

# **"A VERY NOISY OBE"**

**A REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OBE  
INSIDE GRADE I CLASSROOMS 1999**

Centre for Educational Research, Evaluation and Policy

Faculty of Education

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You find it very noisy, and when you're trying to teach you're trying to do different things with different groups. The noise level....it can be too high. Because then you can't work with others on a quieter level. So you've got to control that some way. I find that quite difficult. It is a very noisy OBE. And it is quite stressful not only for the teacher, but also for the children

Interview with Grade 1 Teacher, 1998

## 1. The Research Programme

The announcement by the South African state that OBE would be implemented in all Grade 1 classrooms in January 1998 triggered a vigorous public debate about, inter alia, the prospects of implementation given the lack of teacher training, the low levels of material support for the new curriculum and the complexity of this

This research report provides preliminary evidence about OBE implementation in 32 Grade 1 classrooms in KwaZulu Natal and Mpumalanga provinces during the first nine months of 1998. This large multi-year study on OBE implementation is guided by a single research question:

How do Grade 1 teachers understand and implement outcomes based education in their classrooms?

The findings reported in this report constitute a tentative and preliminary account of OBE implementation given the short period of time in focus i.e., January and October 1998. Nevertheless, the emerging findings suggest important trends and trajectories regarding OBE implementation which already offer critical insights and formative lessons for post-Grade 1 OBE policy, plans and programmes.

## 2. The Research Strategy

This study was conducted in two of South Africa's nine provinces viz., Kwa-Zulu Natal and Mpumalanga. These provinces were selected for both practical and purposive reasons: practical, in that KwaZulu Natal is the province in which the research team is based thereby allowing not only for easy access and low evaluation costs, but also provides immediate relevance to the different stakeholders served in this province through the general work of CEREP. Mpumalanga was chosen in part because the research team has conducted work in that province before on behalf of the provincial department of education and had established positive working relationships with officials in that region. More importantly, both provinces represent typical South African contexts required for the evaluation i.e., small urban centres with a large distribution of rural areas; large discrepancies in educational resources across racial and spatial divides; and generally low standards of performance in the schooling system.

The unit of analysis in this study is the Grade 1 classroom. The study consisted of three components: [1] a baseline study forming part of [2] an impact assessment followed by detailed [3] case studies of Grade 1 classrooms.

The baseline study was conducted in all the Grade 1 classrooms selected for this research using a combination of profile questionnaires of resources and teaching before and after OBE.

In the impact assessment component of the study, a starting minimum of 5 schools was selected within each province, each school distinguished on the basis of a sliding scale of available resources. In other words, the evaluation makes the assumption that there is a relationship between available resources and the ways in which teachers understand and implement OBE in their classrooms. The 5 school types are:

1. a very well resourced school with excellent infrastructure e.g., a typical urban-based white school.

2. a school with reasonable infrastructure but with less of a resource base than the typical white school e.g., atypical urban-based Indian school.
3. an established township school with stable infrastructure but with the minimum of resources available for operating the school e.g., a typical urban township school.
4. A school in a peri-urban area commonly described as "informal settlement" in which there is a decaying infrastructure and no to little resources for operating the school e.g., a school in a squatter settlement area.
5. A school with little to no infrastructure and little to no resources available for supporting the school, and bearing all the characteristics of rural schools such as large class sizes e.g., a rural school far removed from city or even town centres.

Within each school, two Grade 1 classrooms were selected for study i.e., 10 classrooms per province and therefore 20 classrooms in the study as a whole. However, because of the availability and interest of both schools and additional researchers to participate in the study, the number of classrooms were extended to 32 with the additional 16 coming from 8 other schools in Kwa-Zulu Natal province.

As evaluation studies mature in South Africa, the critical value of baseline data is being appreciated as a measure against which to track changes following a particular intervention. The difficulty with the evaluation design of this study is that both the suddenness of OBE implementation and the late availability of funding meant that it was almost impossible to establish baseline studies during 1997. The compromise reached during our deliberations was to generate retrospective baseline data using a collection of interviews and a 'before-and-after' questionnaire (see instrument #4 on next page) as soon as the sampled schools were established.

The instrumentation used in the study can be summarised as follows:

1. a questionnaire profile of the school, assembling data about the aggregate levels of human and material resources available in the school as a whole.
2. a questionnaire profile of the two sampled Grade 1 classrooms, collecting data on the resources available within each of these classrooms in considerable detail.
3. a questionnaire profile of each of the two teachers per Grade 1 classroom per school, developing a detailed portrait of the teacher in terms of formal qualifications, teaching experience, preparation levels for OBE implementation, levels of personal confidence in relation to the new curriculum etc.
4. a questionnaire profile of teaching practices of the two teachers concerned by comparing teaching approaches and strategies before the introduction of OBE (that is, prior to 1998) and since the introduction of OBE (that is, since January 1998). The teacher's recollection of how she taught prior to OBE implementation

in 1998 therefore constituted the de facto baseline data for measuring the dimensions and directions of change since the new curriculum was formally introduced at the beginning of the year.

5. A classroom profile which combined the quantitative questionnaire data (item 2) with photographic evidence and other measures e.g., measuring classroom space against number of learners occupying that classroom.
6. A detailed teacher interview protocol which was conducted after each of two 5-day observational periods; these open-ended interviews probed for teacher understandings of OBE based in part on what the researcher observed over the said five-day period.
7. an observation protocol which consists of detailed indicator specifications (seven indicators later elaborated into a set of 10 indicators based on initial observations); these observations documents, containing both categorical, narrative and critical incident accounts of OBE implementation constitute the most direct measure of how teachers understand and implement OBE inside Grade 1 classrooms.

The observational studies were done at two points: early in 1998 (February/March) for 5 consecutive days and later in the year (September/October) for the same period, in order to gain a more reliable and changing account of teacher understandings of OBE.

The observational indicators were carefully crafted from a study of official documents on Curriculum 2005 and OBE in which the main goals set by the Department of Education for this new curriculum was translated into a tangible and observable set of indicators (see Instrument F, Classroom Observation Schedule). The initial set of indicators was piloted with Grade 1 teachers and OBE trainers to establish their credibility and resonance with practising educators.

The case studies were conducted in four classrooms, two in each province. The set of two classrooms per province, from different schools, was selected as reputational samples i.e., one classroom with an outstanding record of successful OBE implementation, and another classroom in which the teacher was clearly struggling to implement the new curriculum. Such selection was made by talking to teachers and trainers in the province and through the observations of researchers during the impact assessment phase of the study. The case study methodology used most of the instrumentation developed for the impact studies but quadrupled (four times longer) the observation time and conducted several interviews with the teacher throughout the period of observation. A critical addition to the case study protocol was the use of transcript analysis of teacher and learner documents as expressions (or otherwise) of OBE understanding and practice in Grade 1 classrooms.

Please note that at the time of writing, the final case study data had not been submitted by the field researcher in Mpumalanga, and that the final impact study for one of the rural KwaZulu Natal schools was not completed because of a near fatal accident involving two members of the CEREP research team.

### 3. Which OBE Should We Study? A Methodological Problem

One of the vexing problems facing the research team was how to decide on what criteria to use in evaluating whether in fact OBE was being implemented or not. There are, to be sure, many different conceptions of OBE in the South African teacher literature on the subject, from Handbooks to how-to-manuals to academic texts to departmental documents to popular literature to publishing company textbooks. Some use a strictly Spadyean conception of OBE ('culminating demonstrations' of learning at the end of a process), others a People's Education version highlighting the progressive pedagogy of the new curriculum (group work, self-learning, teacher as facilitator etc); and yet others, a mix of OBE conceptions drawing on Australian policies or Scottish practices etc.

We felt it was important to begin with a notion that teachers can understand and implement OBE in a variety of different ways, and that that was acceptable. The methodological task then was to capture these different ways of doing OBE as fully and faithfully as possible. At the same time, we needed to recognise that there was an official set of expectations (themselves changing, confusing and contradictory) as to what an OBE classroom should look like. We then decided to develop a set of indicators, extracted from a close reading of all existing government documents on OBE, as another way of capturing data on Grade I classrooms. Our report attempts to use both strategies (teacher understandings and indicator-based data) to develop our portrait of what happens in Grade I classrooms using OBE.

It is up to the reader to decide to what extent we have been successful in balancing these two strategies in our accounts of what happens inside Grade I classrooms and how teachers understand their practice in the context of a new curriculum.

### 4. What Do We Know About Teacher Understandings and Implementation of OBE?

The findings presented are necessarily tentative and based largely on the baseline and impact assessments. However, across the 32 classrooms drawn from different contexts there are clearly converging findings but at the same time, there are also diverging patterns based on differentiated implementation contexts.

#### 4.1 Teachers hold vastly different understandings of OBE even within the same school

The teachers interviewed expressed considerable variation in their understanding of OBE. Some described OBE as synonymous with C2005. Most teachers defined OBE by

reference to certain common practices e.g., learner-centered instruction, activity-based learning, group work, learning by discovery, less direct teaching and more teacher facilitation, less of a focus on content coverage, learning by doing etc. In other words, teachers certainly held and expressed a very practical and immediate view about what constitutes OBE. None of the teachers referred to OBE in Spadyean terms i.e., in the terms described in official elaborations of what constitutes OBE such as the principles of 'success for all learners' or the reorganisation of time schedules or 'culminating demonstrations' of learning specific tasks or assessment based on outcomes. Rather, teachers referred to OBE in terms common to most progressive pedagogy everywhere rather than the mastery learning underpinnings of the Spadyean version. This wide variation of meanings attributed to OBE by teachers simply reflects the range of terms and concepts used in official documents. This research was certainly not expecting a uniform understanding of OBE; however, the considerable range of meanings attributed to OBE has implications for implementation which could, similarly, be expected to reflect a very broad set of teaching and learning strategies within Grade 1 classrooms. And the range of meanings implies a lack of coherence and focus in the communication of policy on OBE and C2005.

4.2 Teachers claim considerable uncertainty about whether their practices in fact constitute OBE, irrespective of the aggregate levels of institutional resources or years of personal teaching experience or levels of confidence about OBE implementation

While most teachers expressed a clear view about what they understand as OBE, almost all teachers were uncertain about whether they were in fact 'doing' OBE in their classrooms. Well-qualified teachers with years of experience and a reputation for being outstanding Grade 1 instructors, demonstrated the same levels of uncertainty about their practices as in the case of poorly qualified and inexperienced teachers. In part this uncertainty derived from the impression laid that there needs to be a distinction between past and present practices; the fact that there was little affirmation of existing practices in the policy documentation where the emphasis was on changing current behaviour. Teachers did not always appear to know, therefore, whether drilling the three R's was inconsistent with OBE or acceptable within an OBE framework or requiring adjustment along an OBE practice continuum. The uncertainty also reflected teachers' starting the year with what they have always done i.e., their feeling of comfort and security with the familiar; the lack of indepth training; the uncertainty of the planners and trainers themselves; and the lack of on-site supervision and feedback on current Grade practices in the classroom. In short, what is striking in this research is that the clarity of conceptual meaning about OBE is disynchronous with the uncertainty of 'meaning-in-practice' among Grade 1 teachers implementing the new curriculum.

#### 4.3 Teachers uniformly felt that their preparation for OBE implementation was inadequate and incomplete

All the teachers in the study regarded the OBE training in the 5-day block period as inadequate. There were two strands of opinion in the assessment of training. The first strand regarded the training as necessary and useful but that much more training was needed in order to become more meaningful in the lives and practices of Grade 1 teachers. A second strand regarded the training as simply misguided i.e., the training was too basic and offered at a level which such teachers had long surpassed in their own development. Perhaps predictably, black teachers held the former view and requested much more training for longer periods of time than the standard 5-day training. And white teachers in the study saw the need for no training or a totally different kind of training; this group would at various points in the interview process suggest that the Department should concentrate its limited resources "on those who need it" (read: black and disadvantaged) while the rest of "us" would manage by and with ourselves. This raises an important issue witnessed during these interactions with especially white teachers: a high level of ambiguity about their own practices expressed within a 10minute period as both clear and certain understandings of what OBE means and what should be done, and strong feelings of confusion and uncertainty about whether they were really understanding or doing OBE. The common thread in teacher responses though was for a different quality and frequency of teacher preparation for OBE.

#### 4.4 Teachers in most classrooms had the basic C2005 documentation required for the Foundation Phase

Despite initial unevenness in the delivery of OBE materials, all schools and classrooms visited during the period of study had the basic C2005 materials. This basic documentation consisted of the Foundation Phase programmes in literacy, numeracy and life skills. Some teachers had personal copies of these materials in their classrooms; other teachers had to access the materials through the principal's office or the Grade 1 or Foundation Phase co-ordinator. Of course, a distinguishing element with regard to OBE-related materials is that some schools had many other resource materials to support the new curriculum such as the SAIDE multimedia distance education resource, Maskew Miller Longman texts, general OBE writings etc. What this research did not document, however, was the extent to which teachers actually used these policy documents in designing and reviewing their lessons; this would constitute an important follow-up study of 'OBE-in-use.' Such follow-up research would be particularly important given the claims of many teaches that they were not implementing OBE, at least in the early part of the Grade 1 year.

#### 4.5 Teachers strongly expressed the view that OBE was not implementable in the early part of the school year with young children

Grade I teachers generally (there are a few exceptions in our sample) regard the first part of the first year of schooling as inappropriate for an OBE programme. When expressing this view, the teachers describe OBE in C2005 terms: that is, as requiring active learners who construct their own learning based on self-initiated activities in which the teacher stands back as facilitator of the process. The reasoning behind this view of teachers is expressed in three different ways. First, that very young children need to learn some basic disciplines in order to gain from formal education e.g., sitting quietly, taking turns, active listening etc. For teachers, an OBE (in their terms) approach either does not take account of such pre-requisite learnings or assumes that these learnings already exist. Second, that the sophistication of an OBE approach needs students with a starting level competency in reading and writing to engage this new approach. That means some drilling work, phonics, number recognition and other basic skills; in short, an exposure to traditional Grade 1 teaching prior to the introduction of OBE within such classrooms. Third, teachers argue that children in Grade I classrooms come from different backgrounds with respect to language competency, reading abilities, numerical literacy, personal confidence and mastery of early life skill routines (e.g., toiletry needs). For example, children who did not attend pre-school or school readiness programmes were distinctly different in terms of their preparedness for formal schooling than those children who did attend such schools. This difference is normally treated by Grade I teachers through a notion of "bridging" the less able learners into the basic adjustment for formal schooling. Again, this means that long before teachers can implement C2005, as they understand it, these basic preparatory skills need to be learned. Teacher after teacher made the distinction as follows: "I have my OBE, and I have my skills." In other words, for Grade 1 teachers OBE was incompatible with bridging or basic skills; it was only possible after the latter was achieved in the Grade I classroom. For this reason, many teachers expressed the view that they might very well make the transition to OBE later in the Grade 1 school year. But not immediately.

#### 4.6 Teachers generally claimed that there were some things that they were doing differently since the introduction of OBE but many (though not all) claim that they were mainly teaching as they did before OBE

Teachers make general claims that they were changing their practices as a result of OBE. The specific changes mentioned were the following: allowing learners more time to explore and articulate their own learning i.e., teachers were teaching less; doing less written work in books since learners were encouraged to use multiple representational contexts for their tasks; and introducing life skills more deliberately in the curriculum. Other than these specific changes, teachers claimed that their practices did not change very much: they were still doing "the 3 Rs"; they were still concentrating on their phonics; they still did drilling of basic skills; and they have always used activities to structure the learning tasks in Grade 1; and they have not really followed the specific outcomes closely, even though teachers are aware of them. By way of example, consider

the research record for two Middelburg teachers who completed these questionnaires themselves:

#### **HOW MRS COETZEE COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | <b>As in 1997</b> | <b>Less than in 1997</b> | <b>More than in 1997</b> |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 2. Group Work                                  | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 3. Teacher-led Questions                       | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 4. Student-led Questions                       |                   |                          | ✓                        |
| 5. Activity-based Learning                     |                   |                          | ✓                        |
| 6. Team-Work                                   | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |                   |                          | ✓                        |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |                   |                          | ✓                        |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓                 |                          |                          |

#### **HOW MRS PRETORIOUS COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|   | <b>As in 1997</b> | <b>Less than in 1997</b> | <b>More than in 1997</b> |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 10. Individual feedback                         | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 11. Group Work                                  |                   |                          | ✓                        |
| 12. Teacher-led Questions                       | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 13. Student-led Questions                       | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 14. Activity-based Learning                     | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 15. Team-Work                                   | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 16. Assessment based on outcomes                | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 17. Integration of different fields of learning | ✓                 |                          |                          |
| 18. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓                 |                          |                          |

It is important to state clearly that there was a disjunction between teacher claims (as made during interviews and on questionnaires) and teacher practices (as observed during the teaching episodes). Most teachers were talking for more than 90% of the teaching time, whether in white or black schools. Learners seldom asked questions, though this might be related to the nature of Grade 1 discourse where learners appear to constantly provide spontaneous commentary on the lesson ("My Daddy has a LARGE knife" when the teacher introduces eating utensils) or interrupt with information, especially in white classrooms. Learners respond in unison to most teacher questions or prompts, with relatively little individual tutoring or feedback irrespective of class size. The ongoing Grade 1 observational studies will later provide much more systematic and reliable accounts of either synchrony or dis-synchrony with respect to teacher claims and practices. Other research in South African classrooms suggest, however, that often profession and practice are not synonymous when working with teachers.

#### 4.7 Teachers understand and implement OBE in very different ways within and across different resource contexts

Each Grade 1 classroom is different with respect to OBE implementation. Reading across the multiple and "thick" data sets, there are patterns emerging with respect to teacher understandings and implementation of OBE.

Pattern #1: Most of the Grade 1 teachers observed are clearly not doing anything differently from what they did before i.e., conventional Grade 1 teaching focused on making the young learners competent in the basics of reading, writing, numeracy, discipline and confidence. Within this group there are two kinds of teachers. In the first group, both the formal statements of these teachers (interview and questionnaire data) as well as the observational evidence suggest that most of the teachers are doing what they feel comfortable with and what is familiar to them from years of practical experience. These teachers do not claim to be doing OBE nor do their practices suggest that to be the case. In the second group, the teachers claim that they are doing OBE perfectly and completely within their classrooms; yet in our observations of these teachers, there is very little evidence at all that they are practising OBE at all. Profession apart, both groups of teachers within this frame are not practising OBE.

Pattern #2: Some teachers use the C2005 and OBE simply as a broad and guiding framework against which to plot or refer their own teaching. That is, they profess a self-consciousness about the new curriculum policy and attempt to organise their work within that curriculum framework. This is often done at a very superficial level, such as a retrospective labelling and categorisation of classroom-activities under one of the three learning programmes. These teachers imposed the framework provided by the new curriculum on what they had already planned or implemented as a way of demonstrating conformity or compliance with official policy, or simply as a way of confirming the claim that "we have always done OBE." In the latter view, OBE simply provided a language and terminology to describe what was already happening. It is this group of teachers who were more likely to claim that they were often unsure about whether their practices constitute OBE.

Pattern #3: A few teachers claim and understand that their implementation moves constantly between the new requirements of policy and the established conventions and practices of teaching in their Grade 1 classrooms. This movement between policy and practice, between innovation and convention, between what is required and what is possible, was most clearly expressed by the more confident and experienced teachers in the sample. These teachers were actively negotiating the meaning of OBE within the constraints of their classroom and the lessons drawn from their experience. Some of these teachers expected OBE to gain greater currency within their classrooms as the calendar year unfolded; once basic competencies had been established among learners, more OBE practices would probably be introduced as learners become more confident.

#### 4.8 Parents are minimally involved, if at all, in any aspects of OBE within their children's schools or classrooms

In all the classroom studies, teachers are clear that parents play very little role in outcomes based education. This is an important finding since it contradicts the evidence from the pilot school evaluations of 1997. The response of one teacher is not uncommon in the data set:

*Most of the learners come from very poor home background (sic). Many do not have the necessary material that they need for learning all subjects. Parents are very poor and uneducated. They are not co-operative with us teachers (Umhlatuzana Primary, p.11).*

Or in another case,

*The condition in .... the home environment is not conducive for OBE. The parents need to re-orientated into OBE and be encouraged to be supportive of the school requirements for their children for them to learn effectively (Endwebu, p.14)*

And,

*Parents do not take part in their children's education. For an (sic) example, when a teacher gives a learner homework, the parents do not help*

Many teachers make the same point: the parents are not trained or equipped to participate in OBE as it affects their children. Parents are not informed about the new curriculum, except in some of the privileged schools in the sample, and even then the sharing of information does not translate into actual participation in OBE by parents.

#### 4.9 The disparities in resources is perhaps the single most important factor distinguishing teacher understandings and practices with regards to OBE.

The choice of `a sliding scale of resources' in selecting schools for inclusion in the study was informative in four ways. First, it confirmed the fact that schools with less available resources generally do less OBE-related work than schools with more available resources. Second, it demonstrated that the availability of resources remains skewed along racial and spatial lines (established township schools-like Elusindisweni--have relatively more resources than rural or informal settlement schools). And third, it showed that schools with the basic available resources tend to be the only ones that engage in the recruitment of additional resources beyond what is available from either the Department of Education or the principal's office. Fourth, it also revealed that in several cases the lack of resources was simply a rhetorical defense for not doing OBE even when basic resources are available. The field notes of one researcher reads as follows:

*Classes were not colourful and had no display of charts. The teacher was not innovative and lacked imagination in her teaching. She tended to blame her lack of initiative on others, the main obstacle being the supply of resources even when she had the basics available to her (Endwebu, p.14).*

On the other hand, these resource constraints are real for many Grade I teachers who struggle simply to keep-up with the demands of over-crowding. Consider the field note records from a researcher's on-site observations in a rural Mpumalanga school:

*Fifty four Grade 1 learners and sixty-one Grade 2 learners shared a classroom of floor area 49 square meters. The class is cramped and overcrowded with little movement space in-between desks. The learners are seated in groups of five to six people. Two to three learners shared a desk that is designated to seat two learners. On one day during the first set of observations, the weather was so severely cold that the Grade 1 teacher called the Grade 2's to sit in the classroom while she taught Grade 1's. The teacher instructed the Grade 1's to sit on the desks while the Grade 2's remained standing (Bosmanspan, pp. 2-3).*

This research affirms the significance of resources in support of implementation; but it also underlines the need to understand how even available, limited resources are used or not used in the course of curriculum implementation.

#### 4.10 The observation of OBE classrooms underlines the differences between well-resourced and under-resourced schools in the way time is used

There are clear distinctions between black and white schools as far as the use of time is concerned. In white Grade I classrooms, the intense level of classroom engagement and the industrious use of time were observed consistently in both provinces. Learners are constantly busy with one or other project, and often the learners rotate from one activity to the next (e.g., self-guided activities or teacher-aide facilitated activity or small group work with the main teacher) in a seamless stream of learning activities. Some learners in the class, while others attend "computers"; some learners in "computers" while a third group enjoys free-play on the school field. The Westville Junior Primary School was a classic case of such multiple, co-ordinated activities which completely fill the learning day.

By contrast, there was not a single black school in which all five days of research observations were fully implemented in either of the two 5-day observation periods. In one school, the researcher reports the following:

*Attendance of both teachers was erratic. In all the school visits during T1 only four lessons were observed. There were times when both teachers would be absent from class without explanation*

In another school,

*Both teachers lost at least a day due to some administrative tasks. Mrs X lost two consecutive days while Mrs Y lost one day .... In both cases, the teachers had not made plans for those days (Researcher's Report).*

And in a third school,

*The teacher spent most of the time outside the classroom. Most of the time she came to school late and left very early, for either a meeting or doctor's appointment. The teacher does not do any preparations for her lessons. She also does not consult with other Grade 1 teachers. Her class is far behind with their work.*

From the perspective of "time as a resource," this lack of full utilisation of time is another form of resource wastage. It is clear from this study that the curriculum effects of OBE on learning are mediated by the differential use of time in the different schools and classrooms that formed the focus of this investigation. This finding suggests follow-up studies on the relationship between the time utilisation (e.g., time-on-task studies) and learning effects given a new curriculum.

4.11 The engagement of teachers with OBE is further differentiated by the incidence and degree of curriculum co-operation and exchange between Grade 1 practitioners

There is strong variation in the sample of classrooms on the question of teacher cooperation and exchange with respect to OBE. In most classes, teachers tend to work as individuals, struggling to make meaning and application from the new curriculum. The only time such teachers worked with collegial groups doing similar work was in the designated, department-led training workshops.

In a few cases, teachers cite their learning from colleagues as being indispensable to their efforts to make sense of OBE in their Grade 1 classrooms. In one school, there is a Foundation Phase Head of Department who is responsible for organising meetings and workshops of all Grade 1 teachers in the school to plan OBE activities. She is also the person who identifies regional resources (e.g., workshops sponsored by other groups) to support OBE implementation among her colleagues. In this school, regular meetings are scheduled to deal with OBE and parents are introduced to OBE at a special school meeting. The teachers exchange work-plans and curricula, ideas and resources.

It is the clear impression of this study that curriculum co-operation among teachers in the same school made an important difference in the ways teachers understood and implemented OBE in their classrooms. In addition, school-level leadership and coordination emerged as a related ingredient in meaningful curriculum implementation.

4.12 In several classrooms, OBE claims exist alongside very harsh treatment of learners in the face of outsider observations of curriculum practice

Most teachers made claims that a more interactive and learner-sensitive classroom was a consequence of OBE being introduced. Yet, on several occasions during the observation periods, the researchers witnessed acts of physical aggression against students. As one researcher records:

*Often witnessed the teachers administering corporal punishment to the learners for not properly following the instruction given by the teachers. Fear is drilled into the learners. One child reported to the teacher that she had a toothache. Although the child was clearly in pain, the teacher told her to go and sit down and not to trouble her. The teacher added that if she did not do as told she would be beaten.*

And in a different class, in a different province, and a different researcher, the record of observation reads as follows:

*She spent most of the time punishing the kids. She hits them on the forehead, on their buttocks, on their hands and bodies, for [a] not being able to read, write or do numeracy; and [b] for not erasing what they have already written.... When the teacher asks a question, the learners start shivering. Even if they are making words from cards, they are scared to show the teacher because they are scared of the punishment they will get.*

It is not claimed that these records represent highly unusual practices in Grade 1 classrooms. The point is that this happened in the face of an observer studying OBE implementation, and that these practices co-existed with bold claims about commitments to OBE in practice.

4.13 Most teachers express discomfort with the disruption that results from creating an OBE environment within the Grade 1 classroom

Teachers make consistent reference to "noise" as a consequence of doing OBE in the classroom; this is encapsulated in the poignant expression of one of our Grade 1 teachers at the top of this document. Several teachers expressed the same point differently,

*Learners get out of control, unruly.*

In the world of Grade 1 teachers, the introduction of OBE creates opportunities for freedom but also constrains discipline and order. Noise levels disrupt the learning of other children. And, as mentioned previously, this is related to some teachers' understanding of the immaturity of young children to handle an open-ended pedagogy.

The problem of noise is compounded when the classes are large, a point made by most teachers. This means that the teacher's ability to control the OBE classroom is impeded by learner numbers ranging from 30-55 at the same time that she is required, in her understanding, to release those learners into a more facilitative environment which encourages self-directed learning!

4.14 Most Grade 1 teachers have not in fact changed their OBE assessment practices in ways that reflect the new assessment demands of the new curriculum

The study of teacher assessment records and practices show conventional "record books" in many classes with simple symbol assignments in several cases. There was little evidence, even in the well-resourced schools, of clear demarcations of the different learning areas or the critical outcomes or the specific outcomes. That is, the notion of assessing students against some specific and demonstrable attainment targets was seldom in evidence. In one school the final report of students was organised by three categories reflecting the learning programmes (numeracy, literacy and lifeskills) with simple narrative records of student development in each area. But in most of the other records, they appeared no differently from what existed, the teachers claim, in previous years. There are clear examples in the case study reports (attached) of how these assessment transcripts are organised.

## LESSONS LEARNED

This evaluation of teacher understandings and implementation of OBE was intended to be a formative exercise, designed to extract lessons for future implementation of curriculum in general, and post-Grade 1 OBE implementation in particular. Here are the salient lessons learned from the extensive collection, analysis and reflection on the data.

1. The importance of a simple curriculum language which is accessible and meaningful to teachers as classroom practitioners.
2. The importance of sustained teacher development supporting the new curriculum; a support strategy that consists of a mix of centre-based training and in-classroom support.
3. The importance of basic material and infrastructure to support and underpin curriculum innovation.
4. The importance of creating, restoring or instilling a broader "culture of teaching and learning" in a school in order to ensure the success and support of a new curriculum.
5. The importance of affirming existing, positive practices which support and enhance new curriculum ideas and practices.

6. The importance of building a broad community of support for curriculum innovation; in this respect, parents need to be skilled and empowered to participate meaningfully within this process.
7. The importance of organising or structuring curriculum co-operation and exchange as a deliberate mechanism for building professional capacity and enhancing classroom performance.
8. The importance of demonstrating what is possible, through intellectually challenging tasks, the range of curriculum implementation possibilities e.g., innovative assessment protocols that meet the demands of an OBE approach.
9. The importance of creating 'policy synchrony' between different kinds of demands placed on teachers when a new curriculum is introduced. That is, expanding class size and requiring facilitative pedagogies create contradictory demands in the life and work of a practising teacher.
10. The importance of accepting the fact that, as a matter of professional practice, different kinds of policy meanings will be expressed in the classroom. At the same time, there has to be insistence that authoritarian and restrictive practices be removed from the democratic classroom.

# STUDIES OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION, 1998

## OVERVIEW

|  | DATA IN-HAND | EXPLANATION   | NO. OF TEACHERS | SCHOOL TYPE                           |
|--|--------------|---|-----------------|---------------------------------------|
| <b>IMPACT STUDY – KZN SCHOOLS</b>        |              |   |                 |                                       |
| 1. Ekujabuleni                           | ✓            |   | 2               | "Less Effective" former DET           |
| 2. Mbasela                               | ✓            |   | 2               | Poorly resourced, Ex DEC              |
| 3. Westville                             | ✓            |   | 2               | Ex-Model C school                     |
| 4. Umhlatuzana                           | ✓            |   | 1               | Less resourced, Ex HoD                |
| 5. Coedmore                              | ✓            |   | 2               | A less well resourced, Ex-HoD         |
| 6. Umgongqotho                           | ✓            |   | 2               | Poorly resourced Ex DEC               |
| 7. Endwebu                               | ✓            |   | 2               | Poorly resourced , Ex-KDEC rural      |
| 8. Julukandoda                           | ✓            |   | 2               | Poorly resourced , Ex-KDEC            |
| 9. Embuyeni                              | ✓            |   | 2               | Poorly resourced, Ex-KDEC             |
| 10. Gabadela                             | X            | Researchers had a car accident therefore data collection from this school was not completed | 2               | Extremely under-resourced , rural     |
| <b>CASE STUDY – KZN SCHOOLS</b>          |              |   |                 |                                       |
| 1. Riverview                             | ✓            |   | 1               | "Effective School" Former HoD         |
| 2. Ekujabuleni                           | ✓            |   | 1               | "Less Effective" former DET           |
| <b>IMPACT STUDY – MPUMALANGA SCHOOLS</b> |              |   |                 |                                       |
| 11. Elusindisweni                        | ✓            |   | 2               | "Effective" DET                       |
| 12. Middelburg                           | ✓            |   | 2               | Well resourced, Ex Model C or private |
| 13. Bosmanspan                           | ✓            |   | 1               | Under-resourced , Ex-DET              |
| 14. Maziya                               | ✓            |   | 2               | Township school                       |
| 15. Pine Ridge                           | ✓            |   | 2               | A less resourced, ex-HoD              |
| <b>CASE STUDY – MPUMALANGA SCHOOLS</b>   |              |   |                 |                                       |
| 1. Elusindisweni                         | ✓            |   | 1               | "Effective" DET                       |
| 2. Mrs. Nkosi's School                   | X            | Data collected but not submitted.   |                 | "Less Effective" DET                  |

**Impact Study**

**Kwa-Zulu Natal Schools**

# A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS

## EKUJABULENI PRIMARY SCHOOL (1)

KWADABEKA TOWNSHIP, KWAZULU-NATAL IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Ekujabuleni is an ex-Department of Education and Training primary school situated in KwaDabeka Township, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The school was selected as an established school with the basic infrastructure in place. It was selected for the case study as a reputational school in which one teacher was not doing very well with the OBE implementation.

### 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Data in this school was collected in two phases: phase 1 in May 1998 and phase 2 in August 1998. Two teachers were observed for a period of 5 days per phase. This school was also identified for the case study. The case study will be discussed separately.

One instrument, viz., Instrument A (School Profile) was completed by the Principal, two instruments B (Teachers Characteristics Profile) and D (Teachers Questionnaire) were completed by teachers. The Researcher completed instrument C (Classroom Resources Profile) and instrument F (classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument C was completed per observed lesson. At the end of each week an interview was conducted with each teacher. All data was captured on SPSS for analysis.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Ekujabuleni is a primary school with classes ranging from grade 1 to grade 7. It is situated at KwaDabeka Township in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal. The school has a total number of 247 grade 1 pupils, five grade 1 classrooms with five teachers. The school has no teacher aids. All learners in the school are Zulu speaking. The language of instruction in grade 1 is isizulu.

### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

According to the acting principal, most or all the classrooms need minor repairs. The school has the following materials all in good condition: telephone, fax machine, photocopier, storeroom, running water, electricity supply and a staff room. The school

does not have a sports field or a swimming pool. The school is probably one of the "better-resourced" African schools.

## 5. SCHOOL RESOURCES 5.1. For grade 1 class

According to the acting principal about 80-90% of the learners have all required learning materials in all school subjects. The researcher observed the following:

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Ms. Mkhwanazi's class)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment  |
|---|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate space                                 | X   |    | This is because almost the same numbers of pupils are absent each day. Pupils who are present occupy the empty spaces. |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | X   |    |  |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | X   |    | Teacher never used the chair.  |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | X   |    |  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | X   |    |  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall                     | X   |    | The teacher never used these.  |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained                      |     | X  | Painted but not well maintained.   |
| 8. There is ventilation                                       | X   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                             | X   |    |  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | X   |    | Only one window was broken   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available                                   | X   |    |  |

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Ms. Khoza)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment   |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate spaces                                | X   |    |   |
| 2. Adequate writing surface                                   | X   |    |   |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | X   |    | These were only used when the teacher was marking or during breaks. |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | X   |    |   |
| 5. Adequate lighting  |     |    |   |
| 6. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | X   |    |   |
| 7. There are charts displayed on the wall                     | X   |    |   |
| 8. Walls are painted and well maintained                      | X   |    | Painted but not well maintained.                                    |
| 9. There is ventilation                                       | X   |    |   |
| 10. Classroom is adequately roofed                            | X   |    |   |
| 11. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | X   |    |   |
| 12. Chalkboard available                                      | X   |    |   |

## 5.2. Resources to teach OBE

According to the teacher the school received the following OBE material from the

**TABLE 3: MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE SCHOOL: FROM TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS PROFILE - Ms. Khoza**

| Material  | Teacher |
|---|---------|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase     | Y       |
| 2. Literacy Programmes with Teacher's Guide     | Y       |
| 3. Literacy Programs without Teacher's Guide    | Y       |
| 4. Numeracy programs with teacher's guide       | Y       |
| 5. Numeracy programs without teacher's guide    | Y       |
| 6. Life skills programs with teacher's guide    | Y       |
| 7. Life skills programs without teacher's guide | N       |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages               | N       |
| 9. Stationery Packages                          | Y       |

**TABLE 4: MATERIALS AVAILABLE IN THE SCHOOL: FROM THE TEACHER CHARACTERISTICS PROFILE Ms. Mkhwanazi**

| Material  | Teacher |
|---|---------|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase     | Y       |
| 2. Literacy Programmes with Teacher's Guide     | N       |
| 3. Literacy Programs without Teacher's Guide    | N       |
| 4. Numeracy programs with teacher's guide       | Y       |
| 5. Numeracy programs without teacher's guide    | Y       |
| 6. Life skills programs with teacher's guide    | N       |
| 7. Life skills programs without teacher's guide | N       |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages               | N       |
| 9. Stationery Packages                          | N       |

## 6. TEACHER PROFILES

Ms. Mkhwanazi (Teacher C)

Teacher C is a female teacher between the ages 31-40. She has been a teacher for eight years, all of which spent at this school. She has been teaching grade 1's for the past 3 years.

She obtained her Junior Primary Teachers Diploma (JPTD) in 1988 and in 1997 she qualified for the Higher Education Diploma (HED).

She attended a five-day workshop, which she did not find useful. She did not specify whether or not she is confident and competent in relation to teaching OBE, but she said that she needs more training in OBE.

Teacher D is a female teacher who is over 41 years old. She has been a teacher for the past 12 years. She started teaching at this school 8 years ago. She has been teaching grade 1's for 6 years. She obtained her Junior Primary Teachers Diploma in 1985 and in 1996 she qualified for the Further Education Diploma.

Teacher D attended a 5-day workshop, which focused on the implementation of OBE. She found this workshop useful. Like teacher C, Teacher D did not specify whether or not she was confident and competent in OBE. She only mentioned that she needs more training in OBE.

## 7. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

### 7.1 TEACHER C:

#### 7.1.1. Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

This teacher does not believe she practices OBE. According to her, OBE is still foreign to her. She does not understand it and she feels it cannot work for grade one's particularly 'in black schools'.

#### 7.1.2. What specifically has not changed?

According to the interview, nothing has changed in the way teacher B teaches. When comparing the case study observation and the phase one observation, nothing has changed in her teaching.

#### 7.1.3. What are the main successes with OBE?

According to Ms. Mkhwanazi, OBE is not successful. It is time consuming and teachers are not trained to implement it.

#### 7.1.4. What do you see as the obstacle/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

Teacher B said they do not have enough material and time to implement OBE.

#### 7.1.5. Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Ms. Mkhwanazi thought OBE is not appropriate for blacks since 'they are not intelligent'.

## 7.2. TEACHER D:

### 7.2.1. Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Teacher D was not sure whether she was practising OBE. She said that she was trying to integrate across learning areas and involved learners as much as possible.

### 7.2.2. What specifically has changed?

Ms. Khoza was previously teaching at a pre-school. According to her very little has changed in her teaching. Assessment and planning a lesson had changed since she was to integrate learning areas. This was a choice before.

### 7.2.3. What has not changed?

Ms. Khoza still uses traditional methods for teaching learners writing skills. She is having difficulties with assessment.

### 7.2.4. What are the main successes with OBE?

OBE is child centred making it possible for learners to actively participate in the lesson. It also helps the teacher to get to know the learners.

### 7.2.5. What do you see as the obstacles/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

Parents are not actively involved with their children's education. For example, when a teacher gives learner's homework parents do not help.

### 7.2.6. Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Ms. Khoza felt OBE is appropriate for any learner. She also mentioned that the mistake teachers are doing is underestimating the children.

### 7.2.7. What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

More workshops, sufficient materials and parental involvement seemed to be what Ms. Khoza needed to optimally implement OBE. Sufficient materials together with further training would help to motivate teachers.

## 8. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

### 9.1. Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Data in this section was collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule with 7 indicators. The researcher completed this instrument per observation session. For the rating scale used in the instrument please see the appendix.

