To what extent do the programmes address the needs of adult learners?
 - To what extent do adult learners benefit from the programmes?
- (b) What intervention strategies can be put in place to best address the situation?

Data were collected from three target groups, that is, adult learners, adult educators and area coordinators through the use of questionnaires and interviews. This data were presented in the form of tables and graphs that were developed mainly from the administered questionnaires and narratives derived from the interviews with respondents. Tables and Graphs present statistics on the prevalence of issues whereas the narratives present opinions and perceptions of issues at hand.

The following sections present and analyse the data collected. It is imperative to note that both the statistical data and narratives were presented and discussed simultaneously. Data collected from learners and educators are presented together, and that of area coordinators are presented separately towards the end of the chapter although the points of reference were similar.

4.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA OF LEARNERS AND EDUCATORS

This section provides findings about the demographic information of learners and educators.

4.2.1 Demographic data of learners

Demographic data on the gender, age and educational level of the adult learners were determined. The data is presented as follows:

4.2.1.1 Gender of learners

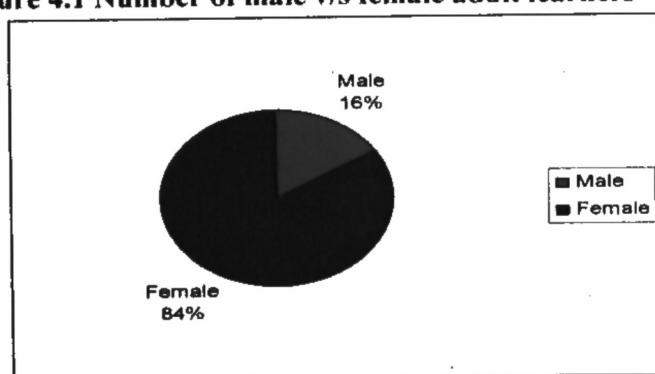
The Department of Education has since 1994 been concerned with access rates and participation of adult learners in educational programmes. A lot of adults have been denied access into these programmes and therefore the ABET directorate has been working towards redressing the past imbalances by opening the doors of learning to all adults. Table 4.1, on the next page, shows the number of female and male learners registered in the whole province. It is clear from this data that there are more female than male learners registered. This finding is in line with the national demographic figures on gender.

Table 4.1 Number of adult learners per district in Limpopo (2005)

Name of district	ABET LEVEL 1			ABET LEVEL 2			ABET LEVEL 3			ABET LEVEL 4		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Bohlabela	85	751	836	94	810	904	125	658	783	269	1568	1837
Capricorn	153	856	1009	125	824	949	150	892	1042	305	1745	2050
Mopani	197	1643	1840	241	1788	2029	213	1278	1491	580	2903	3483
Sekhukhune	104	1192	1296	126	1134	1260	91	582	673	256	1841	2097
Vhembe	212	2302	2514	453	2054	2507	709	1732	2441	911	3508	4419
Waterberg	167	286	453	171	281	452	142	349	491	229	450	679
Grand Total	918	7030	7948	1210	6891	8101	1430	5491	6921	2550	12015	14565

Table 4.1 provides a clearer picture of the number of adult learners who participate in adult education programmes. It further reveals that there are more female than male learners. The statistics as shown in the table above, especially on gender disparities, have an impact on the situation in the different centres where data was collected. The sample of learners in this study was drawn from the Vhembe and Sekhukhune Districts of Limpopo, and as shown in Figure 4.1 below, women participants are more than men.

Figure 4.1 Number of male v/s female adult learners



The data presented indicate that there are 84% of female adult learners participating in ABET programmes, and only 16% male.

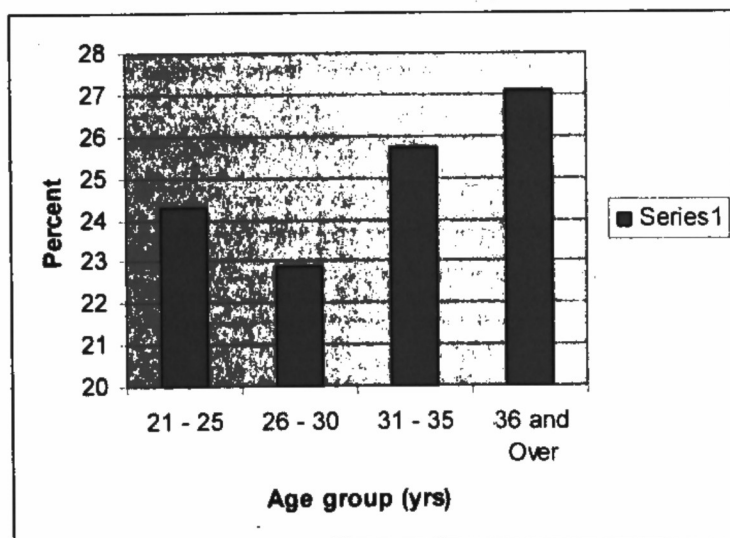
This data is in keeping with the past imbalances as indicated earlier that most women have little or no education. This suggests that in most cases women will tend to participate in programmes more than men. The country's demographic data on gender indicates that there are more women than men.

Learners and educators gave more explanations about these discrepancies through narratives that will be presented in the next sections. However, it should be noted that this may have a bearing on attendance and attrition.

4.2.1.2 Age of Learners

There are debates in South Africa, and other countries, with regard to the term adult. Adulthood was discussed in the second chapter in order to give an indication of the type of people that participate in adult education programmes. Age is very important in this instance because it enables programme developers to align the content towards specific groups of adults within certain age groups. This means that the age of adults enables educators to determine the type of knowledge that should be imparted to the participants. Figure 4.2 below shows the differences in age the groups of the learners.

Figure 4.2 Age group of adult learners



When grouped together, most of the learners' age range between 21 and 35 years. Those who are 36 years and above are few. The situation can be explained by the fact that most questionnaires were given to younger learners, those doing level 3 and 4 because they could already read and write in English. The other contributing factor is that at the time of data collection the most accessible learners were those doing level 3 and 4 because they were busy writing examinations.

From these data it is deduced that most learners who participate in adult education are young. This has implications for the type of programmes that should be offered because they have to be aligned with the characteristics of the adult learners in order to address their needs.

4.2.1.3 Educational level of learners

Adult Basic Education and Training is basically meant to assist those individual adults who have little or no education. It was necessary in this study to establish the level of education of the learners when they registered for the programmes in order to understand the type of programmes that could be offered. The educational levels of the adult learners are presented in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Educational levels of adult learners

What is your highest school qualification?	Frequency	Percent
Primary school	39	25,7%
High school	96	63,2%
Never attended school	17	11,2%
Total	152	100%

Table 4.2 provides information on the educational level of the learners. There was a small group of 11.2% learners that had not gone to school before attending ABET programmes. Those that had secondary schooling are at 63.2% and are in the majority. The reason for this situation is that most of the learners who were in levels 3 and 4 were younger and

had dropped out of the formal school to join ABET. That is why the level of schooling of the learners appears to be high.

4.2.2 Demographic data of educators

4.2.2.1 Number of educators

The following demographic data were also drawn from educators in the Vhembe and Sekhukhune districts. Table 4.3 below is a presentation of the number of all educators in the province. As indicated, Vhembe has the largest number of educators. This may be as a result of the number of learners in the district as shown in Table 4.1 earlier, that influences the number of educators.

Table 4.3 Number of Educators in Limpopo (2005)

Name of District	Number of Educators		
	M	F	TOTAL
Bohlabela	26	234	260
Capricorn	18	197	215
Mopani	76	427	503
Sekhukhune	30	301	331
Vhembe	98	441	539
Waterberg	17	158	175
Grand Total	265	1758	2023

Although gender was not a critical issue for this group, it is clear from the table that there are more female adult educators than male. It has always been the case in adult education centers women to outnumber men. As a result, in all the centres visited during the data collection period, only one had a male educator.

The issue of female educators only becomes a point to ponder upon when talking about retention and dropout problems in the next sections. Most male adult learners do not feel comfortable to be taught by (young) female educators and given the situation as

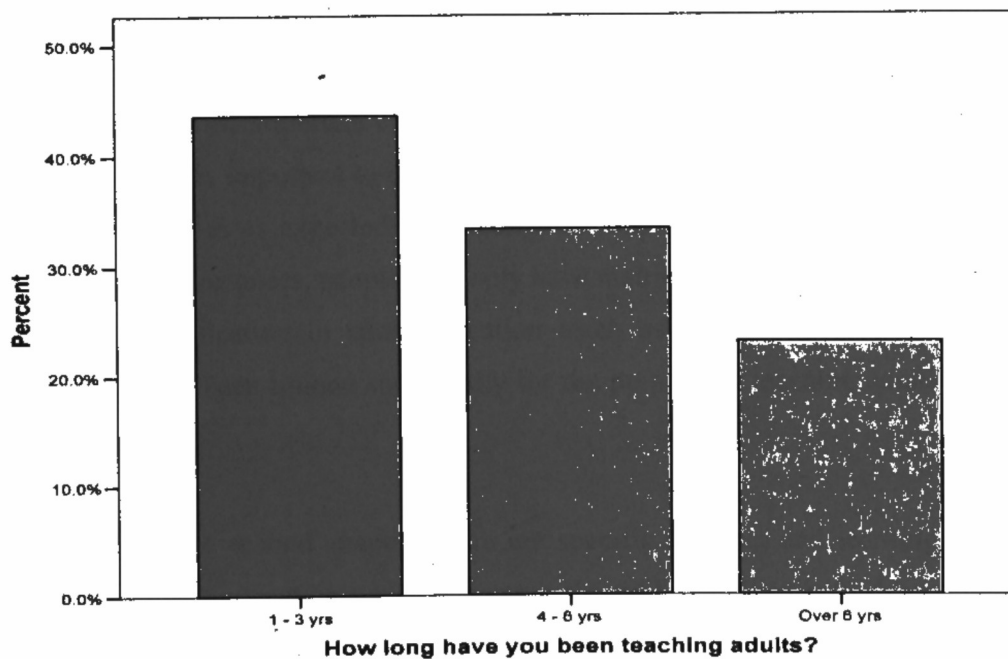
presented, these learners feel they would rather not participate and discontinue with their programmes.

4.2.2.2 Teaching experience of educators in ABET

Adult education is regarded as a specialised area, and therefore requires educators who are qualified to teach adults. The experience of educators is crucial when looking at programmes and the effectiveness thereof, hence the saying that experience is the best teacher. The more time an educator spends in adult education, the more effective and efficient he/she becomes. Figure 4.3 below, reveals that almost half of the educators have taught adults for about three years or less. This information tells us that there could be serious migration problems of educators moving to other fields of work. This minimal experience also poses serious concerns about the depth of knowledge and expertise the educators have in teaching adults.

Figure 4.3 below, highlights the teaching experience of ABET educators.

Figure 4.3 Teaching experience of educators in ABET



It is evident in figure 4.3 that most of adult educators have minimal experience in teaching adults. However, most of them worked in other areas before becoming adult educators. Table 4.4 below, presents this information. For example about 39% of them worked as teachers in the formal schools. Indeed a number of adult educators are drawn from a pool of unemployed educators, some of whom had worked as temporary teachers and others had never been employed.

It is worth noting that over 50% of these educators had never worked or had worked in fields other than teaching.

Table 4.4 Previous work experience of educators

Have you worked somewhere before becoming an adult educator?	Frequency	Percent
No	8	34,8%
Teacher	9	39,1%
Other	6	26,1%
Total	23	100%

4.2.2.3 Qualifications of ABET educators

Qualifications are an important element when looking at how effective educators can be in their duties. It is important to establish whether or not adult educators are qualified to perform their duties as expected. The reason for this consideration was sparked by the fact that in some instances, people who only have matric certificates and not even a single educational qualification in adult education teach adult learners. It is important that people who have been trained specifically for the purpose of teaching adults teach adult learners.

As outlined in the second chapter, there are specific teaching and learning approaches that apply to adult education which educators should be familiar with, for example self-directed learning and critical reflection. It is imperative that adult educators should be familiar with these approaches in order to implement them appropriately.

Figure 4.4 and Table 4.5 below, highlight the levels of education of the educators, as well as the training that they received as adult educators. About 72% of the educators have teaching diplomas. It is evident that there are still 2.6% educators with a matric certificate. Table 4.5 indicates that 75% of the educators have qualifications to teach adults.