### 9.2. Learners' attendance over the Case Study observation

The class enrolment was 45. The class did not have full attendance for the whole observation period. The highest attendance was 39 and the lowest 32.

### 9.3. General Classroom Observation

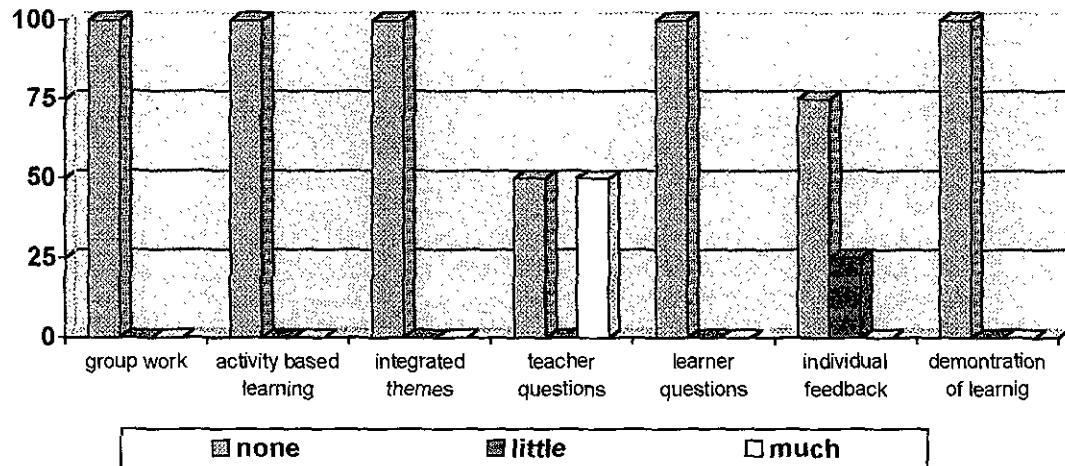
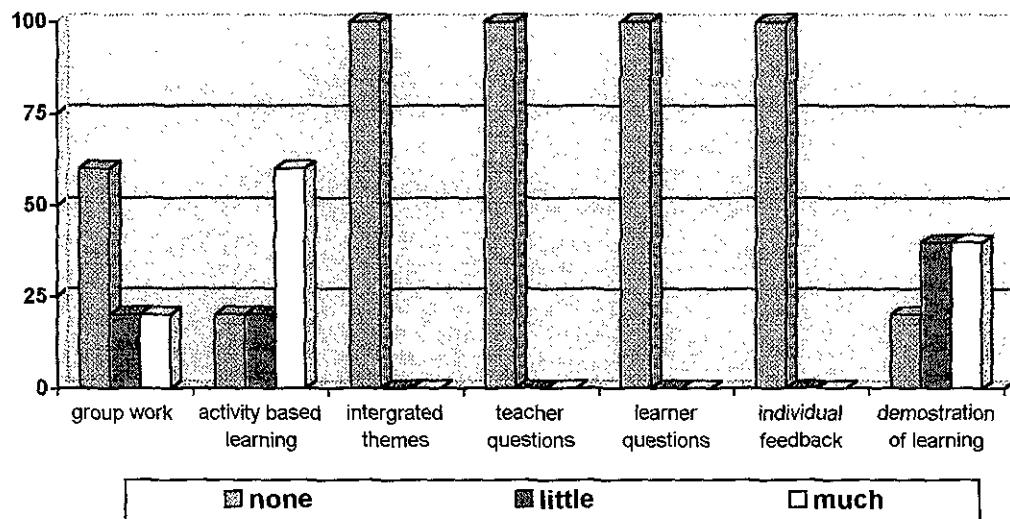


Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS, Ms. Mkhwanazi



PHASE 1

Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS, Ms. Mkhwanazi

## PHASE 2

Figure 3: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS, Ms. Khoza PHASE I

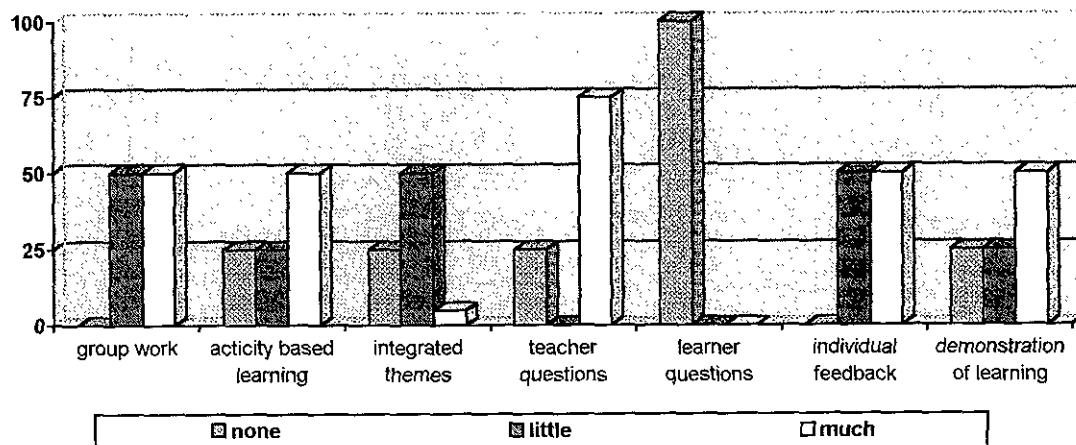
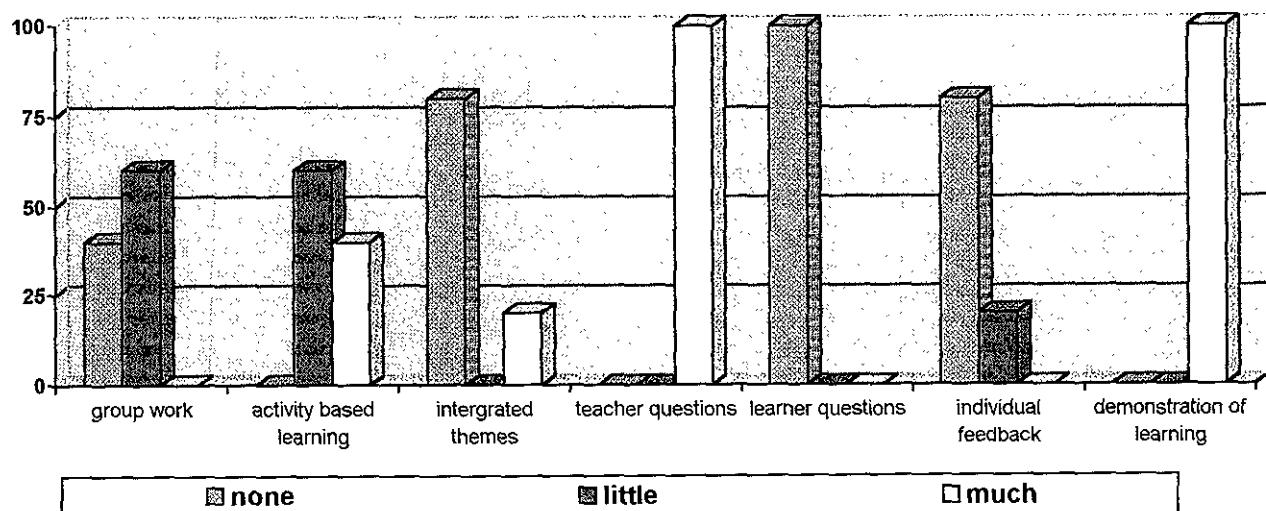


Figure 4: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS, Ms. Khoza PHASE 2

- 8.3. 1. Group work
- 8.3. 2. Learning is activity based
- 8.3. 3. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas
- 8.3. 4. Teacher led-questions
- 8.3. 5. Learner led-questions
- 8.3. 6. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback
- 8.3. 7. Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn
- 8.3. 8. Learners comment actively on the lesson
- 8.3. 9. Learners taken outside their classroom
- 8.3. 10. Learners play freely within or outside the class
- 8.3. 11. Teacher makes maximum use of instructional/teaching time

## 9. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

### 9.1. TEACHER C: Ms. Mkhwanazi

#### 9.1. 1. Teachers preparation

Teacher B claimed (in an informal interview) that she did not do any preparations because she was doing the same work for a number of years.

#### 9.1. 2. Assessment Book

This teacher only kept an assessment book. It only had one page of assessment, which looked like this:

| Name of the child | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dube Sindy        | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   |   |
| Mhlongo Zweli     | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |

This was done for all learners in the classroom. This was the only readable evidence as far as assessment is concerned. The teacher was unable to show me the assessment for numeracy and life skills learning areas. This form of assessment (according to the teacher) determined the groups each learner belonged to.

### 9.2. TEACHER D

#### 9.2.1. Teachers preparation

Ms. Khoza prepared for the whole week. She chose a theme and used it to plan lessons for a week. She then prepared material for those lessons except in cases where she had materials from the past lessons or the previous years.

#### 9.2.2. Assessment Book

Ms. Khoza had her assessment divided into 2:

- ✉ GENERAL OBSERVATION- This section was based on self-confidence, co-operation with the teacher and classmates, completion of tasks, bible education, art education and environmental studies.
- ✉ SCHOLASTIC PERFORMANCE. This part was divided into languages - English and isiZulu (oral, written, spelling and reading), mathematics (understanding, calculation and problem solving) and written work.

She rated pupils' performance using numbers: 1-excellent, 2-good, 3-satisfactory, 4-weak.

**TABLE 5: COMPARISON OF HOW THE TEACHERS DESCRIBED HOW THEIR TEACHING STRATEGIES ARE IN 1998 AS COMPARED TO 1997**

|  | as in 1997 | less than in 1997 | more than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 4. Student initiated questions                 |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 5. Activity based learning                     | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 6. Team work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

**TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE: Ms. Mkhwanazi**

Ms. Mkhwanazi's, teaching practices had not changed. She was using her old teaching methods. She noted that Grade ones were chaotic at that time of the year.

**TABLE 6: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE: Ms. Mkhwanazi**

|  | As in 1997 | less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student initiated questions                 |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 5. Activity based learning                     | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 6. Team work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Ms. Khoza's teaching had not changed due to the fact that she was teaching pre-school before grade 1.

## 12. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- ☒ The teacher spent most of the time outside the classroom
- ☒ Most of the time she came to school late and left very early, for either a meeting or doctor's appointment.
- ☒ She used corporal punishment frequently. She hit the pupils on their foreheads, buttocks, hands and bodies for:
  - Not being able to read, write or do numerical tasks
  - Erasing what they had already written
- ☒ The learners were only free when the teacher was not in class. Outside the classroom they played freely.

- ☛ She treated every subject independently from the other subjects. There was absolutely no integration across the learning areas.
- ☛ The teacher did not create an atmosphere where the learners could speak freely. Whenever the teacher asked a question the learners would start shivering. Even when they were making up words from cards, they were too scared to show the teacher for fear of punishment.
- ☛ The teacher did not do any preparation for her lessons. She did not consult with other grade one teachers.
- ☛ Her class lagged behind all the other classes.

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
MBASELA JUNIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL (2)**

INANDA TOWNSHIP, KWAZULU-NATAL

**IMPACT EVALUTION STUDY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Mbasela Junior Primary School is situated at Inanda Township about 20km north of Durban City. This school is one of the Department of Education and Culture (DEC) schools in the former KwaZulu. Most children, who attend the school come from very poor backgrounds - many stay in the nearby informal settlement. The school was chosen for this study because it fitted the fourth criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a school in a peri-urban area commonly described as 'informal settlement'. In this environment there is decaying infrastructure and limited resources for operating the school, e.g., a school in a squatter settlement area.

At Mbasela Junior Primary School morning assembly begins at 07h50 and classes start at 08h00. There is a 30 minutes break from 10h30 to 11 h00.

## **2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Data was collected in the second week of May (observation session  $T_1$ ) and in the second week October of 1998 (observation session  $T_2$ ). During each observation session, the researcher spent five days doing intensive observation of classroom practice of Grade 1 teachers. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions  $T_1$ , and  $T_2$ . This period (the incubation period) was allowed in order to observe whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. Any changes in teaching practice would be identified during the second observation period. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The acting principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during observation session  $T_1$ , viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents

(see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument was 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted with each teacher.

During second observation session T<sub>2</sub>, two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both instruments.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Mbasela Junior Primary School is a single-shift, junior primary school offering Grade R to Grade 4. The school is belonging to the Inanda Central Circuit of Inanda District in KwaZulu-Natal Province.

The teaching staff at the school comprises of 25 teachers including one acting principal and acting deputy principal. The designated position of the acting principal is that of deputy principal. There are no heads of departments in the school. All teachers in the school are Zulu-speaking and females. There are no grade aides in this school. The acting principal does not have teaching responsibilities.

According to the acting principal there are 1046 learners in the school. There are 553 (53%) boys and 493 (47%) girls. The mother tongue of all learners in the school is Zulu. The languages of instruction in the school are Zulu and English.

According to the acting principal there are six Grade 1 classes at Mbasela Junior Primary School. There are 254 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998).

### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS

There were seven blocks of classes, including the principal's office. The school has a hall that is used as a Grade 1 classroom. The acting principal indicated that some classrooms need major repairs. The acting principal said that although there were bugler proofs in the principal's office there had been numerous cases of vandalism that had taken place in the school. At the time of T2 there was no strong room in the school.

## 5. SCHOOL FACILITIES

According to the acting principal the only facility that the school has, is a telephone. This telephone is in good state of repair. There is principal's office that was in a good condition. The principal's office has some bugler proofing facility, but as indicated there have been reported cases of burglary from the office. There is mains power supply and running water in the school but the only toilet facility available for both learners and teachers pit latrine. All other facilities are not available.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the acting principal, about 40-59% of the learners has all required materials in all subjects in the school.

### 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

#### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Mathenjwa's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Mathenjwa's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR Mrs. MATHENJWA'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | Class was overcrowded. In T2 over 50 learners used the classroom.   |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    | Desks were overcrowded  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | There was only one 40-watt bulb. This could not provide sufficient light when it is overcast  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         |     | ✓  | The class was overcrowded and cramped with over 50 learners.  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | There was a fair display of colourful charts on the walls, although in some charts it would have been better to use photograph rather than hand drawn pictures. |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     | ✓  | The wall needed to be re-painted.   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    | There was no ceiling in the classroom   |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    | The chalkboard was partly covered with charts and other sections had some 'permanent' writing on.   |

## 6.2.2 For Mrs. Sibisi Grade 1 classroom

Mrs. Sibisi uses a classroom that is used as school hall. This classroom is twice the size of the other classrooms. Therefore for most of her lessons Mrs. Sibisi use only half of the space that she has. Table 2 shows resources that were found in Mrs. Sibisi's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS SIBISI'S GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | Class was overcrowded. In T2 over 50 learners used the classroom.   |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    | Desks were overcrowded  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | There was only one 40watt bulb. This could not provide sufficient light when it is overcast   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         |     | ✓  | The class was overcrowded and cramped with over 50 learners.  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | There was a fair display of colourful charts on the walls, although in some charts it would have been better to use photograph rather than hand drawn pictures. |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     | ✓  | The wall needed to be re-painted.   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    | There was no ceiling in the classroom   |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. |     | ✓  | There were a number of broken windows   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    | Partially covered with chart paper and hand-written part.   |

## 6.3 OBE resources

### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Mathenjwa

Table 4 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Mathenjwa.

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                    | RECEIVED |    |
|--|----------|----|
|  | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase      | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides     | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme without teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages                | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                           | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Mathenjwa said that she had not developed any materials for her own OBE classes. Table shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Sibisi.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. SIBISI**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Sibisi indicated that she had not developed her own materials for her OBE classes.

Both teachers concurred by saying that the school did not receive some OBE resource materials. Both said that at the time of T2 the school had just received the rest of the outstanding OBE materials. They pointed out that although they did not have the OBE materials, they blended their traditional teaching methods with teaching strategies that they learnt from their experiences with OBE.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Mathenjwa

Mrs. Mathenjwa is over 41 years old. She has an overall teaching experience of fifteen years. She has spent all these years teaching at Mbasela Junior Primary school. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for ten years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Certificate in 1981 and Primary Teachers Diploma in 1995.

Mrs. Mathenjwa said that she attended only 1 OBE INSET training course. The KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education offered this OBE course. She said that she found the course to be useful. She was not sure about her competence and confidence on teaching OBE. She said that she required more training.

### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs Sibisi

Mrs. Sibisi is over 41 years old. She has a teaching experience of over twenty-four years. She has taught in Mbasela Junior Primary School for nineteen years. She has a ten-year teaching experience at Grade 1 level. She completed her PTC in 1972, and subsequently completed Matric in 1981.

Mrs. Sibisi attended one OBE INSET course offered by the KZN Department of Education over one week. She found the course very useful. She was not sure about her confidence and competence to teach OBE. She indicated that she needed more training on OBE. She valued highly the training in OBE that she received.

## 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers 7.2.1 For Mrs. Mathenjwa.

Table 6 shows how Mrs. Mathenjwa compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 5: HOW MRS MATHENJWA COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Mathenjwa indicated that she was initially uncomfortable with the introduction of OBE because of lack of training in it. She believed that next year (1999) with more training she would be comfortable with teaching OBE. She indicated that she was still not clear with 'assessment based on outcomes'.

The table shows that Mrs Mathenjwa alleged that she had not changed in three aspects of her teaching practices, i.e., individual feedback, group work and formative continuous assessment. It seems that she asked fewer questions, her learners asked fewer questions in class and there is less activity-based learning in her classes. The table further shows that there is more teamwork, assessment based on outcomes and integration of different field of learning in her class.

## 7.2.2 For Mrs Sibisi

Table 7 shows how Mrs. Sibisi compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 6: HOW MRS SIBISI COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity –based learning                    | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Sibisi said that she was not confident and competent to teach OBE because of lack of INSET training. Her wish was that there should be more OBE INSET workshops.

The table shows that Mrs Sibisi stated that she had not changed in her practices from 1997 in the following aspects of her practices: providing learners with individual feedback; group work; student-led questions; activity-based learning; and formative continuous assessment. It shows that there is more of the following since the implementation of OBE than in 1997: student-led questions, teacher-led questions, teamwork, assessment based on outcomes and integration of different fields of learning.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE

Mrs Mathenjwa

#### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

Mrs. Mathenjwa believed that she was practicing OBE in her Grade 1 class because she followed OBE teachers' guides. She said that OBE is both activity and skills driven, as there are more learner-based-activities. She contrasted assessment in OBE with that in traditional teaching by pointing out that learners now are assessed more regularly and individually. She said that in the past learners were assessed in groups.

From all her explanations it was clear that Mrs Mathenjwa did not understand what OBE was, most of her responses dwelt mainly on what she expected one to do if she practices OBE, but even these explanations and descriptions of practices were not very clear and explicit.

### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

On this item Mrs. Mathenjwa said that there was nothing different with how she was teaching because she was used to teaching aids. This contradicts what she had said in a different section of the interview where she indicated that she used more activities since the introduction of OBE.

### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs Mathenjwa said that OBE made learners to be able to do things that her previous learners at the same level would not be able to do, she pointed out that learners are able to do things on their own. She felt that these learners were having better communication skills and could easily work together.

### 8.1.4 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs Mathenjwa said that the school did not receive all OBE programme organizers and learners guides on time. She said that her current OBE learners were far behind those in previous Grade 1. She said that the then current class could not read a whole Grade 1 Zulu textbook at the end of the year whilst former Grade 1. She ascribed part of the difficulty in their teaching to confusion that they had with the Department of Education facilitators who had 'workshopped' them on OBE. They were initially told that they did not have to teach learners alphabets and vowels, but later this was reversed. The then current Grade 1 learners were slow in three R's skills. She stated that she was lacking confidence with OBE

### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Mathenjwa felt that OBE was not appropriate to Grade 1 learners. Because they knew nothing. She felt that the children had to be taught before they could engage with OBE.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs Mathenjwa felt that she would need to attend more OBE INSET workshops in order to implement OBE properly. She also felt that the school needed to be provided with radio and chart paper. She said the department should send all materials on time to schools.

For Mrs Sibisi

### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

Mrs Sibisi indicated that she was not sure what OBE was. This is because she did not understand it herself. She said that she tried to follow what was recommended in the OBE documentation but sometimes went back to her old styles of teaching. She was doubtful about her confidence and competence to teach OBE.

### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

As indicated above Mrs Sibisi said that she simultaneously followed suggestions made in the OBE guides and taught in the old traditional styles.

### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

She felt that there was nothing that she could point out as her successes so far. She thought that she might say something the following year after she had more time and experience with OBE. In a later interview she indicated that what she noted with her learners was that the current children were "more fluent in talking". She said that these children engaged more in debates than the one she taught before.

### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs Sibisi indicated that although the current Grade 1 learners easily engage with others, they were behind in reading and written work. She attributed this to the fact that there was more talking in the class.

Mrs Sibisi pointed out that her other obstacle was the late arrival of some OBE resources materials. This made her to resort to the old styles of teaching.

Mrs Sibisi indicated that she could not get assistance from the principal because the principal did not know anything about OBE. She further indicated that the facilitators from the Department of Education were "not clear about OBE" themselves. She believed that if the department was clear about OBE, then things would have been easier for them.

### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

She felt that OBE expected learners to be able to write by the time they enter Grade 1 classroom but children enter school at different entry points, most of them did not have the basic skills required at this level. She said that she would introduce OBE during the second quarter of the year when children had acquired some of the basic skills necessary

for OBE. She felt that learners with pre-school experience were at an advantage compared to their counterparts who came straight into Grade 1.

#### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs Sibisi felt that the department of Education had to provide teachers with more OBE INSET workshops. She believed that the department should provide the school with teaching aids and TV sets. All OBE resource materials should reach the school on time.

### 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T<sub>1</sub>.

#### 9.1 Learners attendance

##### For Mrs Mathenjwa

There were 40 learners in Mrs. Mathenjwa's Grade 1 class. There was not a single day where there was a full attendance of the learners in this class. The highest attendance was 32 learners (80%). The lowest was 25 learners (63%). The average attendance over the period of observation was 29 learners and the modal attendance was 32.

##### For Mrs. Sibisi

The learners' enrollment in Mrs. Sibisi's Grade 1 was 42. As in Mrs. Mathenjwa's class did not have full attendance. The highest attendance in this class was 36 (86%) and the lowest was 35 (83%). The modal attendance was 35 and the mean attendance was 35. Many learners came late to school, especially in the first period.

## 9.2 Classroom Observations

Although five days were targeted for T<sub>1</sub>, only four were observed. On the fifth day, a Friday the acting principal informed me that there was going to be non-educational entertainment movie to be played for the learners in the school. Each learner was supposed to pay R1.00 for entry into the hall.

All the observed lessons were conducted in Zulu. Mrs. Mathenjwa held all her lessons in the classroom. She allowed learners to go out to write some 'sound' (letters) on the ground once. This session was not followed up when the class went back into the classroom. Most of the times when she allowed learners to go out during her lessons were when the learners requested a permission to go to the toilet. She usually called learners to go to the front and read aloud words written on the chalkboard or charts.

Mrs. Sibisi conducted most of the lessons in the classroom. She twice called learners to the half of the hall opened for some activities, wanted them to scribble some letters on the floor and the second time to write words. She also occasionally called learners to the front to read out some words on the board. In two of her lessons Mrs. Sibisi attempted to teach learners the unit of volume, the litre. This was not only too advanced for the learners but she also used 11/2 litre bottles telling learners that these were equal to 1 litre.

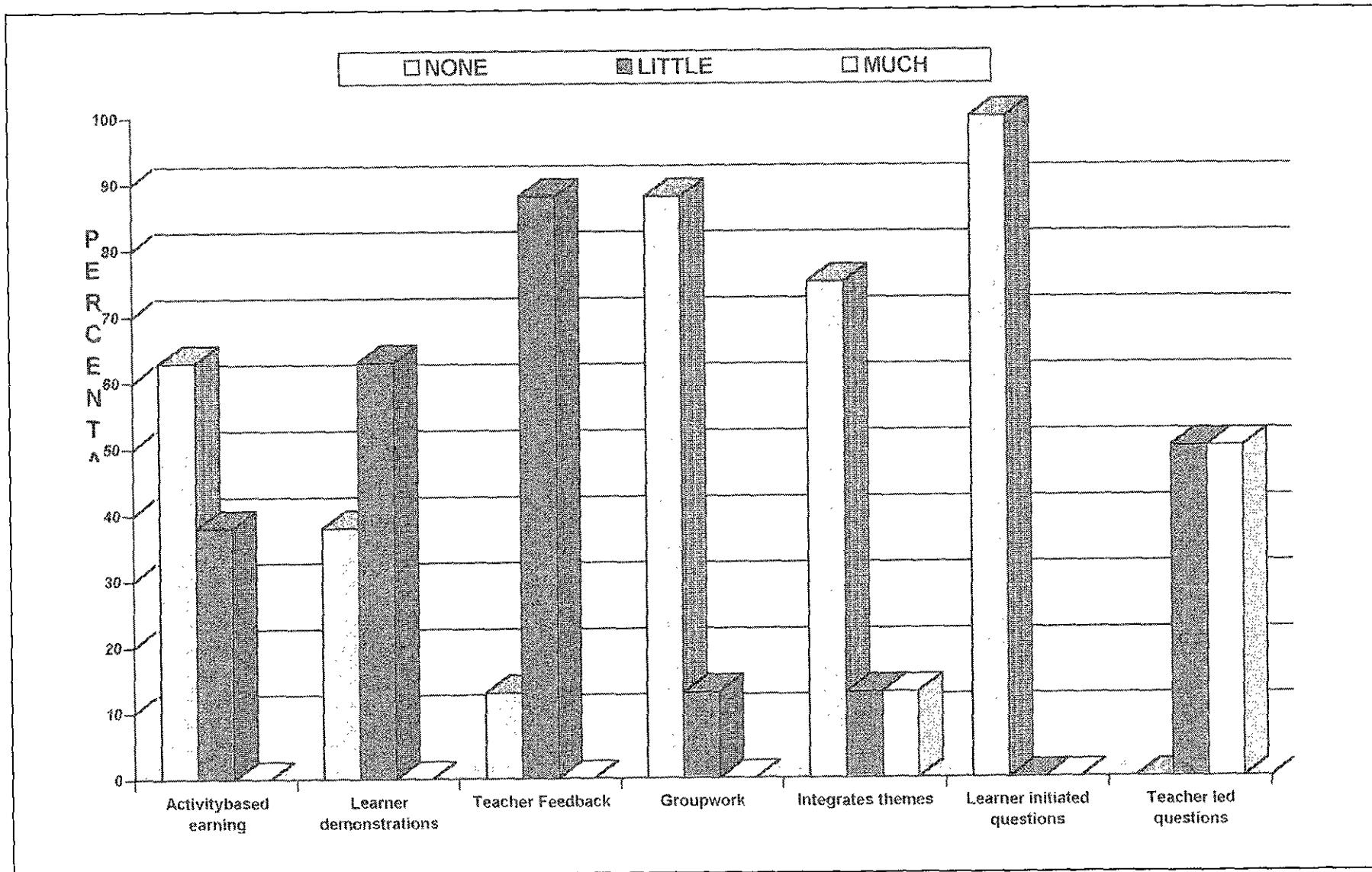
Once Mrs. Sibisi scolded learners for rushing to pick chalk which she had told the learners to come and pick for an activity, and once she beat a learner for not following her instruction, this learner had indicated that she did not understand what she was expected to do.

All her lessons were characterized by sessions of choral recitations of some Zulu poems, counting from 1 to 10 and reading out words that were written either part of the chalkboard or display chart paper on the walls.

In many of the lessons that were observed it would be very difficult to say that the teacher had prepared for the lessons. Most of the activities appeared to be spontaneous and the teacher would prepare most of her materials in class. If she had to use materials from the previous lessons she would battle to get enough materials for all the learners.

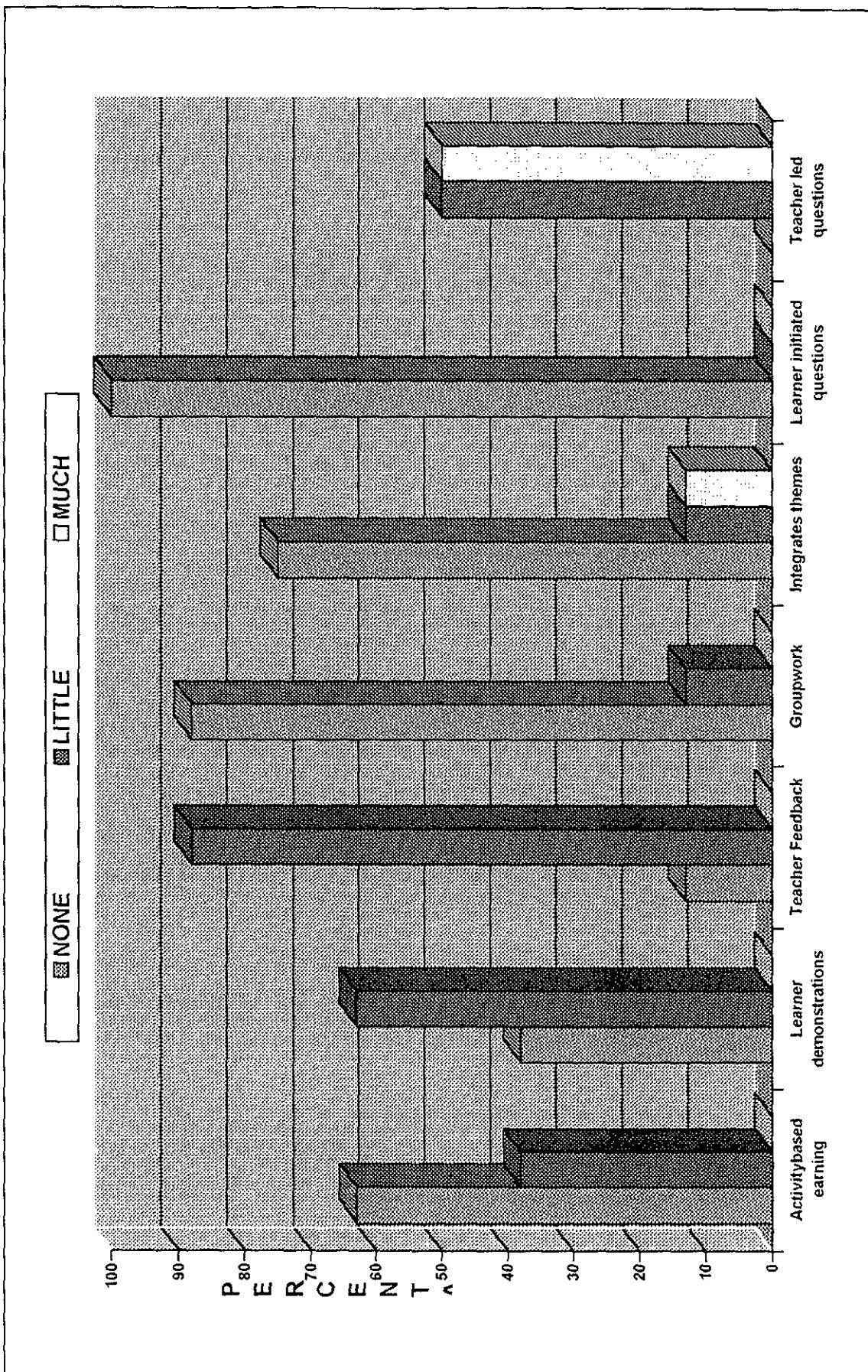
Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T<sub>1</sub>.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY TYPE)**

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was very little activity-based learning taking place in these lessons. The little activity-based learning that normally took place in Numeracy Skills lessons where the teacher let the learners to use some solid objects for either counting or additions and subtractions. Other activities that were noted were in the Literacy classes where the teacher would point out a word and later expect the learners to recognise the word amongst many other words. The bar graph shows that 'little' activity-based learning was observed for about 38% of the lessons observed. In the rest of the lessons that were observed, (63% of the time that the lessons were observed) there was no activity-based noted. Most of the lessons were teacher centred, mostly characterised by receptive teaching interjected by teacher-led questions.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Both teachers gave learners very little time to demonstrate what they had learnt. The bar graph reveals that there was 'little' opportunities given to the learners for about 63% of the time that the class was observed, Most of the time the teacher asked questions she directed them to a whole class and learners mostly responded in chorus. As stated the teacher took out learners once to write some letters on the ground, but even this was not followed up in a constructive manner in the classroom.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

In many instances in both Grade 1 classes learners responded to teachers' questions in chorus as a class, it would be difficult to give individual learners feedback. This difficulty was exacerbated by the fact that this Grade 1 class was the large class. In many lessons that were observed when individual learners gave wrong responses to teacher's questions the rest of the class would spontaneously show by hand calling for the teacher's attention by shouting "Miss, Miss". In most lessons the teacher would then point another learner to correct the wrong response from the previous learner. The teachers also corrected learners' exercise books occasionally.

In one of the lessons observed the teacher reprimanded the learners very sharply saying "don't bark, until a point at you". Most of the time many learners continued to shout their responses on teacher's questions.

#### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

Learners in both classes were arranged into groups of six to eight learners around desks. This arrangement was fixed and did not allow mobility of learners from one group to another. There was no group work noted for 88% of the time spent on observing this class. 'Little' group work was noted for about 13% of the time of the observation. Learners were not eager to share and work with their colleagues.

#### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teachers often tried to build their lessons around pupils' home and everyday experiences. In many cases this worked well but most of the lessons were disjointed with a sharp switch from one learning field to another. Both teachers appeared to have not thought in advance about their lessons. In many occasions the materials that were to be used in the classes were prepared just before the lessons began or while they were already in progress.

#### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

This did not happen in all periods in the classroom. Although learners were very eager to answer teacher's questions they did not volunteer to ask questions on their own. Most of the time when they volunteered to say something to the teachers, it would be when they were seeking a permission to go to the toilet or reporting their peer for something that they had done.

#### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

This was the most dominant feature in many lessons. The bar graph shows that there was 'much' teacher -led questions for 50% of the time during observed lessons. The teacher tended to mix questioning with her talking. Although the overall reflection was that for remaining 50% of the lessons there was 'little' teacher questioning, Mrs. Mathenjwa did ask questions for most of the lesson. Most of the teaching that took place in Mrs Sibisi's classes was receptive teaching.

Most of the questions that both teachers used were low order questions that needed one-word answers. The few times when learners were requested to give open ended long questions when they were expected to give some of their home experiences.

## 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T<sub>2</sub>

### 10.1 Classroom attendance

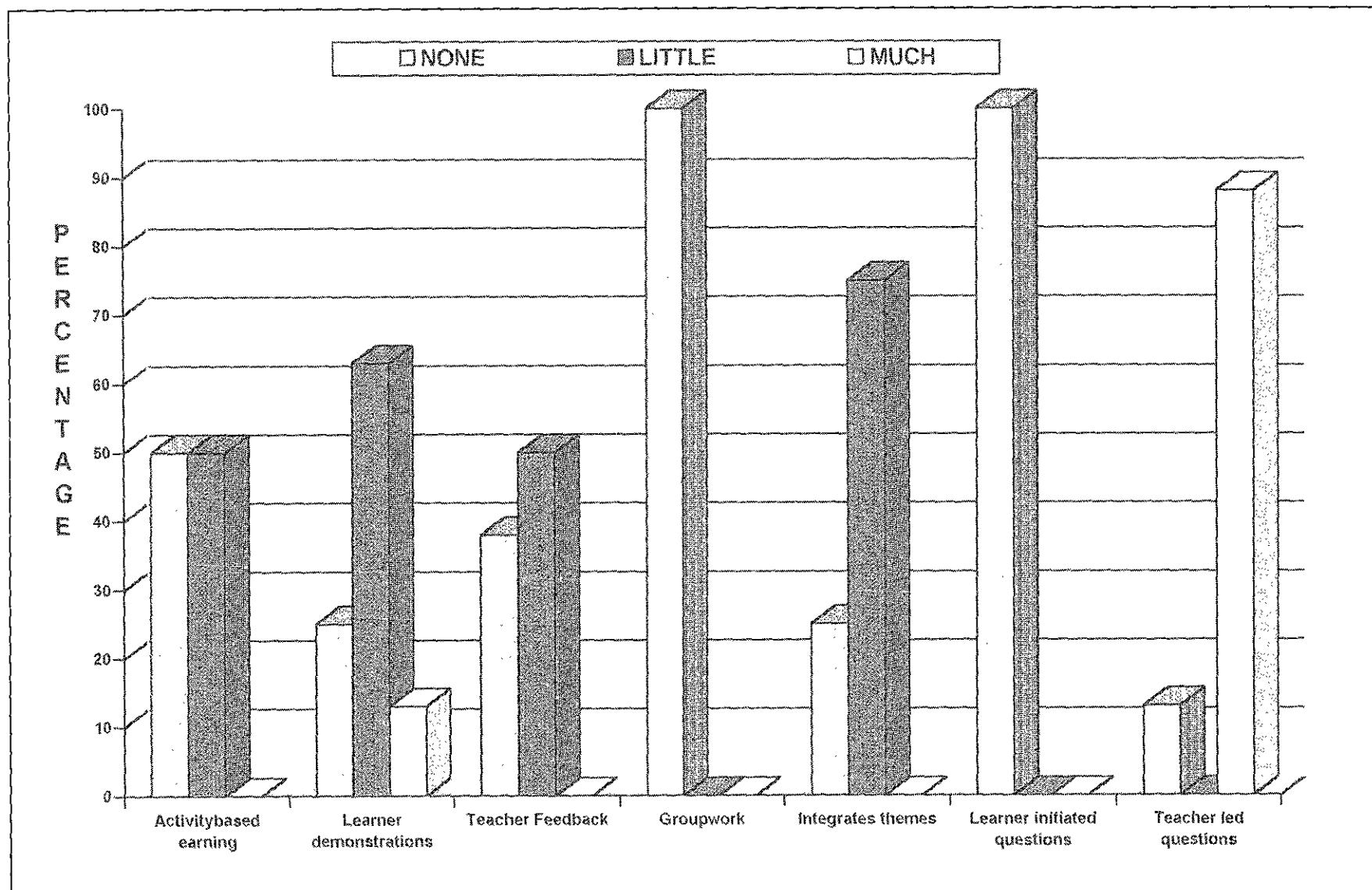
On the first day of the visit the acting principal informed me that teachers in the evaluation study felt that more other teachers should be evaluated too. The acting principal informed me that there were two Grade 1 teachers that were not in school at the time T2, one teacher was on study leave, while the other was on sick leave. As a result of this set back, learners from these classes were distributed between the four remaining teachers. This meant that the classes that were already over-crowded would even be more cramped. Both teachers could not give a definite figure of the numbers of learners in their classrooms.

Although the expected number of learners were not known but again attendance throughout this session was not uniform. For example, the average attendance in Mrs Mathenjwa's class was 45 with the highest attendance being 51 and the lowest being 41. For Mrs Sibisi, the average attendance was 44 with the highest attendance being 52 and the lowest being 40.

### 10.2 Classroom Observations.

There was lack of preparedness noted again on the part of Mrs Mathenjwa. This was noted when she looked for things that she could not find during lessons. Most of the teaching was teacher-centred receptive-teaching with learners only talking when they were responding to teachers' questions. Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations.

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY TYPE)**

There was no much change in the ratings of the OBE indicators in both classes. What follows below are descriptions of some of the similarities and differences in the classroom observations over the two observation sessions T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub>?

#### Activity based learning

There was a little increase on activity-based learning, where during T<sub>1</sub>, 38% of the observation time 'little' activity-based learning that was noted. During T<sub>2</sub> 50% of the time of the observation there was 'little' activity based learning.

Learners were given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn.

For both T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> there was no much difference noted. In both T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> the teachers were observed to provide learners with 'little' opportunity to demonstrate what they learned for about 63% of the time of the observation. The only addition in T<sub>2</sub> was that teachers were observed to give learners 'much' opportunity of what they learnt for about 13% of the observation session.

#### Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

There was a similar pattern in this category. During T<sub>1</sub> the teacher was observed to provide learners 'little' feedback for about 88% of the time of observation whilst in T<sub>2</sub> the teacher was observed to provide 'little' for about 50% of the time and 'much' feedback for about 13% of the time.

#### Students organized in groups

Both teachers did not use group work in all the lessons that were observed. This was despite the fact that in most lessons learners were arranged into groups around the desks. This is a clear indication of the teachers not being able to cope with the nature of children competing amongst each other.

#### Teachers integrates themes from different learning areas

There was an increase in this category on both teachers. During T<sub>2</sub>, there was 'little' integration of different learning fields for about 75% of the time spent in the classrooms in the

schools whilst in T1 'much' integration for about 13% of the time and 'little' integration for 13%.

#### Learner-initiated questions

In both T1 and T2 learners did not volunteer to ask questions in the class Teacher-led questions

This is the very common feature. In both T1 and T2 most lessons were driven by teacher-led questions. The most common questions asked by both teachers were 'recall questions', where learners were mostly expected to give one-word answers.

### 11. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Both teachers in the school could not explain what OBE was. They both concurred in saying that they were not clear with OBE. They were not 'sure' whether what they were teaching was in fact OBE. The teachers shifted the blame towards the Department of Education for the confusion that they were having. They alleged that different personnel from the department had given different explanations as to what teachers had to do.
2. In all the classes that were observed there was very little OBE noted. Both classes were dominated by 'teacher-talk' with very little 'learner-talk' except where the learners responded to teachers' questions.
3. Both teachers were not always prepared for their lessons. This was evident when teachers could not get materials that they wanted to use for a particular lesson. Some classes were very short and the teachers had not thought of activities that would engage learners for a whole session.
4. For both T1 and T2 there was no difference with teachers' practices in the Grade 1 classes.
5. The department did not send OBE resource materials in time to the school. This led to the teachers having to resort back to their old modes of teaching.

6. The little training that teachers had on OBE did not have any impact on them as they held onto old practices. The problem aggravated by the fact that those in school management did not have adequate training to assist and monitor the Grade 1 teachers. Further the department was not clear with what was to be expected from the teacher. This confusion led to the lack of confidence and competence by the teacher to do what was expected of them by OBE.
7. The teachers said that there was a need for more INSET workshops and provision of OBE resource materials for schools.
8. The classes were too large for the teachers to effectively teach and monitor progress of the learners in the Grade 1 classrooms.

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
WESTVILLE JUNIOR PRIMARY SCHOOL (3)**

WESTVILLE, KWAZULU-NATAL IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Westville Junior Primary School is a former Model C school located in Westville just outside Durban City. The school previously catered for the White population living around the school. Today both Black and White children come to school here.

## **2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Data from this school was collected in the first week of June (observation session T1) and in the third week October of 1998 for duration of a week (observation session T2). On each observation session researcher spend five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation sessions would therefore pick up any changes in practice that the teachers would show. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted on each Grade 1 teacher in the impact study.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. Both these instruments were completed by the researcher.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Westville Junior Primary School is a single shift junior primary school offering Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 to children coming mostly from Westville Suburb and the surrounding area. According to the principal the school is in Westville Circuit of Chatsworth District of KwaZulu-Natal Province. Westville Junior Primary is ex-Natal Education Department.

The school consists of 507 pupils. There are 262 (52%) boys and 245 (48%) girls. According to the principal, most of the children who came to school were English speakers. Other languages that are spoken by some children who came to school were isiZulu, isiXhosa and Afrikaans. The language of instruction in the school is English.

There are six Grade 1 classes at the school. The principal indicated that each Grade 1 class had a grade teacher who was assisted by a grade aide. There were 171 learners doing Grade 1 in the school.

### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The school looked well maintained, The principal indicated that some classrooms need minor repairs.

### 5. SCHOOL FACILITIES

According to the principal the school has the following facilities: a telephone, fax machine and photocopier. The principal said that all these facilities were in a good condition. The principal also said that the school has a staffroom, a storeroom and sports field, all these facilities are in good condition. According to the principal there were some classrooms that needed minor repairs.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the principal about 80-100% of the learners have learning materials required in all subjects in the school.

#### 6.2.1 For Grade 1 classrooms (Mrs. Jollands)

Table 1 shows resources that were found in Mrs. Jollands Grade 1 classroom

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. JOLLAND'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | Though slightly crowded where 3 use one writing space             |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |   |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              |     | ✓  | Moves around classroom; either sit on table or mobile             |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    | Both large window for natural light or fluorescent bulbs          |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    | Just begins to get cramp  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | Rich display of many variety                                      |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    | An absolutely stunning variety of photos, pictures, children work |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    | Excellent large windows   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    | Immaculately clean, well painted                                  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    | Perfect   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    | Parts blocked off for display                                     |

Every space in the classroom was utilized to the maximum. There was carpet at the back and the front of the classroom.

#### 6.2.2 For Grade 1 classroom (Mrs. Tomlinson)

Table 2 shows resources that were found in Mrs. Tomlinson's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. TOMLINSON'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment                                     |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | Just about a tight squeeze                              |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |   |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              |     | ✓  | Not specifically so. Workbench, storeroom and arm table |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |   |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    | Board completely covered by charts, display             |

The classroom was fully covered by pictures and charts although it was not as colourful as in the other Grade 1 classroom.

### 6.3 OBE resources

6.3.1 For Mrs. Jollands Table 3 shows the OBE resources and materials that were received by Mrs. Jollands

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                    | RECEIVED |    |
|--|----------|----|
|  | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase      | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides     | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skiff programme without teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages                | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                           | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Jollands said that she had developed some OBE materials individually and with a group of teachers. She said that she developed these materials in a group with other teachers. She explained that she had received OBE materials from courses organized by APEK and from fellow teachers.

Data was not obtained from Mrs. Tomlinson.

## **7. PROFILE OF GRADE 1 TEACHERS**

### **7.1 Teacher Experiences and Qualifications**

Mrs. Jollands is over forty-one year old female teacher. She has ten years teaching experience. She has taught at Westville Junior Primary School for nine years. The teachers indicated that she taught Grade 1 for four years. She has a NTSD, which obtained in 1972. Mrs. Jollands has attended a five-day OBE Training Workshop run by the Westville Circuit. She indicated that she found this course to be useful. She attended a follow-up, half-day OBE workshop run by the same organization. She rated this workshop as not useful. She had attended a half-day OBE Life Skills workshop organized by APEK and rated this workshop as useful. She attended a one-half day meeting organized to establish an OBE Support Group ran by a Mr. John Wesley. Mrs. Jollands said that she felt confident and competent to teach OBE and valued the OBE training that she received. She said that she felt no need for more training in OBE.

### **7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers**

#### **7.2.1 For Mrs. Jollands.**

Table 3 shows how Mrs. Jollands compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997).

### **7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers**

#### **7.2.1 For Mrs. Jollands.**

Table 3 shows how Mrs. Jollands compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997).

**TABLE 3: HOW MRS JOLLANDS COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Jollands said that she continued to teach the basic skills (writing, phonics, reading, and mathematics). She said that she was integrating these with programme organizer when possible. She said that this integration was contriving and did not always work. She said that even though implementing OBE was challenging, it was time consuming in its preparation and left less time to cover the basic skills. She said that discussion and team work was reduced the amount of written work and consequent writing.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

The summary that follows is that of the responses of both teachers to the interview questions.

### 8.1.1 what has not changed in teaching?

Mrs. Jollands said that she has continued to focus on teaching basic skill (writing, reading and mathematics), integrating them with the programme organizer where possible. She indicated that her implementation of OBE was not always been successful. The said that she found OBE time consuming although it was reduced the amount of written work and consequent marking.

Both teachers indicated that their teaching strategies did not change. For example one teacher Mrs. Tomlinson indicated that she felt that "basically everything has not changed, its writing, reading and Math - always taught little things that are relevant to the children". Mrs. Jollands said that "... Grade 1 we focus on skills; reading phonics, ... it is a good system, why change ... I incorporate OBE when it is possible".

Mrs. Tomlinson said that right from the beginning she was always feeling that OBE was in line with the ways they were taught during teacher training. She said that nothing was changed with the ways she taught her learners.

Both teachers said that academic performance of the learners did not change as compared to the children they taught in the past.

Mrs. Tomlinson commented that " I basically do what I did before although I am doing what I feel to be more OBE". I have no real understanding of what OBE is all about, I think we have been bombarded with so much..." "I feel I carry it out, but I can't say to you that I specifically do". On the other had Mrs. Jollands said that when she looked at the Specific Outcomes she realized that she was always practicing OBE.

#### 8.1.2 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners

Mrs. Jollands indicated that she felt that the children were not ready for OBE at Grade 1 level, She said that "... children need to be guided... the teachers does all the writing and the children pick up the words ... and learn how to react".

Asked whether OBE is appropriate at this level Mrs. Tomlinson said that "... it is appropriate to a certain extent, ... stick to the old routine". Mrs. Tomlinson indicated that she "... didn't do OBE at the beginning ... we do a type of readiness programme just to see those that are ready". She said that she had noted that children who had attended preschool were more readily prepared to work with other children in teams or group work.

In the post T2 interview Mrs. Tomlinson said that although the ideas in OBE were excellent, it was not relevant to the Grade 1's. She felt that Grade 1's need more hands-on experience.

#### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements?

Asked to provide one thing that she has achieved with respect to OBE Mrs. Jollands indicated that she feels that she is "... getting there even though I am not doing it thoroughly as could be expected, ... no really I can't think of any thing".

Mrs. Tomlinson indicated that she felt that children coming from pre-school were better prepared and coped well with school than those with no pre-school experiences. She said that they "... definitely see those that went to preschool for 3 years, one year or not at all. There is a big difference, ... I feel that preschool is important.

Both teachers felt that they were lucky to work in a school that is well resourced, although they might have to buy some items from their pockets, the school provided them with most resources that might be required for their teaching in the classroom.

In the post T2 interview Mrs. Jollands said that her children were more motivated towards gathering information on their own. There was more learner's involvement in learners accessing information.

#### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles/limitation with OBE

Mrs. Tomlinson expressed strong feelings against the preparation of teachers for the new curriculum initiative. She felt that "...(she) did not learn one single thing from the (OBE) courses ... I did not find the OBE course useful everyone is doing what they basically did before ... is actually nonsense because you can see that is actually not working".

Both teachers felt that the children in Grade 1 are too young to do OBE. They felt that at this stage "... it is more about interactions amongst themselves which is important. That is actually difficult step because lots of them are very self-centered ... they are very concerned about themselves". "The children at this stage need to be directed, they cannot be left to work on their own". Mrs. Tomlinson felt that the "obstacle ... is the age of the children, ... (children) are not used to working together - they want to be top dogs".

Both teachers feel that the policy document was too cumbersome to work with. 'It was too big and used lots of big word, that even herself, a English-speaking person had to consult the dictionary when in order to cope with the language that is used in the document. She showed concern for other teachers coming from 'disadvantaged schools'. One teacher indicated that there was more expected to cover over sixty Specific Outcomes.

Both teachers said that OBE and Curriculum 2005 meant the same thing to them. Both teachers felt that group work was not a success in their lesson because children were small to work together. They said that children had difficulties with sharing information, opportunities and taking turns in. Mrs. Tomlinson pointed out that small children tended to fight and compete with one another.

The teachers felt that the good support from other Grade 1 teachers both in the school and in working groups that were organized in the schools' circuit.

The teachers said that they found that there was too much paper work in OBE. They would recommend that somehow this should be cut down.

## 9. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Although there were teacher aides in the school they did not appear to play a significant part during T1. They were only mentioned once in the observation schedule. There was no description of the role the teacher aides played in the lesson.

Information that was discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1. All the lessons that were observed were conducted in English.

### 9.1 Pupil's Attendance.

#### 9.1.1 For Mrs. Jollands Grade 1

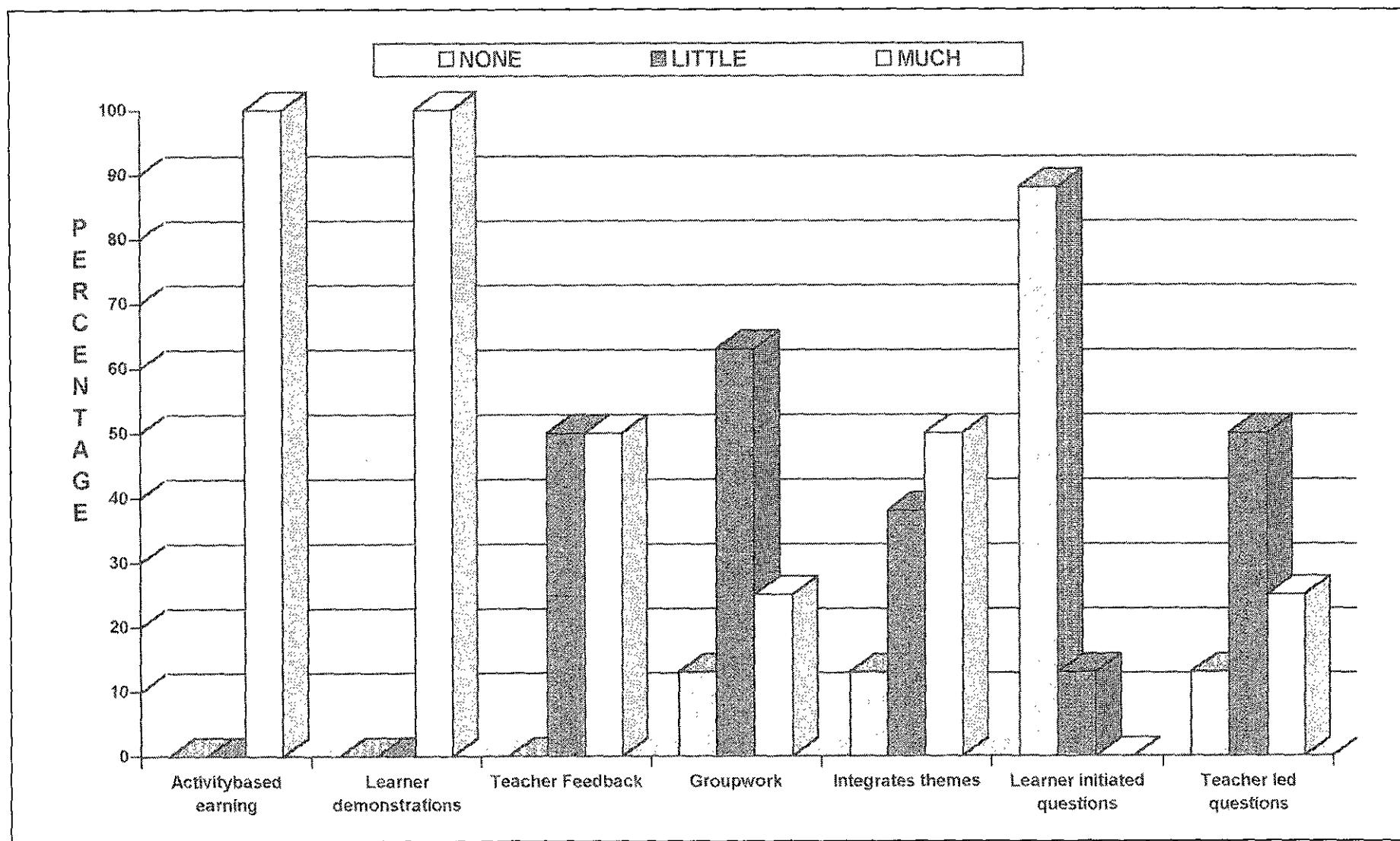
Enrollment in Mrs. Jollands classroom was 31 learners. The average attendance of learners in Mrs. Jollands classroom is 30. Full attendance was obtained over two days during T1 and the lowest attendance was 28 learners (90%).

### 9.1.2 for Tomlinson Grade 1 class

Enrolment in Mrs. Tomlinson's Grade 1 class was 31 learners. The average attendance over T1 was 30. Full attendance was attained only once in the five days that the class was observed. The lowest attendance was 28 learners or 90%.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY) TYPE)**

### **9.2.1 Learning is activity-based.**

The bar graph reveals that there was 'much' activity-based learning in all the lessons that were observed at the two Grade 1 classrooms. An example of these activity-based learning includes cases where the teachers taught Mathematics through play-centered activities. Teacher included some competitive games in their lessons. The researcher also noted instances where there were chorus responses and singing that was led by the teacher.

### **9.2.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn**

Learners were given 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they learned in all the lessons that were observed in the two classrooms, although the data that was received did not provide descriptions of these.

### **9.2.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback**

Both teachers provided learners with 'little' feedback for 50% of the time and 'much' feedback for the remaining 50% of the time that was spent in the school.

### **9.2.4 Students organized in groups**

Group work was noted in some lessons and not in others. There was no group work for 13% of the time that the classes were observed. 'Much' group work was seen in 25% of the lessons that were observed whilst 'little' group work was observed for the remaining 50% of the time.

### **9.2.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields**

Both teachers were observed to integrate themes from various learning fields in numerous occasions. For example the theme 'Vegetable' was used to integrate two or more learning field in the class of one teacher while that of 'chicken farming' was used by the other one. There was 'much' integration that was observed for 50% of the time, while 'little' integration was observed for 38% of the time.

### **9.2.6 Learner-initiated questions**

As it can be expected with children at this age, there were very few question that were initiated by the questions. Learners initiated questions, the researcher noted that learners

were often seen to be actively commenting on their experience. The bar graph shows that there were 'no' learner-initiated questions for 88% of the time that was spent in the school.

#### 9.2.7 Teacher-led questions

The bar graph reveals that there were some lessons that were observed where both teachers did not ask their learners questions. The researcher indicated that on such sessions the teacher would be more focused on instructional direction and/or task continuity and/or announcements. It has already been mentioned that there were instances where teacher led the class in choral recitations and drilling. The graph shows that there were 'much' teacher led questions for 25% of the time and 'little' teacher-led

### 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

#### 10.1 The role of the teacher-aides

There were a number of instances where the researcher reported teacher aides being used in some lesson during T2. Only Mrs. Jollands made use of her teacher aide during this session. In both cases where she was used, the teacher aide played a supervisory role. This was where the teacher wanted to focus on a small group of learners while the rest were engaged in some other activities.

#### 10.2 Classroom attendance

On Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October and Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> October were Hindu cultural holidays Diwali. On these days Hindu children, did not come to school.

For Mrs. Jollands

The average attendance in this class over the five days was 20. The highest attendance was 29 learners (94%) and the lowest attendance was 13 learners (42%).

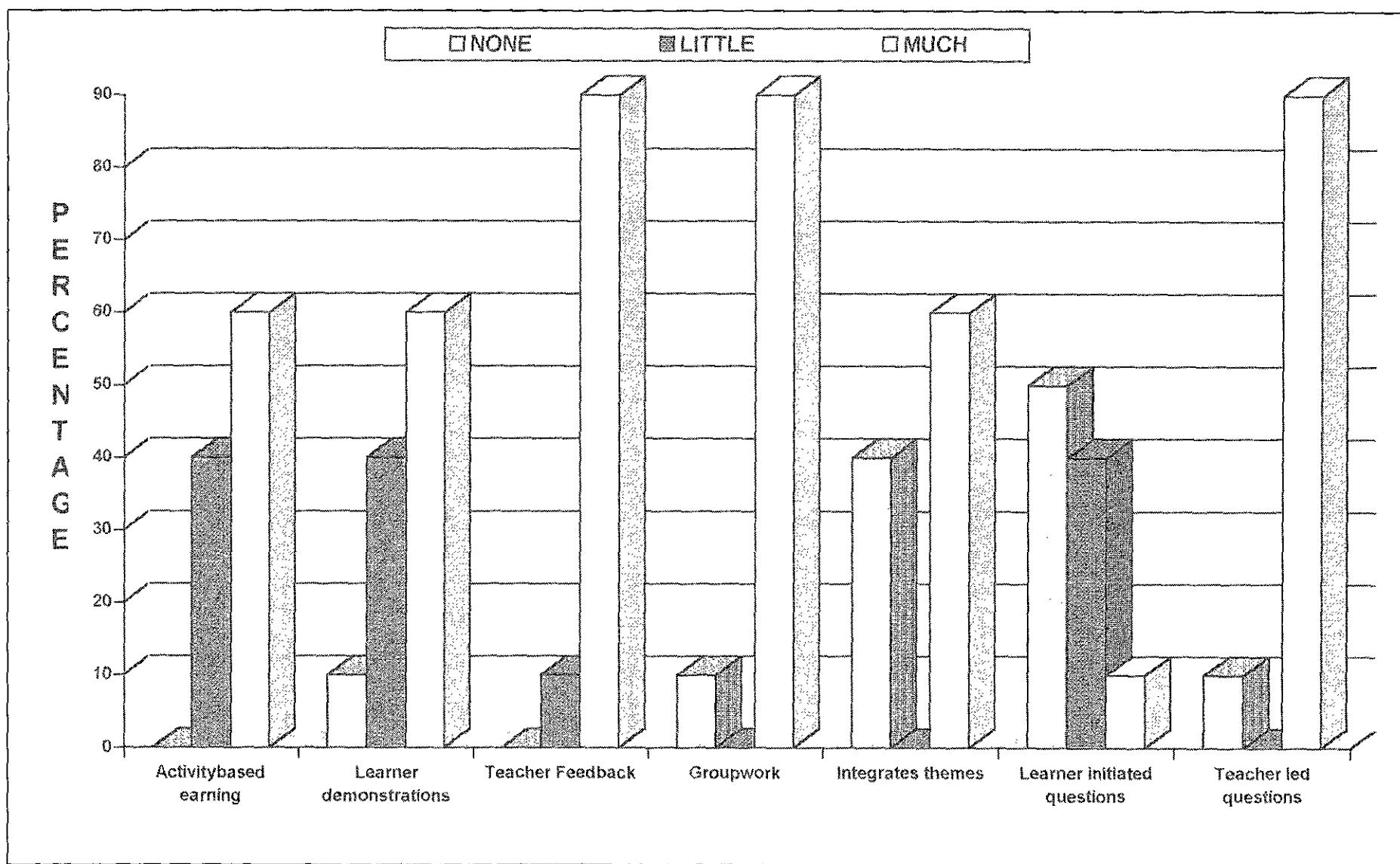
For Mrs. Tomlinson

The average attendance in Mrs. Tomlinson's Grade 1 class was 30. The highest attendance was 31 learners (100%) and the lowest attendance was 29 learners (94%).

### 10.3 Classroom observations.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY TYPE)**

### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was a decline in the amount of activity-based learning that took place during T2. There was 'much' activity-based learning for only 50% of the time compared to 100% of the time spent at the school during T1.

During T2 a guest speaker was invited to give a talk on bees to Grade 1 learners. What followed the talk was a very interesting and innovative discussions and activities that the teachers had planned. The learners were given opportunities to explore some of the experiences they had from this talk in their own discussions.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

There was a general decline with the amount of time that this activity was seen in T2 compared with how much of it was seen during T1. In T, the teachers were observed to provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate what they were learning for 100% of the duration of the observation session. Learners were provided 'much' opportunities to demonstrate what they learnt for 50% of the time during T2.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

Both teachers were seen to provide more individual feedback to the learners T2 compared to T1. During T1 the teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for about 50% of the time spent in the classroom observation compared to 90% over the same time spent in T2.

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

Group work organization changed over the two observation sessions T1 and T2. For example during T1 'much' group work was used in the classes for 25% of the observation time. In T2 in many lessons observed teachers used group work for different activities in the class. During this time T2 the teachers were noted to use 'much' group work for 90% of the time.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

There was a very small difference in the way this indicator was noted between the two observation sessions. For example during T1 'much' integration of different learning field was noted for 50% of the time spent in the school compared to 60% of the time that was observed during T2.

### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

There was a very sharp contrast in the two observation sessions on this category. During T1 'no' learner-initiated questions were observed in 88% of the time. During T2 there were no learner-initiated questions noted for 50% of the time. There were little learner-initiated questions for 40% of the time and 'much' learner-initiated questions for only 10% of the time.

### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

A surprising feature that is noted in this school is the amount of times that there are no teacher-led questions over both T1 and T2. There were no teacher led questions for 13% of the time during T1 compared to 10% of the time during T2. There were 'much' teacher-led questions for 90% of the time during T2 compared to 25% of the time during T1.

## 11. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The teachers are well qualified and experienced. They both say that they have received training in OBE, but they are not happy with it. Both teachers have developed their own OBE materials. They both had a low opinion with regard to the OBE training that they received both saying that they did not find it useful for them. One teacher indicated that she has always held the opinion that there was nothing new with OBE as they have been trained that way during their teacher training.
2. Both teachers said that they continued teaching using the traditional approach as well as following some suggestions in the OBE documentation. They said that there were some basic skills that learners need to acquire in order to do OBE. They were still teaching this to their learners. They suggested the old teaching approaches should not be discarded, as there were some very valuable things that could still be learnt from them.
3. Some of the concerns that teachers gave with regard to OBE training were that there was too much news jargon confusing that teachers in the school had to cope with. They felt that this could be simplified so that it could be accessible to the teachers. The teachers said that they found OBE to be time consuming in preparation and the amount of assessment that is expected from teachers. They felt that if this could be reduced that would make their work easier.

4. The two teachers feel that Grade 1 children are not ready for OBE when they come to school at the beginning of the year.
5. Both sets of classroom observation revealed that both teachers do indeed practice OBE.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
UMHLATHUZANA PRIMARY SCHOOL (4)

CHATSWORTH KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Umhlathuzana Primary School is found in Chatsworth near Durban City in the KwaZulu Natal Province. This school is an ex-House of Delegates (HoD) school. Most of the children in the school are of Indian descent. There are also isiZulu-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking children come to school here. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the second criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a less well resourced school, e.g., a moderately resourced Indian school in Chatsworth area".

## 2, SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the last week of May (observation session T1) and in the first week October of 1998 for duration of a week (observation session T2). On each observation session researcher spend five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation sessions would therefore pick up any changes in practice that the teachers would show. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted on each teacher.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. Both these instruments were completed by the researcher.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Umhlathuzana Primary School is a single shift school providing Grade 1-7. There are 436 learners in the school. There are 228 or 52% male learners and 208 or 48% are female learners in the school. The languages that are spoken by most learners are English. The language of instruction in the school is English.

According to the principal there are one Grade 1 class and one Grade 1 teacher in this school. There are 45 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There are no teacher-aides in the school.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

According to the principal the some classrooms need minor repairs. The acting principal said that the school has a staff-room and a storeroom, both are in good condition.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The following facilities are available in the school: a telephone, a fax machine, a photocopying machine and a sports field. All these facilities are in good condition. There is no mains electricity power supply and running water.

### **6. SCHOOL RESOURCES**

#### **6.1 For Learners**

According to the principal about 60-79% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

## 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Govender's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that were found in Mrs. Govender's Grade 1

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. GOVENDER'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | The teacher argues that there is no sufficient space to arrange desks in groups. |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    | See above  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |  |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    | Reasonable   |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |  |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |  |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |  |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |  |

The researcher indicated that there is large variety of 'traditional' readers: Hayway Series, Beacon Series.

There is a little carpeted nook at the back of the class, 3m x 3m area. Children are moved at different times in a day to this corner and teaching and learning takes place from there. Cluttered but it would seem as if the children are not concerned with 'personal space'.

The researcher indicated that there is adequate supply of resources. 6.3 OBE resources

### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Govender

Table 2 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Govender

**TABLE 2: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Govender said that there were OBE materials that were developed in the school. She said that there were some materials that she developed individually as well as those developed by group of teachers and those that she developed with the assistance of school management. She said that there were some OBE materials that she developed through the assistance of the Department of Education and other that she developed with the assistance of a teachers' union.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHER IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Govender

Mrs. Govender is between 31-40 years old. She has an overall teaching experience of 12 years. She has taught at Umhlathuzana Primary School for six years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for twelve years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Diploma (PTD) in 1970.

Mrs. Govender says that she has attended a two-day Principle/notions of OBE INSET training course offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. Mrs. Govender said that she did not find this INSET course useful. She stated that she is not competent and confident to teach OBE. She said that she requires more training in OBE. She said that she did not value the OBE training that she has received.

During T1 the researcher noted that Mrs. Govender was still unpacking what OBE was all about.

## 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Govender.

Table 4 shows how Mrs. Govender compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 3: HOW MRS GOVENDER COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Govender said that she uses both methods, she has not radically changed her approach especially with respect to numeracy and formal writing (traditional approach). She says that she uses OBE materials in an ad hoc way.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE

Mrs. Govender

The only interview transcript that I found was that for post T2 interview. All the responses in this summary will refer to this document.

#### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

The question about the teachers' understanding of OBE was not directly asked. The teacher indicated that OBE was a brilliant idea. She saw it as ideal for junior primary level. She said that it lends itself to junior primary. It allowed for a great degree of flexibility.

8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE? No reference was made to this regard.

8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Govender said that her learners were more involved in the lesson, there was greater participation leading to more practical lessons, more demonstrations. She said that she measured success in terms of combining old and new methods at different stages in a lesson.

8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Mrs. Govender pointed out that what she saw as an obstacle towards her implementation of OBE in her Grade 1 classroom was that she has to teach rather than to facilitate in her classes because of the large number of learners in her class. She says that because of this severe situation it is impossible to form social groups in the class. She said that she also has problems with arranging furniture in this large class.

She says that her 'Black' learners have language-related problems in the class. As a result of this language difficulty, these learners do not contribute in class discussions.

She says that some resources that were distributed to schools by the department arrived late at the school.

8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

There was no direct reference to this question.

8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Govender said that for OBE to work very successfully the government needs to reduce the class sizes. She also suggested that there should be more INSET workshops organized for teachers by the department. She felt that the department of Education must assist teachers in developing materials.

## 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T.

### 9.1 Learners attendance

For Mrs. Govender

The enrolment of learners in Mrs Govender's Grade 1 class was 45 learners, 1 White, two Coloureds, six Blacks and 36 Indians. The average attendance was 44 learners. In four out of five days the attendance was 100%.

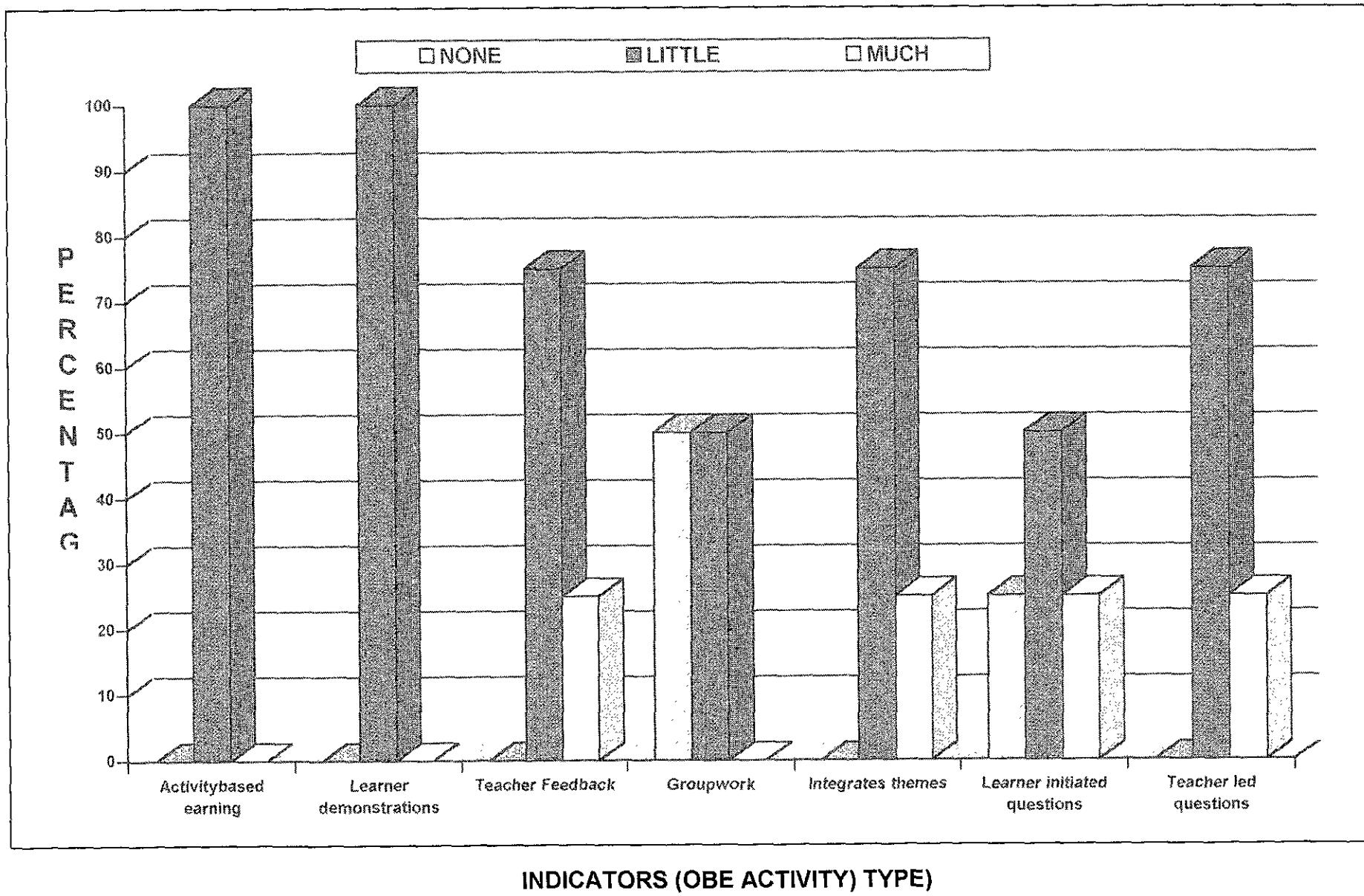
### 9.2 Classroom Observations

All the five days that were targeted for T1 classroom observations were completed. A day was lost because the teacher was on study leave. On this day a parent came to supervise the class. The head of department prepared the tasks that the learners performed on this day.

The teacher admitted to the researcher that she was not following OBE in her class. The researcher noted an African child who was scribbling on an old tattered page. She says that this learner did not understand a word of English and yet the teacher ignored her completely. Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

The bar graph reveals that for most of the sessions that were observed there was very little OBE that was taking place.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'little' activity-based learning that was observed 100% of the time spent on classroom observations. The researcher noted that the teacher was most of the time deliberately teaching her lessons, scribbling some words separately for learners on the board.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'little' opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt for all of the lessons observed. From the description given above one would note that if the teacher is teaching slowly and deliberately it would be difficult of him to give learners opportunities to demonstrate what they learn.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The researcher noted that the teacher assessed learners using the traditional techniques of assessment. She said that there was no individual/group or peer evaluation in this classroom. She says that the teacher feels "inadequate" to implement new assessment techniques. The teacher sees it as an impossible task for 45 learners.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

As stated, most of the teaching was teacher-centred. The teachers used 'little' groups work in all the lessons that were observed. In one attempt that the teacher attempted to use group work she could not continue because the noise level rose and the learners were unable to work in groups.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

This teacher tried to integrate different learning fields through the theme 'messages'. But ended teaching isolated subject. The teachers could not draw links to the different areas.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

There were 'much' learners-initiated questions were noted in 25% of the lessons that were observed in the school. The researcher did not reveal the nature of these questions that were asked by the learners.

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

There were 'much' teacher-led questions for about 25% of the time that was observed. In the remaining time, about 75% of the time the teacher asked 'little' teacher-led questions. This is not surprising bearing in mind that the teacher 'taught' in most of the lessons that were observed.

## 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

### 10.1 Classroom attendance

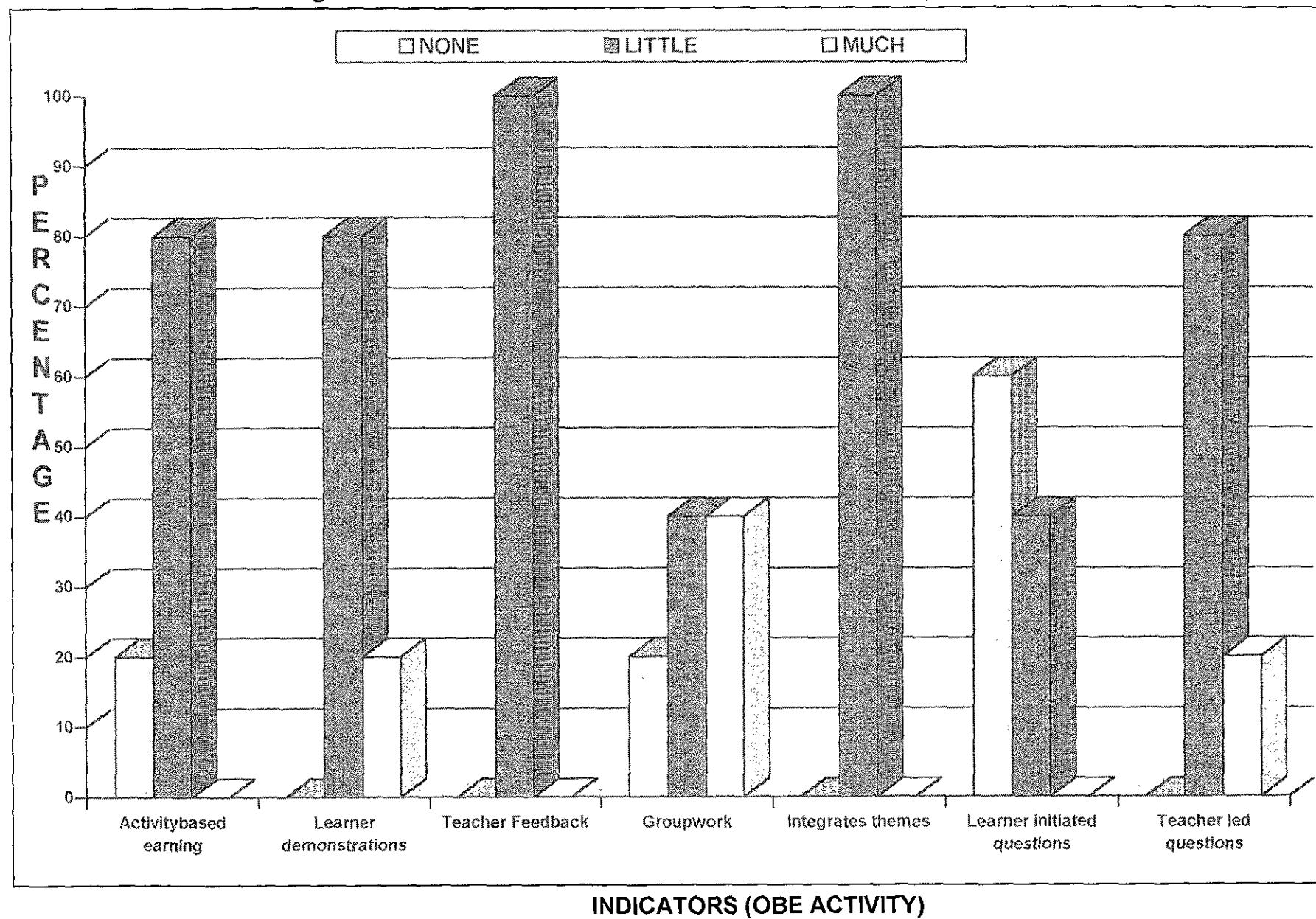
For Mrs Govender

The attendance of learners in Mrs. Govender's Grade 1 was 100%. There were 43 learners this term unlike during T1 where there were 45 learners. It appears that there was a drop of two learners.

### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



There were other distractors in the classroom, e.g., the head count of children by personnel from the department, collection of money for photographs for a cultural function, Diwali.

The bar graph reveals that there is no significant difference in the pattern for the two graphs. In both graphs what immediately would catch the eye of an observer's the heights of the bar representing 'little'. This signifies the fact that there was a 'little' of most activities.

#### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

In both T1 and T2 there was 'little' activity based learning that were witnessed 80% of the times in T2. Teacher 'teaching' rather than facilitating was still the dominant part of the lesson. There were some reading activities, where learners worked with some paper cuttings in groups. But choral phonic responses were still heard.

#### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again 'little of this category was noted by the researcher.

#### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teacher gave learners 'little' feedback in all the lessons that were observed. The researcher did not provide the nature of this feed back.

#### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

The researcher indicated that the teacher used 'little' groupwork in her class. In some of her classes she grouped children according to their ability. In one such organization the teacher gave different groups different set of reading to work with. She indicated that other groups continued with self-activities while the teacher monitored group work.

#### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

The teacher was seen to integrate different learning fields a 'little' for 100% of the time.

#### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

The same pattern emerges in both T1 and T2. In both cases this was the least noted activity that was noted in the classroom.

### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 there were 'much' teacher-led questions in all lessons that were observed. This was expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

## 11. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. Most of the learners come from very poor home background. Many do not have the necessary material that they need for learning all subjects. Parents are very poor and uneducated. They are not cooperative with the teachers.
2. Both teachers are well qualified with a very modest experienced. Both have extensively attended OBE INSET courses. They both highly value the OBE INSET course that they have attended.
3. Both teachers acknowledge that their teaching methods have changed since the introduction of OBE. They both say that their teaching is now learner centered.
4. The school has acquired all the OBE materials it expected from the government. Both teachers said that they have prepared their own OBE materials to complement what they have received from the government.
5. Both teachers were observed to be practicing OBE. The research had a very high regard with what she saw the teachers do in their classrooms.
6. The teachers would like to edge the governments to fulfill their promises of giving merits to teachers who perform very well. They would also like to advice the government to retrain teacher for OBE in INSET courses.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
COEDMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL (5)

CHATSWORTH, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Coedmore Primary School is found in Chatsworth near Durban City in the KwaZulu Natal Province. This school is an ex-House of Delegates school. Most of the children in the school are of Indian descent. There are also Zulu speaking children coming to school here. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the second criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a less well resourced school, e.g., a moderately resourced Indian school in Chatsworth area".

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the second week of June (observation session T1) and in the second week October of 1998 for duration of a week (observation session T2). On each observation session researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation sessions would therefore pick up any changes in practice that the teachers would show. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this

instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted on each teacher.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. Both these instruments were completed by the researcher.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Coedmore Primary School is a single shift school providing Grade 1-7. There are 581 learners in the school. There are 297 or 51 % male learners and 284 or 49% are female learners in the school. The languages that are spoken by most learners are English and Zulu, The language of instruction in the school is English.

According to the principal there are two Grade 1 classes and two Grade one teachers in this school. There are 94 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There were no teacher-aides in the school.

### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS

According to the principal some classrooms needed minor repairs. The acting principal said that the school had a staff-room and a storeroom, both were in good condition.

### 5. SCHOOL FACILITIES

The following facilities are available in the school: a telephone, a fax machine, a photocopying machine, and a sports field. All these facilities are in good condition. There is no mains electricity power supply and running water.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the principal about 60-79% of the learners had all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

### 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

#### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Singh's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Singh's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. SINGH'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment |
|--|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |                     |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |                     |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                     |

The researcher indicated that there is adequate supply of resources.

Table 2 shows classroom resources found in Mrs. Reddy's classroom.

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS REDDY'S GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment |
|--|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |                     |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |                     |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     |    |                     |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                     |

The researcher indicated that there is adequate supply of resources in Mrs. Reddy's classroom.

### 6.3 OBE resources

#### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Singh

Table 3 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Singh

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  |          |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  |          |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides |          |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        |          |    |

Mrs. Singh said that there were OBE materials that were developed in the school. She said that there were some materials that she developed individually and those that she developed with the assistance of school management. She said that there were some OBE materials that she developed through the assistance of the Department of Education.

Table 4 shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Reddy.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. REDDY**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  |          | ✓  |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  |          | ✓  |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides |          | ✓  |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        |          | ✓  |

Mrs. Reddy said that there were OBE materials that were developed in the school. She said that there were some materials that she developed individually and others that she developed with the assistance of school management. She said that there were some OBE materials that she developed through the assistance of the Department of Education.

## PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Singh

Mrs. Singh is between 31-40 years old. She has an overall teaching experience of eleven years. She has taught at Coedmore Primary School for nine years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for eleven years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Diploma (PTD) in 1970.

Mrs. Singh says that she has attended a two-day Principle/notions of OBE INSET training course offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. Mrs. Singh said that she did not find this INSET course useful. She stated that she was not competent and confident to teach OBE. She said that she required more training in OBE. She said that she did not value the OBE training that she received.

### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Reddy

Mrs. Reddy is aged between over 40 years old. She has twenty years teaching experience particular in Grade 1. She has taught in Coedmore Primary School for ten years. She completed her a Primary Teacher's Diploma in the 1960s.

Mrs. Reddy said that she attended a two-day Principles/Theory of OBE INSET training course offered by the KZN Department of Education. Mrs. Reddy said that she did not find the INSET courses useful. She indicated that she was not confident and competent to teach

OBE. She stated that she needed more training in OBE. She said that she did not value the training she obtained in OBE.

## 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Singh.

Table 4 shows how Mrs. Singh compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 4: HOW MRS SINGH COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Singh said that her teaching had not changed much since the introduction of OBE. She says that the introduction of OBE has not impacted significantly on what she does day to day.

### 7.2.2 For Mrs. Reddy

Table 5 shows how Mrs. Reddy compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 5: HOW MRS REDDY COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity –based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Reddy said that she compromises on both approaches, the OBE and the traditional approaches are blended to give her the opportunity to extend her thinking on lesson planning and practice.

#### TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

The only interview transcript that I found was that for post T2 interview. All the responses in this summary will refer to this document

##### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE (Mrs. Singh)

###### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

The question about the teachers' understanding of OBE was not directly asked. When asked to explain some of her achievements since the implementation of OBE Mrs. Singh said that she saw OBE as a curriculum that required teachers to be very creative. The teachers should have realized that even simplest resources could be useful.

###### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

No reference was made to this regard.

###### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Singh found OBE approach to be very exciting. She said that she had started to enjoy it in spite of all the odds that they faced in the school.

#### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Mrs. Singh pointed out that managing large class was an obstacle towards her implementation of OBE in her Grade 1 classroom. She said that having 46 learners in her class was not an ideal situation.

#### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners? There was no direct reference to this question.

#### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Singh said that she would advise the government to develop programme organizers workshops that are practical to demonstrate the effectiveness of the project (OBE).

For Mrs. Reddy

There was no post T1 interview transcript. All information on this section was obtained from post T2 interview for Mrs. Reddy.

#### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

This was not referred to in the transcript. Mrs. Reddy said that she saw OBE as a superb and ideal approach. Her only concern was that the implementation of it was problematic.

#### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

This was not referred to in the transcript.

#### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Reddy indicated one of the main successes with the OBE approach was that emphasis was on creative, co-operative and active learning. Pupils were more involved in self-discovery and plenty of problem solving. She advised that prior learning should be connected to existing knowledge of the learner. She recommended that traditional methods should be reviewed and re-evaluated and not

#### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

Mrs. Reddy pointed out that her obstacles in implementing OBE in her Grade 1 classroom were the following: (a) coping with large numbers of learners which led to discipline problems during activity periods. (b) coping with multi-grade classes. (c) insufficient support materials, e.g., scissors, paste, etc. and (d) visiting specialist teachers and disruptions resulting with lack of continuity.

#### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Not in this interviewed.

#### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Reddy gave the following advice to the Government:

- (a) Classes should be made smaller and easily manageable;
- (b) Insufficient support materials should be looked into;
- (c) Assessment - recording should be minimized;
- (d) Greater parent participation is required; and
- (e) Teachers should be granted time to work as a team to share ideas and compare their resources so that they feel confident and motivated when they enter the classroom.

### A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

#### 9.1 Learners attendance (For Mrs. Singh)

The enrolment of learners in Mrs Singh's Grade 1 class was 48 learners. The average attendance was 48 learners. Attendance in all Mrs Singh lessons was 100%.

For Mrs. Reddy

The enrolment in Mrs Reddy's Grade 1 class was 46 learners. Again attendance in all the days during T1 was 100%.

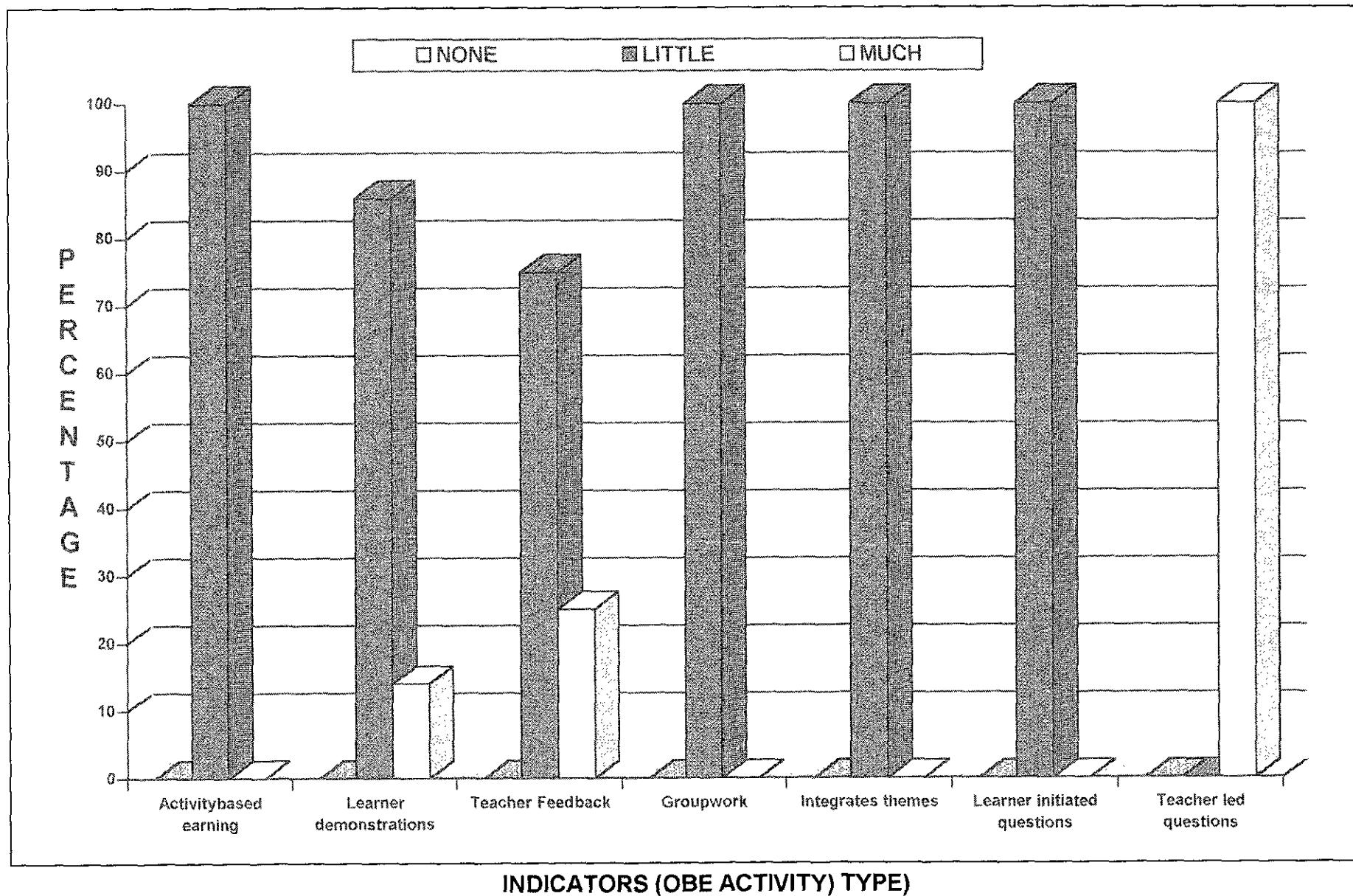
## 9.2 Classroom Observations

Mrs. Reddy was absent from school for two consecutive days. In her absence a parent supervised the class.

All the lessons that were observed were conducted in English.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



The bar graph shows that on each of the six categories, with the exception of 'teacher-led questions' there was 'little' of each category seen in 75% or more of the times spent in the two classrooms. It was only in the 'teacher-led questions' where 'much' of the activity indicator was 100% of the time spent in the classrooms.

The researcher noted that most of the teaching going on in the classrooms was mainly teacher-centred. She also commented on the noise level and the amount of singing that was going on outside the classrooms.

#### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'little' activity-based learning observed over 100% of the time spent on classroom observations. The researcher observed formal teaching taking place a number of times in the classrooms. In one instance the teacher commented that what she saw was not OBE.

#### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'little' opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt for all of the lessons observed. This could be expected, as there was more 'formal' teaching that took place in both classrooms.

#### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teachers were observed to provide 'little' feedback for 100% of the time during observation.

#### 9.3.4 Students organized in- groups

The researcher noted that although learners were mostly arranged in groups around desks, there was very little group dynamics noted. Most of the time the learners worked individually in the class. The bar graph shows that both teachers were observed to use 'little' group work for 100% the time that was spent in the classroom during T1.

#### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

There was 'little integration of different learning fields noted for 100% of the time. Both teachers often taught different subjects in isolation.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

This was the least observed category in both classes. There was 'Little' learner-initiated questions noted in all lessons.

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

This was the only feature that dominated the class. 'Much' teacher led questions was seen in all the classes that were observed.

## CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

### 10.1 Classroom attendance

For Mrs Singh

The average attendance Mrs. Singh's Grade 1 classroom was 46 learners. This figure was the same throughout T2.

For Mrs Reddy

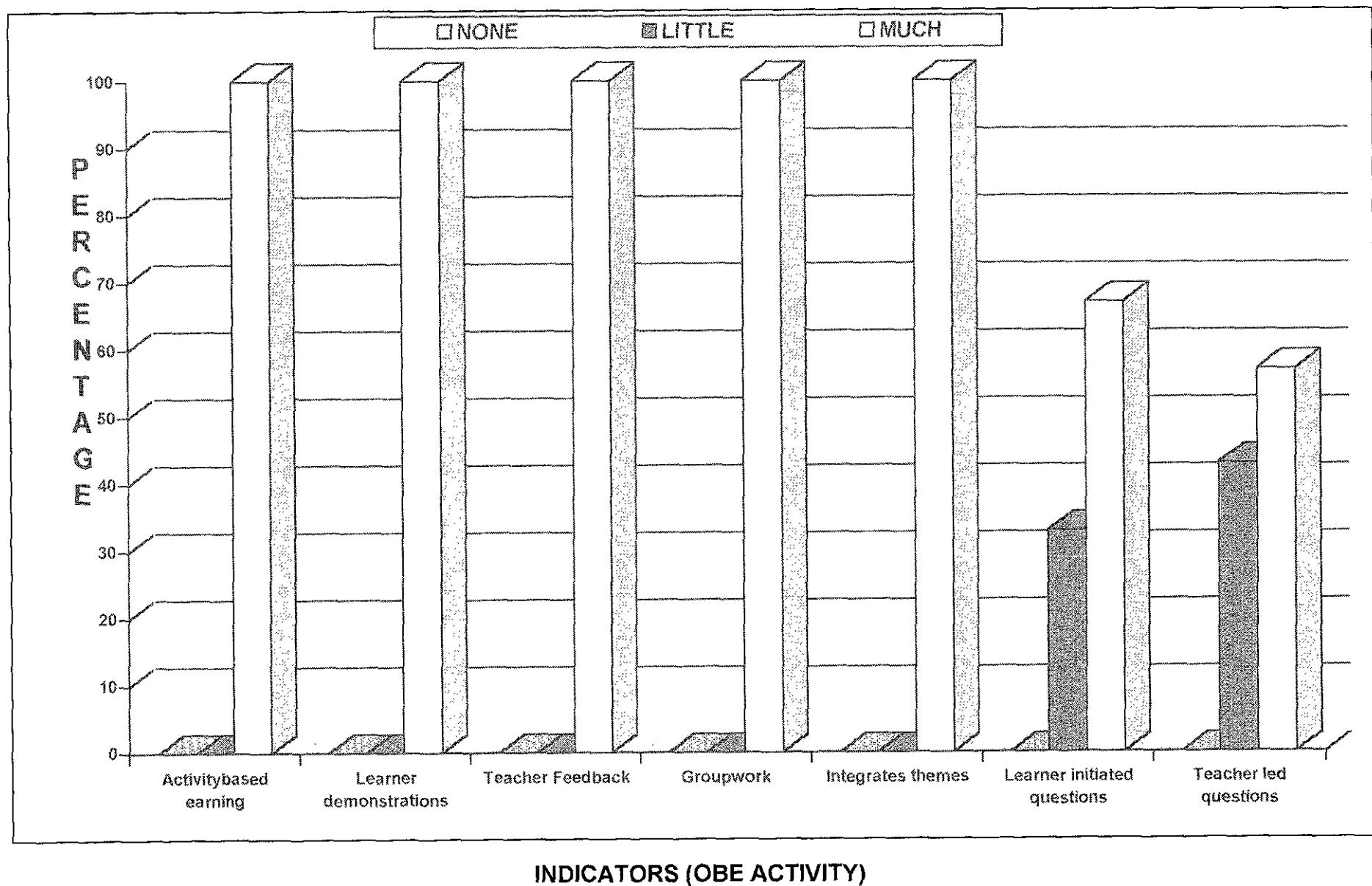
The average attendance in Mrs Reddy's class was 46. As in Mrs. Singh class attendance (46) remained stable.

### 10.2 Classroom observations

There was a sharp contrast in what the researcher observed during T2 from what she saw during T1. All the indicators of OBE were suddenly witnessed in all lessons that were observed in both classrooms. For example, both teachers based their lessons on the theme 'food'. The teachers developed different types of activities, e.g., group work, use of paper and magazine cuttings and pasting for different lessons that she took during T2. One of the comments that the researcher made about what she observed read "OBE all the way!" Another one read "My first experience of learner based activity - where learners are given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn".

According to the researcher both teachers were well prepared and organized for their lessons. Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

'Much' activity-based learning was noted in all the lessons that were observed during T2. The teachers prepared activities that were exciting to learners. The teachers made use of different activities, such as discussions, paper cutting and pasting and reporting back to the rest of the class in the lessons. The researcher cited a situation where learners performed an activity that aided the learners to counts in threes leading to times three (3X) multiplication. She commented that in this way children learn to count rhythmically without any suggestion of tables.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Both teachers gave learners 'much' opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt. As I indicated earlier the researcher remarked that this was her first time to see the teachers providing learners with opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt. Learners demonstrated what they had learnt both as groups and individually.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teachers were observed to provide learners with 'much' individual feedback in all the lessons that were observed during T2.

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

Both teachers were seen to use 'much' group work in all lessons that were observed during T2. The researcher indicated one teacher successfully broke down learners in to social groups that worked co-operatively. There were some disputes about the roles that were to be played by individual members but these were resolved amicably. She indicated that sometimes the class would be noisy, but most of this was not a problem since most learners would be on task.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

'Much' integration of different learning field was noted for 100% of the time spent in the school during T2. The theme 'food' was used to teach different learning field. For example the concept of fractions was introduced by use of cones, sweets and chips. The teacher then used paper cuttings, requesting learners to paste these onto a pyramid drawn leading towards a life skill lesson.

### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

This was the least seen item in all the classes during T2. 'Much' learner initiated were observed being asked for 75% and 'little' learner-initiated questions were heard for 25% of the time spent at school.

### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 this was there was 'much' teachers led questions in all the lessons that were observed. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

## SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. Both teachers are well qualified and experienced. Both have received some training in OBE, which they did not have a very high regard of. Both teachers said that they did not receive most of the OBE resource materials they expected from the government. Both teachers prepared their own materials.
2. The teachers blend traditional teaching with the OBE approach. One teacher said that there was not much difference with the way she used to teach in before.
3. The teachers say that they see OBE as an approach that incorporates creative, cooperative and active learning. One described it as a superb and ideal approach.
4. The teachers felt that the learners were more excited by the OBE approach.
5. During T1 the teachers were not practicing OBE. This changed drastically in T2. The researcher was very pleased and excited with what she saw.
6. Teachers advise the department to retrain teachers in OBE. The department must also supply school with OBE resources. Parents must be encouraged to participate directly in schools.

A SUMMARY OF THE OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM  
UMQONGQOTHO PRIMARY SCHOOL (6)

VULINDELAL, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Umqongqotho is an ex-Department of Education and Culture primary school situated in Vulindlela West, KwaZulu Natal. The school was selected as rural school.

This primary school has classes ranging from grade 1 to grade 4. The school has a total number of 590 pupils including 201 grade 1 pupils. There are 5 grade 1 classrooms and 5 grade 1 teachers. The school has no teacher aids. Most learners in the school are Zulu speaking.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Data in this school was collected in two phases: phase 1 in May 1998 and phase 2 in August 1998. Two teachers were observed for a period of 5 days per phase.

One instruments, viz., Instrument A (School Profile) were completed by the Principal, two instruments B (Teachers Characteristics Profile) and D (Teachers Questionnaire) were completed by the teachers. Instrument C; the Researcher completed (Classroom Resources Profile) and instrument F, (classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument C was completed per observed lesson. At the end of the each week an interview was conducted with each teacher. All data was captured on SPSS for analysis.

## 3. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

According to the principal, some classrooms need major repairs. The school has no telephone, store room, running water, electricity supply and no staff room. The school does not have the sport field and the swimming pool. The school is an example of the typical rural school.

## 4. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 4.1. For grade 1 class

According to the acting principal about 80-90% learners had all required learning materials in all school subjects.

The researcher observed the following:

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Mahlaba)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate places                                | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      |     | ✓  |                     |
| 4. Table for the teacher                                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 5. Adequate lighting in the classroom                         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 6. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 7. There are charts displayed in the wall                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 8. Walls are painted and well maintained                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 9. There is ventilation                                       |     | ✓  |                     |
| 10. Classroom is adequately roofed                            | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | ✓   |    |                     |
| 12. Chalkboard available                                      | ✓   |    |                     |

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Miss Dladla)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment |
|---|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate places                                | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | ✓   |    |                     |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks         |     | ✓  |                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed in the wall                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 8. There is ventilation                                       | ✓   |    |                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                             | ✓   |    |                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Chalkboard available                                      | ✓   |    |                     |

#### 4.2. Resources to teach OBE

According to the teachers the school received the following OBE material from the department of education:

TABLE 3: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Miss Dladla)

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | ✓   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with Teachers Guide      | ✓   |    |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides | ✓   |    |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  | ✓   |    |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             | ✓   |    |

TABLE 4: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Mahlaba)

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | ✓   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with Teachers Guide      | ✓   |    |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides | ✓   |    |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  | ✓   |    |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             | ✓   |    |

According to both teachers, they (as teachers) individually developed OBE materials.

#### 5. TEACHER PROFILES

##### 5.1. Ms Dladla

Miss Dladla is a female teacher between the 26-30yrs. She has been a teacher at this school for six years. She has taught grade 1 for four years.

In 1992 Ms Dladla completed a Junior Primary Teachers Diploma and in a Further Diploma in Education in 1997. She attended one five-day workshop on OBE and found it to be useful. Ms Dladla described herself as competent in OBE but uncertain about her confidence. She highly valued the training she received on OBE though she needed more training.

## 101.2. Mrs. Mahlaba

Mrs. Mahlaba is a female ranging in between 31-40 years. She has been teaching for the past 17 years. She has been teaching Grade 1 for 13 years at this school.

She completed her Primary Teachers Certificate in 1980 and is currently doing Senior Primary Teachers Diploma (SPTD). She also attended the five-day workshop offered by the Department of Education, which she found useful.

Mrs. Mahlaba was lacking confidence and not competent regarding OBE teaching. She approved the training received, but still needed more training.

## 6. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

Teachers were given a teacher questionnaire (instrument F) to fill. This gave the researcher information about teacher's changes in the teaching strategies from 1997 to 1998.

**TABLE 5: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (MRS MAHLABA)**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | more than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | X          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  | X          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | X                 |
| 4. Student- initiated questions                | X          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity based learning                     |            |                   | X                 |
| 6. Team work                                   |            |                   | X                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | X                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | X                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | X                 |

**TABLE 6: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (Miss Dladla)**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | more than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | X          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | X                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | X                 |
| 4. Student- initiated questions                | X          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity based learning                     |            |                   | X                 |
| 6. Team work                                   |            |                   | X                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | X                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | X                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | X                 |

## 102.1. Mrs. Mahlaba

### 6.1.1. Do the teacher believe they practice OBE?

Mrs. Mahlaba believed that she did practice OBE in her teaching without clear understanding and sufficient resources in the school. The lack of resources hindered them in doing things they want. But she said OBE was easy to follow and with the needed materials they could make it.

### 6.1.2. What has changed?

Nothing much had changed. Basically the teacher compared OBE to theme teaching. She drew similarities in the two methods, like group work and integration. But changes were the following: teachers no longer have a timetable, they are free to teach what they want to teach whenever they want it. There is no timetable to tie one down. And the assessment has changed.

### 6.1.3. What are the main successes with OBE?

Active participation of learners and involvement of learner were the success in OBE.

### 6.1.4. What do you see as the obstacle/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

Basically the teacher saw the environment as the limitation. That means that if you came from pre-school there were better chances for you to adjust easily as far as OBE was concerned. The teacher also saw teaching vowels as an obstacle, because you had to switch to the old method.

Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

The teacher thought OBE was appropriate for grade 1 learners and suggested a link between home and school in cases where the learner encounters difficulty with learning.

### 6.1.5. What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Photocopying machine for making interesting lessons.

6.1.6. If you had one important piece of advice to the Department of Education, what would this be?

The teacher's advice was based on resources. She mentioned that teachers in urban areas received more resources than in rural areas. Therefore she suggested equal distribution of resources to both urban and rural schools.

## 6.2. Miss Dladla

### 6.2.1. Do the teachers believe they practice OBE?

Ms Dladla also believed that she was practicing OBE. This is because she integrated different themes.

### 6.2.2. What specifically has changed?

The teacher did less talking, and allowed learners to participate and initiate activities to be done in class. She was a facilitator not a teacher.

### 6.2.3. What specifically has not changed?

Learners were not completely geared for the change. They were still expecting the teacher to do more for them.

### 6.2.4. What are the main successes with OBE?

Team teaching, cooperative planning of teachers, flexibility (as compared to being forced to do things from the official documents), and the integration of the learning areas. Learners were more spontaneous; they had developed initiative skills and many other skills.

6.2.5. What do you see as the obstacle/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

Learners got out of control, unruly. Some learners did not want to participate in the activities going on in class. This was also influenced by the fact that they would go to the next grade even if they did not master the needed skills.

6.2.6. Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

The teacher thought OBE was appropriate for grade 1 learners since it was real-life orientated and learners could adjust easily.

6.2.7. What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?  
Photocopying machines, stationery, videos, radios, etc.

6.2.8. If you had one important piece of advice to the Department of Education, what would this be?

They should have provided schools with resources before implementing OBE.

## 7. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

### 7.1. Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Data in this section was collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule with 7 indicators. Experienced senior researchers carefully identified these indicators for OBE after going through the OBE documentation and the policy document. The researcher per observation session completed this instrument. For rating used in the instrument please refer to the appendix.

## 9.2. General Classroom Observation

### 7.2.1. Classroom observation

FIGURE 1: GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION, PHASE 1: MS. DLADLA.

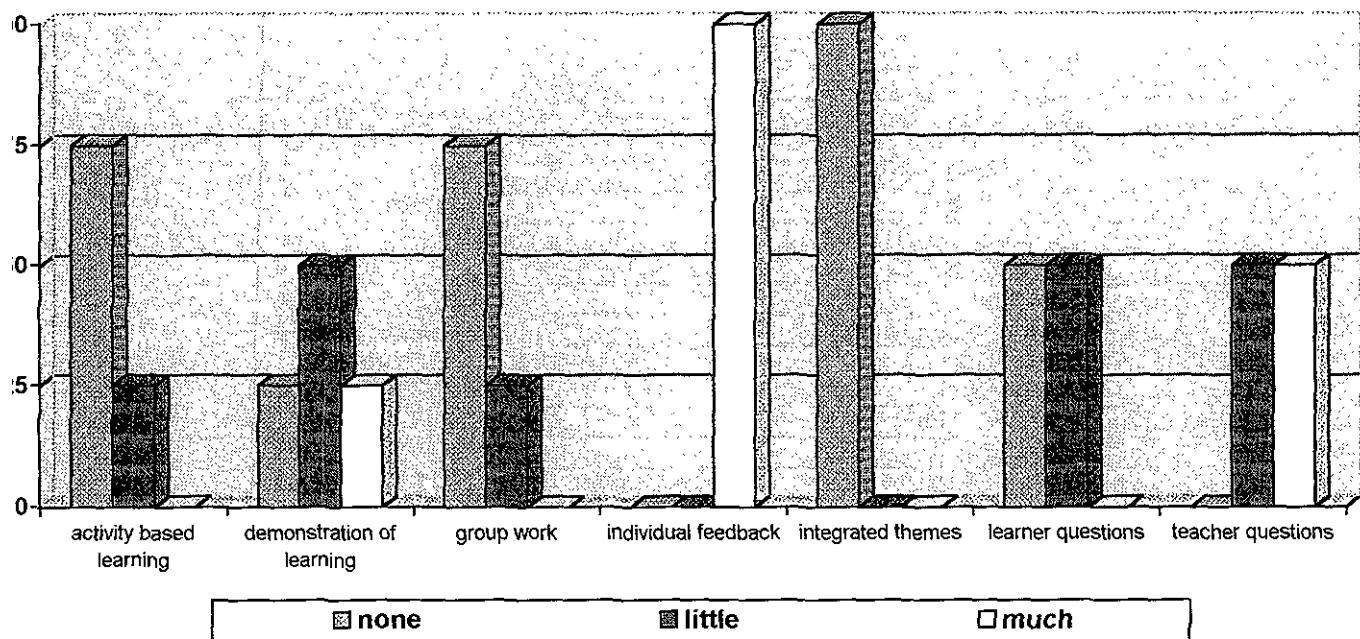
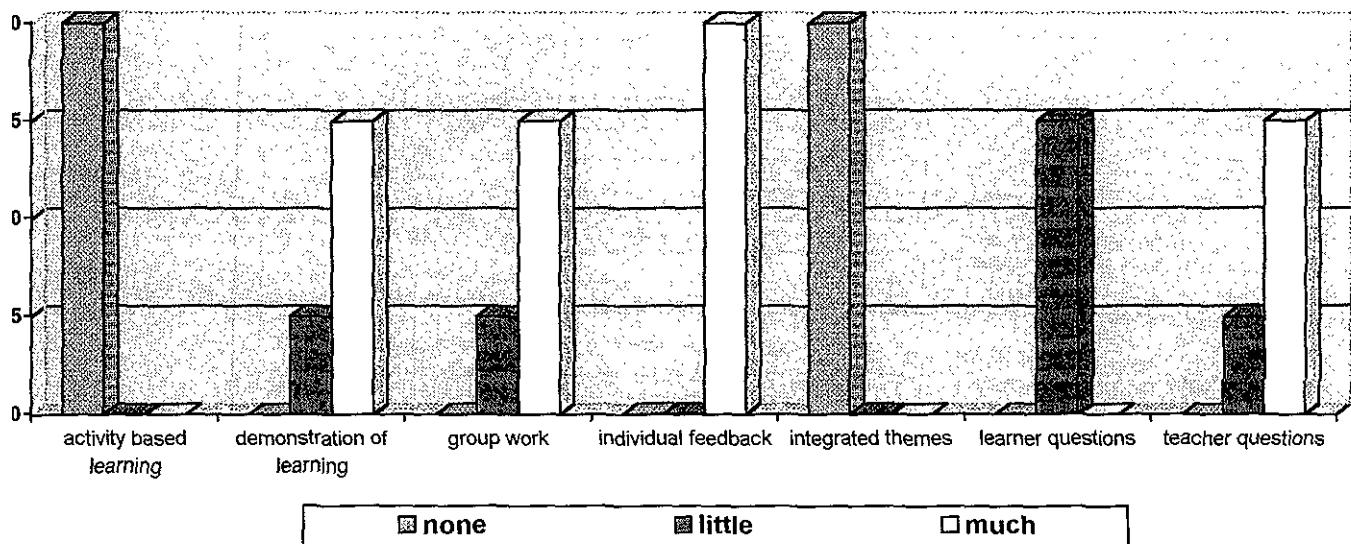
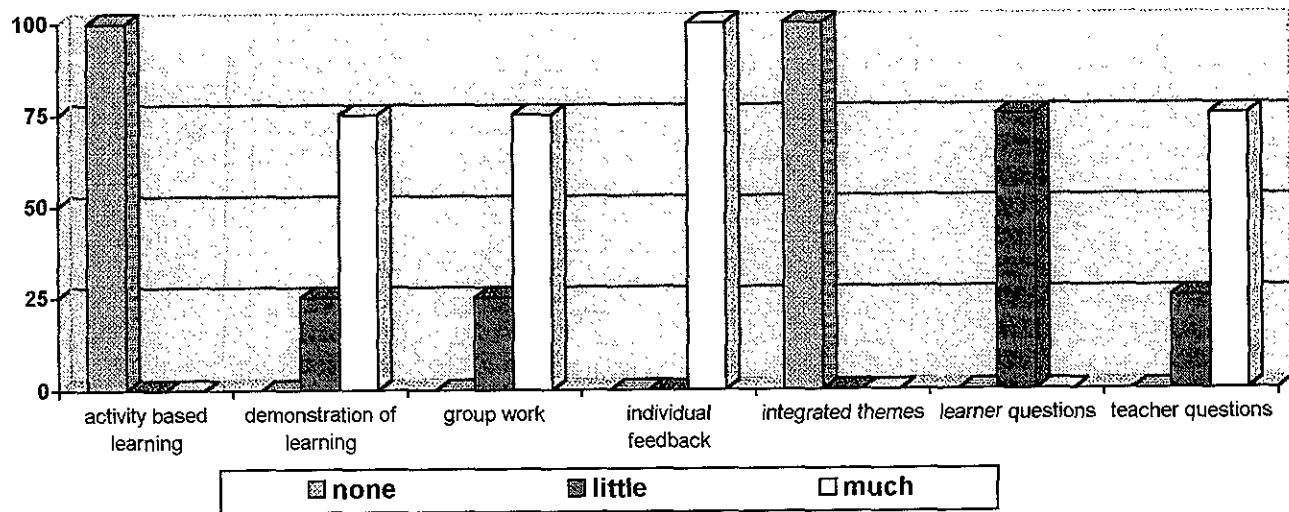


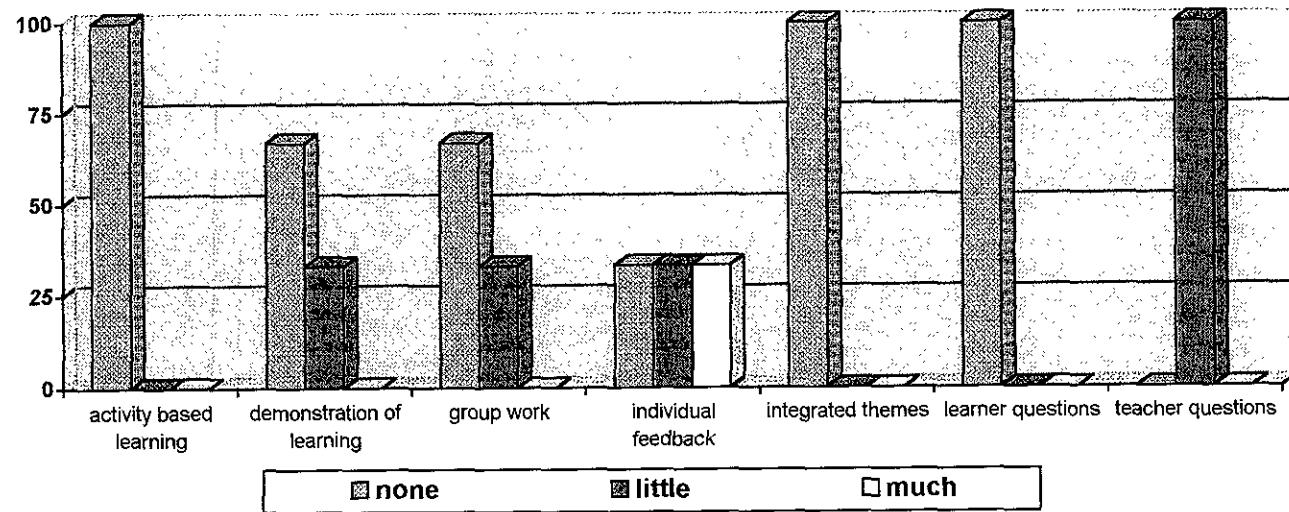
FIGURE 2: GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION, PHASE 2: MISS DLADLA



**FIGURE 3: GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION, PHASE 1: MRS MAHLABA**



**FIGURE 4: GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION, PHASE 2: MRS MAHLABA**



### Group work

These classes were observed to use little or no group work at all. The observation showed that 89.9% of the observed time, no group work was taking place in both the classes.

### **7.2.2. Learning is activity based**

Most of the time teacher used activity based learning in their classrooms. And in all lessons observed only 11.1 % of the time there was no activity based learning.

### **7.2.3. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas**

Teachers do integrate different themes. But the observation showed that 44.4% of the time there was no integration, 22.2% of the time there was little integration and 33.3% of the time much integration was observed.

### **9.3. Teacher led-questions**

Much of the time observed, teachers were the ones who asked more questions.

### **9.4. Learner led-questions**

Learners did not ask questions at all. But rather they were continuously making comments.

### **9.5. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback**

The teachers were not giving individual feedback except during the second phase where little feedback was given.

## **8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

There was no change between phase 1 and phase 2.

Both teachers were practicing OBE in spite of the resource limitations Both teachers implemented some activity-based learning.

Teachers worked together in the planning and implementation of OBE Teachers had some problems with:

- Assessment and
- Group work

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
ENDWEBU PRIMARY SCHOOL (7)

IXOPO, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Endwebu Primary School is a poorly resourced ex-KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture primary school. It is one of the schools, which was selected into the study because of the availability of personnel and proximity of the school.