Figure 4.4 Educational qualifications of educators

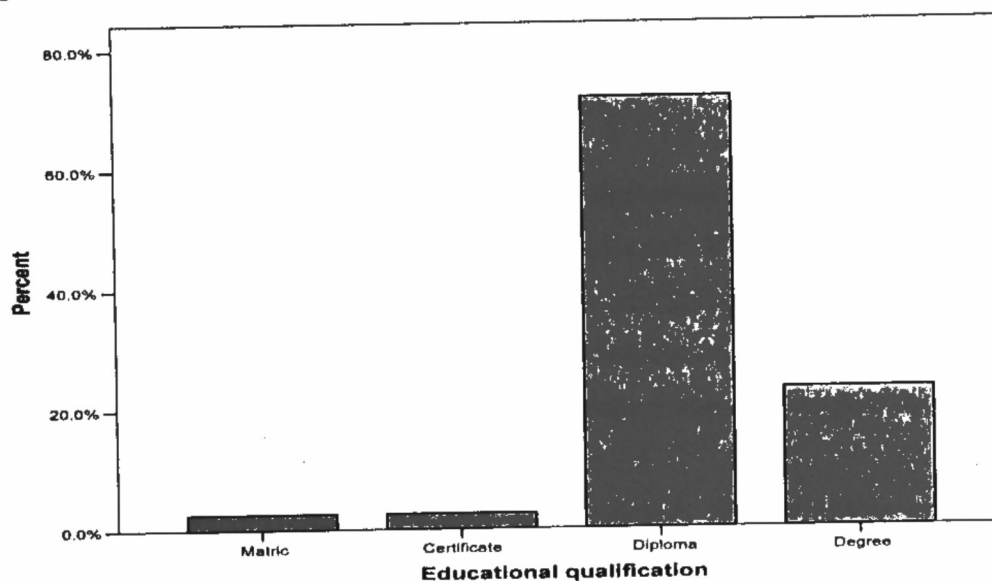


Table 4.5 Qualifications in ABET

Do you have a specific qualification in adult education?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	20	74,1%
No	7	25,9%
Total	27	100%

The data clearly show that adult educators have educational qualifications and that most of them are qualified to teach adults.

4.3

DESIGN AND PLANNING OF PROGRAMMES

Before programmes are developed and offered, there is a lot of preparation done beforehand. The following sections will present data with regard to all the planning, design and organisation of the adult education programmes in Limpopo. Issues regarding design and planning, such as, needs analysis, market research, recruitment, resources and training will be discussed.

4.3.1 Analysis of adult learners' needs

As outlined in the literature review of this study, adults feel they are obliged to participate in educational programmes because of a sense of need. Who has to decide about what should be learned and for what purpose? Merriam and Cafarella (1991:270) argue that in essence, at least, it is the adults themselves who should decide on what should be offered. Needs assessment is a prerequisite before programme design is embarked upon.

Table 4.6 below, provides information that indicates that educators conduct needs assessment. The data reveal that 81% of educators combine both talks with the community and the individual adult learners. It is important for adult educators to approach programmes from a collective perspective of the community and that of individuals.

Table 4.6 Needs analysis

Before offering programmes do you establish why adult learners want to learn? If yes, how do you do that?	Frequency	Percent
Talking to the community	7	18,4%
Talking to the community, interviewing individual adults, in class.	31	81,6%
Total	38	100%

When asked whether or not they conduct any needs assessment before offering programmes, educators mentioned that they do. Some mentioned that they do it with

individual learners while others use the whole-class approach. It is interesting to note that even though educators understand the whole process of needs assessment and what it is intended for, the exercise becomes quite a futile one. They get discouraged because they are unable to cater for some of the needs because the programmes are packaged and therefore both educators and learners are to some extent obliged to confine themselves to the packages. It has been indicated earlier that they are supposed to register the stated eight learning areas and cannot do anything beyond that.

On the same note learners indicated that educators do conduct needs analysis, however the responses were not really convincing. They maintained that educators do ask them about their needs, motivation and intentions before they start with the programmes. They also mentioned that educators do not always teach what the adult learners want to learn. Learners complained that:

“They always teach us theory. We want skills so that we can make money.”

The issue of addressing the needs of adult learners is a very serious one due to the process followed by the Department of Education. It becomes difficult to address those needs. The reason for this is that the Department of Education already predetermines the content in the programmes and educators do not have much to say about them.

It seems that needs analysis is done at a late stage, that is, after the programme has been designed. It is clear from the data that in fact adult educators are not necessarily involved in the assessment of the needs. The reason for this situation is that the Department of Education is the one that engages in the process of needs assessment and not the educators.

4.3.2 Socio-economic background of learners

Market research is important in order for programme developers to understand the background of the adult learners.

Educators highlighted that most of the learners come from poor socio-economic backgrounds. They felt that it is important to be aware of that fact so that they are able to provide services and programmes that will best address the needs of their learners. In that spirit then the conclusion might be that educators understand the necessity of needs identification and analysis thereof.

4.3.3 Gender

As evident in one of the tables and graphs shown previously, the number of female learners is more than that of male learners in ABET centers in Limpopo. The gender issue has been a problem in adult education for a long time. Various reasons have been advanced through research conducted by Malale (1996) and Mphahlele (2003) as presented in chapter two. However the problem is still recurring.

In this study educators do not provide any reasons different from the ones known in the research mentioned. They attribute the problem to issues of social orientation of men as compared to that of women. Men do not want to see or find themselves in the presence of women, especially in instances where they are proved to be incompetent or incapacitated. The other factor mentioned is that men say that they do not see any development in ABET programmes given the type of things that are being taught in the centres. When asked about why men do not attend, the educators said:

“Men? They promise but do not come because they go to the beer-halls.”

“Men look down on ABET. They say they have never seen anyone with a certificate or has got a job.”

“A lot of people think ABET is for women.”

The female learners added by saying that:

“Men are in the minority. Not that they are more educated... but culturally they fear to go down, sit on the desks and compete with women.”

“We call them. They always say they will come but they do not. Even not many men go for elections. Have you noticed? It is only women.”

Besides the concerns about social orientation of men and women, some of the responses as presented may be pointing back to the type of programmes offered and the content thereof. It is possible that most of these programmes do no appeal to men and that is why they do not want to associate themselves with such.

During programme design and planning phases gender should be taken into consideration because it is a critical issue that needs to be addressed. It is evident that most men still do not participate in ABET programmes, therefore the problem of illiteracy will not be easily and immediately reduced.

4.3.4 Adult learners’ motivation to participate in ABET

It was very pivotal to establish why these learners decided to attend ABET classes. As discussed in the second chapter, authors such as Knowles (1973), Mwamwenda (1995) and Rogers (1986), argue that no adult learners can participate in a learning programme if there was no “need to fulfill”. Because of this need, learners are therefore motivated to attend educational programmes.

During the interviews, learners gave various reasons why they decided to attend classes and these are grouped as follows:

- To become literate (being able to read and write);
- To learn English;

- To improve their own education;
- To be able to look for a job;
- To start own businesses;
- Because of age restriction at school;
- To improve at work (these were already employed in the Department of Water Affairs);
- To learn income generation skills.

This list was generated from different learners, however, it should be pointed out that, even though the data was not quantified, most of the learners responded that they wanted to acquire skills that would enable them to generate their own income.

Table 4.7 Choice of programmes

Which adult education programme/s do you attend?	Frequency	Percent
Mother tongue	84	54,9%
English	129	84,3%
Numeracy	105	68,6%
Income generation	22	14,4%

As presented in Table 4.7 above, 84% of the learners indicated that they attended English lessons. This is because older learners were mainly concerned with reading, writing and numeracy skills because they argued that they were old and therefore needed only those skills for their daily survival. They indicated that the skills were very vital in their lives because they reduced the level of dependency that they had on other people. For example the following are some of the excerpts from their statements (translated from Xitsonga and Sepedi):

"I should be able to make a signature on my own."

"I force myself to go to school so that when I want to talk to my husband I should be able to do so without asking my child to do it on my behalf."

“When I go to the shops to buy, I must ask someone how much the items cost.”

The other group of learners indicated that they found ABET very important because they wanted to further their studies or get employment. When asked which type of employment they envisaged, most of them mentioned that of being a domestic worker or mentioned that they did not know. This is because the former is one of the easiest jobs they can get from nearby villages, townships and towns.

It is also remarkable to note that only a small percentage of 14.4 learners attend income generation classes. In most of the centres there were no such projects hence the low percentage.

4.4 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

This section presents aspects and elements that should be taken into consideration when developing and implementing ABET programmes. The findings are presented as follows:

4.4.1 Training of educators

One of the critical areas that were discussed in the second chapter is practitioner development. Practitioner development is mentioned as one of the crucial issues in adult education. That makes training a focal point as in any other form of programme provision. The demographic data on educators revealed that many educators received initial training to teach adults. As a result, it became vital to establish whether or not educators were trained continuously for them to be more effective and up-to-date with the recent developments in adult education.

Table 4.8, on the next page, reveals that 75% of the educators were trained in order to be able to teach adult learners. This is quite a big number. The educators are also convinced that the training was enough, and that is reflected by the 75% in table 4.9, just below table 4.8.

Table 4.8 In-service training in adult education

Did you receive any form of in-service training in order for you to teach adults?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	75%
No	4	25%
Total	16	100%

Table 4.9

In your opinion, was the training adequate for you to teach adults?	Frequency	Percent
Adequate	33	94,3%
Not adequate	2	5,7%
Total	35	100%

During the interviews educators maintained that they had received in-service training in adult education immediately after employment. This training was offered mainly in the form of workshops. However, it is important to note that some educators mentioned that there was no rigorous training for them in the past two years and this statement may account for the 25% that is reflected in Table 4.8 above. This concern was also confirmed by one provincial ABET official, who said that the training of educators was discontinued in the year 2002.

As stated earlier training offered to these educators was mainly in the form of workshops. Although data derived from the questionnaires indicate that the training was adequate (in Table 4.9), educators did not seem completely satisfied during the interviews. They mentioned that the training was not enough. They also blamed and discouraged the Cascading model of training because it was mostly used for the training. They believe that by the time the training reaches the lower levels, the information seemed to have watered-down, that some of the issues and aspects were no longer taught, as they should have been. Some even complained that they sometimes did not even receive the training at all.

Areas of emphasis during the training sessions were, *inter alia*, assessment, how to teach adults and conduct needs analysis.

It appears that educators were not completely satisfied with the type of in-service training that they received. Important to note is the fact that all educators had received pre-service training. They were trained as teachers for formal schools and some have educational diplomas and others degrees.

4.4.2 Marketing of programmes and recruitment strategies

Adult education, unlike other forms of education, is not compulsory. Because of this factor, educators need to develop strategies of teaching prospective adult learners.

Educators responded and argued that they used various strategies and methods for marketing the programmes and recruiting adults. They mentioned that they used the door-to-door strategy for recruiting adult learners. They also made announcements in schools and at community gatherings and meetings. Local shops at the villages were also used for advertising adult education classes.

Educators who do visit adult learners in their houses indicated that sometimes they experienced problems because people did not welcome them. In fact, the door-to-door strategy is such a difficult one because people felt belittled by the visits, while on the other hand it was difficult for educators to identify people who are illiterate. As a result educators relied much on announcements and meetings. In fact, the door-to-door strategy would also enable educators to easily communicate about the specific needs of learners.

Learners also reiterated that educators recruited them through announcement at local schools and community meetings, as well as notices at the shops.

These responses are an indication that educators made an attempt to recruit adult learners using different methods and strategies.

Not all adults in the communities are aware of adult education programmes therefore educators should embark on a rigorous recruitment drive. If this is not done, then most adults will still be left out of the programmes and the level of illiteracy will still be high.

4.4.3 Availability of required resources

Resources are a vital component in adult education and should be provided sufficiently for the smooth running of the programmes. The issue of resources here concentrates on teaching and learning materials, infrastructure, transport, remuneration of educators, as well as other important resources. All of these are dependent on availability of funds.

4.4.3.1 Teaching and learning materials

Teaching and learning material should be supplied to assist learners in the process of learning. As indicated in the Department of Education ABET policy (1997), materials development and distribution was cited as very pivotal. Materials, such as textbooks, allow learners to study or learn independently while they also augment the teaching and learning that takes place in the classroom. Moore (1980:23) also stresses that adult learning is self-directed, which means that learners should be able to gather information and collect ideas.

Although focus in the questionnaire was only on availability of textbooks, it should be noted that there were no other materials used by learners in ABET centres. Textbooks that were provided were not enough for all the learners. On the next page, Table 4.10 shows a higher percentage (69%) of learners who acknowledged that there were textbooks in the centres but that the textbooks were not enough as shown in Table 4.11, on the next page. 12.8% of learners maintained that in their centres there were no textbooks at all.

Table 4.10 Availability of textbooks

Do you have textbooks for learning?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	104	69,3%
No	31	20,7%
Not sure	15	10%
Total	150	100%

Table 4.11

Are the textbooks enough for you to learn?	Frequency	Percent
Enough	39	26,4%
Not enough	90	60,8%
No textbooks	19	12,8%
Total	148	100%

Learners are obliged to share textbooks. Sharing creates problems for them because they stay far apart and that makes it difficult for them to do their schoolwork at home. Learners also indicated that they did not receive stationery and notepads, and therefore have to share with those that were given to schoolchildren.

Educators mentioned that there was shortage of materials for learners almost every year. That became even more serious because they do not possess materials development skills and therefore it became difficult for them to be creative and improvise.

Some educators argued that they tried to teach various income generating skills such as computer literacy, sewing and Agriculture, but this endeavour became a nightmare because there were no proper equipments and tools to do that successfully. As a result, it became very difficult for learners to acquire such skills due to poor or lack of hands-on experience.

There were learners who were interested in computer skills but could not acquire those because there were no computers. This issue was followed up with educators who

indicated that the department had since promised to provide funds but to no avail. This was captured as follows:

"The department always promises but nothing is taking place."

"The department does not supply enough."

Computers are not the only problem because learners complain that they want to learn more income generation skills but are told that there are no resources such as sewing machines and materials, gardening tools or start-up funds for small business ventures.

"We want to start with projects but the educators tell us that there is no money from the department."