There are over 1500 learners who come to school here. Most of these children come from very poor rural backgrounds. Most of the parents struggle to pay fees, and do not assist teachers with additional materials that they may require children to bring to their classes.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the last week of May (observation session T1) and in the third week September of 1998 for the duration of a week (observation session T2). At each observation session the researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation sessions would therefore pick up any changes in practice that the teachers would show. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this

instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted with each teacher.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Endwebu Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to 7. It is located in the Highflats Circuit of Ixopo District the KwaZulu-Natal Province. The enrolment in this school is 1661 with 861 (52%) male pupils and 800 (48%) female pupils. The home language of most pupils is isiZulu. The language of instruction is English.

According to the acting principal there are five Grade 1 classes in this school. There are 221 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There are five teachers who teach the five Grade 1 classes.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

Both the acting principal and the teachers indicated the buildings in the school are in a poor state. According to the acting principal the school needs complete rebuilding. The acting principal said that the school has a staff-room, but this is in a very poor state.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

There are no facilities available in the school. There is no mains electricity power supply and running water. The school does not have a telephone.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the principal about 40-59% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

### 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

#### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Mzizi's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Mzizi's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. MZIZI'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment |
|--|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              |     | ✓  |                     |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | No electricity      |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     |     | ✓  |                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     | ✓  |                     |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             |     | ✓  |                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                     |

The researcher pointed out that the teacher did not use her classroom during the observation sessions. She used a classroom that was still under construction. She indicated that this classroom was very poorly resourced.

There was no Classroom Resources Profile for Mrs. Mazibuko's classroom.

## 6.3 OBE resources

### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Mzizi

Table 2 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Mzizi

**TABLE 2: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   |          | ✓  |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Mzizi said that she has not developed any materials for her own OBE classes. Table shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Mazibuko.

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. MAZIBUKO**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   |          | ✓  |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Mazibuko said that she has not developed any materials for her own OBE classes.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Mzizi

Mrs. Mzizi is between 31-40 years of age. She has overall teaching experience of 12 years. She has taught at Endwebu Primary School for four years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for two years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Diploma in 1985 and her Higher Diploma in Education in 1996.

Mrs. Mzizi said that she attended a four-day Planning OBE INSET training course offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. Mrs. Mzizi said that she found this INSET

course useful. She stated that she was not competent and confident to teach OBE and that she required more training in OBE. She said that she highly valued the OBE training that she had received.

#### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Mazibuko

Mrs. Mazibuko is aged between 31-40 years. She has twelve years teaching experience. She has taught in Endwebu Primary School for six years. She has two years teaching experience at Grade 1 level. She completed her Primary Teacher's Certificate in 1981.

Mrs. Mazibuko says that she has attended a four-day Planning OBE INSET training course offered by the KZN Department of Education. Mrs. Mazibuko said that she found the INSET courses useful. She said that she needed more training in OBE.

#### 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

##### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Mzizi.

Table 3 shows how Mrs. Mzizi compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997).

**TABLE 3: HOW MRS MZIZI COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|   | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|---|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 10. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 11. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 12. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 13. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 14. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 15. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 16. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 17. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 18. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Mzizi said that this year her teaching had already changed. She said that she mainly guided her pupils rather than telling them about the subject matter. She said that she also assessed children as a whole, although it was not clear as to what she meant by this.

## 7.2.2 For Mrs. Mazibuko

Table 4 shows how Mrs. Mazibuko compared her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year. 1997.

**TABLE 4: HOW MRS MAZIBUKO COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity -based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Mazibuko pointed out that her teaching had changed because she could let her learners discover things for themselves, and allowed learners to help one another. She indicated that she no longer transmits knowledge to the learners but she guides and helps them.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE Mrs. Mzizi

#### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

There is no direct question asking the teacher to directly state her understanding of OBE. But from the response the teacher on whether she thinks she is in fact practicing OBE, she said that she does teach OBE because she allows the children to be free and she does not reprimand them for giving what she believes to be wrong responses. She explained that she always tries to guide learners to the correct answers through questioning and probing,

#### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Mzizi believes that she is practicing OBE in her Grade 1 class because now her subjects are correlated. She now uses one theme to teach different subjects. When asked to indicate what specifically had not changed in her teaching, she explained that she still uses the chalkboard and worksheets a lot in her lessons.

### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

When asked to state her successes with OBE, Mrs. Mzizi said that she allowed the learners to learn what they liked. She does not force them to learn things they do not like. She said that this would help learners to find different jobs.

In a post T2 interview she reiterated she allowed learners to learn what they wanted in her lessons and do things for themselves. She indicated that learners enjoyed work and participate in her lessons.

### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Mrs. Mzizi pointed out that what she saw as an obstacle towards her implementation of OBE in her Grade 1 classroom were, the inadequate supply of materials and the bad condition of her school's classrooms; there are no windows, and the building needs attention.

When asked the same question later in the post T2 interview Mrs Mzizi repeated her initial call for materials to be supplied to her school. She indicated that parents were not supportive. She also gave a concern of large classes saying that her class was not manageable.

### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Mzizi said that OBE was appropriate for learners at Grade 1.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Mzizi felt that for her to be able to optimally implement OBE she would need a photocopying machine to help them duplicate worksheets. She says that these worksheets would help her know what her learners need.

She said that she would advise the department to provide schools with more resources and organize more OBE INSET workshops for teachers. She feels that OBE facilitators should give teachers demonstration lessons of ideal/model OBE classes.

## For Mrs. Mazibuko

There was no post T1 interview transcript. All information on this section was obtained from post T2 interview with Mrs. Mazibuko.

### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

Not in this interview

### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Not in the interviewed.

### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Mazibuko said that her learners were confident to do things on their own and discuss them constructively.

### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

When asked about the obstacles to OBE that she has encountered she said that there were insufficient resources in her school. She gave examples of things like computers, photocopying machines and typewriters. She said that availability of these facilities would make it easier for them to meet the needs of their learners.

She indicated the environment in which they live was very poor. When teachers requested learners to bring things from home the parents say that they cannot afford most of these things. She said that another problem arises from the fact that some learners have to travel very long distances to school every day. She says that by the time they arrive at the school these learners are already tired and fail to cope with the work they are given by the teachers. Mrs. Mazibuko concurs with Mrs. Mzizi by saying that the classrooms in their school are not adequately equipped.

### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

The question was not asked in this interview.

## 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Mazibuko said that she would advise the Department of Education to supply schools with materials, especially computers and photocopiers, as these would make it easier for them to teach OBE. She mentioned that her school has a shortage of desks. She said that their school also has a shortage of teachers. This is compounded by the fact that their Grade 1 classes are very large.

## 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

### 9.1 Learners attendance

For Mrs. Mzizi

The enrolment of learners in Mrs Mzizi's Grade 1 class was not available. The average attendance was 33 learners and the modal attendance was 22 learners. The highest attendance was 35 and the lowest was 32.

For Mrs. Mazibuko

Again there were no figures of the enrolment in Mrs Mazibuko's Grade 1 class. The highest attendance in this class was 35 and the lowest was 32 learners. The average attendance was 34 learners and the modal attendance was 35.

### 9.2 Classroom Observations

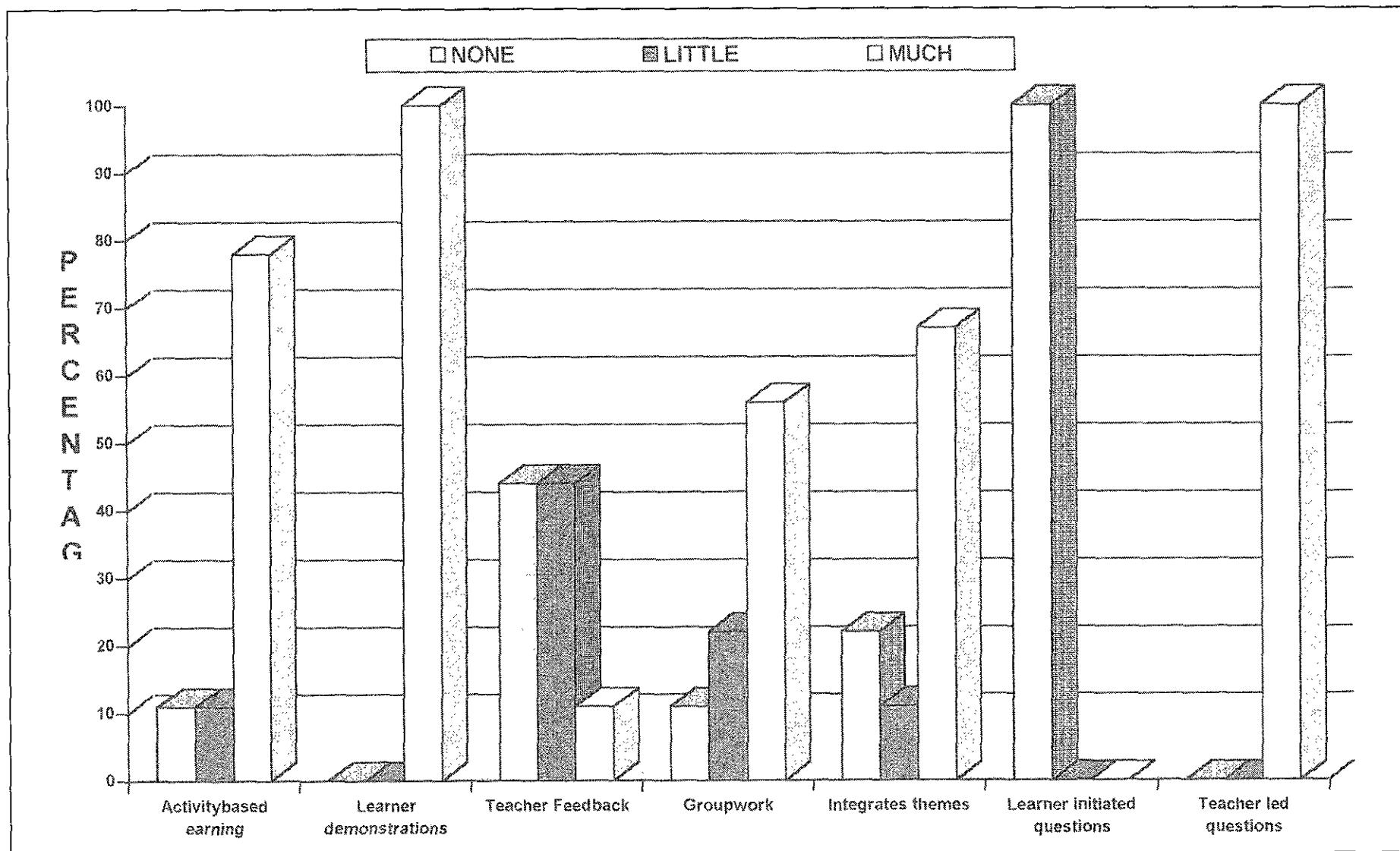
All the five days that were targeted for T, classroom observations were completed. One day, a Friday was lost due to some school engagement. All the lessons that were observed were conducted in isiZulu.

A teacher administered corporal punishment to learners that were absents from school for one day without asking the learner for explanation. She addressed this child as "hey you stupid".

The teacher gave materials for learners to work on but did not follow the learners nor give any instructions of what the learners were supposed to do.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session  $T_i$ .

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY)**

### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'much' activity-based learning. It was observed about 80% of the time spent on classroom observations. Some of the activity that the teachers used included learners colouring and posting pictures on chart paper. There were a few lessons where learners sat passively in class listening to teacher 'talk'. This was noted for about 10% of the time that the school was observed.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'much' opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt for all of the lessons observed, see the bar graph.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The bar graph shows that both teachers seldom gave learners feedback in the classroom. Both teachers gave 'much' feedback to their learners for about 10% of the time spent in the classrooms. There was 'little' or 'no' feedback given to the learners for more than 80% of the total time that was spent in the classrooms.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in-groups

The researcher says that he observed 'much' group work being used in more than 50% of the time he spent in both classrooms in this school. The researcher did not explain activities that the teachers did with the learners in the groups.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teachers were seen to integrate themes from different learning fields for all the time they spent in the classrooms. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to do "much integration of themes for more than 60% of the time spent in the classroom during T1.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

As in the other school this is the least noted feature in the two Grade 1 classrooms in this school. It would appear that one factor that could contribute to this problem is that the learners may not be free to do so, seeing that a child was beaten for being absent without

the teacher waiting for any explanation. The other factor could be that children at this stage are not ready to ask questions.

#### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

Again like all Grade 1 lessons this was a common feature in all the lessons. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to ask 'much' questions for all the lessons that were observed.

### 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

#### 10.1 Classroom attendance

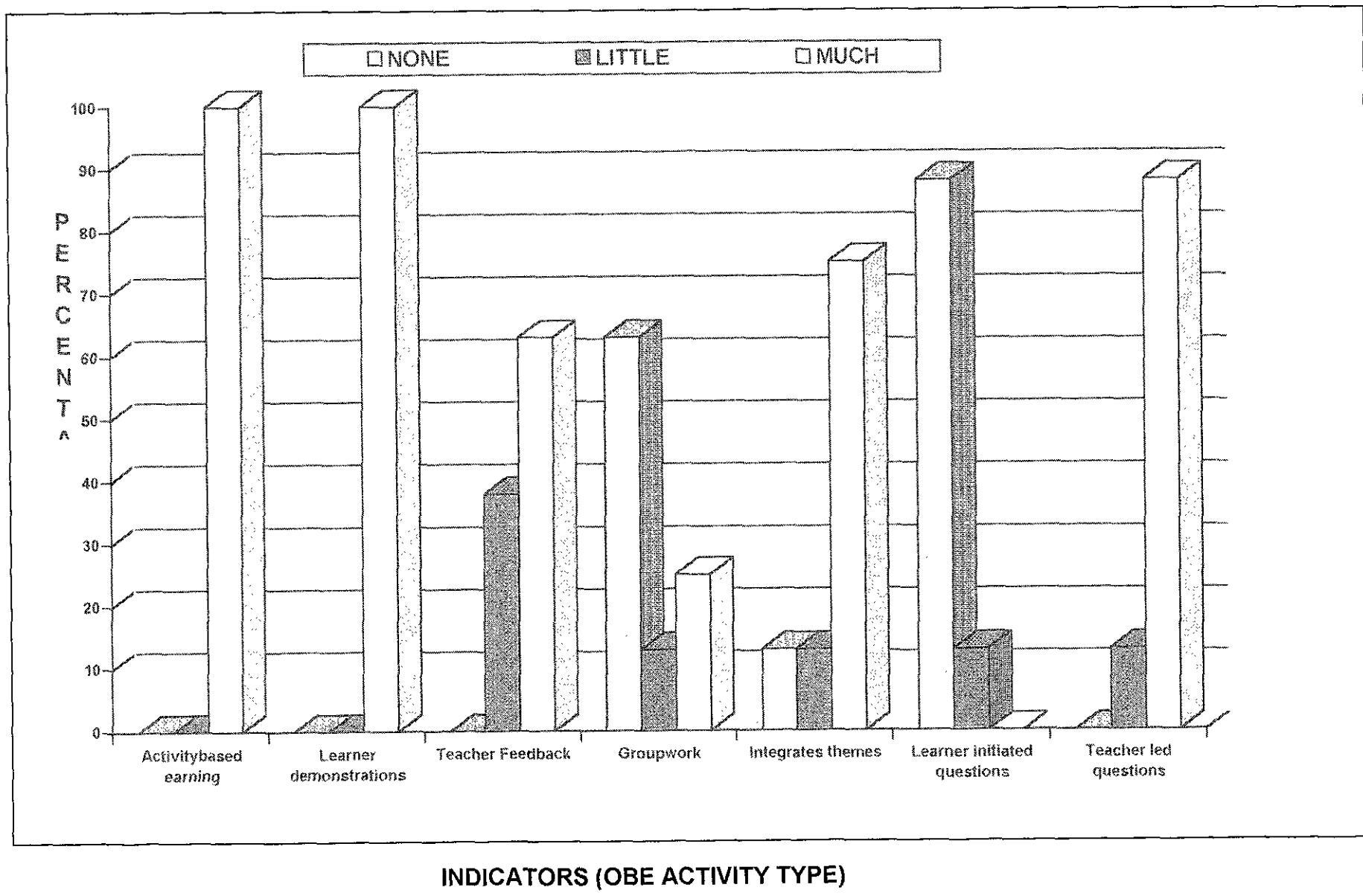
For Mrs. Mzizi

The average attendance in Mrs. Mzizi's Grade 1 classroom was 30 with the lowest attendance being 25 learners and the highest being 32 learners. On the day when attendance was lowest, (25) there was no teaching as the teachers were attending to administrative matters.

#### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Both teachers lost at least a day due to administrative matters. Mrs. Mazibuko lost two consecutive days while Mrs. Mzizi lost one day. The researchers noted both these days. Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

In both T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> 'much' activity based learning that was observed in both classes. There was 'much' activity-based learning (100%) in all the classes during T<sub>2</sub> compared to just under 80% that was observed during T<sub>1</sub>.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again this was the dominant feature in all lessons in both T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> observation sessions. In both T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub> both teachers were observed to grant learners 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt for 100% of the time that the researcher spent in the classrooms.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

There was a marked difference in the manner in which the teachers provided learners with individual feedback between T<sub>1</sub> and T<sub>2</sub>. For example in T<sub>1</sub>, the teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for about 10% of the time spent in the classroom observation compared to 60% over the same time spent in T<sub>2</sub>. The teachers were seen to provide learners with 'little' feedback (about 40%) and 'no' feedback (about 40%) most of the time during T<sub>1</sub>.

### 10.3.4 Students organised in-groups

There was a general decline on this category from T<sub>1</sub> to T<sub>2</sub>. During T<sub>1</sub> there was 'much' group work that was seen for about 50% of the time of the observation session while in T<sub>2</sub> 'much' group work was seen for about 20% of the time. In T<sub>2</sub> group work was very seldomly seen in the classroom, the bar graph shows that for about 60% of the time the teachers were not using group work. This could arise from the preoccupation of the teacher with administrative issues.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

'Much' integration of different learning fields was noted for about 70% of the time spent in the school during T<sub>1</sub> and about 60% of the time in T<sub>2</sub>. This shows that both these teachers integrated different learning fields in almost all their lessons in both observation sessions.

#### **10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions**

The trend for both T1 and T2 was similar for both classrooms in this school. For both teachers learners did not volunteer questions in both T1 and T2.

#### **10.3.7 Teacher-led questions**

In both T1 and T2 teacher led questions dominated. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
JULUKANDODA PRIMARY SCHOOL (8)

VULINDLELA, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Julukandoda Primary School is a poorly resourced former KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture primary school. This school is about 30km from Pietermaritzburg City. It is one of the schools, which was selected into the study because of the availability of personnel at the university and proximity of the school. Most of the parents struggle to pay fees, and do not assist teachers with additional materials that they ask children to bring to school.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the last week of May (observation session T1) and in the second week October of 1998 for the duration of a week (observation session T2). During each observation session the researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. Any changes in teaching practice would be noted during the second observation session. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 1/2hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted on each teacher.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and the post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments. The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Julukandoda Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to 7. It is located in the Vulindlela Circuit of Vulindlela District the KwaZulu-Natal Province. There were details of the school enrolment figures. The home language of most learners is Zulu. The language of instruction is English.

According to the head of department there are five Grade 1 classes in this school. There are 142 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There are three teachers who teach the five Grade 1 classes.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

According to the head of department the school is in a good condition.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

There are no facilities available in the school. There is no mains electricity power supply or running water. The school does not have a telephone.

### **6. SCHOOL RESOURCES**

#### **6.1 For Learners**

According to the head of department about 50-79% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects.

#### **6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms**

##### **6.2.1 for Mrs. Maduna's Grade 1 classroom**

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Maduna's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. MADUNA'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment                 |
|--|-----|----|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    | There was no chair for the teacher. |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  |     | ✓  |                                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             |     |    |                                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                                     |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                                     |

Although the class is suitable for OBE classes it needs to be developed and improved further.

Table 2 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Nomvete's Grade 1

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. NOMVETE'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment |
|--|-----|----|---------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                     |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |                     |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |                     |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                     |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |                     |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |                     |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  |     | ✓  |                     |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             |     |    |                     |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                     |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                     |

Although there were posters on display on the walls, they needed cleaning.

### 6.3 OBE resources

#### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Maduna

Table 2 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Maduna.

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Maduna said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes with a group of teachers in a workshop that was organized by the Department of Education. Table 4 shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Nomvete.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. NOMVETE**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Nomvete said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes with a group of teachers in a workshop that was organized by the Department of Education.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Maduna

Mrs. Maduna is over 41 years old. She has overall teaching experience of 15 years. She has taught at Julukandoda Primary School for all these 15 years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for seven years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Diploma in 1982.

Mrs. Maduna says that she has attended one four-day OBE INSET training course and one five-day OBE INSET workshop, both offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. She found these INSET courses useful. She said she is not confident to teach

OBE. She is not sure whether she is competent to teach OBE. Even though she values the OBE training that she has received, she needs further training.

#### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Nomvete

Mrs. Nomvete is aged between 31-40 years. She has eight years teaching experience.

She has taught at Julukandoda Primary School for these eight years. She has six years teaching experience at Grade 1 level. She completed her Primary Teacher's Diploma in 1991 and a Higher Education Diploma in 1997.

Mrs. Nomvete says that she has attended one four-day OBE INSET training course and one five-day OBE INSET workshop, both offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. She found the courses useful. She does not confident to teach OBE. She is not sure whether she is competent to teach OBE. Even though she values the training received, she needs more training.

#### 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

##### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Maduna.

Table 5 shows how Mrs. Maduna compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 5: HOW MRS MADUNA COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Maduna said her teaching practices have changed a great deal this year. What she does now is more concrete than what she did in the past.

## 7.2.2 For Mrs. Nomvete

Table 6 shows how Mrs. Nomvete compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 6: HOW MRS NOMVETE COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity -based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Nomvete pointed out that her teaching has changed and is now easier, but she did not elaborate on this.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

The teacher was not asked for her perceptions of OBE.

### 8.1.1 Teacher understands of OBE

There is no direct question asking the teacher to state her understanding of OBE.

### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Maduna believes that she is practising OBE in her Grade 1 class because her children have become more active than before. Children can now solve problems for themselves. She gives learners many problem-solving tasks.

Mrs. Maduna feels that teaching has been made easier and more flexible. She does more group work and finds this more effective than before OBE. When asked to indicate what specifically had not changed in her teaching, she explained that her teaching has changed altogether since the introduction of OBE. She still uses her previous teaching strategies.

### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Maduna said that she is now proud to be an OBE teacher, she reiterated that her teaching is flexible since the introduction of OBE. She said that her pupils are more interested in learning and they now think she is a good teacher.

### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Her obstacles regarding the implementation of OBE in her Grade 1 classroom were the large number of pupils and the inadequate supply of materials.

### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Maduna said that OBE was appropriate for learners at Grade 1 but did not offer any explanation.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

She said she would need "manuals for the Foundation phase, conversation poster, facilitator's sentence maker and work charts". She said that she would advise the department to provide schools with more resources. -

For Mrs. Nomvete

### 8.2.1 Teacher understands of OBE There was no comment on this.

### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

In the past she used to start with teaching phonics at Grade 1 but now learners have to identify different words and different phonics. She said that the learners are more active than before. She said "... in OBE you start with what is called specific themes..." The teacher would make goals and plans for achieving them. At the end, the teacher would have to assess whether she had achieved her goals.

Mrs. Nomvete said that her attitude towards teaching has not changed. She says that OBE has reinforced some of the things that teachers used to do in the past. She single out group work and said that although teachers used to do group work in their classes in the

past, they did not do it as much as they are doing now. She believes that they are more advanced in using group work.

#### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Nomvete says that since the introduction of OBE, there has been an improvement in her relationship with her learners. Her learners enjoy being with her and they now take her more as their mother and friend.

#### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

(It seems that Mrs. Nomvete mentioned obstacles/limitations that she felt OBE had eliminated.) Since the introduction of OBE, a set timetable is no longer used. Now she does not feel obliged to teach this or that at specific times; all her teaching is correlated.

#### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

She felt that OBE was appropriate for Grade 1 learners, but she was not sure . She had attended only a few OBE workshops. In a later question Mrs. Nomvete indicated that learners who did not go to preschool or reception classes have problems when they start Grade 1. She said that in their school, where almost all the children did not go to preschool, they have to cover the work that these learners would have done at preschool up to the Easter break. They would only start with Grade 1 work in the second term of the school year.

#### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

She would advise the Department of Education to supply schools with materials and organize more workshops.

### 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; 'little'

means that the strategy was used a few times (two to three times); and 'much' means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

There were only four Classroom observation schedules that were completed for T1. The researcher provided the following reflections of what transpired over the time that he visited the schools.

#### Day 1

Both teachers arrived late at school on this day. He was able to observe the morning session, i.e. Mrs. Maduna's Grade 1 class. When he went to the late morning session of Mrs Nomvete's class, she was not there. She had left the pupils unattended and never showed up for the rest of the day.

#### Day 2

Again Mrs. Nomvete (the teacher of the class that was to be observed in the early morning session) came 30 minutes late to school this morning. The researcher observed this class until break. Both Grade 1 teachers then informed him that there were not going to be any lessons after break due to preparations for forth-coming cultural activities and musical competitions.

#### Day 3

Mrs. Maduna was absent from school due to family bereavement. The two classes were then combined and were supposed to be taught by Mrs. Nomvete. Despite this arrangement Mrs. Nomvete came to school late this morning. A number of the pupils did not have a place to sit. The teacher slapped one learner for closing a page (the learner's) on which the activity of the morning was. She shouted at learners using abusive words like stupid, rubbish, etc. The learners continued to co-operate with the teacher even under these conditions and assisted each other.

Mrs. Maduna was still absent from school, and the class joined Mrs. Nomvete's class. On this day the teacher was not harsh, as she had been the previous day. She encouraged learners to work together and assisted those who needed help.

## Day 5

The school was closed on this day, as every one was expected go to the cultural activities show. There were a variety of performances, such as, Zulu dancing, folk tales, poems - both traditional and modern, etc.

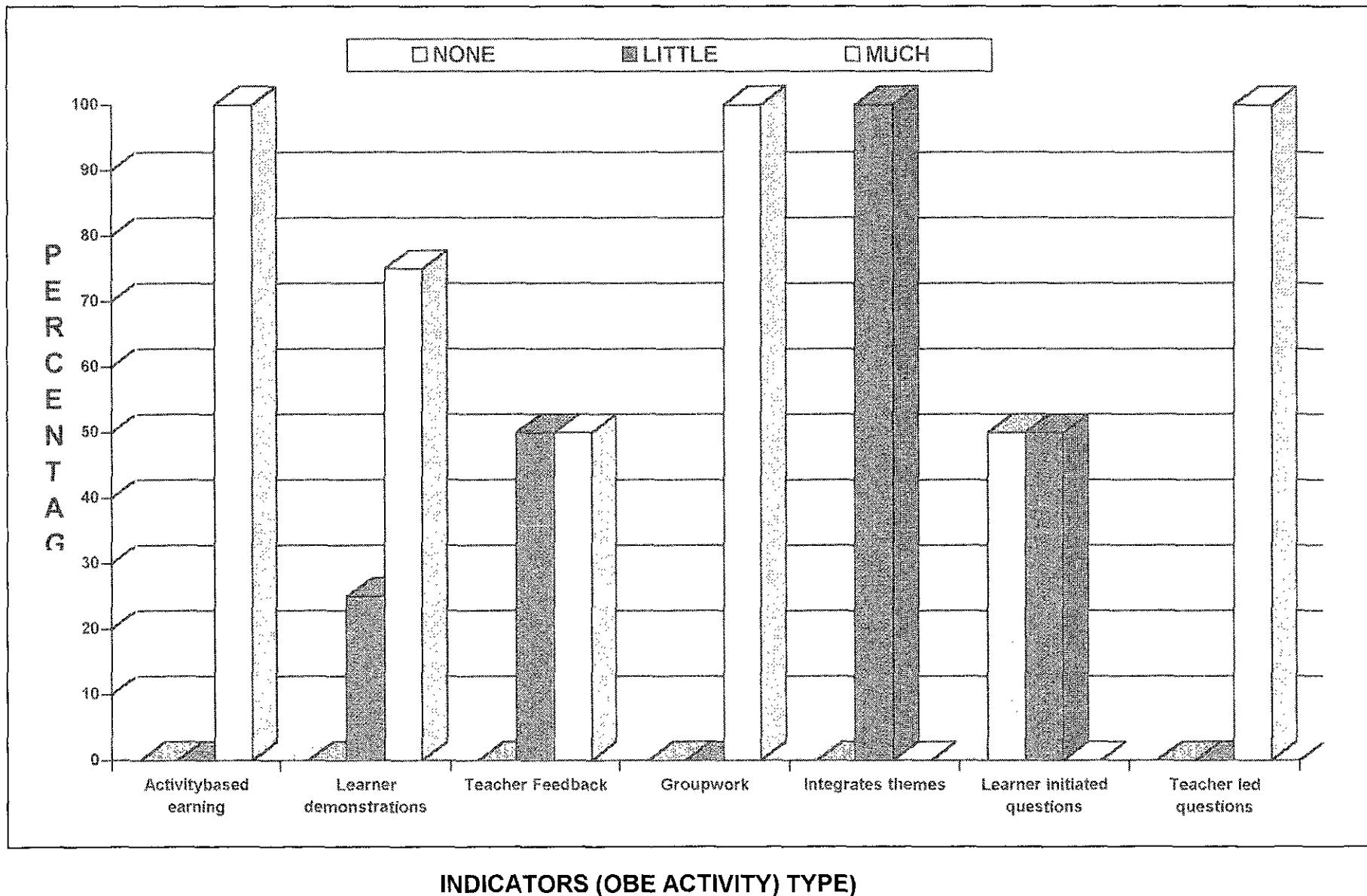
### 9.1 Learners attendance

The above passage shows that the situation in this school was rather abnormal. Under these circumstances it would be difficult to give specific averages of learners attendance in each classroom. Attendance in Mrs. Maduna's Grade 1 class that was observed was 32 learners. Attendance in Mrs. Nomvete's Grade 1 class was 37 learners. Attendance in the two combined classes was 66 learners and 56 learners, respectively.

### 9.2 Classroom Observations

Only four lessons were observed in this school during T1. All the lessons that were observed were conducted in Zulu. Figure 1 shows the graph of the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

Although there were many disruptions that occurred in the school, some classes appeared to have settled down. What was most eye catching was that, activity-based learning dominated almost all the time. The teachers had developed class activities in innovative ways. For example, in one class, the teacher showed learners three pictures. The learners were asked to discuss the functions, the relation with human beings, the habitats, etc., of the animals that were in the pictures.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt i.e. 75% of the time. Some of these demonstrations came from the discussions that followed the activities that the teachers had given the learners.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The bar graph shows that both teachers seldom gave learners feedback in the classroom. Both teachers gave 'much' feedback for about 50% of the time spent in the classrooms. There was 'little' or 'no' feedback given to the learners for more than 50% of the observation period.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

Group work dominated the lessons almost all the time. Most of the groups that the teachers used were big, i.e., more than ten learners in a group. Both teachers used this approach well, with different learners playing different roles and assisting each other in the group.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teachers were seen to integrate themes from different learning fields all the time. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to do 'little' integration of themes for more than 75% of the time spent in the classroom during T1.

### **9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions**

As in the other schools this feature was seldom observed in the two Grade 1 classrooms in this school. The atmosphere in the class may not have encouraged it, possibly due to the harsh and arbitrary discipline that was sometimes observed. For instance, a child was beaten for being absent from class without the teacher waiting for any explanation. The researcher noted that there were no learner initiated questions for 50% of the time and few learner initiated questions for the remaining 50 % of the time.

### **9.3.7 Teacher-led questions**

The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to ask few questions for the entire lessons that were observed.

## **10. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2**

### **10.1 Classroom attendance**

For Mrs Maduna

The average attendance Mrs. Maduna's Grade 1- classroom was 34 with the lowest attendance being 32 learners and the highest being 37 learners.

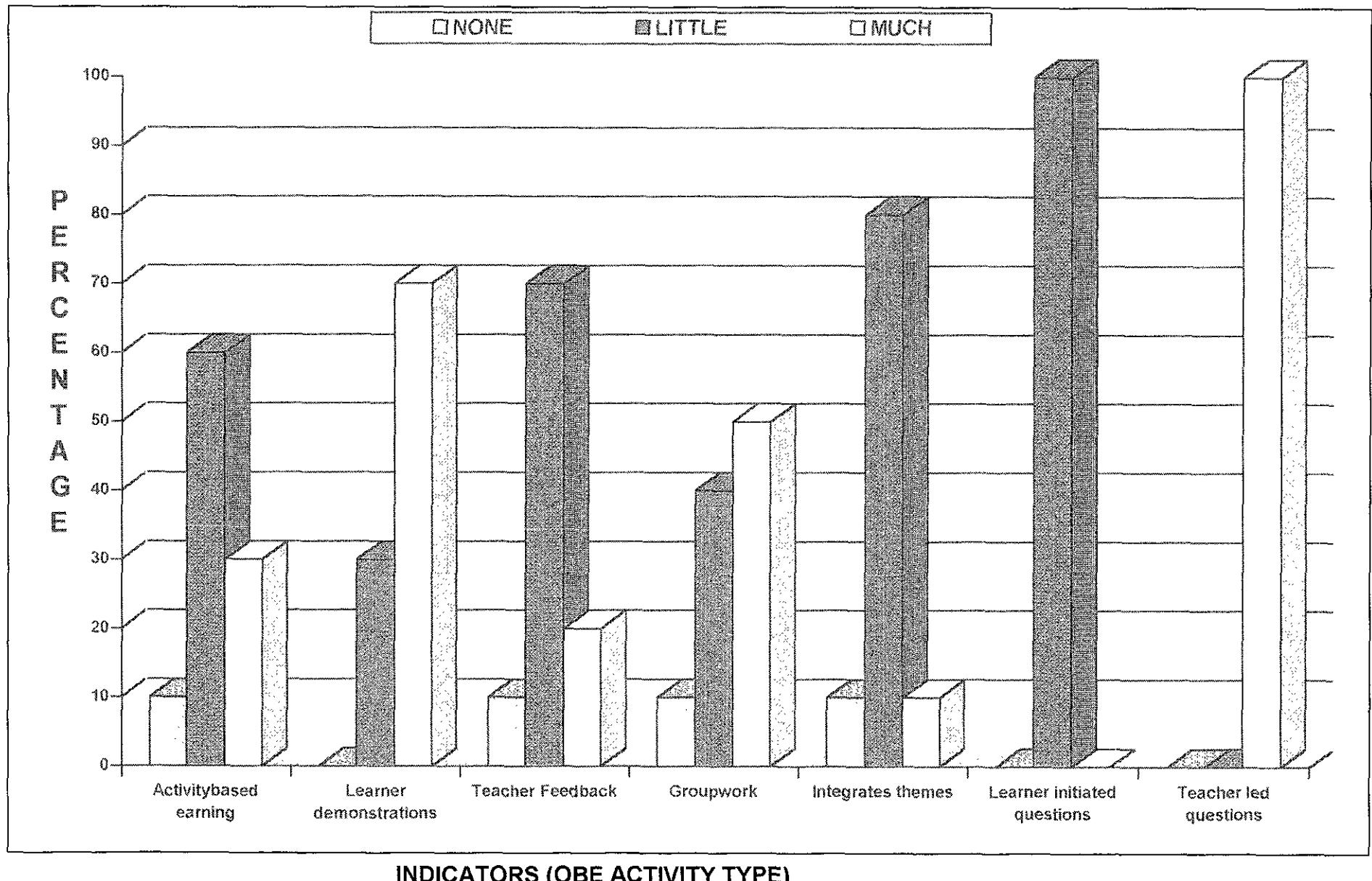
For Mrs. Nomvete

The Average attendance in Mrs Nomvete's lesson was 34. The highest attendance was 37 learners and the lowest attendance was 29 learners.

### **10.2 Classroom observations.**

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

The amount of activity-based learning during T2 compared to T1. During T2 there was 'much' activity based learning for only 30% of the time compare to 100% during T1. There is no explanation for this decline.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again this was the dominant feature in all lessons in both T1 and T2 observation sessions. In both T1 and T2 both teachers were observed to give learners 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt for 75% and 70% of the time, respectively.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

There was some difference in the manner in which the teachers provided learners with individual feedback between T1 and T2. For example in T1 the teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for about 50% of the time spent in the class compared to 20% over the same time period during T2. The teachers were seen to provide learners with 'little' feedback for about 50% of the time during T1. During T2, the teachers were observed to provide 'little' feedback for 70% of the time.

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

There was a general decline in this category from T to T2. During T, group work was used almost all the time while in T2 group work was seen for about 50% of the time. The bar graph shows that group work was used for about 40% of the time.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

There was no significant difference in this category over the two observation sessions. The was 'little' integration of different learning fields for 75% of the time during T1 and for 80% of the time during T2.

### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

Figure 1 and Figure 2 show that there were some differences in the number of times that the learners were observed to asked questions in the two observation sessions. During T1 there

were few ('little') learner-initiated questions for 50% of the time and 'none' for the remaining 50%. During T2, there were few ('little') learner led questions for 100% of the time.

#### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 there was many ('much') teacher led questions in almost all the lessons that were observed. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general, ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners.

### 11. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. Both teachers were well qualified and experienced, They had both received some training in OBE. They highly valued this training in OBE that they received. Both teachers did not feel confident to teach OBE. The teachers felt that they needed more training in OBE
2. The teachers associated OBE with activity-based learning. They indicated that their main obstacle in implementing OBE were having to cope with large classes and the lack of OBE materials and other resources in their school.
3. It was not clear what they saw as their achievements. One explained that her relationship with the learners had improved. Both teachers tended to throw in words that are often related with OBE without being able to elaborate exactly what they meant with these words.
4. The teachers said that the children were ready for OBE, but did not elaborate. Later, in the same interview one teacher contradicted herself saying that most children who had not gone to preschool (which meant a large majority of Grade 1 children in the school), were not ready for OBE when they first came to school.
5. Attendance of both teachers leaves much to be desired. In all the school visits during T1, only four lessons were observed. There were times when both teachers would be absent from class without giving any explanation.

6. The researcher also noted cases of child abuse. There was much intimidation of pupils in the school.

7. Even though, the teachers were practicing OBE to some extent, the researcher's main concern was that they were not in class often enough.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
EMBUYENI PRIMARY SCHOOL (9)

NDWEDWE, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Embuyeni Primary School is a poorly resourced former KwaZulu Department of Education and Culture primary school. It is one of the schools, which was selected into the study because of the availability of personnel and proximity of the school.

There are under 1000 learners who attend this school. Most of these children come from very poor rural backgrounds. Most of the parents struggle to pay fees, and do not assist teachers with additional materials that they may require children to bring to school.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the third week of May (observation session T1) and in the first week of October 1998 for the duration of a week (observation session T2). During each observation session researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. During the second observation session any changes in practice that the teachers would show, would be noted. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this

instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted with each teacher.

During the second observation session (T2) two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments. The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Embuyeni Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to 7. It is located in the Ndwedwe Circuit of Ndwedwe District in KwaZulu-Natal. The enrolment in this school is 876 with 401 (46%) male pupils and 475 (54%) female pupils. The home language of most pupils is Zulu. The language of instruction is English.