In some centres there are small initiatives taken with regard to such skills but there are a lot of problems experienced. For example, one of the centres that were once funded by PROLIT during the Ikhwelo project was left stranded due to lack of support from the department. The learners have a big yard and a small building that was provided by PROLIT but since the end of the project,

"The department is doing nothing."

They say that they are troubled by wild animals that destroy their crops, and the building is not big enough to accommodate all learners therefore is augmented by a shack that is not so comfortable.

The problem of insufficient teaching and learning materials can be attributed to that of funds. If there is not enough funding for ABET in general then obviously the textbooks and other materials will not be enough. As a result ABET programmes will lose meaning given this type of constraints.

4.4.3.2 Infrastructure

The unavailability of fulltime classes for the adult learners and offices for adult educators was an indication that there is a problem of infrastructure. Adult learners use formal schools for ABET programmes, as a result, they are literally subjected to small chairs and tables that are used by primary school children. This arrangement poses problems because when there are other activities taking place in the schools, the adult learners cannot utilise the classes for that period. This means that they have to miss school for that particular day, which has implications especially given the number of days and hours they are allocated for learning.

One educator said:

"We have no sense of ownership. We are at the mercy of the school principal because he has the power to decide."

"Sometimes the children are singing in the school for music competitions and it is difficult for our learners to concentrate."

"We always fight with the teachers in the school because they say we are using their chalks."

The learners added that they still did not have access to the school buildings when the school children were on vacation. This means that when schools were closed, ABET did the same. However it should be mentioned that not all school managers were 'tough nuts to crack'. Some did understand the need and urgency of educating the parents of their school children. One educator mentioned that in his centre the principal budgeted for some of the small things that they might need. For example, in 2005 he bought a steel cabinet for the ABET educators that can be used to store their books and other stationery.

It is important to note that the very same schools were also not in a very good condition. Most of them, especially that they were located in the rural areas, still needed 'aggressive' upgrading. The buildings, furniture and the yard needed attention.

"(Pointing) Look, the windows and doors are broken."

Clearly, adult learners and educators operate under harsh conditions. It is difficult therefore to guarantee effective teaching and learning.

4.4.3.3 Transport

Transport for delivering materials and stationery was cited as a problem. At the time of data collection, I observed in one centre that learners were unable to start writing the examination on time because they had to wait for the question paper. The reason for this delay was because they did not have transport to collect the paper from the area office. The center manager used public transport to collect examination papers at the office. They indicated that it was a problem that they experienced time and again that learning materials were not delivered in time due to the transport problem.

While sitting and waiting in the Vhembe District's coordinator's office one morning, still waiting to be accompanied to the centres, I heard the coordinator conversing over the phone with one of his officials who got stuck on the road because they had given him a semi-functional car to go and deliver examination books at the centres. After ending his conversation he looked at me and said:

"You see Monica, you must note this. These are some of the problems we have here. Now the poor fellow must try and drive slowly back here. In the meantime I need to try and see if we can't get him a better car. Now time is running out."

4.4.3.4 Remuneration of adult educators

Payment of educators' salaries is also a critical issue. In this instance educators complained that they did not get their salaries on time and that resulted in various problems such as being listed at the credit bureaus. They further complained that in fact in most cases they were not sure when they would get their salaries, as a result they could not plan properly for personal issues that involve money. The Salary problem leaves much to be desired. One wonders why these educators are still hanging around in the system.

A programme cannot run smoothly with unsatisfied educators. To keep them motivated and on their toes, educators need to be remunerated accordingly. Clearly, there is not enough money to support ABET activities. All stakeholders are pointing fingers at the Department of Education. Educators say they cannot do anything about the situation because they are not allowed to raise funds.

4.4.4 Notional hours

ABET learners are supposed to exit at Level 4 with a 120 credits General Education and Training Certificate. This translates into 1200 notional hours. They are allocated six hours per week to attend eight learning areas.

Both educators and learners complained that the time allocated for them to learn is too little. Two hours per day three times a week was not sufficient, they said. They complained that eight learning areas per week are too much given the amount of time allocated. As a result, those who were writing level four examinations at that time of this research felt that they were not ready. The following excerpts capture their concerns:

"Eight subjects are many and difficult."

"We are forced to register all irrespective of our knowledge and ability. When you fail there is no supplementary... you register one subject for the whole year."

Learners are clearly not satisfied with the number of learning areas they had to register for within the limited timeframe.

Educators argued that the time was not enough because teaching adults requires patience, concentration, and attention to individual problems of the learners.

About the issue of time one educator said:

"Adults are not like children. They take time to understand what you are teaching them. So it is difficult for us to cover all the work within this limited time."

They are only given two hours per day to teach, three times a week. This means that they had a total of only six hours of teaching per week to teach the eight learning areas for the different levels. If carefully calculated, it means that each learning area receives less than an hour of teaching per week.

The other problem regarding the time for teaching is that lessons start only in the afternoon after the school children have vacated the classes. Educators indicated that at that time of the day, most learners are tired because they have been involved in their daily household chores. They complained that most of the learners could not concentrate because they were tired while some were already worried that it is getting late and they must start their journeys back home. The latter worry is brought about by the fact that some stay far from the schools and had to walk longer distances to and back from the ABET centres. They said that for some of the learners it was not safe.

Learning by adults sometimes becomes a painful exercise due to a number of factors such as past learning experiences. They need extra attention and that requires a lot of time. For the department of education, allocation of time for a programme should be regarded as one of the important aspects.

4.4.5 Content of programmes

Content that is offered within the programmes should be considered. There are concerns about its relevance especially because it should be geared towards addressing the needs of adult learners. What follows is a presentation of the responses with regard to the relevance of the programmes.

4.4.5.1 Type of programmes offered in the centers

There are ten learning areas that are being offered in the adult education programme. These are as follows:

Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics Literacy, Mathematics and Mathematical Sciences, Human and Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Technology, Economic and Management Sciences, Life Orientation, and Arts and Culture.

Although Table 4.12 below, presents a response of 74.4% it was evident during site visits that income-generating skills were not offered in the centres. Learners indicated that they wanted to learn the skills but there were no programmes to address these skills. They complained that theory would not help them in any way. For example one educator mentioned that they teach learners computer skills but there was not even a single desktop available. She indicated that they sometimes requested someone from the community to bring his desktop to the centre and this exercise was cumbersome.

Table 4.12 Income generation skills

Besides reading, writing and numeracy, do you teach any income generation skills?	Frequency	Percent
Always	29	74,4%
Sometimes	9	23,1%
Never	1	2,6%
Total	39	100%

As highlighted above, educators argued that they attempted to go beyond the learning areas and offered income generating skills, but to a limited extent due to poor financial support. They supported the views echoed by learners that it was difficult to teach theory without linking it with practical work. For instance, in one of the centres they had planted some vegetables but complained that wild animals destroyed these because they did not have money to buy a fence, as such they could not proceed with the project.

The Learning Areas are still important to be taught to adults because they provide basic education that leads to other life skills such as income-generation. It appears that adults are mostly taught the eight learning areas and not much on the skills that are needed. This raises a lot of questions especially when we look back at what was said about addressing their needs and motivating them to participate.

4.4.5.2 Objectives of programmes

The overall objective of ABET has been stated in the policy as being to provide general basic education and training to adults for access to further education and training and employment.

This objective would be achieved through the various programmes that are offered in ABET.

Educators were concerned and worried that the content of the programmes is not relevant and that adult learners will neither have access to Further Education and Training (FET) nor get employed. This means that in the long run, this overall objective will not be achieved.

4.4.5.3 Teaching and learning techniques

It is important that educators apply teaching techniques and strategies that allow learners to be self-directed, reflect critically and use their own experiences in learning (Brookfield, 1995:20). It is also propagated by the Outcomes Based Education that the

educator should not be the center of the teaching and learning process, and that learners should be allowed to explore and acquire new knowledge on their own.

This study established whether or not educators allow learners to be autonomous by using different teaching strategies. It is shown in the tables 4.13 and 4.14 below, that the educators employ different approaches when teaching the adult learners. Most learners even appreciate and enjoy the combination of the strategies instead of the use of one.

Table 4.13 Teaching and learning strategies

How do your educators teach you?	Frequency	Percent
Educators always teach	26	17,2%
Educators let you learn on your own	5	3,3%
Educators let you work in groups	29	19,2%
Educators teach, let us learn on our own and let us work in groups	91	60,3%
Total	151	100%

Table 4.14 Techniques preferred by learners

How do you prefer to learn or to be taught?	Frequency	Percent
By educators	21	14,1%
On your own	5	3,4%
With other learners	16	10,7%
By educators, on my own and with other learners	107	71,8%
Total	149	100%

The data presented in Tables 4.13 and 4.14 above could not be verified because at the time of data collection, learners were busy with examinations. As a result, I could not observe the lessons to establish how the educators teach and interact with the learners in

the classroom. It was also not possible to look at the type of activities that are given to the learners to complete in their workbooks. However, looking at the type of classes they were using and the sitting arrangement, one could easily tell that teachers mainly apply the whole-class approach. With the limitations brought about by poor resources, no one could expect much to happen in such contexts.

4.4.5.4 Relevance of programmes offered in addressing the needs of learners

The issue of relevance of programmes appears to be a difficult one. It is not possible to talk about adult education without alluding to relevance. This is because these adults have been excluded from educational processes and some received little or no education. Therefore their learning, as stated, is mainly undertaken to address specific needs that have been identified. This, therefore, warrants relevant programmes that will address the needs.

Although not convincing in their responses, educators maintain that the programmes they offer are relevant and therefore address the needs of learners. One is tempted to say that their response is not convincing mainly because if conducting needs assessment is a problem in itself then how relevant will the programmes be? On the contrary, some openly indicated that there is a need to have a re-look into the programmes or to try and contextualise the content so that it is applicable to specific issues and problems of the Limpopo province. Quite interesting is the fact that other educators observed that the content in some textbooks does not even correspond with the unit standards. Educators have to use their own discretion when using them.

Table 4.15, on the next page, indicates that about 79% of the learners are satisfied about the relevance of programmes that are offered. However, this information tempts one to ask why the dropout rate is so high in the centres.

Table 4.15 Relevance of programmes

Do you think that your adult educators offer programmes that you want to learn?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	118	78,7%
Partially	23	15,3%
No	9	6%
Total	150	100%

There seems to be contradicting responses. Learners, on the one hand, were convinced that they were taught relevant programmes while on the other hand very pertinent issues were raised with regard to the type of skills they acquire. Educators are worried that learners do not acquire relevant skills for employment or income-generation.

4.4.5.5 Learners' opinions about the programmes

Given all the responses and discussions that went on, it was important to check and verify what the learners thought about the programmes they were receiving. Although most learners said they were happy and content about the programmes, there was a silent response that actually said, *"we are not completely satisfied with what we are getting."* The body language and facial expression said it all. They said that people have successfully completed level four programmes but had nowhere to go and had nothing to do.

Generally, these learners indicated that they are happy because there are some interesting things to learn from the programme; for example in learning areas such as Tourism and Life Orientation. They maintain that they are gaining a lot because staying at home is not such a viable option.

In spite of all the predicaments discussed in the preceding sections, learners are still motivated to attend classes and do display the zeal to continue. They are prepared to recommend the programmes to other people in the communities. They do call for improvements and income-generating projects but have not given up completely. The following statements are testimony to that:

"I will not leave the centre. I will continue."

"We will call them to come to school."

"I am busy calling to others that here we are learning!"

"The only problem is that we do not have equipments, but my performance is very good."

"We never think of leaving this place. Where will we go?"

"I will make it because I have the zeal... I am committed to learning. When I get back at home I do tell them that women, we are getting help at the centre."

The last statement was uttered by one of the older learners. She proudly had all her workbooks in front of me during the interviews. As we were talking she was showing me all what she had written. She seemed happy about it and motivated to continue learning.

Responses from learners are an indication that not everything is a waste of time in ABET. They were positive about it and believe that something would come out of it.

4.4.5.6 Ability to apply gained knowledge and acquired skills

Learners whose intentions are to acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills are content and say they are able to apply the skills. They are able to read and no longer solely depend on other people to do certain things. One of them said:

"Now when we go to society meetings the other women always choose me to do most of the things. It is not because I know everything, but for them I am much better. Because I know their level of education I sometimes pretend to be a genius. It is good to interact with other people and understand what is taking place around you. Now people think I know because I can engage in discussions... I get the news and ideas from the ABET."

There are those learners who had hoped that they would be able to start their own businesses and those that wanted to further their education. They are not so confident that they will be able to do that without any pitfalls. They feel that too much theory is being emphasized and, as a result, they will not be able to do much with it.

In most centres, learners who were at level four, did not know what was to become of them after completion. They were not aware that they could enter the Further Education and Training (FET) band or alternatively with the necessary skills and be able to establish SMMEs in order to generate their own income. They seemed to be sailing in a boat that had neither direction nor destination. When I asked them “where to from here?” they laughed and some of them said:

“I am going to look for a job... (Where?) I do not know as long as I can work and help my family.”

“I will go and further my studies. I want to go to university. It is possible, not so?”

Other adult learners were laughing. Not because they knew that it is not possible to directly move from level four and go straight to university, but because the learner was asking me the question. It felt as if the question was an eye-opener for them, as if they had never seriously thought about their future plans. In fact they immediately requested me to explain the different possibilities and opportunities that are available for them.

The impact of programmes can only be honestly determined after adult learners had completed the programmes and are out there implementing the skills and knowledge that they have acquired. It was imperative to establish, from educators, if the fruits of their efforts were visible after the learners had gone through the programmes.

When asked about whether or not the programmes brought about any change in the lives of the learners some educators said:

“Yes. Most of them know how to read and write their names and can do other things.”

“You see it is very difficult for the learners to do anything because they do not have start-up funds. They want to start their own small businesses but money is the problem.”

Educators were asked if they made follow up to verify if indeed the learners were progressing well with their lives after completion. Unfortunately not much is being done to that effect except what has been said earlier. Educators mentioned that they were deeply concerned about learners who passed level four because they did not seem to find themselves anywhere. They explained that the problem is the issuing of certificates. Learners had been writing the Independent Examination Board examination but had not received any certificates. As a result they cannot either further their studies in the FET band or seek employment where they can show evidence of their level of education. To this effect, it makes it quite difficult for educators to establish whether their learners can make it beyond the ABET band or not.

Both learners and educators were neither convinced nor confident that they would perform well in the FET colleges. Their concern is brought about by the fact that learners are taught a lot of aspects within a short period of time. They wonder if they will match the standard of those who come from the formal schools.

4.4.5.7 Recommendation of programmes to other learners

Learners may have raised problems encountered but will still recommend programmes to those who are not taking part. This response may also be explained by the previous findings especially that learners find the programmes relevant and important. They believe that literacy and numeracy are important for all illiterate adults. This is a positive sign and revelation about the programmes. On the next page, table 4.16 provides the evidence of their responses; 83% were confident that the programmes are relevant and therefore can be recommended for other people who are not currently taking part. Only 4.7% completely disagreed.

Table 4.16 Recommendation of programmes to other learners

Will you recommend the adult education programme to other adults who are not attending?	Frequency	Percent
Yes	124	83,2%
No	7	4,7%
Maybe	18	12,1%
Total	149	100%

4.4.5.8 ABET qualifications and articulation

Educational programmes should allow learners to move vertically and horizontally. This means that learners should be able to continue to other levels of study and other programmes.

It is the intention of the Department of Education that ABET learners, should after completing level 4, be able to register in the Further Education and Training band of the NQF.

This study established that there is a huge gap between levels 1 and 2 and levels 3 and 4. Educators indicated that levels 1 and 2 concentrate on basic literacy, communication and numeracy. These levels, they argue, do not prepare learners adequately in order to continue with level 3. As a result, those that wish to go to level 3 suffer a lot because they cannot cope with the content and standard in that level and that results in their dropping out of the programme.

On the same note, learners were not even aware that they could register with the FET colleges after completing ABET level 4. Neither did they know whether they would find jobs, and if so, what type. Some of the educators were also not confident in responding to the issue of progression and articulation. This was evident in the foregoing section where learners said a lot of things about where they would go after ABET level 4.

Both learners and educators indicated that they have, since writing examinations, not received certificates for level 4 and that is why they cannot be admitted in the FET

colleges. Learners were discouraged by the ABET system and disillusioned about their future.

4.4.5.9 Poor attendance and Dropout problem

The dropout rate of learners has always been a problem, even in the ordinary school system. There are a number of factors that can lead to learners dropping out. However it was pivotal to establish why it is rife in adult education, particularly where people volunteered to participate in the programmes. They have identified their felt needs and considered it important to address them through adult education programmes.

The adult learners mentioned quite a number of reasons that lead to a high dropout rate or poor attendance. They indicated that they had other important things to attend to. In fact some did not agree with the concept of dropout. The following are excerpts from their statements:

“We do not necessarily drop out. Sometimes there are issues that need our attention and then we cannot attend classes as expected.”

“My child was sick and I had to stay at home for more than a month. When I went back I was told it is too late to continue... others are far ahead with the syllabus. I did not have a choice.”

“Sometimes people do not have relatives nearby who can stay with the children when they go to classes. So they stop attending.”

Some learners stressed that they are responsible people who cannot just “bank” classes unnecessarily. They argue that they encounter a lot of problems because sometimes the educators think they are lazy or they just stay away deliberately.

In one instance, the adult learner expressed remorse and blamed the department. She highlighted an incident where her fellow learner lost hope and decided not to continue because she was not on the examination list. Because of that, she was excluded from the examination and nothing was ever done to rectify that, yet she had been attending for the whole year.

At one center, learners indicated that people are not motivated enough to continue attending because there is no direction. When requested to elaborate on that, they made mention of the fact that they had never seen anyone with an ABET certificate, neither had they seen anyone having done anything with the knowledge and skills acquired from ABET. They expressed feelings of disillusionment. They said there was no progress and development. All they did was sit down and listen to the educators. Some said:

"We want to finish, the children want to eat."

"...maybe it is better if just we go looking for jobs... ah, any kind of job."

"I feel I am wasting time. My friends are working in Jo'Burg."

Some learners in one centre felt that they were cheated by the system and would not continue to study if that is how they are going to be treated:

"The question paper is different from what the educators taught us."

"I do not think I will pass this exam. I just wasted the whole year only for this?"

Learners who had just finished to write a paper in Economic Management echoed these statements and expressed feelings of disappointment. They complained that the department was not fair to them.

This issue was taken to be a serious concern, therefore, learners in other centres were asked about their opinions on the exam. They concurred with the previous learners'

concerns. I immediately asked the educators thereafter in order to understand the gist of the problem.

The educators explained that the problem was brought about by the issue of time. Because they had limited time, they were unable to cover all the work therefore some of the aspects in the question papers were indeed new to the learners.

It was further explained that they did not always receive all the unit standards on time or never received some of them at all:

“Unit Standards are delivered late. When teaching there is no point of reference.”

As a result:

“We just teach without the unit standards.”

One centre manager said:

“The books do not correspond with the unit standards.”

“The set standards are above level four learners. If you look at their question paper you will see that it is more difficult.”

The following is a summary of the responses by educators with regards to issues of poor attendance and dropout:

- *Family problems and responsibilities:* Women look after children, or even start preparing meals for the evening. It was so distressing to realize that some women go to an extent of bringing their small children along to classes.
- *(Seasonal/temporary) Employment:* There are times when learners get employed as domestic workers and in that case, they stop going to classes. Some of the centres, especially in the Vhembe district, are closer to farms. During harvesting the learners get temporary employment at the farms and

then they suspend their educational activities. There are those who own small plots and need to care for the crops at various seasons of the year.

- *Socio-cultural responsibilities:* This one came out quite frequently, that some husbands do not appreciate their wives going for late afternoon classes and therefore accuse them of several unwelcome behaviours. Some learners are being called upon to join their husbands at their place of work especially in Gauteng.

In some villages it is said that during circumcision schools, women must attend to the young lads and girls. They do the cooking for them on a daily basis until the last day. As a result, they are unable to attend classes regularly.

- *Laziness:* Some educators felt that learners are just lazy to engage in adult education programmes so they drop out.

All of these foregoing statements and concerns are taken to be a serious pathway towards poor attendance and ultimately dropout problem. Adults do not want to be subjected to or feel a sense of failure, especially given all the pressures that surround them. However, there should be a closer look at the real issues that lead to poor retention and dropout. If programmes are not relevant and therefore do not appeal to learners, it is obvious that as adults they will opt for other commitments and not go to classes.

4.4.5.10 Community perceptions about ABET programmes

Adult education should be embedded within the community, and whatever takes place in the centres, should take into cognisance the community they find themselves in. Educators indicated that communities do support adult education initiatives. However, they stress the fact that support is very minimal. Some communities, they argue, “*do not understand what ABET is all about. They think that it is for old men and women.*” This thinking raises the problem highlighted in chapter two about the image of ABET and perceptions that communities have about it.

Learners also argue that some members of the community do understand ABET and why learners have to take part in its programmes. But a lot of learners mentioned that other people are looking down upon them. It is not only those who are literate. Learners said:

“... even those who do not know how to read and write.”

“They say people at their age cannot learn.”

“Some of them are just ashamed. They do not want other people to know that they are illiterate.”

One of the learners raised another interesting point that their own children and those of others laugh at them when they go to school. She indicated that that is prompted by the fact that they go to the same school as their children but at different times. Others added by saying that the situation creates problems because sometimes their children do not even want to go to school because they are also being laughed at by the peers who pass insinuations and unacceptable remarks to them saying:

“Your parent is not educated.”

“... you are just like your mother.”

This clearly shows that the manner in which people view adult education, is still very negative and derogative.

This black cloud that hangs above ABET can also be added as an explanation why men do not want to associate themselves with it. They do not want people to demean them and think that they are useless members of the community with no direction at all.

4.5 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and Evaluation are intimately related. According to Verduin and Clark (1991:30) monitoring and evaluation are both necessary management tools to inform decision-making and accountability. Educators indicated that area coordinators conduct monitoring of ABET centres. It is not a consistent exercise because of transport problems. They maintain that coordinators do not always visit their centres. So far, since the introduction of the learning areas, no formal evaluation was conducted by the Department of Education.

These responses provide a clear indication that there are problems with regard to monitoring of ABET programmes. Monitoring is not conducted regularly and this poses serious concerns about the performance of both learners and educators in the programmes. It is vital that monitoring be conducted to track performance against what was planned, so that there is continuous information on whether progress is being made towards achieving the ABET outcomes. Periodic in-depth analysis of ABET programmes is also necessary to ascertain performance. However, this evaluation function relies on data generated through proper monitoring activities.

4.6 RESPONSES OF AREA COORDINATORS

Interviews with coordinators were conducted as a way of verifying some of the issues and responses provided by adult learners and educators. Below is a presentation of their responses on various aspects.

4.6.1 Qualifications of coordinators

Qualifications were not much of a critical area or issue. However, all the coordinators were in possession of a Bachelors degree. Some even had Masters degrees in education. None of them had any formal training in ABET.

4.6.2 Training in Adult Education

Coordinators have received training in adult education. It should be noted at this stage that most, if not all, were seconded from the former rationalised colleges of education in the province. As a result most had to be trained because they were not very familiar with the ABET system. They indicated that, although they were trained, the training is not sufficient because there are new developments in ABET and therefore, they need more training. One indicated that he was mainly relying on experience because he did not receive any training.

The main reason why the coordinators feel that the training is not sufficient is because it is mainly offered through workshops. Workshops are short and normally facilitators try to cover many aspects within a short period of time. The most important aspect with the training that the coordinators received is that it is crucial and helpful to them to work effectively in the system. For instance they have also undergone assessor training and are now qualified assessors. This training equipped them with the necessary tools with regard to assessment, more especially that in adult education, there needs to be well-developed assessment standards and procedures.

4.6.3 Work experience in Adult Education

The working experience of coordinators ranges from two to four years. This is as a result of the fact that they were deployed from other areas or units in the department of education to the ABET section. Experience becomes an important area because through its lenses, it is easier to develop expectations about the type and quality of provision and service delivery in the ABET section.

4.6.4 Motivation and decision to work in Adult Education

ABET has been for a long time one of the marginalized sections in the Department of Education. It is one of the sections that have been undermined by a lot of people, literate and illiterate alike. It was therefore a very deliberate decision in this research to ask about the motivation of coordinators to work in the section. The decision was also backed up by Rampedi's research (2003) who discovered a lot of anomalies in the ABET of the province. Rampedi did reveal that some coordinators felt like 'hosepipes'. They did not see themselves as part of policy implementation but as people who would just transfer policy issues from the top to the levels below theirs.

In fact, as one of the footnotes, Rampedi (2003:81) cited one of them saying, "*You see Mr Rampedi, here we don't read (policies) ... we implement!*" This statement shows some sense of no commitment or obligation.

It was therefore, not surprising but expected in this research when most coordinators indicated that they worked in ABET because of the restructuring process in the Limpopo Department of Education. Officials were seconded to the ABET section and up to date, most of them do not even know whether or not they will stay in the section because posts are still to be advertised. Irrespective of this situation, they appeared to be committed to and positive about working in the section. They stressed that they are beginning, over time, to enjoy working in the area. Only one explicitly cited his devotion to community development and said that, that was a motivation for his involvement in ABET.

4.6.5 Marketing of programmes and recruitment of educators and learners

Realising that there were a lot of issues and problems emerging from the interviews with learners and educators, it became pivotal to look at the procedures and strategies that are put in place to recruit educators. It was indicated that posts for adult educators are processed following the normal employment procedures.

Posts to be filled in the different Districts are identified at the beginning of each year. If there is a District that has a shortage then posts are created and sent from the provincial Department of Education to the Districts. At the Districts, advertisements are prepared and mounted at the office itself, at nearby schools, shops, and community buildings. Announcements are also made on local radio stations.

Applications are screened and selection is made. Educators are then called in for interviews and those that meet the requirements are appointed and placed at various centres.

After appointment, educators recruit learners on their own, using the different methods that were outlined earlier.

It is evident from these findings that educators' posts are openly advertised and a fair and transparent process is followed to appoint them.

4.6.6 Training of adult educators

It is maintained that all educators received training after they had been appointed. Some of them are in possession of the ABET certificate from UNISA. However, there seems to be a rich consensus by the coordinators that the training of adult educators is not sufficient.

During the interviews, one of the coordinators said, *"They are being trained in different aspects like portfolios, invigilation, CASS, and annual survey but they need extra training to be competent enough."*

They argued that most of them are still not competent enough and therefore, require rigorous training for them to be more effective and efficient. This point appears to draw support from what the educators said earlier about the cascading model of training.