According to acting the principal there are two Grade 1 classes in this school. There are 72 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There are two teachers who teach the two Grade 1 classes.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

Both the acting principal and the teachers indicated the buildings in the school are in a poor state. According to the acting principal the school needs complete rebuilding.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

There are no facilities available in the school. There is no mains electricity power supply or running water. The school does not have a telephone.

### **6. SCHOOL RESOURCES**

#### **6.1 For Learners**

According to the principal about 20-39% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

## 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Bhengu's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Bhengu's Grade 1

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. BHENGU'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment                        |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |  |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              |     | ✓  |  |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | No electricity                             |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     |     | ✓  |  |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     | ✓  |  |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             |     | ✓  | The roof has holes and leaks when it rains |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    | No windowpanes. May have broken glasses    |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |  |

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS MKHIZE'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |   |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |   |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              |     | ✓  |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | No electricity  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     |     | ✓  | None  |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     | ✓  | Very dirty, paint falling off, pupils sharpen pencils on them |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             |     | ✓  | A quarter of the roof was blown away. There are leaks         |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    | Some have no window panes.                                    |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |   |

## 6.3 OBE resources

### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Bhengu

Table 3 shows the OBE resource materials that were received by Mrs. Bhengu

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Bhengu said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes. Some materials were developed with the assistance of the school management. She also has materials that were developed in workshops organized by the Department of Education. She has attended OLSET course, which she found useful. Mrs Bhengu said that she is not confident about teaching OBE. She says that she needs more training in OBE. She highly values the training in OBE that she received.

Table 4 shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Mkhize.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. MKHIZE**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Mkhize said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes. She did not feel confident to teach OBE. She did not know whether she was competent to teach it. She said that she needs further training even though, she values the training she has received.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Bhengu

Mrs. Bhengu is over 41 years of age. She has overall teaching experience of 12 years. She has taught at Embuyeni Primary School for twelve years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher

for four years at this school. She has M+2, which she obtained in 1997. She completed here Primary Teachers' Certificate in 1978.

Mrs. Bhengu says that she has attended a four-day Planning OBE INSET training course offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. She found this INSET course useful. She did not feel competent and confident to teach OBE. She said that she requires more training in OBE, even though she values the OBE training that she has received.

### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Mkhize

Mrs. Mkhize is aged between 31-40 years old. She has twelve years teaching experience. She has taught at Endwebu Primary School for six years. She has two years teaching experience at Grade 1 level. She completed her a Primary Teacher's Certificate in 1981. Mrs. Mkhize says that she has attended a four-day Planning OBE INSET training course offered by the KZN Department of Education. Mrs. Mkhize said that she found the INSET courses useful. She also said that she needs more training in OBE.

## 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Bhengu.

Table 3 shows how Mrs. Bhengu compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 5: HOW MRS BHENGU COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Bhengu said that her teaching has already changed. She guides the pupils for the most part, instead of simply telling them what she know. She says that she also assesses children as a whole, although it is not clear what she meant by this.

#### 7.2.2 For Mrs. Mkhize

Table 4 shows how Mrs. Mkhize compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 4: HOW MRS MKHIZE COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity –based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | -          |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Mkhize pointed out that her teaching has changed because now she lets her learners to discover things for themselves, and allows them to help one another. She indicated that she no longer transmits knowledge to the learners but she guides and helps them.

### 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

#### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE Mrs. Bhengu

##### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

There is no direct question asking the teacher to directly state her understanding of OBE. She believes that in OBE the teacher should teach learners in groups through game playing. She believes that now and then, learners have to be taught outside the main classroom in a very relaxed environment. Learners must be guided to discover things for themselves. This type of learning is learner-based.

### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Bhengu believes that she is practicing OBE because she teaches the learners through group work. She lets them play games in groups and takes them outside the classroom.

### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Bhengu said she now uses group work and teaches learners through game playing inside and outside the classroom. Her lessons are question driven and encourage cooperative learning.

### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Mrs. Bhengu's main obstacles were (a) inadequate supply of materials; (b) the bad condition of the classrooms - there are no windows and the buildings need repairs; (c) Insufficient training for OBE teachers; (d) lack of support from parents - most parents do not assist learners with their homework. She attributes this lack of support on the part of the parent to illiteracy, she says that parents give very little value to education.

### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Bhengu said that OBE was appropriate for learners at Grade 1.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

She would advise the department to provide the school with more resources and buildings; they should organize more OBE INSET workshops for teachers. She suggests that parent should be brought into education, and the school governing body should also encourage parents to pay school fees.

For Mrs. Mkhize

There was no post T1 interview transcript. All information in this section was obtained from post T2 interview for Mrs. Mkhize.

### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

Mrs. Mkhize said that OBE encourages the active participation of learners.

#### **8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?**

She encourages active participation by grouping her learners in her OBE lessons.

#### **8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?**

Mrs. Mkhize said that her main success is the active participation of learners.

#### **8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?**

She said that her limitation/obstacles are (a) lack of resources; (b) lack of training in OBE; (c) lack of support from the parents and (e) the school need rebuilding as most of the materials get destroyed when it rains.

#### **8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners? This question was not answered.**

#### **8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?**

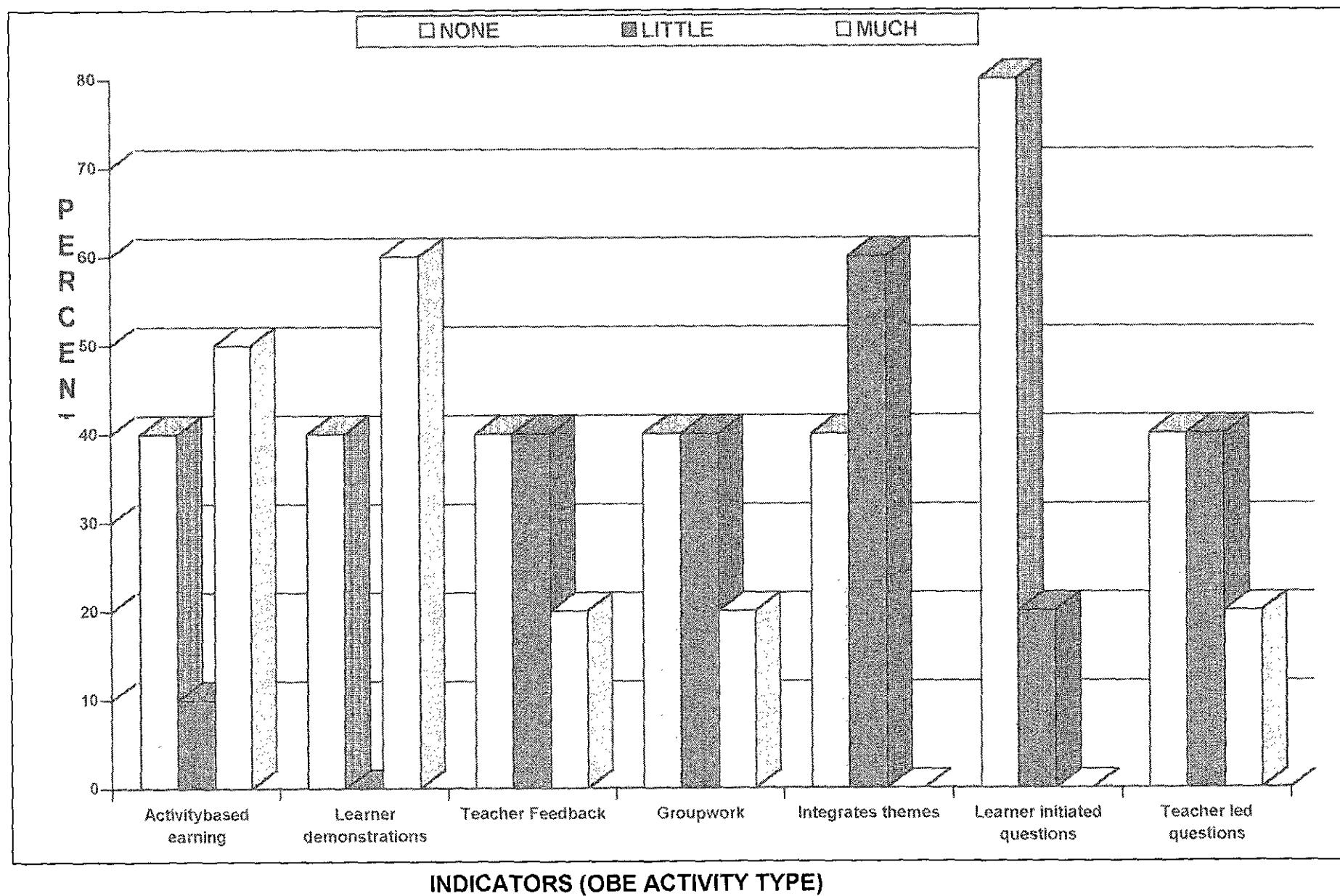
Mrs. Mkhize said that she would advise the Department of Education to encourage parents to be more involved in their children's studies and also to pay school fees. The department should rebuild the school and teachers should be retrained for OBE.

### **9. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that, that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



## 9.1 Learners attendance For Mrs. Bhengu

The average attendance in Mrs. Bhengu's class was 30 learners. The highest attendance was 32 and the lowest was 27.

For Mrs. Mkhize

The highest attendance in this class was 32 and the lowest was 27 learners. The average attendance was 31 learners.

## 9.2 Classroom Observations

All the five days that were targeted for T1 classroom observations were completed. The researcher indicated that a whole day (Thursday 21 May) was used as sports day.

All the lessons that were observed were conducted in isiZulu.

The researcher saw teachers administer corporal punishment to the learners for not following the instructions given by the teachers. It is the researcher's opinions that learning is difficult at this school since the children are often fearful. On one occasion, a child was in tears because she had toothache. She reported her problem to the teacher. The teacher simply told the child to go back to her seat and not bother her and threatened to beat her up if she disturbed her again.

Mrs Mkhize missed one day due to family bereavement. Her class was invited to join Mrs Bhengu's class. By the time the classes were together an hour had already been lost. Figure 1 shows the graph of the classroom observations during session T1.

### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'much' activity-based learning that was observed about 90% of the time spent on classroom observations. Some of the activity that the teachers used included learners simulating some actions e.g., sleeping. The teachers also requested learners to mimic some action words.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt in all of the lessons observed, (see the bar graph). The demonstrations that the learners would do include situations where they had to show their understanding of action words by showing the teacher the 'action' when the word was read.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The bar graph shows that both teachers seldom gave learners feedback in the classroom. Both teachers gave 'much' feedback to their learners for about 10% of the time spent in the classrooms. There was 'little' or 'no' feedback given to the learners for more than 80% of the total time that was spent in the classrooms. -

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

Group work was observed almost all the time in both classrooms. Most groups were arranged according to learners' abilities.

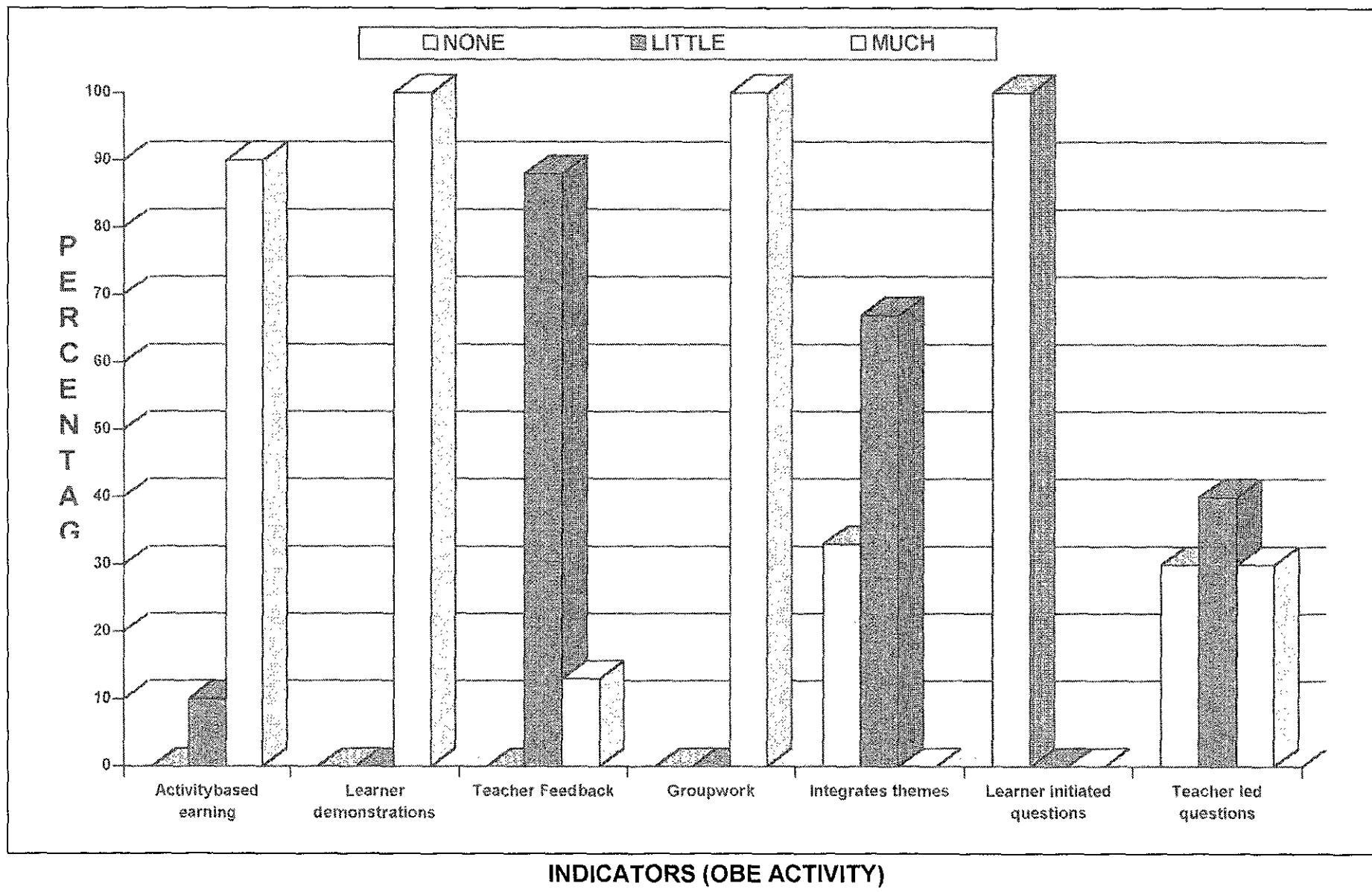
### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teacher taught their lessons in isolation. 'Little integration of themes was noted for 67% of the time of the observation. For the rest of the time there was no integration.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

The pupils never initiated the questions. This could be due to fear and intimidation as mentioned in the introductory part of this section (paragraph 9.2)

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

Again like all Grade 1 lessons, this was a common feature in all the lessons. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to ask many questions for the lessons that were observed. The researcher indicated that most of the questions that were asked were closed-ended questions that encouraged memorization. The teachers used these questions to drill learners.

The bar graph shows a very unusual situation where there were no teacher questions asked. This was for 30% of the time. The only explanation could be the teacher had gone out of the classroom at that time. One cannot imagine a Grade 1 class or any normal primary school class, where teachers do not ask questions.

## 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2 Classroom attendance

### For Mrs Bhengu

The average attendance Mrs. Bhengu's Grade 1 . classroom was 30 with the lowest attendance being 29 learners and the highest being 33 learners.

The average attendance for Mrs Mkhize was 29. The lowest attendance was 28 learners and the highest attendance was 30 learners.

There was one learner who was mentally retarded in Mrs Mkhize's class.

### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Both teachers lost at least a day due to administrative matters. Mrs Mkhize lost two consecutive days while Mrs Bhengu lost one day.

On Monday 05 October the Grade 1 learners were dismissed because all teachers had gone for a prayer meeting for one of their colleagues who had a family bereavement.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based

When comparing activity based learning during T1 and T2, there was a decline in both classes. There was 'much' activity-based learning for 90% of the time during T1, compared to just under 50% of the time during T2.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

In both classes there was a decline from T1 and T2 in this category. During T1 this feature was observed in all the lessons. During T2 'much' learner demonstrations were noted only for 60% of the time.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

There is some similarity in this category in both T1 and T2. For example in T1 the teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for about 13% of the time compared to 20% over the same time spent in T2. The teachers were seen to provide learners with 'little' feedback about 70% of the time during T1. On the other hand, the teachers were observed to provide 'little' feedback or no feedback for 40% of the time during T2.

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

There was a general decline in this category from T1 to T2. During T1 'much' group work was seen almost all the time of the observation session while in T2 'much' group work was seen for about 20% of the time.

10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields There was very little change in this regard.

### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

The trend for both T1 and T2 was similar for both classrooms in this school. In both classes, learners did not volunteer questions in both T1 and T2.

## **Impact Study**

**Mpumalanga Schools**

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
BOSMANSPLAN PRIMARY SCHOOL (13)  
HENDRINA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE  
IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Bosmanspan Primary School is a former Department of Education and Training (DET) farm school found just outside KwaZamokuhle Township in Hendrina, Mpumalanga Province. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the fifth criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a rural black school, e.g., a very isolated school in deep rural area with no facilities, a severely under-resourced school".

There are about three hundred pupils using four classrooms in the school. According to the principal most of the children who come to school are "... from squatter camps (informal settlements) and from the surrounding farms". Other children come from KwaZamokuhle Township. She said that the parents of these children claim to be very poor. They cannot afford to pay a minimal school fee of R20.00 per annum.

The principal said that all teachers in the school teach double classes.

The Principal indicated that when some children are being taught, others are playing outside. Each learner is in class for half the time they spend at school. The school starts at 07h50 and finishes at 13h00 each day.

## **2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Data from this school was collected in the first and the third week of October of 1998 for the duration of a week. During the second observation session T2, no Grade 1 classrooms were observed at the school because the grade teacher was on study leave and all her classes were cancelled. During each observation session the researcher spent five days of intensive observation of classroom practice of the Grade 1 teacher. A period of about three months was allowed to pass before the second observation period. This time was allowed between the two observation sessions. The incubation period was allowed in order to give

teachers time to assimilate and digest ideas on OBE. The second observation period would show whether any changes in teaching practice had occurred. It would be assumed that these changes were due to the influence of the OBE training that the teacher had gone through.

During T1 observation three instruments, viz., A (School Profile), B (Teachers Characteristics Profile) and D (Teachers Questionnaire) were completed by the Principal. The Researcher completed further two instruments: Instrument C (Classroom Resources Profile) and instrument F (classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F were completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Classroom observation was done over a period of five consecutive days. Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents, (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. In Bosmanspan Primary school, the principal is also a Grade 1 teacher. At the end of both T1 and T2 I conducted interview with the Grade 1 teacher.

The data was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Bosmanspan Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to Grade 7 to children coming from the farm in which the school is found, nearby informal settlements and KwaZamokuhle Township. The school is located in the Witbank District in Middelburg 2 Circuit in Mpumalanga Province. There are 325 pupils in the school. There are 148 (46%) girls and 177 (54%) boys in this school. The mother tongue of most of the students is isiNdebele. The language of other pupils is Zulu. The language of instruction in the school is Zulu.

There are only four teachers: two female teachers and two male teachers. All these teachers are isiNdebele-speaking. Three teachers teach two classes each and the fourth teacher (Grade 7 teacher) teaches only one class. There are no grade aides in this school.

The school has one Grade 1 class. The Principal teaches both Grade 1 and Grade 2 in the same classroom. The same teacher teaches grade 1 and Grade 2 in the same classroom. Grade 1s take their lessons in the period from 08h00 to the morning break while the Grade 2s play outside. The Grade 2s then use the same classroom for their lesson after break and continue till lunch break. The same teacher teaches Grade 3 and Grade 4. Grade 3 and Grade 4 also alternate, with one coming in the morning and the other coming after the morning break. The Principal indicated that the Grade 5 and Grade 6 shared a class. Grade 5 and Grade 6 learners do not alternate classroom but sit in the class throughout the school day. Grade 5 and Grade 6 have only one teacher. Only Grade 7 pupils are taught separately in their own classroom.

There are 54 Grade 1 learners in Bosmanspan Primary School. Grade 1 shares this classroom with 61 Grade 2 learners. The classroom was very overcrowded and compact.

#### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The school has only one block of four classrooms standing alone in the farm. The principal said that most of the classrooms needed few repairs. The principal said he had applied for the construction of additional classrooms through another project, Masifunde Project, in which the school is a participant. There is no strongroom in the school, and therefore there are no valuables that are kept at the school. During T2 there was some construction work that was going on in Grade 1/2 classroom.

The classroom floor area of 49 m<sup>2</sup>. was used by 54 Grade 1 learners and 61 Grade 2 learner. Pupils in these classes were very cramped with very little room between desks. The learners were seated in groups of five to six people. Three learners shared a desk that is designed to seat two learners.

On one day during T, the weather was so severely cold that the Grade 1 teacher called the Grade 2 to sit in the classroom while she taught Grade 1. The teachers instructed the Grade 1s to sit on the desks while the Grade 2s remained standing. This means that there were about 54 Grade 1 and about 61 Grade 2 learners in the class at one time.

## 5, SCHOOL FACILITIES

According to the principal the only facility that the school has, is a sports field. This sports field is in a poor condition. There is a principal's office, which is also used as a storeroom for schoolbooks. The only toilet facility that is available in the school is a pit latrine.

There is no mains electricity power supply or running water in the school.

## 6, SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Pupils

According to the principal about 20-39% of the pupils have all required materials in all subjects. The Grade 1 teacher said that the school has received all OBE learning programmes for Grade 1s.

#### 6.2.1 For Grade 1 Class

Table 1 shows resources that are available in the Grade 1 classroom that was observed.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         |     |    |  |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    | Three learners shared desk space designed for two  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    | The teacher's table was completely covered with books  |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 |     | ✓  | The class was dark, mainly because of the dull paint on the walls  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         |     | ✓  | The class was overcrowded and cramped with over 50 learners.   |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | Only three charts hang on the walls.   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    | The paint used was very dull. The wall needed painting.  |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    | Only windows on one side could be opened   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    | Black paint had been applied on the wall to make a blackboard. There were numerous patches where it was difficult to write on or to read |

### 6.3 Resources to teach OBE

Table 2 shows the OBE materials that the school has received from the Department of Education.

**TABLE 2: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

The Grade 1 teacher indicated that she has not developed any materials for her OBE classes.

## 7. PROFILE OF GRADE 1 TEACHER

### 7.1 Teacher Experiences and Qualifications

The Grade 1 teacher is over 41 years old. She said that she has twenty-one years of teaching experience. She has taught at Bosmanspan Primary School for sixteen years. The teacher said that she has taught Grade 1 for eight years in this school. She first qualified as a teacher with Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC) in 1976. Subsequently she did Standard 10 and Senior Education Certificate (completed in 1996). She is currently studying for Senior Education Diploma.

The teacher said that she has attended three one-day OBE Training workshops and one four-day OBE workshop run by the Mpumalanga Department of Education. She indicated that she found these courses useful. She says that although she found the courses useful, she feels that she needs more training in OBE.

### 7.2 Teacher-Preparedness to Teach OBE.

The Grade 1 teacher said that she feels confident and competent to teach OBE and she values highly the OBE training that she has received.

### 7.3 Changes in teachers' practices

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 5. Activity -based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

The Grade one teacher said that she believes that her teaching has changed since the introduction of OBE. She says that she feel that the learners have improved considerably compared to learners in previous years. She cites her main problem as having to teach two classes in one classroom.

## 8. TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

### 8.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

The teachers said that she believed that she is in fact practicing OBE and yet she said that she was not clear of what OBE is. She said that she is "doing individual teaching and pupils have to work too ... so I am doing part of OBE but I was not clear that was OBE".

### 8.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

The teacher said that she believes that she is practicing OBE. The explanation that she gave was that she thinks she is "... practicing OBE was because now I use more group work. She said that she now provides learners with less information than before. The teacher later contradicted herself when explaining how she introduced a new topic. She said that when introducing new lessons she often resorts to the traditional modes of teaching where she would "explain first" thus providing 'information' to the learners.

The teacher said that her main obstacle was the lack of resources in the school. She said that some times she has to teach "some things theoretically". She says that the parents at

her school are not cooperative and are not willing to pay additional expenses. She cited lack of classroom space as the main obstacle in her teaching.

The teacher indicated that the learners are enjoying working in groups and seem to learn better than previous Grade 1 pupils.

### 8.3 Preschool and OBE

The teachers says that most of the children who come to her school have not gone to preschool and therefore have to be taught how to write and to read. She believes that children have to be taught the alphabet.

The teacher feels that OBE should not be taught from the beginning of the year. She indicated that a lot of time is lost at the beginning of the year as the children who have not gone to preschool have to be taught the basic skills. She said that OBE should be taught form the second term in Grade 1.

### 8.4 Preparation for implementing OBE.

According to the teacher there is a need for more training in OBE. She said that there is a need for more of OBE materials material in the school. She reiterated her concern of the lack of classroom space and large numbers that she has to cope with. She suggested that there is a need for more classes in the schools.

### 8.5 Achievements in the implementation of OBE

The teacher says that she has noted some improvement in the performance of her learners since she began to implement OBE. She indicated that her pupils are cooperative and are able to ask some questions. She claims that her teaching is child-centered. The later sections of this report will reveal that in the main, the teacher is continuing to teach in the traditional mode.

## 8.6 Obstacles/limitation to implement OBE

The teacher said that the parents of children in her school are not cooperative. She said that she has not been able to take excursions with her learners because parents "do not pop out money". To illustrate her point she pointed out that many parents do not pay school fee of R20.00. When asked for a reason they refuse to pay, the parents say they just do not have the money.

Despite the teacher's claim that she assessed her learners using group assessment and her teaching was pupil-centered, it emerged from the interview and in the subsequent classroom observation that she was not clear what she meant. The explanation she gave about how she assesses her students suggested that the teacher marked learners individually.

## 8.7 Recommendations/suggestions made by the teacher regarding the implementation of OBE

She recommended that the department should monitor schools closely during the implementation process. She also said that the Department of Education should supply schools with materials that would assist the school to implement OBE successfully.

## 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F Classroom observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. In this instrument the rating 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

All information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1. During T2 the Grade 1 teacher was on study leave and had cancelled all her Grade one classes. There was some renovation that was also being done in the Grade 1/2 classroom.

## 9.1 Learners attendance

The teacher indicated that there were 54 learners in Grade 1 this year. The pupils were never all present on any one day. The highest attendance was 51, on the first observation day. 49 learners were present the following day. The lowest was 48 learners, which was on two occasions. The average attendance over the period of observation was 49 learners.

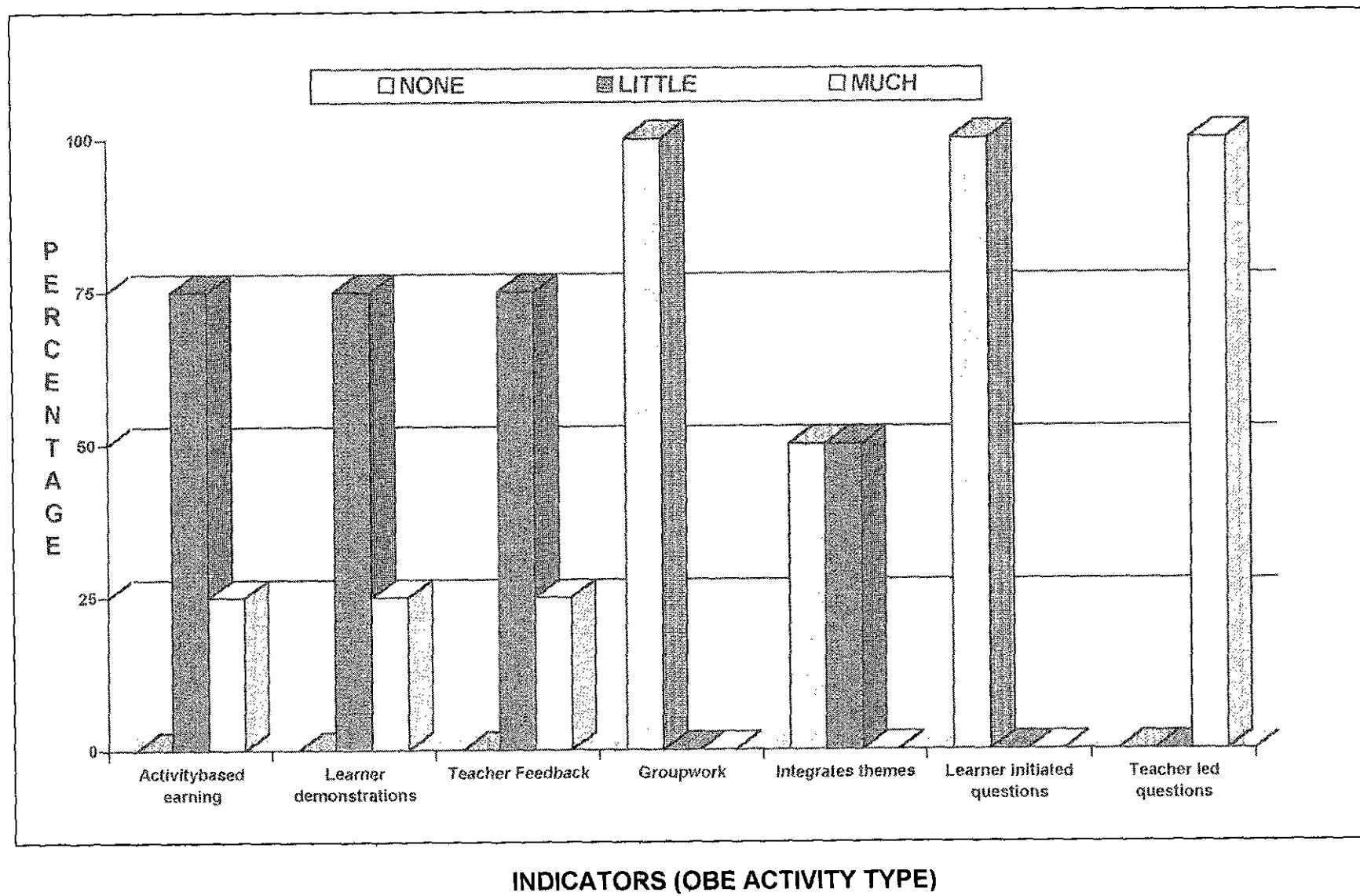
In all the days that were observed, there were learners who came after lessons had started.

## 9.2 Classroom Observations

Although five days were targeted for observation session T1, only four were observed. All the lessons that were observed were conducted in isiZulu. Most of the learners in this class spoke isiZulu or isiNdebele as their mother tongue. There was one learner who did not speak isiZulu. On a number of occasions the teachers had to explain instructions to this learner in seSotho, her mother tongue.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM.**



### 9.2.1 Learning is activity-based

There is very little activity-based teaching in this Grade 1 classroom. The graph shows that there was 'little' activity-based teaching for about 75% of the time that the class was observed. 'Much' activity-based teaching was noted only for about 25% of the observation time. This contradicted the teacher's claim that she teaches mainly activity-based lessons. Most of the time when the teacher gave learners work using materials that the learners were supposed to have brought from home, these were not available. Most of the time the teachers resorted to whole class teaching. In many lessons it was not clear whether the teacher had thought about the activities that she was going to engage in prior to the lesson.

All Grade 1 lessons were conducted in the classroom. The pupils were never taken outside for lessons. Learners only left the classroom to go to relieve themselves or during breaks.

### 9.2.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learnt

The graph shows that learners were seldom given opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt. Mainly this was done in Literacy Skills lessons where the teacher would call words aloud and learners would then have to chose the correct word from a given set of words. The graph shows that learners were given 'little' opportunity for 75% of the observation period. There was only one day (25%) that the learners were given 'much' opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt.

### 9.2.3 Teachers provide learners with individual feedback

Individual feedback took the form of corrections made at the end of the lessons. The graph shows that for about 75% of the observation there was 'little' feedback that was provided to the learners during the lesson.

It was noted that although the teacher corrected the pupils work, (especially mathematical problems) she did not comment as to why the learners were wrong.

#### 9.2.4 Students organized in groups

The desks in this class were arranged in a way that facilitates group work. Each group had up to six learners. In all the lessons that were observed all work was assigned to individual members in the group. The teacher gave instructions to a whole class. When pupils were given tasks to do they worked as individuals. On many occasions when learners were given some tasks to perform, they were seen trying to hide their work from others and not willing to share. This is perhaps in the nature of children to be self-centred and to compete with their peers. On no occasion were pupils required to perform tasks in groups. This was the case even though the teacher indicated that since the introduction of OBE she uses group work in most of her lessons.

#### 9.2.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning areas

The graph shows that there was 'little' or no integration of themes (none) in all the days observed. Most of the lessons that were observed were taught in isolation. The teacher drew some lessons from learners' daily experiences on only a few occasions.

#### 9.2.6 Learner initiated questions

In all the lessons that were observed there were no questions that were initiated by the learners. Most of the time, the learners only spoke when responding to questions that were asked by the teacher or when they were repeating after the teacher or singing a poem, recitation or counting aloud. This was done very frequently in this class. The only times that the learners volunteered to say something was when they wanted permission to go to relieve themselves or when they were reporting 'mischief that was done by another learner.

#### 9.2.7 Teachers-led questions

This was a dominant feature in all the lessons. The teacher did most of the talking and asked the questions. The graph shows that the teachers asked 'much' questions in all the lessons that were observed in this phase. Most of these questions were one-answer questions and were closed. The teachers never asked higher order questions.

## 10.GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Bosmanspan Primary School is very under-resourced. The children in this school are taught under very appalling conditions, where you have one teacher teaching more than 110 pupils from two different grades in the same classroom. The facilities in the classroom are not conducive for effective learning and teaching.
2. The school has received all the required OBE resources for 1998.
3. Parents are not cooperative and supportive of the programme in the school. As a result of this disinterest of the parents, the teacher cannot take pupils on excursions and other out of school activities.
4. The teacher was able to clearly say what OBE was. This was reflected in her explanation of her understanding of OBE and what she did in class.

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
MAZIYA PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL (14)**

KWAZAMOKUHLE TOWNSHIP, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

**IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Maziya Public Primary School is found in KwaZamokuhle Township on the outskirts of Hendrina Town in Mpumalanga Province. Hendrina is about 50km away from Middelburg Town. This school is one of the ex-Department of Education and Training (ex-DET) schools. Maziya Primary School is in Middelburg No 2 Circuit in the Witbank District.

Most of the children in the school are Zulu speaking. The children come from a poor township and informal settlement community. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the third criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a township school, e.g., an established school in a township with only basic infrastructure in place".

**2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Data from this school was collected in the first week of June (observation session T1) and in the third week October of 1998 for the duration of a week (observation session T2). During each observation session the researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. Any changes in teaching practice would be noted during this second observation session. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom

Table 2 shows resources that are found in Mrs. Nkosi's classroom.

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS NKOSI'S GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |  |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    | The chair is not comfortable as it is for small children. The teacher's table is a small desk. |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | Brightly coloured and creative to reinforce learning   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |     |    |  |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    | Ceiling – good   |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    | Well maintained  |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |  |

### 6.3 OBE resources 6.3.1 For Mrs. Dlamini

Table 3 shows the OBE resources materials that were received by Mrs. Dlamini

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                    | RECEIVED |    |
|--|----------|----|
|  | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase      | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides     | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme without teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages                | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                           | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Nkosi commented that the Literacy programme was written in English. She did not explain why she was concerned that this document was written in English, but one can speculate that she would have liked it to be written in vernacular.

Mrs. Dlamini said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes. She said that she developed these materials in a group with other teachers.

Table 4 shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Nkosi.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. NKOSI**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Nkosi said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes. She said that she developed these materials in a group with other teachers.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Dlamini

Mrs. Dlamini is between 31-40 years old. She has overall teaching experience of one year. She has spent this year teaching at Maziya Primary School. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for one year at this school. She completed her Junior Primary Teacher's Diploma in 1996.

Table 5 shows the OBE INSET courses that were attended by Mrs. Dlamini and their duration.

**TABLE 5: THE OBE INSET COURSES ATTENDED BY MRS. DLAMINI**

| Focus of course                                  | Who offered it     | Duration (Days) | Value of Training |            |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
|  |                    |                 | Useful            | Not useful |
| 1. Curriculum 2005 Pilot School Teacher Training | Dept. of Education | 5               | ✓                 |            |
| 2. Workshop and problems                         | Dept. of Education | Twice per week  | ✓                 |            |
| 3. Workshop and problems                         | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 4. Network of programmes organizers              | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 5. Record instruments and reports                | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 6. Facilitating group work                       | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 7. General principles of assessment              | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |

observation session (the 1½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted on each teacher.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Maziya Public Primary School is a single shift school, providing Grade 1-7. There are 795 pupils in the school. There are 408 or 51 % male pupils and 387 or 49% are female pupils. The language that is spoken by most students is Zulu. A few other pupils speak isiNdebele as their mother tongue. The principal indicated that the language of instruction in the school is Zulu.

The teaching staff of the school is made up of seventeen staff members. There is one principal, one deputy principal and two Heads of Departments. There are sixteen 'permanent' qualified teachers and one 'unqualified' teacher. All these teachers are permanent. There are no teacher-aides in the school.

According to the principal there are two Grade 1 classes and two teachers in this school. There are 68 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998).

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

There are twenty- four classrooms that are in the new block. There is a separate office block. The Principal indicated that the school requires complete rebuilding.

## 5. SCHOOL FACILITIES

The school has the following facilities: a telephone, a storeroom, and a staff room. All of these are in good working condition. The school also has electricity power supply and running water.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the principal about 20-39% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

### 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

#### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Dlamini's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are available in Mrs. Dlamini's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. DLAMINI'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |  |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |  |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    | The chair is not comfortable as it is for small children. The teacher's table is a small desk. |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | Brightly coloured and creative to reinforce learning   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |  |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |  |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |  |

Although Mrs. Dlamini indicated that she felt confident to teach OBE, she said that she requires more training in OBE.

#### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Nkosi

Mrs. Nkosi is between 31-40 years old. She has overall teaching experience of 12 years. She has spent seven years teaching at Maziya Primary School. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for four years at this school. She completed her Junior Primary Teacher's Diploma in 1996.

Table 6 is a table of the OBE INSET courses attended by Mrs. Nkosi.

**TABLE 6: THE OBE INSET COURSES ATTENDED BY MRS. NKOSI**

| Focus of course                                  | Who offered it     | Duration (Days) | Value of Training |            |
|--|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|------------|
|  |                    |                 | Useful            | Not useful |
| 8. Curriculum 2005 Pilot School Teacher Training | Dept. of Education | 5               | ✓                 |            |
| 9. Workshop and problems                         | Dept. of Education | Twice per week  | ✓                 |            |
| 10. Workshop and problems                        | Dept. of Education | Twice per week  | ✓                 |            |
| 11. Network of programmes organizers             | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 12. Record instruments and reports               | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 13. Facilitating group work                      | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |
| 14. General principles of assessment             | Dept. of Education | 1               | ✓                 |            |

#### 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

##### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Dlamini.

Table 6 shows how Mrs. Dlamini compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 7: HOW MRS DLAMINI COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Dlamini indicated that her teaching has changed altogether. She said that in the past her teaching was teacher-centered. She said that it is now learner-centered. Her learners are now active, free to ask questions and they want to discover for themselves.