Coordinators maintained that training is done for educators but due to the type of contract employment they have, it is difficult to retain them. They said that educators are

employed on a one-year contract, as a result, they always leave for other jobs with the training and skills that they have acquired in adult education. This also raises concerns in as far as resources are concerned because a lot of money is spent on training.

4.6.7 Relevance of Learning Areas

Coordinators feel that the Learning Areas are relevant and therefore address the needs of learners. There has been a slight addition that the areas need to be contextualised to the issues of Limpopo and its rural areas. One coordinator said:

“No, I think there is still room for contextualising the current learning areas to make them more relevant.”

4.6.8 Learner satisfaction with programmes

Coordinators mentioned that learners are satisfied with the programmes but are scared of the examination. They feel they are not well prepared for assessment. This goes hand in hand with what has been said earlier by both learners and educators that they feel they are most of the time not ready for examinations and are even afraid that they will not make it. One of the reasons cited is that the time for teaching and learning is insufficient. As a result they cannot cover the entire syllabus.

One coordinator indicated that he thinks the programmes are relevant for the learners because there have been no complaints from the learners.

4.6.9 Notional hours

The issue of notional hours has been quite thorny for both educators and learners. Coordinators also concur that the time allocated for teaching and learning is indeed not enough.

The following excerpts from their statements support this:

“More contact time with learners is needed for better performance.”

“Six hours per week is not enough to cover the amount of work. I propose that the policy should be clear in this matter.”

The number of hours is allocated by the provincial department and is applicable to all the districts.

The question of the duration of teaching and learning sparked other issues that are related to it. Given the amount of time allocated, coordinators were further asked if learners cope with the amount of work that should be covered throughout the year.

These are some of their responses:

“The time is too limited. Eight Learning Areas need more time. But there are those learners who cope, e.g. those who completed Grade 9, who are coming for ABET certification.

“Learners cannot cope because they are adults. They carry the burden of looking after their children, husbands, selling in their spaza-shops, ... It is not easy for them to pass all eight learning areas.”

This clearly indicates that learners cannot cope, given the number of contact hours that are allocated. They study under serious time constraints.

4.6.10 Dropout rate

Dropping out of programmes has been one of the problems in ABET since time immemorial. At some stage, there has been a debate on whether this tendency should really be regarded as dropout or something else. This contention was brought by the fact

that adult learners have other commitments and these deter them from continuously participating in the programmes.

One of the coordinators stated that many learners drop out towards the middle and end of the year due to various factors such as visiting their husbands and other family chores. ABET learners are adults who are affected by so many things which force them to stop attending. For example some fall pregnant, poverty also forces them to go and work and the fear of examination are some of the issues cited as being problematic. Chapter two has attempted to highlight some of the barriers that hinder successful participation in adult education and some of these responses confirm them.

4.6.11 Progression between and beyond ABET levels

It was argued that some learners were able to complete level 4 and proceed to Further Education and Training (FET), however the number is very limited if it existed at all. It should be noted that most of the learners who are in level 4 are those that have dropped out or have been excluded from the formal school system due to its policy with regard to age.

However, other coordinators stated that there is no smooth progression because of the level of complexity between levels 2 and 3. They contended that moving from level 2 to 3 was quite problematic because the latter is higher.

The problem of progression is brought about by the fact that educators treat all the levels as one year fulltime programmes without considering all other impacting aspects like the amount of time allocated for teaching and learning within a year and problems that these adults encounter which deter them from attending all the time.

The research was also concerned about whether education received through ABET programmes equipped learners with the necessary skills. In fact it was very important to establish whether or not the learners were able to use the skills acquired from ABET

programmes after completion, better still, to check if such learners were recognised by other service providers in education. The findings reveal that coordinators do support the fact that most learners do not go anywhere beyond level 4 and attribute that to the issue of certificates and lack of financial support. But the problem seems to go beyond that and the following excerpts are evidence:

“There are no learners who are furthering their studies beyond level 4. They experience problems because their ABET certificates take too long before they can receive them.”

“Yes, some attend FET colleges, the majority do not know what to do. They need extra help.”

“We have not realised the progress of going beyond ABET. They do need extra help to guide them on where to go and what to do.”

It is not very clear what happens to adult learners after completing ABET level 4. The coordinators do not have mechanisms in place to trace and make follow-up on the learners. It is possible that adult learners are not involved in any educational activities or income-generating projects after completing ABET.

4.6.12 Resources

Coordinators were aware of the problem of resources and do acknowledge that resources have been one of the major problems experienced in ABET.

It was not a miracle or a surprise to hear from coordinators that there were no sufficient resources for ABET. Educators and learners have cited this problem earlier. The problem has been in existence for quite a long time and Mabasa (2002) and Rampedi (2003:78-86) have also identified and discussed some of the problems experienced with regard to resources.

The district coordinators and educators expect a lot of support from the provincial department but they do not seem to be getting enough. At the time of the research, coordinators were preparing for level four examinations and I observed that there were a lot of problems with regard to transport, manpower and production of question papers for the various districts.

Most of the responses given by the coordinators do not differ much with what has been said earlier by the educators and learners. To highlight just a few of the concerns the following will be quoted:

"We do not have our own buildings."

"We need more human resource because other ABET centres have more learners but few educators."

"Educators do not have offices... they are crying for better salaries."

"Sometimes learners attend under trees if the classes are still occupied by the school children. Yes ... now what happens when it is cold or stormy?"

The list of problems seems to be endless but inevitable. Teaching and learning can only run smoothly with a wide array of resources being made available. I have also cited the problem of transport earlier on. It becomes very difficult for these coordinators to monitor centres because there are no (proper) cars to drive them around. The policy document is very open and clear and makes provision for the issue of monitoring and evaluation of ABET centres.

One coordinator said:

"It is difficult to visit all the centres in a month due to transport. Some of them are far and the roads are bad. When I must use my car then it is not easy. Besides we are paid

for limited kilometers per month. If you go beyond the limit then it is your own problem. You will not get paid for it. So...?"

"I cannot do proper monitoring because there are no funds. Some of the centres I have not even visited since a month ago."

The results indicate that there are generally not enough resources to run ABET activities.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to establish strategies and criteria that would assist in developing relevant and meaningful ABET programmes. In order to establish these criteria, the study sought responses from adult learners, educators and coordinators with regard to the type of programmes that are being offered. The findings were derived from the questionnaires and extracted from the interviews just to highlight the problems, concerns as well as challenges in ABET. The findings cannot be claimed as absolute and final with regard to problematic areas in adult education in Limpopo, especially that the study focused on two districts only. Again, the study was conducted at a very crucial time of examination when all stakeholders were busy and some of the respondents were anxious. However, valuable data was collected on questions that were formulated in the study.

4.8 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The study has shown that ABET in Limpopo Province is facing serious challenges and that this has implications for the type of programmes that are offered to adults. There are great concerns for learners, educators and area coordinators. Taking into consideration the research questions formulated in chapter 1, the following section is a summary of the findings:

- **The content of programmes offered:** Basic Literacy and numeracy are offered as well as ten learning areas are offered. The need for skills

development programmes is critical. The content does not seem to respond adequately to the needs of adults;

- **Needs analysis:** Needs are identified and analysed but not aligned with programmes;
- **Training of adult educators:** Educators are trained but the training is not adequate. Teaching and learning techniques: given the way programmes are structured and the poor resources, educators do not use appropriate approaches for teaching and learning;
- **Notional hours for programmes offered:** Time allocated for teaching and learning is not sufficient. Respondents complain that it is too little;
- **Resources:** There is a huge shortage of ABET funds. There are not enough ABET centres, teaching and learning materials, transport for delivering materials and monitoring;
- **Adult learners' participation and dropout rate:** Both learners and coordinators indicated that there is a high rate of dropout; and
- **Employment and retention of educators:** Educators are not satisfied with the type of contracts they get from the department. Neither are they content with the manner in which they are paid.

The next chapter will present the discussion and recommended quality criteria that will pave the way forward for development and improvement of the adult education field for rural areas in Limpopo.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Adult Basic Education and Training in South Africa is geared towards addressing the past imbalances in education. Therefore, it aims at improving the quality of life of adults who have never been to school and those who have little education. It has to offer, as its point of departure, basic literacy and numeracy. These should be offered to provide a basis for further learning in adult education. Given the fact that most adults are not employed and live in abject poverty, income-generation and other life-skills should also be taught to equip these learners with the necessary skills that will enable them to take control of their daily situations.

The main aim of this study was to investigate the type of ABET programmes that are offered in Limpopo Province with the ultimate intention of establishing useful criteria that should characterise relevant and meaningful programmes for adult learners in the rural areas. It was imperative in this study to investigate the type of programmes that are currently offered in adult education in the rural areas of Limpopo Province. The main idea was to establish whether the programmes are addressing the needs of adult learners by offering relevant and quality content. The study further developed in the form of recommendations quality criteria that should characterise adult education in the rural areas of Limpopo.

This chapter therefore, presents the summary of the findings developed from the data that was collected from adult learners, educators and area coordinators. Based on the findings of this study, relevant criteria are outlined as recommendations for the improvement of Adult Basic Education and Training in Limpopo.

5.2 DISCUSSION

The following section is a discussion of the findings as they emerged from the study.

5.2.1 DESIGN AND PLANNING OF PROGRAMMES

A number of aspects were looked into with regard to the design and planning of ABET programmes. The following are issues that emerged from the findings obtained in this study.

5.2.1.1 Analysis of needs

The point of departure in the design and plan of programmes is to conduct a market search to establish who the target group will be. It is imperative to learn more about the socio-economic status of adult learners and the communities they reside in. Emphasis was made in chapter two about educating a learner who will be able to thrive and survive as an individual and who will also take into consideration the welfare of his/her community. Hence Mumba (1989:48) advocates for diversification of adult education in Zambia through non-formal and community oriented adult education.

Limpopo Province is predominantly rural and is characterised by high levels of illiteracy, unemployment, poverty and poor infrastructure. This information in itself is sufficient to warrant a proper needs analysis process that will enable programme developers to cater for the needs of the communities they are attempting to serve.

It became distinctly evident that adult educators conduct needs assessment before they offer the programmes. When further asked exactly how the needs are identified, educators responded that they normally ask the learners in class what it is that they want to learn. This informal nature of needs assessment raises questions on its effectiveness and relevance.

The focus of adult education should be centered on the needs of adult learners. The aim of such programmes should be to improve the literacy level of adult learners and to impart skills that will assist in creating jobs and self-employment, in order to ultimately eradicate poverty and to have people who can maintain and sustain themselves. As a follow-up to this point, the educators were asked if they really think the programmes are addressing the needs of adult learners and they disagreed.

A focused analysis of needs is conducted before the design of programmes. It emerged from the findings that educators are not actively involved in the planning process and in needs identification and analysis prior to programme development. Although learners are consulted about what they want to learn, they have little to say about the programmes because they are already developed and pre-packaged. Although in her study guide Gravett (1997) argues that in some instances adult learners may not completely have an idea of what would be beneficial for them due to lack of exposure, other authors still maintain that adult learners' voices should be heard. Merriam and Cafarella (1991:270) argue that it is the adults who should provide guidance on what should be offered especially because they attend programmes to address specific problems that they encounter in their daily lives.

It can be concluded that the needs assessment that is being conducted by adult educators with adult learners is not taken into account in the design of adult education programmes offered by the Department of Education.

5.2.1.2 Motivation to participate in ABET programmes

Motivation is one of the key issues in adult education. Although there was a distinction between internal motivation and external motivation in chapter two, the research results show that the internal motivation appears to be more prevalent in adult learning.

What motivates the learners informs the choice of the programmes. Because adults have different motives for learning these are basically informed by their socio-economic status.

They choose programmes, which they assume, will lead to the improvement of their status. For example, it emerged in the study that 84% of the learners would like to learn how to read and write in English and 68.6% want to acquire numeracy skills. These results are an indication that the adults realised that they needed second language and numeracy skills to be able to improve their life situations. They realised that being literate in mother tongue only is not sufficient. However, it should be noted that being literate in mother tongue is a stepping stone towards further learning and acquisition of knowledge. That is why the study also reveals that 54.9% of the learners need reading and writing skills in their mother tongue.

Although learners want to generate their own income, they seem to be aware that basic skills should be addressed in order for them to sustain whatever activities they want to engage in. They first need to be literate and numerate, know and understand English before they can engage in income generation endeavours.

The one key criterion in offering adult education programmes is that, basic literacy and numeracy should be offered before introducing income-generating projects.

5.2.2 PARTICIPANTS IN ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

In this section participants refers to adult learners and educators, and a number of conclusions are made about them.

5.2.2.1 Marketing of programmes and recruitment of adult learners

It is clear that adult educators engage a number of strategies to recruit adult learners. They visit families to announce ABET programmes, which is very strenuous and time-consuming. The question is where do they start and how do they identify families which have illiterate members? It is difficult for them because they rely on referrals by other learners and sometimes they use their own judgement. One starts to wonder if they do this with passion for their work or just to earn a salary.

However the conclusion that can be made concerning the recruitment endeavour is that no matter how hard educators try, adults do not turn up in large numbers. The fundamental truth is that the strategies that are currently employed for recruiting adult learners do not yield the desired results.

Adult educators are recruited through advertisement at local District Offices. This approach suggests that only educators who are located in that particular district will apply for the posts. The system of advertising restricts cross-pollination of educators because most of them will not know about the availability of positions, unless informed by friends and colleagues.

At least there has been an improvement with regard to recruitment and the Department of Education (ABET) should be congratulated on this achievement. In the past educators were at liberty to open centres and start teaching based on the number of learners that they had recruited. A person would headhunt adult learners and approach the district office with the list. On that basis, then she/he would be allowed to teach. This system was manipulated and fraudulent because in some cases adult learners did not exist at all and educators received payment for doing nothing. Conflicts also arose because educators were fighting over learners and unofficial boundaries were created as to how far an educator should recruit.

More effective ways of marketing the programmes should be developed. Marketing strategies should be intensified and made attractive for prospective adult learners.

The system of advertising is a fair one because educators will be given a chance to contest for the vacancies.

5.2.2.2 Adult learner participation v/s Gender

Gender has, since 1994, been one of the points of concern by the government in redressing the past imbalances. As a result most strategies that are developed and used to address these imbalances also take into consideration the gender disparities and make an attempt to close the gap.

Data in chapter four reveals that the total number of adult learners as at 2005 in Limpopo is 14565; 2550 male learners and 12015 female learners constitute this number. At the centres where data was collected the total percentage of female learners was 84% and that of male learners is 16%. This is a clear indication that there are more female learners than male learners participating in ABET programmes.

As indicated earlier, South Africa has undergone serious processes of imbalances and disparities in the past. Women were mostly denied access to education and were barred from participating in socio-economic activities. As a result, they suffered the consequences of being illiterate and marginalized. Therefore these statistics, in terms of participation, are influenced by these irregular occurrences and practices of the past apartheid era. That is why there are more women participating in adult education programmes, especially that the policy for ABET (1997) also stipulates that underprivileged and disadvantaged group will receive more attention.

However people should not lose sight of the fact that men also need to be educated. For example, in his formulation about what adult education is not about Zeelen (1997), then a visiting professor at the University of the North, contends that adult education is not only about women as most perceive it to be.

It was mentioned by some of the female learners and educators that the situation as it prevails, does not necessarily suggest that men are more educated than women and a number of reasons were advanced to that effect. During the research, women alleged that men are still entangled in their manhood pride and do not want to be seen to be inferior

and worthless. As a result, most of them distance themselves from ABET programmes because they think people will look down upon them and despise them.

However, given the research findings about the relevance and the type of programmes offered, it may also be concluded that the programmes are not responsive to the needs of men and therefore, are not sufficiently appealing to them. In the past men in Africa in general, were perceived to be heads of families and that they should provide for them in all respects. Men have been occupying prominent positions in the society and were involved in influential decision-making processes. Therefore, a man who did not possess appropriate tools and skills to do so, felt hopeless and inferior. Consequently, if he has to participate in educational activities it has to be those that will assist him to fend for his family and be recognised as an active member of his community, contributing positively towards its development.

5.2.2.3 Educational level of adult learners

The identification of the relevant target group is imperative for any educational programme. An educational programme should respond to the needs of the learners. It was important to establish the educational level of the current adult learners to determine whether the programmes were addressing relevant needs. Most of the learners (63%) indicated that their highest educational level is high school, while 25.7% had primary school and 11.2% never attended school.

It was revealed that learners who have gone up to high school are those who dropped out of the formal schools due to pregnancy, lack of funds and childcare facilities. Some were affected by the age policy that was implemented in schools which indicates that after the age of 20, learners are no longer allowed to attend school and should quit the system.

It was stressed in chapter two that ABET is mainly meant for adults who have never gone to school or have little education. This means that it is meant for adults who are either illiterate or semi-literate and are continuously affected and stricken by unemployment

and poverty. It therefore becomes a problem to realise that, due to poor support that is being offered to out-of-school learners, ABET programmes are seemingly overcrowded by them. This situation raises a lot of concerns because it affects the design of programmes that will meet the needs of adult learners in order to address issues of unemployment and poverty.

The situation as it prevails, suggests that ABET programmes are, to a large extent, offered to the wrong target group. A proper target group should be identified and therefore catered for. There should be a thorough revisit to the programmes in order to accommodate the different target groups without compromising the objectives as formulated in the ABET policy (1997).

5.2.3 DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The research findings reveal quite a number of concerns and problems with regard to the implementation of ABET programmes in the targeted areas of the study. The discussion that follows, concentrates on the key issues of the development and implementation phase of these programmes.

5.2.3.1 Adult educators' qualifications and experience

Experience and educational qualifications are very important aspects to ponder upon when offering ABET programmes. These aspects provide a picture of how effective and efficient adult educators are. It has been stated in chapter two that adult educators should possess specific skills in teaching adults mainly because adults come to programmes because of some sense of a need. Therefore in order to appropriately satisfy the identified needs of adult learners, there needs to be an educator corps which are well trained and have a proper orientation about ABET and its related activities.

Results have shown that most adult educators are qualified and have been trained on how to teach adults, but have little experience in teaching adults. Only about 25% have over 6 years of teaching in adult education. A large number of educators, 60.9%, do not have

any teaching experience at all. The situation as presented, raises a number of questions with regard to the quality of work that can be produced by these educators. Adult learners bring with them a number of experiences to the learning environment; they have different expectations from the programmes and expect that educators are well trained and experienced to address their issues of concern.

Adult education programmes were offered since time immemorial. However more focused policies that govern adult education were developed and intensified in 1995 through to the year 2000 (Rampedi, 2003:6). From this study it has emerged that very few of the adult educators have worked up to 6 years. This means that there is a poor retention of adult educators. Furthermore, it is clear that there are instabilities in the ABET system; and there is too much exodus. The situation as explained, requires rigorous support and development of educators in order to retain them within the ABET system.

5.2.3.2 Training of adult educators

Adult educators need to go through an intensive training for them to cope with the teaching demands put upon their shoulders. It has been stressed throughout this study that, adult learners come to ABET classes because they want to respond to and therefore address some sense of need in their lives. This means that educators who are charged to teach them, should be thoroughly equipped and competent enough to be able to impart knowledge and skills required by these adults.

According to Macheng (2004:76) there are generally three important aspects that educators should be acquainted with in order for them to be effective and efficient teachers. These are, content knowledge, teaching and learning strategies and assessment. Competency in the three areas is key to the process of teaching and learning.

The study reveals that most educators have undergone pre-service training and have obtained certificates, diplomas and degrees. Only a few, that is, less than 3% are teaching adults with matriculation being their highest qualification. Further, about 74% of the

educators indicate that they have a specific qualification in adult education. Therefore as far as pre-service training is concerned for the educators, it can be satisfactorily argued that the educators are well prepared.

Although 75% of educators argue that they have received in-service training, and a further 94% maintaining that it was adequate, they are not convinced about their competency, effectiveness and efficiency. They mentioned that training was not enough because it is offered mainly in the form of workshops. Area coordinators also stressed that educators are not well prepared to teach adults because the type of in-service training offered to them, is in the form of workshop with the use of the Cascade Model. Although Rampedi (2003:161) concentrates on ABET policy implementation, he explains the problems that arose because of the use of the Cascade Model in Limpopo to train adult educators. He adds that it is not enough, given the intensity of training needed, the duration and the number of people that should participate in the training.

It becomes evident that in-service training is not adequate and that it should be intensified and provided on an on-going basis. Duke (1990:298) emphasises the importance of continuous professional development and contends, that for educators to best carry out their duties effectively, they should be given support in the form of training. Taking into consideration the fact that the findings highlight that the experience of educators ranges between zero and six years, a rigorous approach of training should be adopted. No adequate training was offered in the past four years and this is a matter of great concern when looking at issues of professional growth and development. There are a lot of changes in the South African education system and that affects adult education too. It is therefore important that educators are prepared, knowledgeable and skilled to deal with such changes.

5.2.3.3 Availability of resources

The study reveals that adult education in Limpopo Province is not provided with sufficient resources. The findings are evident from all the stakeholders who participated in the study. It is therefore inevitable to hastily conclude that there are no adequate physical, financial and human resources.

ABET policies should make stipulations about provision of resources for programmes, their administration and enforcement. According to Derthick (1972:87) lack and inadequacy of funds and incentives are often cited as reasons for the failure of most programmes. Planning for programmes depends on the availability of funds. Adequate resources positively influence the environment where implementation occurs by stimulating interested individuals and groups to press for successful programme performance. On the same note, Taylor and Vinjevold (1999) assert that it is difficult for educators to implement learner-centered practices because of dysfunctional schools and teacher support systems.

It has been shown and explained in chapter four that learners do not have buildings that belong solely to ABET and educators do not have offices to operate from. The situation as presented, denies adult learners free access to buildings and that means their learning sessions can only be confined to specified time during the day. This means that they have to abandon their other roles and proceed to classes at a given time during the day because they are not at liberty to decide what time would be suitable for them.

This issue is also problematic for educators because they do not have space to prepare their work and therefore have to do it at home without the necessary resources. Confidence and passion for their work will also diminish. Educators indicated that they are concerned that ABET does not receive the same attention from the Department of Education as other sections do within the department.

Human resource has also been cited as a barrier in ABET. There is a shortage of educators due to the remuneration system and conditions of service. Adult educators are not offered fixed contracts. Payment of their salaries is not effected on time and is not consistent. Educators just have to wait for the next payment but are not sure when that will be done. For this reason, most of them leave for more secured jobs. This exodus of educators affect the quality of teaching that is being done. It may further lead to high drop out rates because learners are not sure if they will have educators or not. Generally, learners take time to get used to their educators and the strategies that they use when teaching, and over time they build their confidence and self-esteem. It becomes difficult for them to adapt and adjust time and again whenever educators are changed. Educators in ABET are not well taken care of. One wonders for how long will the remaining cohort continue with all the uncertainties hanging over their heads. There will still be a high rate of exodus of educators in ABET if they are not provided with realistic employment contracts.

Inadequate funds are allocated to run ABET activities such as purchasing of teaching and learning materials, transport for coordinators for monitoring and evaluation and introduction of income generating projects. Learners do not have enough books and equipment to support teaching and learning. They indicate that they would like to learn and acquire skills so that they can be independent and self-sustaining but unfortunately the Department of Education is unable to cater for such projects. In areas where income-generating projects have been initiated there is no proper financial control and this results in the failure of the projects.

The problems seem to be formidable. The question that arises is how will the objectives as formulated in the ABET policies and plans, be realised with insufficient resources. Demands for education and training are growing yet government expenditure is constrained. In the Multi-year Implementation Plan (1997:215-238) a number of strategies about funding were outlined and steps would be taken to address the issue of funding. However, it seems that the plan is not optimally functional hence, very little has been done.

It appears that ABET is failing to address issues of unemployment and poverty due to poor financial support for income generating projects as envisaged in the government's strategy to eradicate illiteracy.

5.2.3.4 Notional hours

Time allocated for teaching and learning in adult education is six hours per week, two hours per session. This time caters for the eight learning areas that should be learned, especially at levels three and four. Learners and educators are complaining that the time is too little and that not much justice is done to the syllabus and therefore, learners sit for examinations not completely prepared.

It is true that adults are not like children as one educator indicated. They take time to comprehend and therefore require enough time to go through the learning materials. Although one cannot dispute the fact that they have other things to do during the day, they still need enough time to go through the learning process. The fact that they attend lessons only in the afternoon poses problems because at that time they are tired and cannot concentrate.

Besides, their learning time is being taken and used up for other things. For example during my visit to some of the centres I observed that they had to clean the classes before they started with lessons because the classes were just too dirty to work in. Some of the learners stay far from the schools and arrive late. This means that they no longer have two hours because of the delays. It was impossible to start earlier because the regular learners would still be in class; neither could they start later because they had to leave for home earlier to take care of their household chores.

Unavailability of infrastructure also affects allocation of time. If there are no classes that can be utilised during the day, time cannot be increased. However, it should be highlighted that time of allocation is a critical factor in teaching and learning and, should be taken into considerable account. In this instance the time allocated for teaching is clearly insufficient and learners, as well as educators, experience a lot of constraints due to this factor. Teaching and learning should not be regarded as an activity that can be

rushed through. It should be a relaxed environment free from tension, anxiety and pressure.

5.2.3.5 Content of programmes

Rogers (1971:29) emphasises the fact that adults come to education for many reasons. On that note, a lot has been said about identification and assessment of the needs of adult learners before programmes can be designed. While Programmes should be developed to address these needs, they also need to achieve set objectives that are in line with the government's strategy of addressing issues of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment.

The research findings show that the overall objective of ABET is not completely achieved through the programmes because learners are unable to access the Further Education and Training band, neither are they able to find employment or create their own job opportunities.

The learning areas, as shown in chapter four, are relevant and appropriate for those adults who want to pursue academic qualifications. In this instance, adult learners have a dire need to close the gap of unemployment and poverty in order to survive on a day-to-day basis. It is a fact that these adults require some sufficient skills in literacy and numeracy. But most importantly, they require programmes that will assist and equip them with the necessary skills for survival. In as much as these learning areas are important, it should be noted that income generation programmes should be put at the center of ABET programmes. In his study on ABET policy implementation in Limpopo, Rampedi (2003:167) asserts that it seems that adult education is silently sliding back into "second chance schooling" because of the type of programmes that are being offered. There is a dire need to reconsider ABET provision if issues of unemployment and poverty are to be alleviated.