#### 7.2.2 For Mrs. Nkosi

Table 8 shows how Mrs. Nkosi compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 8: HOW MRS NKOSI COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Nkosi indicated that her teaching has changed altogether. She said that in the past her teaching was teacher-centered. She said that it is now learner-centered. Her learners are now active, free to ask questions and they want to discover for themselves.

Both responses of the two teachers are identical in this instrument.

## **8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE**

### **8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE (Mrs. Dlamini)**

The only interview transcript that I found was that for post T2 interview. All the responses in this summary will refer to this document.

#### **8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE**

The question about the teachers' understanding of OBE was not directly asked. When asked to explain some of her achievements since the implementation of OBE, Mrs. Dlamini said that OBE is a learner-centered process, but did not explain further.

#### **8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?**

No reference was made in this regard.

#### **8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?**

Mrs. Dlamini indicated that her learners have improved drastically in different skills, e.g., in writing and listening skills; they are now able to write some words that they would not have been able to write at that point in previous years. Her learners had improved in manual skills of cutting, pasting and drawing. They can now arrange some letters and sounds to form words.

#### **8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?**

For, Mrs. Dlamini, the main obstacle is lack of support from parents. She attributed this lack of support to lack of knowledge and understanding of OBE. She says that because parents do not understand OBE they do not approve of it. She also pointed out that materials arrive late to schools. Pedagogically she said that she found that since the implementation of OBE, she introduced too many sounds to the learners at the same time, and this might be a hindrance to the learners.

#### **8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?**

There was no direct reference to this question.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Dlamini said that the government must keep their promise to reward teachers who perform well in OBE so as to motivate them. More teachers should be hired in classes. She says that the government should be seen to keep promises that it made to teachers with regard to OBE.

For Mrs. Nkosi

There was no post T1 interview transcript. All information on this section was obtained from post T2 interview for Mrs. Nkosi.

#### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

This was not referred to in the transcript. Mrs. Nkosi says that now her teaching is learners-centered.

#### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

This was not referred to in the transcript.

#### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Nkosi pointed out that learners are now able to work with each other in groups. She said that her learners have shown signs of improvement in mechanical skills such as cutting, pasting and drawing. She says that there is also improvement in numeracy skills where learners are able to write, name symbols and differentiate between even and odd numbers. She also cited examples from literacy skills, saying that learners can make up words for themselves; and arrange some letters.

#### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

Mrs. Nkosi says that one of her main obstacles in implementing OBE in her Grade 1 classroom was that the materials that were sent by the government arrived late to school her school. She reiterated Mrs. Dlamini's point where she showed concern about too many sounds that are introduced at the same time in the Literacy Skill Learning Area. She further concurs with Mrs. Dlamini where she said that lack of knowledge and understanding of OBE on the part of the parents was a major hindrance to the teaching of

OBE. She says that this lack of knowledge of the parent could lead in parents thinking that schools which are still teaching using the content laden modes are better than schools that are more OBE oriented.

#### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Not in this interview.

#### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Nkosi says that the Department of Education must show commitment to OBE by funding the process and not making empty promises. Like Mrs. Dlamini she says that the Department must keep its promise to reward teachers who perform well in OBE in order to motivate them.

### 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

#### 9.1 Learners attendance

For Mrs. Dlamini

The enrolment of learners in Mrs. Dlamini's Grade 1 class was not available. The average attendance was 31 learners. The highest attendance was 33 learners and the lowest was 32 learners. There were no two days where attendance of the learners was equal.

For Mrs. Nkosi

Again there were no figures of the enrolment in Mrs. Nkosi's Grade 1 class. The highest attendance in this class was 33 and the lowest was 32 learners. The average attendance was 33 learners.

## 9.2 Classroom Observations

All the five days that were targeted for T1 classroom observations were completed. All the lessons that were observed were conducted in isiZulu.

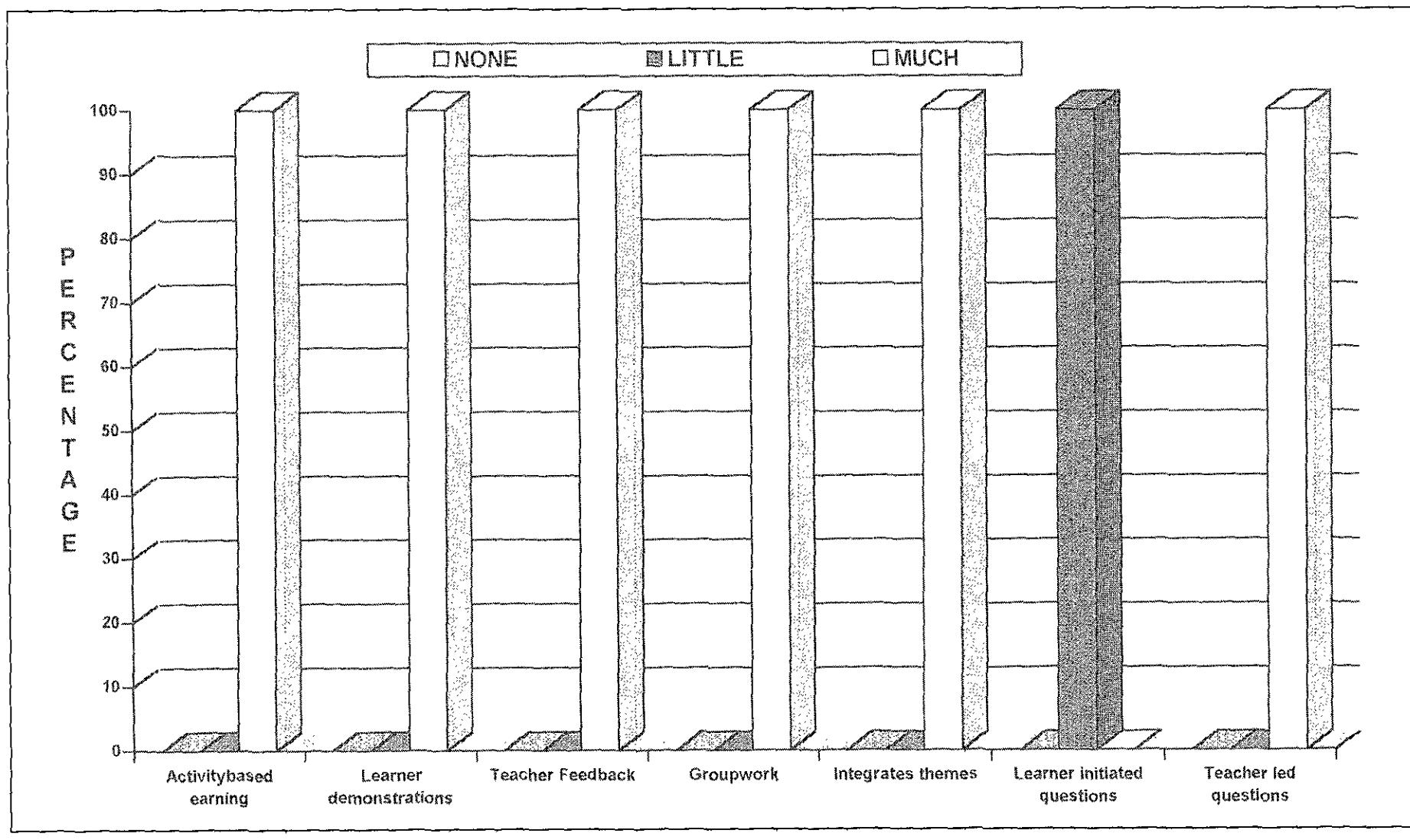
A teacher administered corporal punishment to learners that was absent to school for one day without asking the learner for an explanation. She addressed this child as "hey you stupid".

In one lesson the teacher took the children outside so that the learners could show her what a dam was. Unfortunately when the children went out the teacher stayed behind with her colleague who were standing in the sun.

The teacher gave materials for learners to work on but did not follow the learners nor give any instructions as to what the learners were supposed to do.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY) TYPE)**

The bar graph shows that on each of the six categories, with the exception of 'Learners-initiated questions' there was 'much' of each category that was seen in 100% of the times that was spent in the two classrooms.

There were two physically challenged learners in Mrs. Dlamini's class. The teacher and the learners gave these two learners the same treatment and equal attention as the rest of the class alike.

The researchers also noted that the learners in this classroom are given homework every day after school. The teacher then corrects this homework with the assistance of the learners the next day. An example of one such homework was where learners were to colour and assign some number to some household utensils. The next day the teacher with the children checked whether the learners did what they were requested to do.

### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'much' activity-based learning that was observed 100% of the time spent on classroom observations. Some of the activity that the teachers used included learners colouring, cutting and pasting; speaking and listening, etc.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'much' opportunities to demonstrate what they have learnt for all of the lessons observed, see the bar graph. In many cases where learners had produced some work, this would then be 'corrected' by the teachers with the assistance of the learners.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

This was observed all the time the teacher spent in both classes in the school.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

'Both teachers used much group work in all the lessons that were observed. The learners discussed the different organs that are found in the 'human head'. After discussing these the learners reported back this in their groups.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

This was one of the well-executed skills by both teachers. Example that the researcher gave was a class where the learners were to identify the different body parts that are found in the human head. The researcher reported examples where the part on body parts were used to teach Numeracy through counting and some simple operations, then used to teach about cleanliness.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

This was the least observed category in both classes. 'Little' learners-initiated questions were noted in all the lessons that were observed in the school.

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

Again like all Grade 1 lessons this was a common feature in all the lessons. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to ask 'much' questions for the entire lesson that were observed.

## 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

### 10.1 Classroom attendance

For Mrs. Dlamini

The last day during T2 was used for a school function in the school. This was a day that used for a farewell ceremony of a teacher who had retired earlier in the year. The whole day was used for this function.

The average attendance Mrs. Dlamini's Grade 1 classroom was 34 learners with the lowest attendance being 32 learners and the highest being 35 learners.

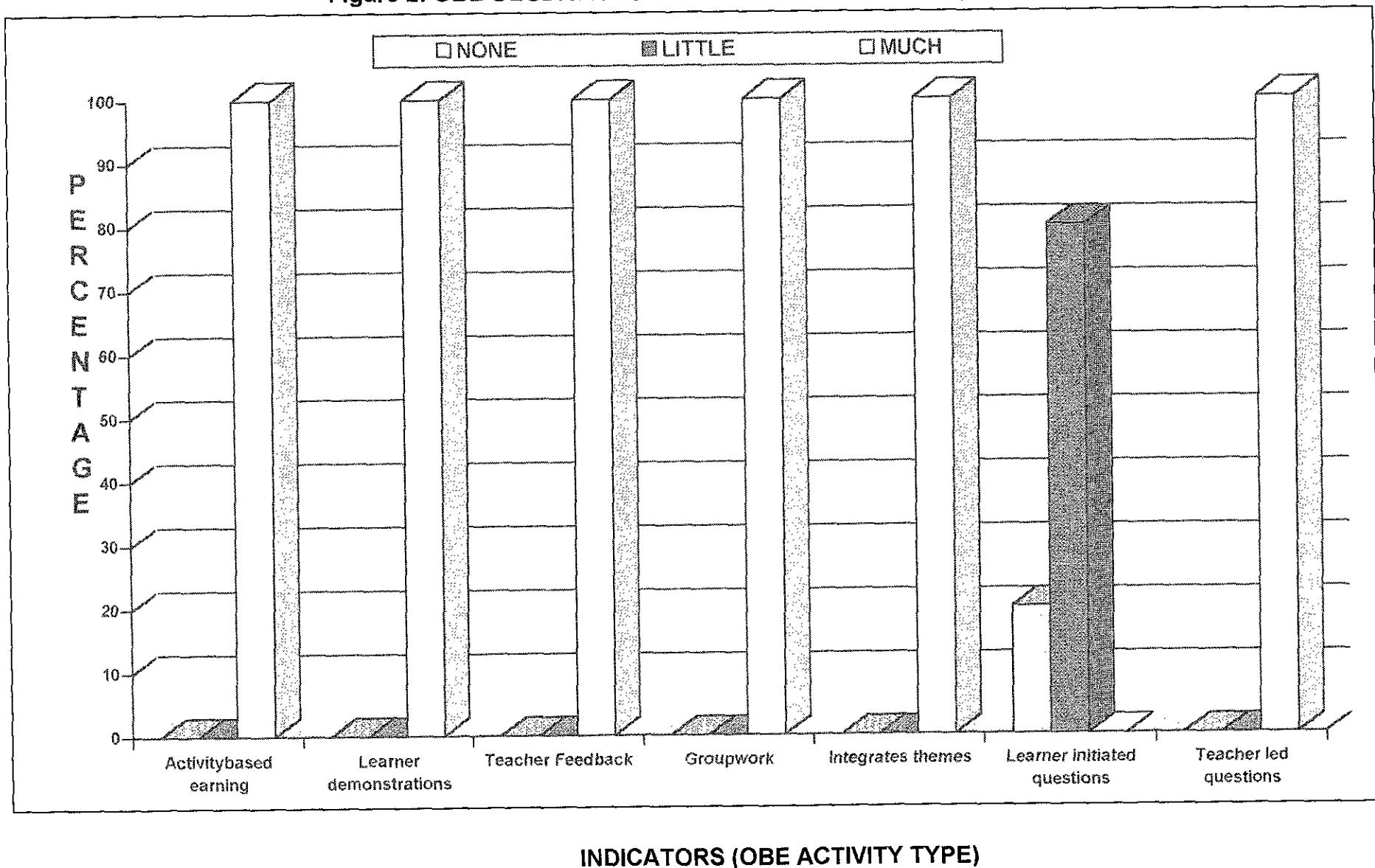
For Mrs. Nkosi

The average attendance in Mrs. Nkosi's class was 31 learners, with the highest attendance being 31 learners and the lowest attendance being 30 learners.

#### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations. The bar graph shows that the researcher noted identical pattern in the activities in T2 to those in T1.

Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.



### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

In both T1 and T2 there was 'much' activity based learning that was witnessed in both the two classes. There was 'much' activity-based learning in all (100%) in all the classes during T1 and T2.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again this was the dominant feature in all the lessons, in both T1 and T<sub>2</sub> observation sessions. In both T1 and T2 both teachers were observed to grant learners 'much' opportunities to demonstrate what they learnt for 100% the time that the researcher spent in the classrooms.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teachers were observed to provide learners with 'much' individual feedback in all the lessons that were observed in the school in both T1 and T2.

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

Again on this category there was the same observation in both T1 and T2. In both cases the teachers were seen to have 'much' group work in all the lessons that were observed.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

'Much' integration of different learning field was noted for 100% of the time spent in the school during T1 and T2. This shows that both these teachers integrate different learning fields in almost all their lessons in both observation sessions.

### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

The same pattern emerges in both T1 and T2. In both cases this was the least noted activity that was noted in the classroom. In both T1 and T2 there was 'little' learners-initiated questions noted for all (100%) of the time that was spends in the school.

### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 the teachers asked most of the questions. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

## 11. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. Most of the learners come from very poor home backgrounds. Many do not have the necessary materials that they need for learning all subjects. Parents are very poor and uneducated. They are not cooperative with the teachers.
2. Both teachers are well qualified. Both have extensively attended OBE INSET courses. They both value the training they have received.
3. Both teachers acknowledge that their teaching methods have changed since the introduction of OBE. They both say that their teaching is now learner centered.
4. The school has acquired all the OBE materials it expected from the government. Both teachers said that they have prepared their own OBE materials to complement what they have received from the government.
5. Both teachers were observed to be practicing OBE. The researcher had a very high regard with what she saw the teachers doing in their classrooms.
6. The teachers would like to urge the governments to fulfil their promises of giving merit awards to teachers who perform very well. They would also like to advise the government to retrain teachers for OBE through INSET courses.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
MIDDELBURG PRIMARY SCHOOL (12)

MIDDELBURG, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Middelburg Primary School is a former Model C school in Mpumalanga Province. The school has playing fields, a swimming pool and hostel facilities for about 200 children. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the first criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a well-resourced white school, e.g., a white former Model C or private school".

The population of the school is just under 1000 learners of whom about 60% are White and 40% are African. The principal indicated that some children in the school come from Mozambique, Botswana and Swaziland. The language of instruction is English.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the first week of June (observation session T1) and in the third week of October 1998 for the duration of a week (observation session T2). During the observation sessions, the researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation session would show whether any changes had occurred in teaching practice. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire).

The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T1 an interview was conducted with each Grade 1 teacher in the impact study.

During second observation session T2 two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### 3. SCHOOL PROFILE

Middelburg Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to 7. It is located in the Witbank District in the Middelburg Circuit in Middelburg in Mpumalanga Province. The enrolment in this school is 871 with 429 (49%) male pupils and 442 (51 %) female pupils. The home language of most pupils is English (54%). Other languages spoken by some learners are Zulu (15%), Afrikaans (11%) and seSotho (7%). The language of instruction is English.

The teaching staff comprises of thirty-three (33) staff members made of the principal, two deputy principals, three heads of departments and twenty-seven (27) teachers. There are no teaching aides in this school.

According to the principal there are three Grade 1 classes in this school. There are 90 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998) comprising of 48 (53%) boys and 42 (47%) girls. The principal further indicated that 61% of the learners are English-speaking; 20% are Afrikaans-speaking; 11 % are isiZulu-speaking and 9% are seSotho-speaking.

## 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS

The school looks well kept and well maintained. There are thirty-two (32) classrooms in the school. The principal indicated that most or all classrooms need minor repairs. There are separate offices for the principal and management staff and separate offices for the secretaries. All these offices are in a good condition.

## 5. SCHOOL FACILITIES

The school has the following facilities: a telephone; a fax machine; a photocopier; a staffroom; a sports field and a swimming pool. The principal said that all these facilities are in a good condition. The principal indicated that there is also a storeroom that is in a poor condition. The school also has electricity power supply and running water.

## 6. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 6.1 For Learners

According to the principal about 60-79% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

### 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

#### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Coetzee's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that are found in Mrs. Coetzee's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. COETZEE'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment  |
|--|-----|----|----------------------|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    |                      |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    |                      |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |                      |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |                      |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    |                      |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    | Clear and attractive |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |                      |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |                      |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |                      |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |                      |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |                      |

**TABLE 6: HOW MRS PRETORIUS COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 5. Activity -based learning                    | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 6. Team-work                                   | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning | ✓          |                   |                   |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             | ✓          |                   |                   |

Mrs. Pretorius pointed out that her teaching has not changed from the previous years. She says "the terminology appears to be changing, e.g., Differentiation - group work; aims and objectives - specific outcomes; critical outcomes".

The table shows that Mrs. Pretorius said that she has not changed in her practices from 1997 in all aspects of her practices, except for group work, which has increased.

## 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE Mrs. Coetzee

#### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

There is no evidence of Mrs. Coetzee's understanding of OBE from her transcript. The responses to the interview questions only show her conviction that that OBE can only work if there is a proper foundation, which she refers to as the "basics". She says that unless these basics are taught to children when they first come to school, then it would be impossible to implement OBE.

#### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Coetzee believes that she is practicing OBE in her Grade 1 class because "the kids are giving me the information, the learners are answering questions rather than me telling

them". She indicated that most of the time she has to restrain herself from providing learners with the answers as was the case in her previous Grade 1 lessons.

Although she believed that she is in fact teaching OBE Mrs. Coetzee strongly emphasized that she still continues to teach the learners the basics skills. She said that once the basic concepts are instilled in the learners then OBE can follows.

#### 8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Coetzee says that her main success with OBE is that the learners are contributing to groups and to the lessons actively this year compared to her previous learners.

At the end of T2 Mrs. Coetzee gave the following response to the same questions:

Learners are contributing in groups and are active in lessons. I start with basics before going into OBE. They are now able to do activities for themselves, e.g., finding words for themselves. Learners are giving all the information, helping each other to answer questions and they are enjoying it.

#### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

Mrs. Coetzee said that the learners expect to be given things, and are not prepared to go out and use their own imagination and creativity to make things up. She said that the learners "... are not using resources they have in themselves".

She believed that there is no difficulty with teachers who use their imagination to come up with ideas. She highlighted the fact that in her school there is every thing that they may need to teach OBE, what is left is for them, as teachers, to use their imagination.

#### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Coetzee reiterated that when learners first come to school they have to be taught some basics because "... you can't just tell the children to discover things". She said that as far as she is concerned the basics come first and then you can introduce OBE once the learners understand the basics.

### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Coetzee felt that OBE teachers need to use their imagination. She says that even though resources are important, it is also important for teachers to creatively use resources that are available to the best of their imagination. She insisted that with proper use of creative imagination, teachers can use anything to teach OBE.

She would advise the government to tell teachers that it is important to teach the basics. On the post T2 interview, Mrs. Coetzee repeated her earlier call that the department should instruct the teachers to teach the basics, as she believes that they are most important. She advised the department to train teachers through INSET workshops. She reiterated that resources are important "... not only resources that you buy, but also resources that you make yourself.

For Mrs. Pretorius

### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

As with Mrs. Coetzee, there was no direct reference or question that requested Mrs. Pretorius to explain her understanding of OBE.

### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Pretorius believes that she is teaching OBE. But she indicated that in Grade 1, the teacher has to teach the basic skills learners need to know. She said that the learners can not carry out OBE without these skills.

Mrs. Pretorius said that this year she concentrates "... a bit more on group work, children giving their own ideas, doing their own thinking".

Mrs. Pretorius reiterated that she still teaches the learners things they should know. She said that as before "... they still use basic skills, group work, and my teaching has not changed much" but she did not specify the aspects of her teaching that had not changed.

### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Pretorius said that the changes that she has noted with the learners are that they are naughty, they give their ideas and enjoy themselves and they ask questions, This would suggest that the general classroom environment is more relaxed and conducive for effective learning to take place.

At a later interview Mrs. Pretorius gave this response to the same questions "Learners are thrilled with OBE, they are enjoying themselves and they demonstrate good understanding and progress. What makes this success possible is that, I teach the basics first in the traditional/ classical way and then later use the OBE method.

### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

When asked about the obstacle of OBE that she has encountered in both interviews she said that she had not had any obstacles.

### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 4 learners?

She said that when children first come to school to do Grade 1 they can not read and write, they do not know the alphabet and the letters. She insisted that there are some certain basic skills that they must be taught "... from there they can decide things for themselves ... from there they can go into group work". She reiterated that to her the basics are very important before she can concentrate on OBE.

### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Pretorius felt that for her to optimally implement OBE classes must be trimmed down. Her main advice was that for the future of OBE is:

- the basics should be taught first before they (the learners) can go and work in groups
- limiting the number of learners in the classrooms
- there should be more OBE INSET workshops where people are given strict guidelines to follow.

At the post T2 interview Mrs. Pretorius said she would advise the Department of Education ... tell the teachers that OBE should be used together with the classical teaching method". She explained that she advocated this because when learners came into Grade 1 they have no ability to read or write. They also don't know the alphabet. "... then how could one expect them to read newspapers..." She also showed some concern about the large numbers of learners in Grade 1 classrooms.

## 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1. 9.1 Learners attendance

For Mrs. Coetzee

There was no indication of the enrolment of learners in Mrs. Coetzee's Grade 1 class. Attendance in this class ranged from 24 learners (one day) to 28 learners (one day). The average attendance was 26 learners.

For Mrs. Pretorius

There was no figure obtained for the enrolment in Mrs. Pretorius class. The highest attendance in this class was 27 (four days) and the lowest was 25 learners. The average attendance was 27.

### 9.2 Classroom Observations

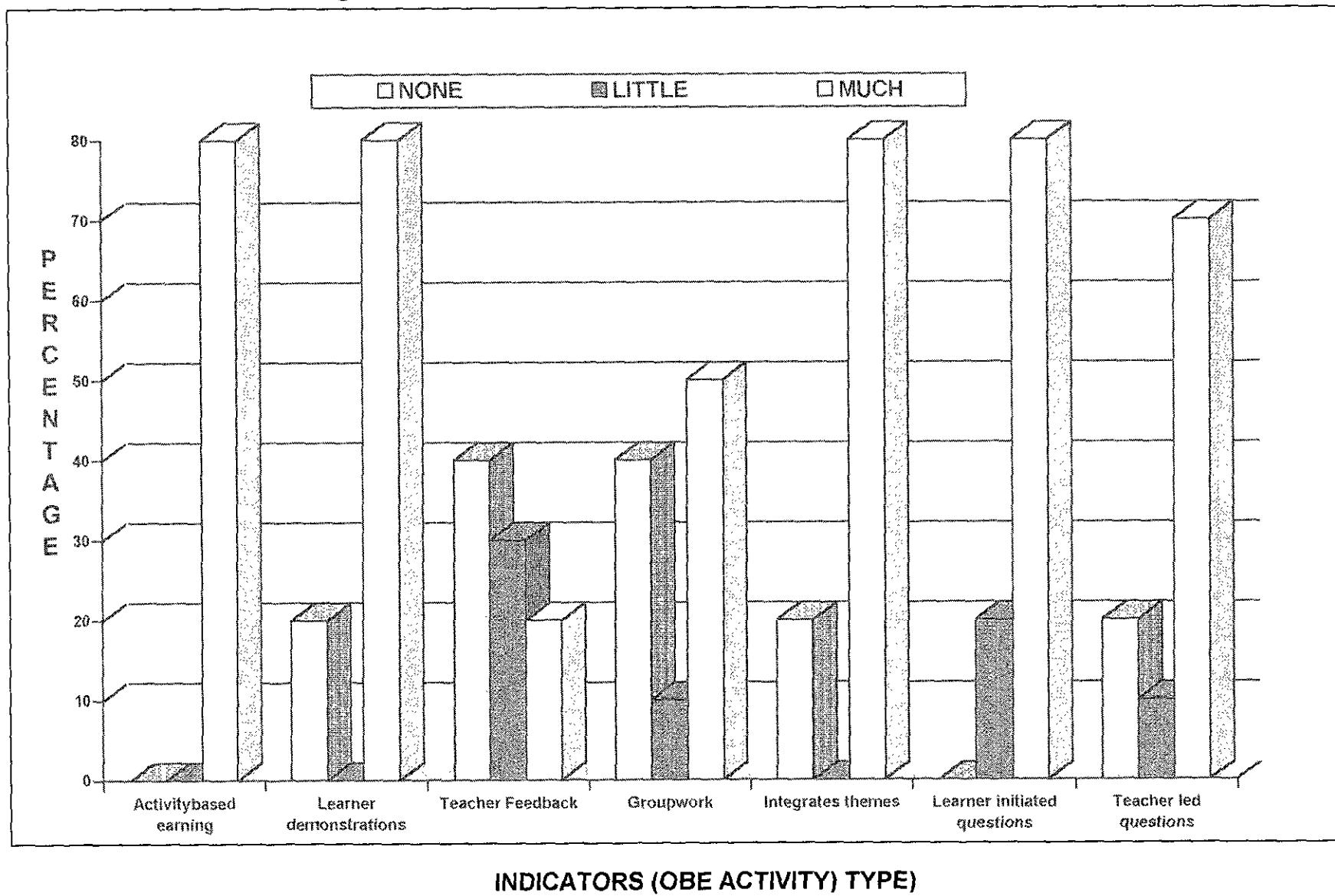
All the five days that were targeted for T1 classroom observations were completed.

On the fifth day of T1 all Junior Primary classes assembled in the school hall, where a guest teacher delivered a speech about "space". All learners sat quietly in the hall listening to the speaker. They were allowed to ask questions at the end of the talk.

All the lessons that were observed were conducted in English.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

All the lessons that were observed had 'much' activity-based learning. This was for 80% of the time spent on classroom observations. The remaining 20% was the time all the Junior Primary classes were put together for the 'space talk'. Both teachers had prepared different types of very innovative activities for their learners. In some of her lessons Mrs. Pretorius gave learners activities and provided learners with minimum guides and still managed to get the expected outcomes from her learners.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again the bar graph reveals that both teachers gave learners ample opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt. The bar graph shows that both teachers were seen to give learners 'much' opportunities for 80% of the time that was spent in the classrooms. Both teachers gave the learners these opportunities in different ways. For example, in one class the learners were requested to present what they had worked on in their groups to the rest of their peers.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

Both teachers gave learners feedback in a different ways. One day, Mrs Coetzee arranged for a shop assistant to sell and give change to learners who were able to work out the amount they needed to tender and the expected change that was due to them. There were instances where prizes were given to learners that gave the expected answers. The bar graph shows that both teachers did not provide feedback for 40% of the time that they were observed. The teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for 20% and 'little' feedback for 30% of the time spent in their classrooms.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

Both teachers were very innovative in the way they used group work. The researchers reported a case where a teacher (Mrs. Pretorius) gave learners some materials and requested the to discuss how they would represent these on chart paper. After their discussion the learners were are able to resent and reason what they displayed for the class. Mrs. Coetzee was observed to engage her learners in a problem-solving activity in a

group. Both teachers encourage the groups to present what they did as groups. The teachers were observed to use 'much' group work for 50% of the time of the observation. There was no group work that was observed for about 40% of the time.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teachers were seen to integrate themes from different learning fields for all the time they spent in the classrooms. Teachers used pupils' daily experiences in the lessons. Learner-initiated questions

Pupils asked many questions in all the lessons that were observed for both teachers. The atmosphere in the school is very conducive to learning and encourages learners to ask questions. This is unlike other schools involved in the study where pupils simply never asked questions.

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

Again like all Grade 1 lessons this was a common feature in all the lessons. The bar graph shows that the teachers were seen to ask 'much' questions for all the lessons that were observed. As indicated there two lessons that were used for a speech that was delivered by a guest speaker. This constitutes 20% of the time that was observed. This was the only times that there were not teacher-led questions.

## 10.CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

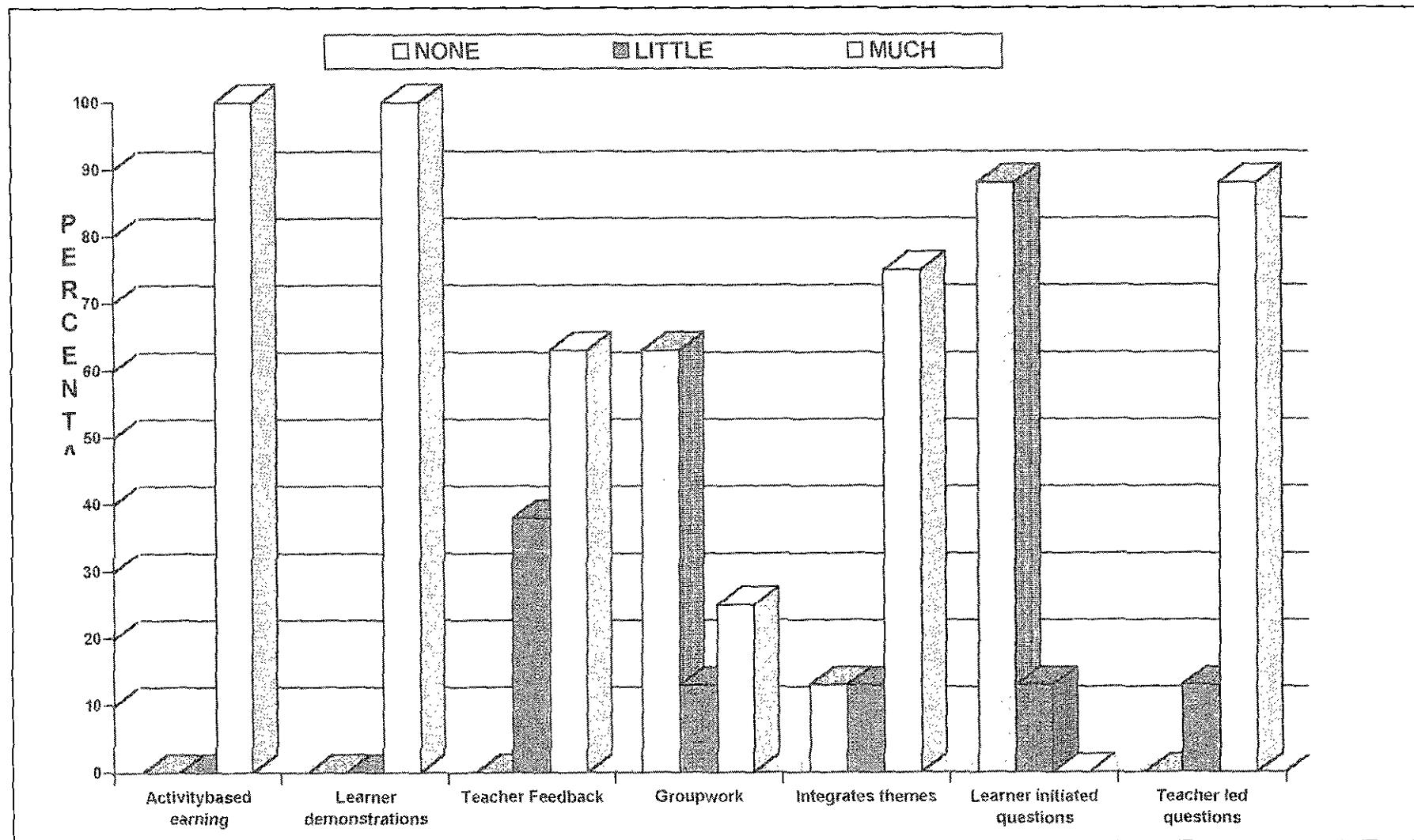
### 10.1 Classroom attendance

In all the days of T2 observations the attendance in both Mrs. Coetzee and Mrs. Pretorius' classroom was 31 each.

### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY TYPE)**

### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

In both T1 and T2 there was 'much' activity based learning that was witnessed in both the two classes. There was 'much' activity-based learning in all (100%) the classes that were observed. Both teachers appeared to have really thought of appropriate activities that would engage learners throughout the lessons. These backs what the teachers said that when teaching OBE, teachers have to use the available materials and resources creatively.

### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again this was the dominant feature in all lessons in both T1 and T2 observation sessions. Learners were given opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt in different ways, e.g., in groups representations following group discussions and in chart displays.

### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

Both teachers were seen to provide more individual feedback to the learners T2 compared to T1. During T1 the teachers were observed to provide 'much' feedback for about 20% of the time spent in the classroom observation compared to 63% over the same time spent in T2

### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

Group work organization changed over the two observation sessions T1 and T2. For example during T1 'much' group work was observed to be used in the classes for 25% of the observation time. In many lessons during T2, the teachers used group work for different activities in the class. They used it 50% of the time. On the other hand, there was no group work for 63% of the time of the observation during T1 compared to only 40% of the time in T2. It appears that group work is the most difficult and the most under utilized strategy that teachers employ with the Grade 1 learners.

### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

'Much' integration of different learning field was noted for 80% of the time spent in the school during T1 and 75% of the time in T2. This shows that both these teachers integrate

different learning fields in almost all their lessons in both observation sessions. In both T1 and T2, the time when there was no integration was when there were no formal lessons due to some other school engagement.

#### 10.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

There was a very sharp contrast in the two observation sessions on this category. During T1 'much' learner-initiated questions were observed in all the lessons that were observed. During T2 there were no learner-initiated questions noted in all the lessons that were observed. One wonders what could have caused this sharp change in the behavior of all the children in two different classrooms.

#### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 there was 'much' teachers led questions in almost all the lessons that were observed. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

### 11. SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

1. The Grade 1 teachers were well qualified and experienced. They had both received training in OBE and were confident and competent to teach OBE. They both indicated that they had received all the necessary materials to teach OBE.
2. Both teachers said that they had not changed much in their approaches of teaching compared to the previous years. Both felt that the OBE approach should be used in conjunction with the traditional approaches. They felt that the two complement each other.
3. Both teachers believe that learners need to be taught some basic skills before they can engage with OBE. They feel that OBE assumes some prior knowledge of these skills on learners. Only after learners have acquired these basic skills will they be ready for OBE.

4. Both teachers say that the learners are enthused and enjoy OBE. They said that learners contribute and participate more in the classrooms.
5. Teachers need to be retrained in OBE.
6. The teachers in this school are thoroughly prepared and organized. Learners' activities were well prepared.
7. The teachers were concerned about large classes. They felt that this impeded the implementation of OBE.
8. Both teachers were seen to be practicing OBE. Both teachers associated OBE with learner oriented classrooms. Both were seen to be engaging learners in their classrooms.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
UMHLATHUZANA PRIMARY SCHOOL (4)

CHATSWORTH, KWAZULU-NATAL

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Umhlathuzana Primary School is situated in Chatsworth near Durban City in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. This school is an ex-House of Delegates (HoD) school. Most of the children in the school are of Indian descent. There are also Zulu-speaking and Afrikaans-speaking children. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the second criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a less well resourced school, e.g., a moderately resourced Indian school in Chatsworth area".

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the last week of May (observation session T1) and in the first week October of 1998 for duration of a week (observation session T2). During each observation session the researcher spent five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice. A period of about three months was allowed to lapse between the two observation sessions T1 and T2. This time (the incubation period) was allowed in order to note whether there would be any changes in the teachers' practices with regard to OBE after the teachers' exposure to OBE. The second observation session would show whether any changes had occurred in teaching practice. It is assumed that these changes would be due to training in OBE.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T1, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F).

The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T, an interview was conducted with each teacher.

During second observation session (T2) two instruments were administered to the school. Instrument F (Classroom Observation) and post observation interview, Instrument E. The researcher completed both these instruments. The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Umhlathuzana Primary School is a single shift school providing Grade 1-7. There are 436 learners in the school. There are 228 or 52% male learners and 208 or 48% are female learners in the school. Most learners speak English. The language of instruction in the school is English.

According to the principal there is one Grade 1 class and one Grade 1 teacher in this school. There are 45 learners doing Grade 1 this year (1998). There are no teacher-aides in the school.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

According to the principal the some classrooms need minor repairs. The acting principal said that the school has a staff-room and a storeroom, both are in good condition.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The following facilities are available in the school: a telephone, a fax machine, a photocopying machine, and a sports field. All these facilities are in good condition. There is mains electricity power supply and running water.

### **6. SCHOOL RESOURCES**

#### **6.1 For Learners**

According to the principal about 60-79% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

## 6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms

### 6.2.1 for Mrs. Govender's Grade 1 classroom

Table 1 is a table of resources that were found in Mrs. Govender's Grade 1

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. GOVENDER'S CLASSROOM**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative comment   |
|--|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓   |    | The teacher argues that there is no sufficient space to arrange desks for group work. |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓   |    | See above   |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓   |    |   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓   |    | Reasonable  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓   |    |   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓   |    |   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓   |    |   |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓   |    |   |

The researcher indicated that there is large variety of 'traditional' readers: Hayway Series, Beacon Series. There is a little carpeted nook at the back of the class, 3m x 3m area. Children are moved at different times in a day to this corner and teaching and learning takes place from there. It was cramped but the children did not seem to be concerned with 'personal space'. The researcher indicated that there is adequate supply of resources.

## 6.3 OBE resources

### 6.3.1 For Mrs. Govender

**TABLE 2: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Govender said that there were OBE materials that were developed in the school. There were some materials that she developed individually together with a group of teachers and those that she developed with the assistance of school management. She said that there were some OBE materials that she developed through the assistance of the Department of Education and others that she developed with the assistance of a teachers' union.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHER IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Govender

Mrs. Govender is between 31-40 years old. She has overall teaching experience of 12 years. She has taught at Umhlathuzana Primary School for six years. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for twelve years at this school. She completed her Primary Teachers Diploma in 1970.