5.2.3.6 Relevance of programmes in addressing the needs

Determining whether programmes are relevant or not depends on what the needs of the target group are. In this case, relevance can also be judged based on the overall ABET objective stipulated in the policy document, that learners should be able to access FET and also get employment.

The study shows that about 78% of the learners maintain that the programmes offered are relevant. This belief triggers a lot of questions especially with regard to the foregoing sections. How do programmes become relevant when they do not address the needs of the learners? Why do adults drop out from relevant programmes, more especially with low participation by men? How is it possible that learners are unable to further their studies in the FET colleges or are unable to generate income? The list of questions can be endless. Both learners and educators were modest on this issue. Some coordinators indicated that the programmes need to be fine-tuned so that they can be more relevant for the situation in Limpopo. Some aspects within the learning areas need to be contextualised in order to address specific problems in this Province. They further argued that projects should be introduced to equip learners with entrepreneurial skills for income generation.

It should be mentioned though, that these programmes have assisted some of the learners because they are happy about the change that is taking place in their lives. For instance, those who are now able to read and write are quite satisfied with the programmes. They are able to integrate within their communities and, for them, something good is happening in ABET. Some learners seem disillusioned whereas others are still enthusiastic about the programmes. Obviously all is not so gloomy and hopeless. The programmes can still be recommended to other learners who are still sceptical about ABET.

5.2.3.7 Instructional techniques

Teaching and learning for adults require the use of relevant and effective techniques so that it becomes meaningful. Adults learn differently from children and, it is for this reason that approaches for teaching and learning, should be selected and used in such a way that they are comfortable and free to learn.

The study investigated about the learning preferences as well as the teaching and learning approaches that educators and learners employ during teaching and learning activities. Interestingly, about 60% of the learners indicated that educators made use of different strategies to learn. A relatively low percentage of 26% say that educators prefer to employ the whole class approach.

It emerged from the findings that educators are aware of what should be done with regard to teaching and learning techniques that can be more effective and successful in teaching adults. However, there is suspicion about the extent to which these techniques are implemented during the actual teaching. This suspicion is prompted by the facts that, issues about resources, were raised and the question becomes how learner-centred approaches are effectively applicable without the necessary teaching and learning materials. For instance, the adult learners indicated that they hardly engaged in practical work because there was no equipment or any other appropriate materials that could be used. Clearly the notion of experiential learning as advocated by Brookfield (1983:16) and Jarvis (1995:75), does not come into play in this instance. Further, learners cannot take control of their own learning because they do not have support materials. Brocket and Hiemstra (1991) emphasise that in self-directed learning, adults plan, implement and evaluate learning and therefore assume full ownership and accountability of their learning process. In this study, it is evident that learners are restricted to fully carry out activities because the situation prohibits them from doing so.

It can be concluded that most of the teaching that takes place in ABET classes is mainly teacher-centred. In most of the centres even the sitting arrangement in the classrooms is

that of a typical traditional setting. The implications of these findings are that adult learners will mostly find it difficult to learn and acquire the necessary skills that they need. They have other things to attend to and therefore, their attention span requires activities that will keep them engaged all the time. Their memory may not have the capacity to accommodate all the theories and related concepts without linking and connecting them to their everyday experiences. Although Tobin (1990:414) was talking about children's learning, the ideas are still applicable in adult learning. Tobin's contention is that meaningful learning is possible where learners are provided with the opportunity to experiment and manipulate equipment and materials while working cooperatively.

5.2.3.8 Dropout rate

The dropout rate in ABET programmes are seemingly increasing every year. Although there are no clear statistics on this issue, it is clearly stated in the findings that learners drop out of the programmes or do not attend regularly. This situation is attributed to a number of factors as shown in chapter four. However, a conclusion can be made from these findings that adult learners would rather concentrate on other appealing problems and issues than attend classes. To explain this further, it can be said that the current ABET programmes to some extent, diminish the zeal that is inherent in learners because they do not address the real needs of the learners.

The current structure of ABET should be looked into. As indicated in chapter two, adult learners assume a lot of responsibilities. As a result, it is difficult for them to attend ABET classes through out. It is important that ABET programmes should be structured in such a way that they allow flexibility. Flexibility in this context means that adult learners should be allowed to attend parts of the programme that are of concern to them and be credited for those only.

5.2.3.9 ABET qualifications and articulation

Both learners and educators are worried and concerned by the fact that the ABET level 4 certificate does not seem to be recognised at any level. Level 4, on the National Qualifications Framework, is equivalent to the General Education and Training Certificate. For example, those that have completed level 4 are still without jobs or cannot access FET programmes. Adult learners indicate that no learner at level 4 received a certificate.

This is a serious concern and needs immediate attention by the Department of Education. It is clearly stated that educational programmes should lead to a recognised qualification that will enable participants to continue learning or gain skills so that they are self-reliant.

5.2.3.10 Ability to apply acquired knowledge and skills

Irrespective of the fact that the adult learners maintain that the programmes are relevant, they are not so confident about the knowledge and skills that they acquired.

Taking into consideration the findings in this study, especially about a number of issues that were raised, it seems virtually difficult, if not impossible, for most of the learners to use the skills and knowledge. In the first place, these learners are not sufficiently prepared due to time constraints, poor resources, inappropriate teaching and learning strategies and relevance of programmes.

It is worrying to think of what becomes of the adult learners in Limpopo after participating in the programmes. They revealed that they are unable to enter the FET phase and thus cannot start their own small businesses.

Adult learners participating in these programmes are not well equipped to address their needs. It is imperative that the content of the programmes be revised as well as the teaching and learning techniques that are employed. However, it is important to reiterate that the problem of resources, also impacts on how effective teaching and learning is conducted. Therefore, the programmes should be financially supported.

5.2.3.11 Community perceptions about ABET

Adult education does not receive a respectable gesture from members of the community. People still look down upon those who attend ABET programmes and attach all negative connotations and labels to them. This is an indication that the manner in which ABET is implemented and introduced to the communities, should be improved and tightened.

A lot of advocacy is needed for the programmes to gain recognition. It is crucial for all stakeholders to work on the image of the ABET programmes to improve community perceptions.

5.2.4 MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF ABET PROGRAMMES

Coordinators are involved in monitoring the ABET centres. Educators have acknowledged that these coordinators do not visit regularly and in some instances they have not yet visited at all to see what is taking place at grassroots level. Coordinators argue that there are several financial constraints to that effect and that is a barrier because they are unable to perform their duties optimally.

Programmes cannot operate effectively if there is no monitoring of activities in order to identify their successes and failures. It means a lot can go wrong in the centres for a long period of time without any intervention by the department of education. Ramaili (2004:57) contends that during monitoring, flaws can be identified and weaknesses located on time to make adaptations necessary for success. Monitoring provides regular feedback to the participants and programme developers. Consequently, it should be regarded as an important phase of the ABET programme development. Since the introduction of Learning Areas in ABET no evaluation was conducted.

5.3 CONCLUSION

There are still a lot of issues in ABET that needs undivided attention by the Department of Education. Dr Kader Asmal, then minister of education in 1999, stressed that, lack of literacy skills deny people a lot of opportunities and exposure. Realising that the level of illiteracy was still at its peak at that time, he argued that it should be eradicated within five years. This means that at least by the year 2004, remarkable progress should have been made to that effect. When zooming into the issues that emerged from the findings it is evident that more work still lies ahead. There is still a lot at stake and there are pertinent issues that should be address as a matter of urgency, otherwise the poor will remain poor and left at the periphery.

The starting point of needs analysis should be taken into serious account in the development of adult education programmes.

Taking into consideration the findings in this study and the conclusions that have been reached recommendations are made which will attempt to pave a way forward.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR DESIGNING ABET PROGRAMMES

Based on the findings of this study, recommendations discussed below are made. It should be indicated that during the feedback sessions, educators and learners made some inputs towards the formulation of these recommendations. This means that the suggestions made are from the researcher's point of view as well as from the affected target groups.

5.4.1 Relevant and effective needs assessment programme

An effective needs analysis procedure should be done before the design of ABET programmes. All stakeholders should be involved on a larger scale. There should be well-informed consultation processes and communities should be involved and allowed to

participate during the preparation phase. It is recommended that needs analysis should be done prior to programme development as opposed to what educators indicate they are engaged in.

5.4.2 Rigorous marketing and promotion of ABET

Although recruitment is being done, it should be intensified. For instance making announcements at schools or at meetings and funerals is not effective enough because at that time people are more concerned about problems that affect them other than about ABET. In this instance the announcement is just a by-the-way issue. Attractive and appealing strategies should be used in order to convince more adults to participate in ABET programmes. There can be activities such as ABET open day, where learners make testimonies and maybe display some of the work that they have produced.

The ABET learners week should also be widely communicated to a wider community because, in some cases, it is only known to the immediate target group and few stakeholders.

A monthly newsletter can also be circulated to communities, especially in the rural areas. Local radio stations should have regular slots where they announce ABET activities and people can be allowed to phone in and exchange ideas on ABET matters. These suggested strategies would also assist in alleviating negative perceptions and images that are held by communities. Communities will be kept informed and will be knowledgeable about what ABET entails.

5.4.3 Training of educators

Training is very vital for purposes of effectiveness and quality. It is therefore recommended that the Department of Education should arrange well-organised ongoing training for educators. If the Cascade model is currently the most viable for training educators, it should be closely monitored to ensure that it does not lose value as it trickles

down. Workshops and refresher courses should be conducted regularly to keep educators abreast on developments in the ABET sector.

More important is that new recruits (educators), should be inducted before they start performing their duties. This exercise will assist to establish where the training needs of the educators so as to address them adequately.

5.4.5 Content and relevance of programmes

Adult learners who wish to climb the academic ladder and access Further Education and Training need the Learning Areas. However, it is clear that programmes that are geared towards equipping adult learners with income generating skills should be established and introduced in the ABET centres. The different districts should be thoroughly studied in order to establish niche areas. For example Limpopo Province is vastly Agricultural, it has various tourist attractions and the mining industry is booming. Adult learners should be exposed to projects that are relevant to these opportunities and be equipped with necessary skills. This recommendation suggests that there should be close cooperation and collaboration among governmental departments. Links should be forged in order to strengthen the ABET system in Limpopo. For example, the following departments are relevant for collaboration with the Department of Education: Agriculture, Labour, Economic Affairs, Tourism and Health.

It emerged from the findings that the content should be contextualised. It is important that for ABET programmes to be located within the context of the communities without excluding the adults from national and international perspectives. It has been stated in chapter two, that because of an individual's immediate environment expectation may be different. These expectations also influence the needs of adult learners. Vehoeven (1994:476) maintains that the dual rationale for adult education programmes is that they result in substantial good for the individual and for the larger society. This means that the contextual and, perhaps cultural conditions necessary to create sufficient motivation for adult learning, have an impact on what should be learned.

5.4.6 Notional hours

The allocated time for teaching and learning should be increased. However this problem can only be addressed as and when the issue of resources is taken care of. The time allocated for teaching and learning is insufficient.

5.4.7 Resources

It is inevitable to mention that resources and, especially funding, poses a lot of problems with regard to implementation of ABET programmes in Limpopo. Most of the ABET activities are dependant on availability of funds and, therefore, undergo serious constraints if funds are insufficient. It is therefore recommended that, although serious considerations should be made when budgeting and allocating funds to the ABET directorate, ABET should not only strive to get a bigger slice from departmental funds, but also intensive fundraising activities should be initiated at departmental, district and centre levels to supplement the budget allocated. Proposals should be developed and sent to various donors to apply for funds especially to finance income-generating projects. Based on the issue of provision of funds, specific recommendations are made with regard to the following:

- **Staffing and remuneration**

More educators should be appointed on a permanent basis to avoid the exodus from the ABET section to other jobs.

Educators should be remunerated on time and consistently to reduce high turnover, to ensure sustainability and to reduce the high level of dropout by the learners.

- **Infrastructure**

There should be provision of fulltime ABET centres specifically for ABET activities. Adult learners should be able to access these centres at any time of the day and not be

restricted to two hours in the afternoon. If these centres are available, it means there will be fulltime educators to coordinate daily activities of adult learners. The centres will be vibrant and more learners will be motivated to take part because not all are comfortable with the afternoon sessions.

Availability of centres for adult learners will, to a greater extent, promote ownership of activities and projects and a sense of pride in being an adult learner. If centres are made available, most probably more adult learners will participate in the ABET programmes.

- **Reinforcement of income generating projects**

More income generating projects should be introduced in ABET centres. Not only should they be introduced, but also they should be supported financially and monitored to ensure viability and sustainability. These projects should also accommodate men because in some instances, a lot of these projects are geared for women. Examples of such projects are vegetable gardens, brick-making, soap-making, sewing, cooking and hospitality.

- **Transport for monitoring ABET centers**

Transport is used for various reasons in ABET. For example it is occasionally needed to deliver teaching and learning and other support materials. Most importantly it is needed for ongoing monitoring process.

Limpopo Province is mainly rural and some areas are inaccessible due to the poor roads. Therefore appropriate vehicles, such as vans and bigger cars (what are called four-by-fours in South Africa), should be purchased and used for monitoring purposes, to ensure and maintain the quality of the programmes.

5.4.8 Interdepartmental collaboration initiatives

As indicated above departments should establish linkages in order to address issues of common interest. For example, ABET has a potential in developing emerging farmers. In this instance the Department of Agriculture is quite relevant, especially taking into consideration that some of the farmers need adult education in order to perform optimally in farming. NGOs can also assist, especially in the area of materials development and implementation of appropriate teaching and learning strategies in ABET. Although NGOs are experiencing huge cuts in funds, they are well experienced in ABET and there are many in Limpopo who can form part of the collaboration.

The Department of Health and Welfare is also relevant for partnering with DoE. There is a need to emphasise health-related problems in ABET. The world is faced with the scourge of HIV/AIDS that requires knowledgeable people and enormous education. Therefore it is imperative that adult learners are well versed with health issues in order to best address their health-related problems.

5.4.9 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring is a recurring process that takes place throughout the life of the programme. It is imperative that coordinators should be supported to conduct it. Programmes will falter and wither if they are not taken care of. Therefore, monitoring and evaluation of ABET programmes should be done regularly, to ensure quality and to be able to address problems immediately as they occur. Sufficient funds should be allocated towards this process and coordinators should be supported in this regard.

Coordinators should submit monthly reports of what they have done to enable the Department of Education to attend to pertinent issues. If the areas of operation are too big to be handled by one coordinator in a month, more coordinators should be appointed to assist. In fact for thorough and detailed monitoring, at least two Area Coordinators should be appointed.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are suggested as areas for further research activities and are informed by the findings in this study:

- A feasibility study on the type of skills development programmes that can be introduced in Limpopo Province;
- Educational training needs of out-of-school youth, especially between the age of 21 and 25;
- Educational training needs of unemployed young adults; and
- The effectiveness and viability of the Cascading Model for training adult educators.

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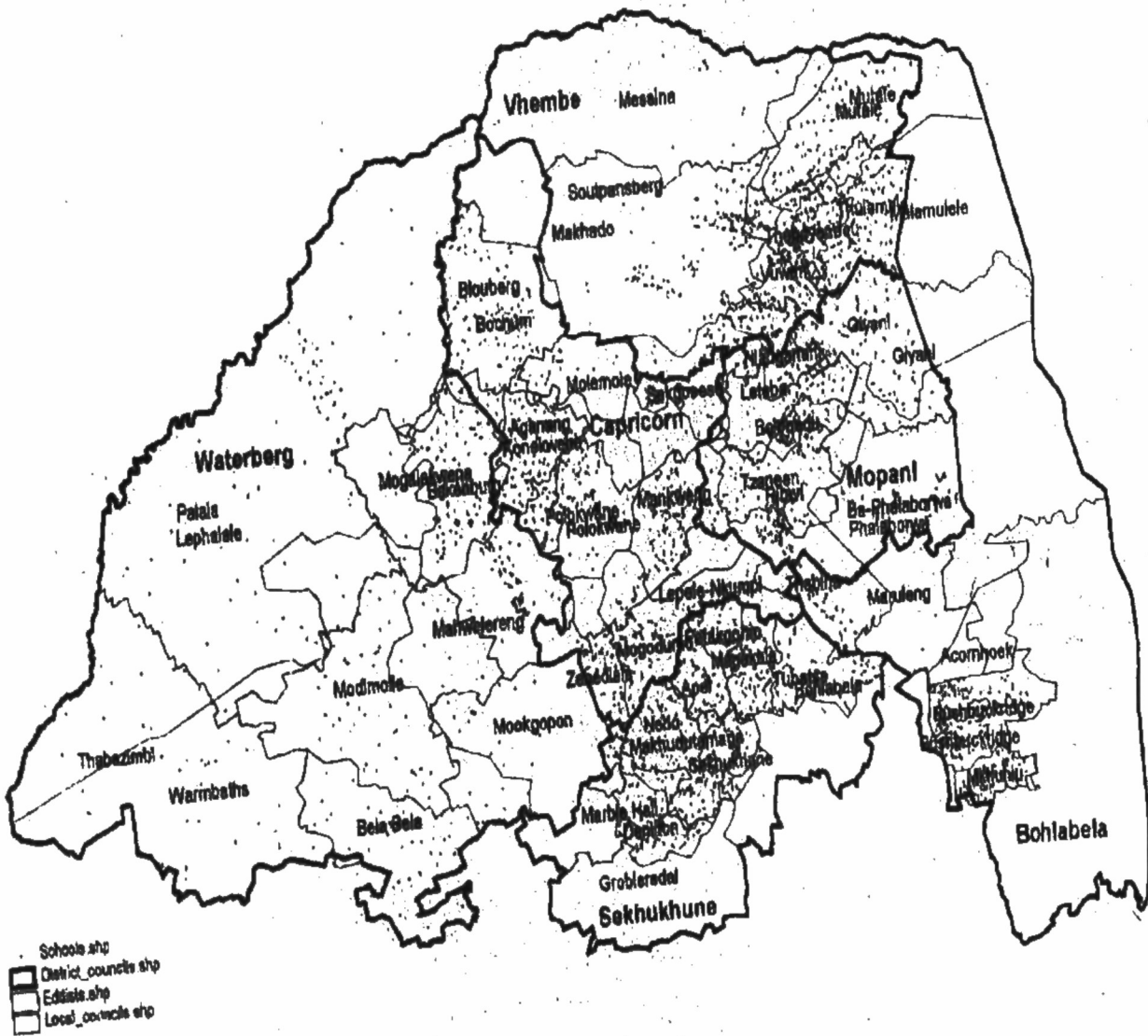
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APPENDIX A



APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADULT LEARNERS

Please tick the applicable box/es and elaborate where necessary

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Age group

21 – 25	
26 – 30	
31 – 35	
36 – 40	

3. What is your highest school qualification?

Primary school	
High School	
Never attended school	
Other (Specify)	

4. What motivated you to attend adult education classes?

5. Which adult education programme/s do you attend?

Mother tongue	
English	
Numeracy	
Workplace literacy	
Others (Specify)	

6. Why did you choose the stated programme/s?

Because you want to mix with other people and learn from them	
You want to have money and support your family	
You want to get a job	
You want to improve at work	
You want to learn more on your language and English	
If other (Specify)	

7. Do you have textbooks for learning?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

8. Are the textbooks enough for you to learn?

Enough	
Not enough	
No textbooks	

9. Do you understand your educators when they teach?

Yes	
Sometimes	
No	

10. How do your educators teach you?

Educators always teach	
Educators let you learn on your own	
Educators let you work in groups	
Educators teach, let us learn on our own and let us work in groups	

11. How do you prefer to learn or to be taught?

By educators	
On your own	
With other learners	
By educators, on my own and with other learners	

12. Do you think that your adult educators offer programmes that you want to learn?

Yes	
Partially	
No	

13. Are there any barriers/problems that hinder you to attend adult education classes?

Yes	
No	

- 14. If yes, please state two major problems.**

- 15. Do you think adult education is important for you?**

Very Important	
Important	
Less important	

- 16. Are there learners who dropped out of the programme?**

Yes	
No	

- 17. Will you recommend the adult education programmes to other adults who are not attending?**

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

Please tick the applicable box/es and elaborate where necessary

- 1. How long have you been teaching adults?**

1 – 3 years	
4 – 6 years	
7 – 09	
10 – 12	
13 – 15	
More, please specify	

- 2. Have you worked somewhere before becoming an adult educator? If yes, write down the occupation.**

- 3. What is your highest educational qualification?**

Below Matric	
Matric	
Certificate	
Diploma	
Degree	
Other, please specify	

- 4. Do you have a specific qualification in adult education? If yes, please state it:**

5. If not, did you receive any form of training in order for you teach adults?

Yes	
No	

6. In your opinion, was the training adequate for you to teach adults?

Adequate	
Not adequate	
Not sure	

7. In your centre what do you think makes adult learners to attend classes?
Mention only two:

8. With regard to gender, who are the main participants?

Males	
Females	

9. Prior to offering programmes, do you establish why adult learners want to learn? If yes, how do you do that?

Talking to the community	
Interviewing individual adults	
In class	
Combination of the three above	
Other (Specify)	

10. Besides reading, writing and numeracy, do you teach any income generation skills?

Always	
Sometimes	
Never	

- 11. Do you think the learners like what you are teaching?**

Yes	
Partially	
No	

- 12. In your opinion do you think programmes offered in this centre are different from the ones offered in other centres?**

Different	
Slightly different	
Not different	

- 13. Do you encounter any problems in teaching adults?**

Always	
Often	
Seldom	
Never	

- 14. If you do encounter problems, which are the major problems? Mention two:**

- 15. When do your learners enjoy learning or being taught?**

When you always teach them	
Alone, as individuals	
In groups with other learners	
All of the above	
Other, please specify	

16. Do you experience drop out problems?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

If yes, what do you think are the causes for dropping out? Mention two:

17. In your experience, which learning areas do your adult learners prefer most? Please state them:

18. Which income generating skills do your adult learners like to acquire? Please state them?

19. Do adult education programmes in Limpopo Province need some improvement?

Yes	
No	
Not sure	

20. If yes, please give two suggestions:

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

1. When did you start working as an adult educator?
2. Did you receive any training on adult education before?
3. Was the training sufficient enough for you to become an adult educator?
4. What other qualification/s do you have?
5. What motivated you to teach adults?
6. How do you recruit adult learners for this center? Which strategies do you employ to sell adult education in this area?
7. Do you conduct any needs analysis? How? Which methods do you use?
8. Do you think needs analysis in adult education is important? Why?
9. What of programmes/projects do you offer in this center?
10. On what do you base your decision on the type of programmes that you offer in this center? What is the yardstick? Are the programmes provincial, regional, area or center based?
11. In your opinion, are the programmes relevant to the daily needs of the adults who attend here? Please explain.
12. Which programmes/projects do adult learners in this center prefer most? Why?
13. Are there teaching/learning materials and other needed resources?
14. Do you think adult learners who go through the programmes are empowered enough and acquire the necessary skills to face their daily problems?
15. How is the time and duration for these adults to attend and participate in the programmes structured?
16. Which methods of teaching do you use with these adults: how do you teach them and how do they learn? Which methods do they prefer most?
17. How can you describe your adult learners, that is, their characteristics? From what socio-cultural and economic background are they?

18. Do you think it is important to have sufficient information about your adult learners?
19. Who are most of your learners? Men or Women? Why do you think it is the case? Is it culture/tradition or other factors?
20. What is the level of attendance in this center? Why do you think it is like that?
21. Are there any learners dropping out? If yes, why and how high is the level of dropout?
22. What motivates the adults in your center to attend the education programmes?
23. In case of low/poor attendance and dropout, are there any attempts by educators to make follow-up?
24. Besides the problems of poor attendance and dropout, do you encounter any other problems? If yes, what are the problems? How do you attempt to solve them?
25. What about the community in general: is it aware of the programmes? Do they offer any support to your center?
26. What about learners who successfully go through the programmes: do you have any idea of where they are and what they are doing with the knowledge and skills gained and acquired?
27. What is your opinion about the present adult education provision in Limpopo, especially in rural areas? In their findings, some researchers think the image is negative, what do you think?
28. Are there any suggestions you would like to make about adult education programmes in the rural areas of Limpopo?

Thank you for cooperation and participation in this research.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ADULT LEARNERS

1. Age (Optional)?
2. Marital status, children?
3. Educational background?
4. Motivation to attend adult education programme: what where there problems?
5. Recruitment
6. Needs analysis conducted?
7. Opinion about programmes offered: relevance, appropriateness. Which are more appealing?
8. Structure of the time and duration for attendance
9. Availability of learning materials and other resources?
10. Opinion about educators: teaching approach and treatment
11. Present feeling as compared to initial feeling about self
12. What does the community and other people say? Any support?
13. Any change in life?
14. Are there problems/barriers that affect attendance?
15. Other learners dropping out?
16. Comment on the group attending: men or women?
17. Ability to apply the gained knowledge and acquired skills
18. Recommendation of programmes to other adults?
19. General

Thank you for cooperation and participation in this research.

APPENDIX F



Corner 113 Bickard &
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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

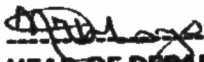
Sir/Madam

The bearer, MM Rakoma, has been given permission by Limpopo Department of Education (LDoE) to conduct research at ABET centers in both Greater Sekhukhune and Vhembe Districts. The title of the research is 'Rethinking Abet in the rural areas of Limpopo Province: Establishing useful criteria for relevant programmes.'

The Department requests learners, managers and educators to cooperate with the researcher when research activities are conducted.

It is envisaged that the research report will assist LDoE in many ways.

Thank you



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

DATE: 11/5/2005

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
HEAD OFFICE

8-JAN-2000 SAT 09:36

TEL:0183892430

NAME: ADC-NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY

P. 3

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ABET	:	Adult Basic Education and Training
AET	:	Adult Education and Training
AETASA	:	Adult Educators and Trainers Association
ANOVA	:	Analysis of Variance
CEO	:	Chief Executive Officer
CONFINTEA	:	International Conference on Adult Education
DoE	:	Department of Education
FET	:	Further Education and Training
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
GETC	:	General Education and Training Certificate
NEPI	:	National Education Policy Investigations
NGO	:	Non-governmental Organisation
NQF	:	National Qualifications Framework
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic and Cooperation Development
PALC	:	Public Adult Learning Center
PROLIT	:	Project Literacy
RIVONINGO	:	A XiTsonga word meaning 'light'
SAIDE	:	South African Institute for Distance Education
SMME	:	Small Medium and Micro Enterprise
UNESCO	:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organisation

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