Mrs. Govender says that she has attended a two-day Principle/notions of OBE INSET training course offered by the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. Mrs. Govender said that she did not find this INSET course useful. She stated that she is not competent and confident to teach OBE. She did not value the training she had received and felt the need for further training.

During T1 the researcher noted that Mrs. Govender was still unsure about OBE.

### 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

#### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Govender.

Table 4 shows how Mrs. Govender compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997)

**TABLE 3: HOW MRS GOVENDER COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Govender said that she uses both methods, she has not radically changed her approach especially with respect to numeracy and formal writing (traditional approach). She says that she uses OBE materials in an ad hoc way.

#### &TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

##### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE Mrs. Govender

The only interview transcript that I found was that for post T2 interview. All the responses in this summary will refer to this document.

###### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

The question about the teachers' understanding of OBE was not directly asked. The teacher indicated that OBE was a brilliant idea. She saw it as ideal for junior primary level. It allowed for a great degree of flexibility.

###### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

No reference was made to this regard.

#### **8.1.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?**

Mrs. Govender said that her learners were more involved in the lessons; there was greater participation leading to more practical lessons and more demonstrations. She said that she measured success in terms of combining old and new methods at different stages in a lesson.

#### **8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?**

Mrs. Govender said that she has to teach rather than to facilitate in her classes because of the large number of learners in her class. She says that because of this severe situation, it is impossible to form social groups in the class. She said that she also has problems with arranging furniture in this large class.

She says that her 'Black' learners have language-related problems in the class. As a result of this language difficulty, these learners do not contribute in class discussions,

She says that some resources that were distributed to schools by the department arrived late at the school.

#### **8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?**

There was no direct reference to this question.

#### **8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?**

Mrs. Govender said that for OBE to work very successfully the government needs to reduce the class sizes. She also suggested that there should be more INSET workshops organized for teachers by the department. She felt that the department of Education must assist teachers in developing materials.

### **12.A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little

means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times. Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

### 9.1 Learners attendance For Mrs. Govender

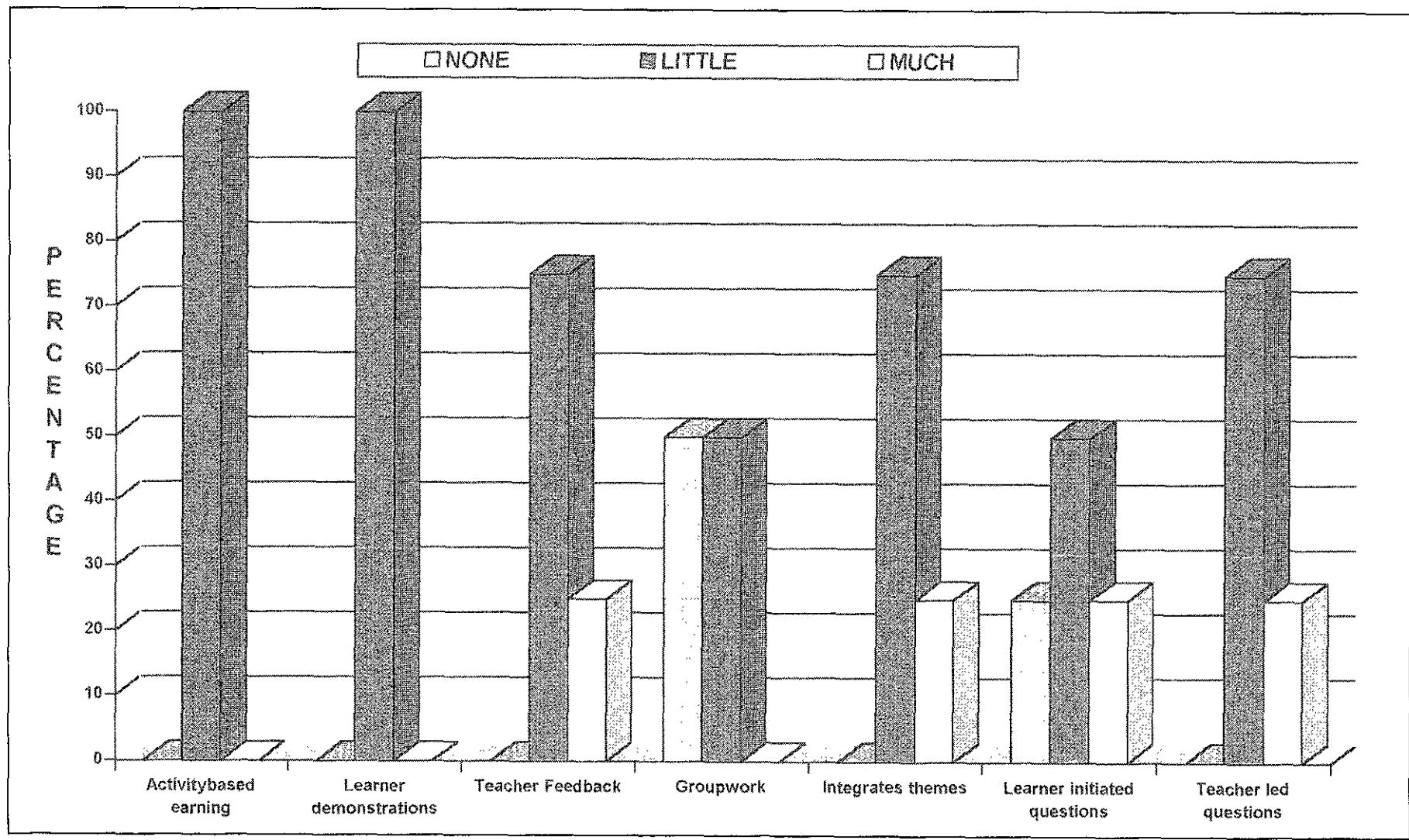
The enrolment of learners in Mrs. Govender's Grade 1 class was 45 learners, 1 White, 2 Coloureds, 6 Blacks and 36 Indians. The average attendance was 44 learners. In four out of five days the attendance was 100%.

### 9.2 Classroom Observations

All the five days that were targeted for T1 classroom observations were completed. A day was lost because the teacher was on study leave. On this day a parent came to supervise the class. The head of department prepared the tasks that the learners performed on this day.

The teacher admitted to the researcher that she was not following the OBE method in her class. The researcher noted an African child who was scribbling on an old tattered page. She says that this learner did not understand a word of English and yet the teacher ignored her completely. Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY) TYPE)**

The bar graph reveals that for most of the sessions that were observed there was very little OBE that was taking place.

### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

There was 'little' activity-based learning that was observed 100% of the time spent on classroom observations. The teacher simply used whole class instruction and scribbled some words separately for learners on the board.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Learners were given 'little' opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt for all of the lessons observed. From the description given above one would note that if the teacher is teaching slowly and deliberately it would be difficult her to give learners opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teacher assessed learners using the traditional techniques of assessment. There was no individual/group or peer evaluation in this classroom. The teacher feels "inadequate" to implement new assessment techniques and seems to see it as an impossible task for 45 learners.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

As stated, most of the teaching was teacher-centered. The teachers used 'little' group work in all the lessons that were observed. She made one attempt to use group work but she could not continue because of the high noise level. The learners, themselves were unable to work in groups.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

This teacher tried to integrate different learning fields through the theme 'messages', without success. The teachers could not draw links with different areas.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

'Much' learner-initiated questions were noted in 25% of the lessons that were observed in the school

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

'Much' teacher-led questions were observed for about 25% of the time. For 75% of the time the teacher asked 'little' teacher-lead questions. This is not surprising bearing in mind that the teacher 'taught' in most of the lessons that were observed.

## 13. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION; T2

### 10.1 Classroom attendance

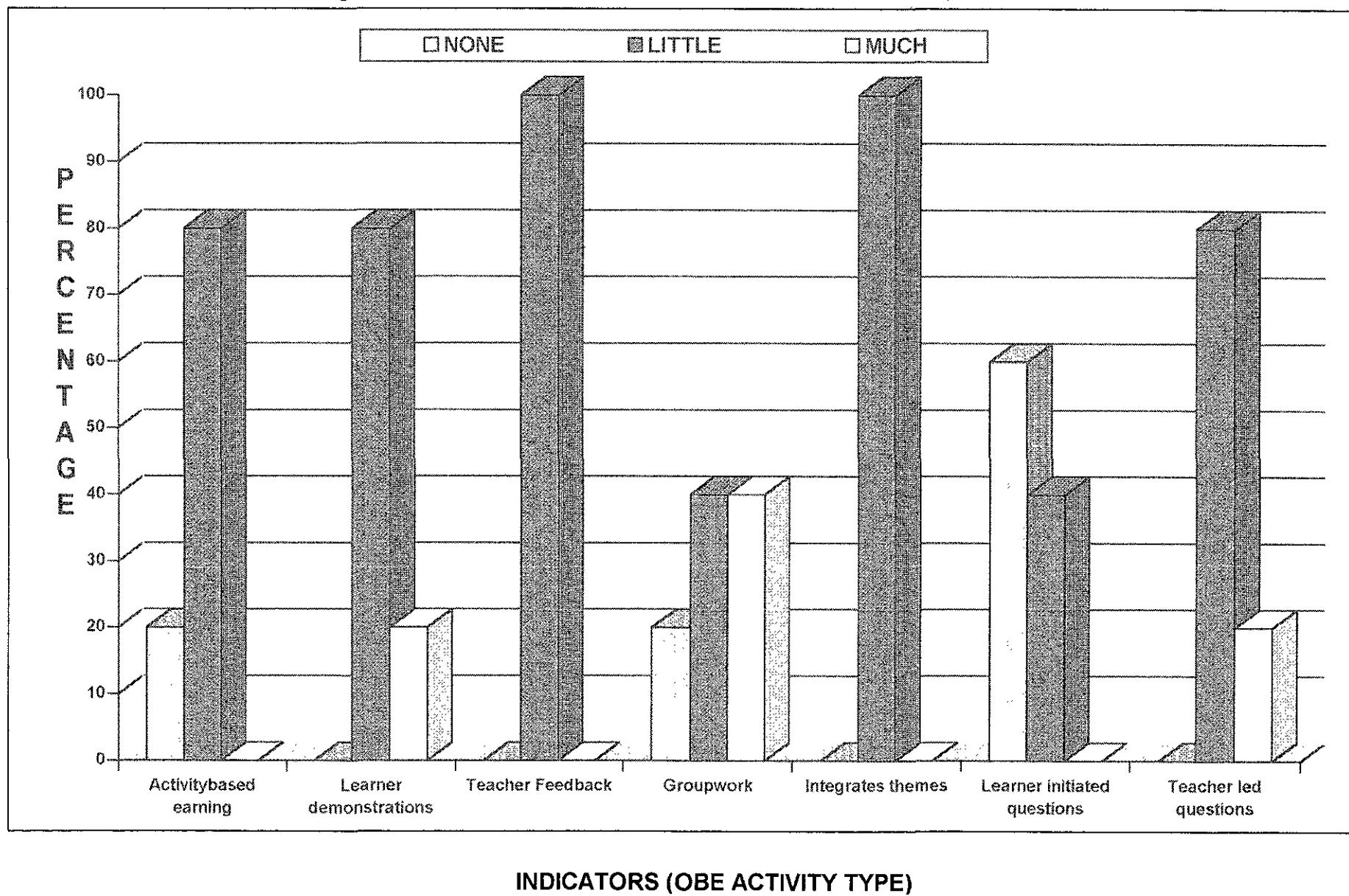
For Mrs. Govender

The attendance of learners in Mrs. Govender's Grade 1 was 100%. There were 43 learners this term unlike during T1 where there were 45 learners. It seems that two learners had left.

### 10.2 Classroom observations.

Figure 2 is the bar graph of the classroom observations that were carried out during T2 observations

**Figure 2: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>2</sub>.**



There were other distractions in the classroom, e.g., the head count of children by personnel from the department and collection of money for photographs for a cultural function called Diwali.

The bar graph reveals that there is no significant difference in the pattern for the two graphs. There was a 'little' of most activities.

#### 10.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

In both T1 and T2 there was 'little' activity based learning for 80% of the times in T2. Teacher 'teaching' rather than facilitating was still the dominant part of the lesson. There were some reading activities, where learners worked with some paper cuttings in groups. Choral phonic responses were still heard.

#### 10.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again 'little of this category was noted by the researcher.

#### 10.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teacher gave learners 'little' feedback in all the lessons that were observed.

#### 10.3.4 Students organized in groups

The teacher used 'little' group work in her class. In some of her classes she grouped children according to their ability. On one occasion she gave different groups different sets of reading to work with. She indicated that other groups continue with self-activities while the teacher monitored group work.

#### 10.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

The teacher was seen to integrate different learning fields a 'little' for 100% of the time. Learner-initiated questions

The same pattern emerges in both T1 and T2. In both cases this was the least noted activity in the classroom.

### 10.3.7 Teacher-led questions

In both T1 and T2 the teacher asked almost all the questions. This can be expected as most Grade 1 teachers and teachers in general ask questions as part of instruction or to check for understanding of the learners in most of their classes.

## 14. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

1. Most of the learners come from very poor home backgrounds. Many do not have the necessary materials that they need for learning all subjects. Many of the parents are poor and uneducated. They are not cooperative with the teachers.
2. Both teachers are well qualified. Both have extensively attended OBE INSET courses. They both highly value the OBE INSET course that they have attended.
3. Both teachers acknowledge that their teaching methods have changed since the introduction of OBE. They both say that their teaching is now learner centered.
4. The school has acquired all the OBE materials it expected from the government. Both teachers said that they have prepared their own OBE materials to complement what they have received from the government.
5. Both teachers were observed to be practicing OBE. The research had a very high regard with what she saw the teachers do in their classrooms.
6. The teachers would like to urge the governments to fulfill their promises of giving merits to teachers who perform very well. They would also like to advise the government to retrain teacher for OBE in INSET courses.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS PINE  
RIDGE COMBINED SCHOOL (15)

WITBANK, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Pine Ridge Combined School is a former House of Delegates (HoD) school in Mpumalanga Province. This school was chosen for this evaluation study because it fitted the second criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "a less well resourced school, e.g., a moderately resourced Indian school".

The population of the school is just under 1000 in this school. The language of instruction in the school is English.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

Data from this school was collected in the second week of June (observation session T<sub>1</sub>) for duration of a week. Five consecutive days of intensive observation of classroom practice were spent in the school by the researcher.

The principal completed Instrument A (School Profile) and the Grade 1 teachers in the evaluation study completed Instrument B (Teacher Characteristics Profile) and Instrument D (Teacher Questionnaire). The researcher completed two sets of instruments during T<sub>1</sub>, viz., Instruments C (Classroom Resources Profile) and Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument F was completed by the researcher per classroom observation session (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break). Seven indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents (see Appendix F). The rating used in this instrument were 'None'; 'Little' (1 or 2 times); and 'Much'. At the end of T<sub>1</sub> an interview was conducted on each Grade 1 teacher in the impact study.

The data from Instrument F (Classroom Observation Schedule) was captured and analyzed on Microsoft Excel software.

### **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Pine Ridge Combined School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to 12. It is located in the Witbank District in Witbank Circuit One in Mpumalanga Province. The enrolment in this school is 885 with 415 (47%) male pupils and 415 (53%) female pupils. The home language of most pupils is Zulu. Other languages spoken by learners are isiNdebele, English and isiXhosa. The language of instruction is English.

There are two Grade 1 teachers and no teaching aides in this school. According to the principal there are two Grade 1 classes in this school.

### **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS**

The school looks well kept and well maintained. The principal indicated the school is in a good condition. There is a staff-room and storeroom. Both these are in good condition.

### **5. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The school has the following facilities: a telephone; a fax machine; a photocopier; a staff-room and a sports field. The principal said that all these facilities are in a good condition. The school also has mains electricity power supply and running water.

### **6. SCHOOL RESOURCES**

#### **6.1 For Learners**

According to the principal about 80-100% of the learners have all required learning materials in all subjects in the school.

#### **6.2 For Grade 1 classrooms**

##### **6.2.1 for Mrs. Adams's Grade 1 classroom**

Table 1 is a table of resources that are found in Mrs. Adams's Grade 1 classroom.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS. ADAMS'S CLASSROOM**

|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Qualitative comment</b>              |
|--|------------|-----------|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓          |           | A small table and chair for each child. |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓          |           | Table small but suitable for each child |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓          |           | Teacher's table big enough              |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓          |           | Four large lamps in the class           |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓          |           |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓          |           | Clear and attractive                    |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      | ✓          |           |   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓          |           | Four windows on two sides, reach top    |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓          |           | With ceiling                            |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓          |           |   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓          |           | Also small board for learners           |

The class has enough space for movement. It was kept clean and it had a paper basket. There was space for putting bags outside the class. Books were kept in cupboards and shelves.

Table 2 shows the resources that were found in Mrs. Benjamin's Grade 1 Classroom.

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR MRS BENJAMIN'S GRADE 1 CLASSROOM**

|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Qualitative comment</b>              |
|--|------------|-----------|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate seating space.                         | ✓          |           | Each child has his own table and chair. |
| 2. There is adequate writing space for learners.               | ✓          |           | Table grouped to form 7 tables          |
| 3. There is a chair and a table for the teachers.              | ✓          |           | Teachers table is big enough            |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | ✓          |           | Four bulbs                              |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks.         | ✓          |           | Class size 5.800m x 5.100m              |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall.                     | ✓          |           |   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained.                      |            |           |   |
| 8. There is good ventilation.                                  | ✓          |           | 4 large windows on two sides            |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed.                             | ✓          |           | Also having Ceiling.                    |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair. | ✓          |           | Large enough                            |
| 11. Chalkboard is available.                                   | ✓          |           | Also small chalk board for learners     |

The class has enough space for movement. It is kept clean, has paper basket, Space for keeping bags is out of the class; books are kept in cupboards and shelves.

6.3 OBE resources 6.3.1 For Mrs. Adams Table 3 shows the OBE resources and materials that were received by Mrs. Adams

**TABLE 3: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

| OBE MATERIALS                                    | RECEIVED |    |
|--|----------|----|
|  | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase      | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides     | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme without teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages                | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                           | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Adams said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE Grade 1 classes in a group with other teachers.

Table 4 shows OBE materials that were received by Mrs. Benjamin.

**TABLE 4: OBE GRADE MATERIALS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY MRS. BENJAMIN**

| OBE MATERIALS                                 | RECEIVED |    |
|---|----------|----|
|   | YES      | NO |
| 1. Policy Document for the foundation phase   | ✓        |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 3. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides  | ✓        |    |
| 4. Life Skill programme with teacher's guides | ✓        |    |
| 5. Illustrative Learning packages             | ✓        |    |
| 6. Stationery Packages                        | ✓        |    |

Mrs. Benjamin said that she has developed some materials for her own OBE classes. She said that she developed these materials in a group with other teachers. She has also developed some OBE materials in departmental workshops.

## 7. PROFILES OF THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS IN THE STUDY

### 7.1.1 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Adams

Mrs. Adams is over 41 years old. She has overall teaching experience of sixteen years. She has spent four years teaching at Pine Ridge Combined School. She has been a Grade 1 teacher for twelve years at this school. She completed her THED in 1975.

Mrs. Adams says that she has attended a four-day Introduction to OBE INSET training course and weekly INSET workshops offered by the Mpumalanga Department of Education. Mrs. Adams said that she found both INSET courses useful. She felt competent and confident about teaching OBE and did not feel the need for further training.

#### 7.1.2 Experience and qualifications of Mrs. Benjamin

Mrs. Benjamin is between 31-40 years old. She has ten years teaching experience. She has taught in Pine Ridge Combined School for one and half years. She has one and a-half years teaching experience at Grade 1 level. She completed her THOD - 4 year Diploma in 1987.

Mrs. Benjamin says that she has attended a four-day Introduction to OBE INSET training course and weekly INSET workshops offered by the Mpumalanga Department of Education. Mrs. Benjamin said that she found both INSET courses useful. She felt competent and confident about teaching OBE and did not feel the need for further training. She has developed OBE materials in groups of teachers and workshops offered by the Department of Education.

#### 7.2 Changes in practices by the teachers

##### 7.2.1 For Mrs. Adams.

Table 5 shows how Mrs. Adams compared her teaching strategies during 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year (1997).

**TABLE 5: HOW MRS BENJAMIN COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity-based learning                     |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Adams said her teaching has changed a lot since 1997. She says that the children are now much more involved than before.

#### 7.2.2 For Mrs. Benjamin

Table 6 shows how Mrs. Benjamin compares her teaching strategies in 1998 in Grade 1 with how she used to use the strategies last year, 1997.

**TABLE 6: HOW MRS ADAM COMPARES HER PRESENT TEACHING STRATEGIES WITH LAST YEAR**

|  | As in 1997 | Less than in 1997 | More than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | ✓                 |                   |
| 4. Student-led questions                       |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 5. Activity –based learning                    |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 6. Team-work                                   |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | ✓                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | ✓                 |

Mrs. Adam says that her classroom situation has changed a lot since 1997. She says that learners now lead her teaching. Learning is now learner based. She says that the classroom situation is now very relaxed and everyone can express themselves. She says her learners find OBE enjoyable.

### 8. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF OBE

#### 8.1 Teachers' understanding of OBE

At the time of writing this report data for T2 was not yet available. Mrs. Adams

##### 8.1.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

There is no evidence of Mrs. Adams's understanding of OBE from her transcript. The response suggests that the teacher thinks OBE is about learners studying in small groups. The atmosphere in this class is relaxed and very informal. Children learn through 'play'.

#### 8.1.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Adams believes that she is practicing OBE in her Grade 1 class because the learners learn through play and little formal teaching. She says that in her class she works according to the learners' abilities. She contrasts the traditional approach with the OBE approach saying that traditionally, the teacher worked according to the goals that he/she set, whereas, in the OBE approach the learners determine the pace and direction of the class.

#### 8.1.3 What has not changed in the teaching?

The teacher indicated that she still teaches what she calls the 'basic things'. Here she says she refers to skills such as reading and writing, she says that she still does Mathematics, but approaches it differently. She does not teach these basic skills individually. They are all integrated now.

#### 8.1.4 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Adams says that her main success with OBE is that her learners are very relaxed in her lessons; children do not feel intimidated in any way in her lessons.

#### 8.1.4 What are the obstacles /limitation with OBE?

She felt that her classes were too large (43 pupils in 1998).

She believes teachers who use their creative imagination should have no difficulties with the implementation of OBE. She said that in her school there is everything that they may need to teach OBE. It is now up to them as teachers to use their imagination and resources creatively.

#### 8.1.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Mrs. Adams reiterated that OBE is appropriate for learners at an early stage. She believes that it is appropriate to introduce OBE at an early stage in school. She argues that teaching children through play is very useful because although the learners have a very

short concentration span this would not be problem in OBE class because the learners would not notice that there are learning through the games that they play.

#### 8.1.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Adams felt that for her to be able to optimally implement OBE teachers would stay with smaller numbers. She also showed that she would have like to have weekly workshops and meet colleagues from other school to discuss problems that they face with OBE.

She would like to advise the government to cut down the large numbers of learners in Grade 1. She also said she wished that a mechanism could be worked out in which learners who have learning difficulties could be held back until they were ready to proceed to the next level of their education.

For Mrs. Benjamin

#### 8.2.1 Teacher's understanding of OBE

As with Mrs. Adams, there was no direct reference or question that requested Mrs. Benjamin to explain her understanding of OBE.

#### 8.2.2 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Mrs. Benjamin believes that she is teaching OBE because she uses learners' daily experience to develop her lessons. She says that in her classes she no longer provide information to the learners but get it from the learners. She now draws her lessons on the learners views and mere advise them when they are 'wrong'.

#### 8.2.3 What are the main successes/achievements with OBE?

Mrs. Benjamin said that the standard of teaching in her class has stayed the same although she follows the OBE approach.

#### 8.2.4 What are the main obstacles /limitations with OBE?

When asked about the obstacle of OBE that she has encountered in both interviews she said that she had not had any obstacles. She said that in OBE even the "less clever children can achieve".

#### 8.2.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

She said that she believes that OBE is appropriate for learners at Grade 1 level.

#### 8.2.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

Mrs. Benjamin felt that at the moment she did not need anything. It does not look like she understood the question. Her main advice was that for the future of OBE there should be more INSET workshops for teachers.

### 9. A GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

Data that is used in this section of the report was obtained from Instrument F - Classroom Observation Schedule. There were seven indicators that were carefully identified for OBE classrooms. Three ratings were used against each of the seven OBE indicators that were identified in this instrument, viz., 'none' means that that strategy was not used at all; little means that the strategy was used few a few times (two to three times); and much means several times.

Information that is discussed in this section is based on data collected during T1.

#### 9.1 Learners attendance

For Mrs. Adams

Enrolment of learners in Mrs. Adams's Grade 1 forty-three learners class. Attendance in this class ranged from 24 learners (one day) to 28 learners (one day). The average attendance was 35 learners and the modal attendance was 18 learners.

For Mrs. Benjamin

The highest attendance in this class was 43 and the lowest was 22 learners. The average attendance was 35.

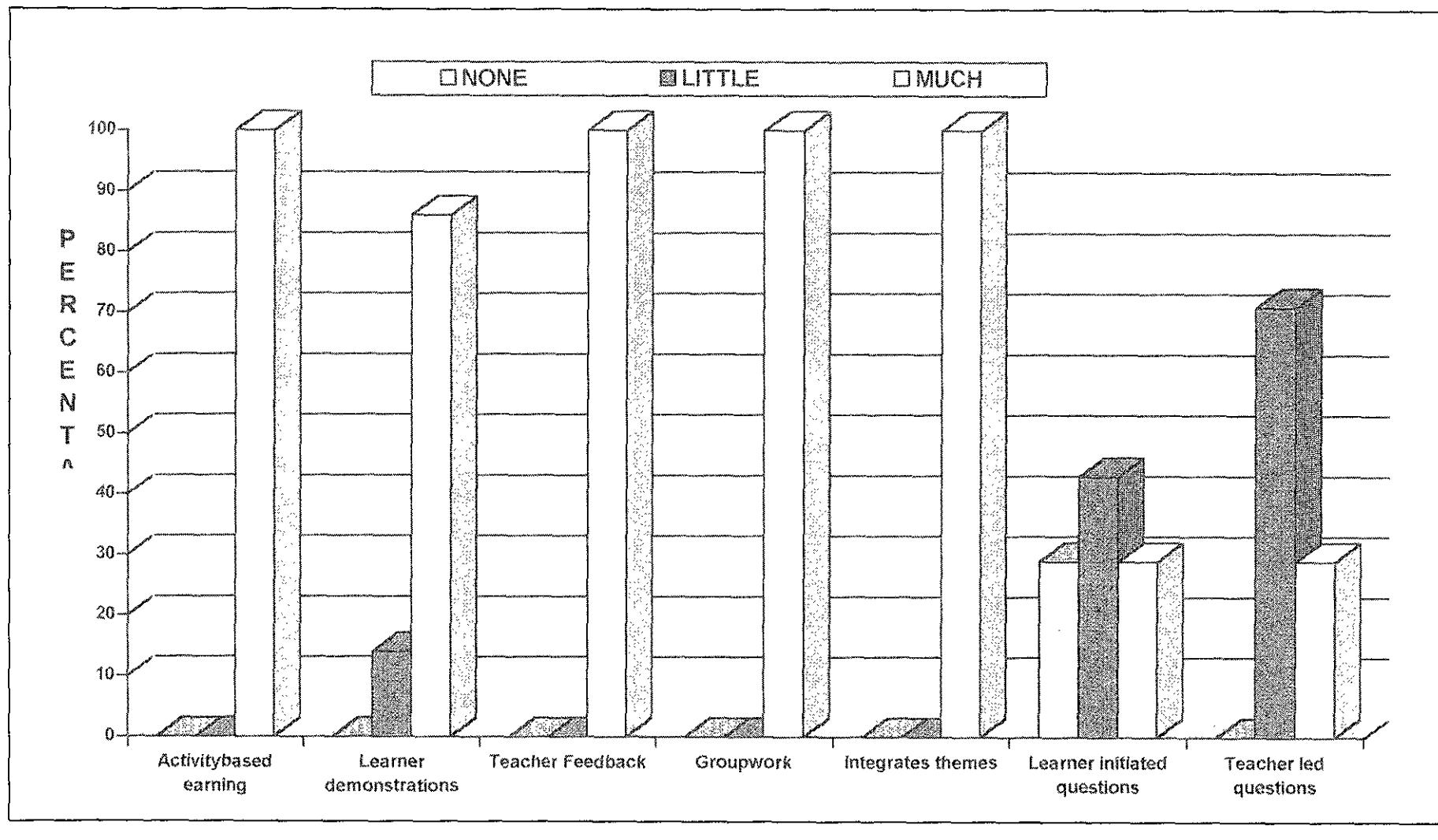
These figure for both teachers reveal that attendance was very poor in these Grade 1 classrooms.

## 9.2 Classroom Observations

All the lessons that were observed were conducted in English.

Figure 1 shows the graph the classroom observations during session T1.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM, T<sub>1</sub>.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY) TYPE)**

### 9.3.1 Learning is activity-based.

All the lessons that were observed had 'much' activity-based learning. This was for 100% of the time spent on classroom observations. Both teachers had prepared different types of very innovative activities for their learners.

### 9.3.2 Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn

Again the bar graph reveals that both teachers gave learners ample opportunities to demonstrate what they had learned. The bar graph shows that both teachers were seen to give learners 'much' opportunities for more than 80% of the time that was spent in the classrooms. The learners were given these opportunities in different ways by both the teachers.

### 9.3.3 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

Both teachers gave learners feedback in different ways. One example was in the class of Mrs. Benjamin who was observed using a very interesting way of rewarding learners. She used a picture of a butterfly with pairs of numbers to be added joined on each wing. When each learner has given all the correct answers, then they would be allowed to colour the butterfly. The teachers were seen to provide 'much' feedback in all the lessons that were observed.

### 9.3.4 Students organized in groups

Both teachers were reported to have used group work for 100% of the time that they were observed in the classrooms but the researcher did not provide descriptions of these group dynamics that went on in the classroom.

### 9.3.5 Teachers integrates themes from different learning fields

Both teachers were seen to integrate themes from different learning fields for all the time they spent in the classrooms. Example of such scene would be where teachers used pupils daily experience in the lessons.

### 9.3.6 Learner-initiated questions

Learner-initiated questions were observed for less than 30% of the time spent in both teachers' classrooms. The bar graph indicates this.

### 9.3.7 Teacher-led questions

Surprisingly teacher led questions were not as frequent as one would expect in such highly innovative classes. 'Much' teacher led questions were noted in less than 30% of the time spent in the classes. A reason for this could be that, the teachers addressed most of their questions to individual groups since they used a lot of group work.

## SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

1. Both teachers are well qualified and experienced. They have both received training in OBE. Both feel confident and competent to teach OBE. They do not feel that they need further training in OBE.
2. Both teachers say that they have prepared their own materials for teaching OBE.
3. These teachers associate OBE with activity-based and learning driven learning/teaching. They both say that traditional approach and the OBE approach should be used in the way that they complement each other. Both teachers say that children need to be taught some 'basics' in order to be able to do OBE.
4. The teacher show some concern with large classes. They say that class size should be cut in order for OBE to run smoothly.
5. The teachers were indeed practicing OBE.

A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
ELUSINDISWENI PRIMARY SCHOOL (11)

UMHLUZI TOWNSHIP, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

IMPACT EVALUATION STUDY

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Elusindisweni is an ex-Department of Education and Training (DET) primary school situated in Umhluzi Township, Middelburg Mpumalanga Province. The school was selected as an established township school with the basic infrastructure in place. Even though, it was selected as an under-resourced school, it was relatively successful with regard to the implementation of OBE.

Elusindisweni is a primary school with classes ranging from grade 1 to grade 7. The school has a total number of 984 pupils including 135 grade 1 pupils, 3 grade 1 classrooms and 3 grade 1 teachers. The school has no teacher aids. The learners are from different backgrounds socially and culturally. Their home languages are also different. Most learners are Ndebele speaking. Other learners speak siSwati, isiXhosa, isiZulu, seSotho, sePedi, seTswana and xiTsonga. For higher primary learners, English is the language of communication.

## 2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

Data was collected in this school in two phases. Phase one was done in May and phase 2 was done in October. Two teachers were observed for a period of 5 days per phase. This school was also identified for the case study (discussed separately).

One instrument, viz., Instrument A (School Profile) was completed by the Principal, two instruments, B (Teachers Characteristics Profile) and D (Teachers Questionnaire) were completed by the teachers. The Researcher completed instrument C (Classroom Resources Profile) and instrument F (classroom Observation Schedule). Instrument C was completed per observed lesson. At the end of each week an interview was conducted with each teacher. All data was captured on SPSS for analysis.

### 3. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

According to the principal, some classrooms need minor repairs. The school has the following materials all in good condition: telephone, store room, running water, electricity supply and the staff room (in poor condition). Jet later contributed a computer and one teacher fundraised for a fax machine. The school does not have a sports field nor a swimming pool. I considered the school one of the better-resourced African schools.

### 4. SCHOOL RESOURCES

#### 4.1. For grade 1 class

According to the acting principal about 80-90% of the learners have all required learning materials in all school subjects.

The researcher observed the following:

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Ndlovu)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment   |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate places                                | X   |    |   |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | X   |    |   |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | X   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | X   |    |   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | X   |    |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed in the wall                     | X   |    |   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained                      |     |    | Bricks used for the classroom. The class is thus not cemented and painted, but it is well maintained. |
| 8. There is ventilation                                       | X   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                             | X   |    | The class has ceiling board. This is highly unusual in the African schools.                           |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | X   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard available                                      | X   |    |   |

**TABLE 2: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Thubane)**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment   |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate places                                | X   |    |   |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | X   |    |   |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | X   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | X   |    |   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | X   |    |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed in the wall                     |     | X  | The notice board does not hold pins, thus charts are not displayed                                    |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained                      |     |    | Bricks used for the classroom. The class is thus not cemented and painted, but it is well maintained. |
| 8. There is ventilation                                       | X   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                             | X   |    | The class has ceiling board. This is highly unusual in the African schools.                           |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | X   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard available                                      | X   |    |   |

#### 4.2.Resources to teach OBE

According to the teachers, the school received the following OBE materials from the Department of Education:

**TABLE 3: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Ndlovu)**

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | Y   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       | Y   |    |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y   |    |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | Y   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with teacher's guides    | Y   |    |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides | Y   |    |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  |     | N  |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             |     | N  |

**TABLE 4: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE (Mrs Thubane)**

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | Y   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       | Y   |    |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y   |    |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | Y   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with teacher's guide's   | Y   |    |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides | Y   |    |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  |     | N  |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             |     | N  |

According to both teachers, they, as teachers developed OBE materials.

## 5. TEACHER PROFILES

### 5.1. Mrs. Ndlovu

Mrs. Ndlovu is a female teacher aged between 31-40 years. She has been a teacher for seventeen years and has been teaching in this school for 4 years. She has been teaching grade 1's for the past 3 years. She obtained her Higher Education Diploma (HED) in 1996.

She attended four workshops, which she found useful. The Department of Education offered all these workshops. The first workshop was a five-day workshop focusing on the implementation of OBE. The second workshop was a four-day workshop, which dealt with school readiness. The next two workshops were one day each and they dealt with long term planning and assessment respectively. She views herself as confident and competent in relation to teaching OBE. Although she values the training she received in OBE, she said she needs more training.

### 5.2. Mrs. Thubane

Mrs. Thubane is also a female teacher between the ages 31-40. She has been teaching for fifteen years. In this school she has been teaching for fourteen years.

She completed her Primary Teachers Certificate (PTC) in 1983. She also attended four workshops. The Department of Education offered all these workshops. The first workshop was a five-day workshop focusing on the implementation of OBE. The second workshop was a 4-day workshop, which dealt with the school readiness. The next two workshops were one day each and dealt with long term planning and assessment respectively. She did not specify whether or not she found the workshops useful. She also viewed herself as confident and competent in relation to teaching OBE. Although she values the training she received in OBE, she said she needs more training.

## 6. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

Teachers were given a teacher questionnaire (instrument F) to fill in. This gave the researcher information on the teacher's changes in the teaching strategies from 1997 to 1998.

**TABLE 5: TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (MRS THUBANE)**

|  | as in 1997 | less than in<br>1997 | More than in<br>1997 |
|--|------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                      | X                    |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                      | X                    |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       | X          |                      |                      |
| 4. Student- initiated questions                | X          |                      |                      |
| 5. Activity based learning                     |            |                      | X                    |
| 6. Team work                                   |            |                      | X                    |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                      | X                    |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                      | X                    |
| 9. Formative continuos assessment              |            |                      | X                    |

Mrs Thubane mentioned that the main changes in the OBE and traditional approach were that OBE is not exam driven, learners learn from their own experiences and they learn actively.

**TABLE 6:TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE (MRS NDLOVU)**

|  | As in 1997 | less than in 1997 | more than in 1997 |
|--|------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Individual feedback                         |            |                   | X                 |
| 2. Group work                                  |            |                   | X                 |
| 3. Teacher-led questions                       |            | X                 |                   |
| 4. Student- initiated questions                |            | X                 |                   |
| 5. Activity based learning                     |            |                   | X                 |
| 6. Team work                                   | X          |                   |                   |
| 7. Assessment based on outcomes                |            |                   | X                 |
| 8. Integration of different fields of learning |            |                   | X                 |
| 9. Formative continuous assessment             |            |                   | X                 |

Because of the time constraints and the commitment to a school event, interviews on the teacher's understanding of OBE were conducted simultaneously in this school. These were their ideas for both phases.

#### 6.1 Do the teachers believe they practise OBE?

- ✉ Both teachers believe they do implement OBE, because of the following reasons:
  - Their lessons are integrated
  - The themes cover all the learning areas
  - The mixed ability groups they have in their classrooms and the amount of group work they used during my observation.
  - The increase in pupils' participation. They are now more active than they ever were before and they (the teachers) know that their pupils are free to participate.
  - The type of assessment in their classroom.

#### 6.2 What specifically has changed?

According to the teachers the following have changed in her lessons:

Reading and writing: pupils still read and write, but the teaching method and the objectives of reading and writing have changed.

Planning: when she is planning her lessons she integrates them across the learning areas. She does long term planning and from this, short term planning is done.  
 Integration: her lessons are now integrated.

Learning outside the classroom: she takes learners outside the classroom more often than she did before,

Assessment: assessment is now outcomes based and continuous. She now assesses for skills rather than content.

#### 6.3 What are the main successes with OBE?

#### 6.4 SUCCESSES:

OBE relieves teachers because:

- it is child centred - a lot of work is done by the learners
- the teacher now does less 'preaching' than before
- the teacher is more of a guide OBE caters for slow learners:
- facilitation is done at the learner's pace
- it is not exam driven

The amount of group work. Pupils are no longer 'reserved'. Learners can now interact with the teachers without fear. Corporal punishment is not used, so learners are not scared to try.

#### 6.4 What do you see as the obstacle/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

#### OBSTACLE/LIMITATIONS:

Not enough material for OBE

Parents do not participate in the learning of their children Not enough workshops were given to us

No follow-ups are in process.

#### 6.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

## 6.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Both teachers think that OBE is best-used 'right from the start since we need to prepare learners right from the start'. They thought school readiness could be done using the OBE method for best results. They felt that implementing OBE later in the year would mean that during the earlier part of the year, learners were not exposed to creative learning and they might not be able to adjust for a very long time.

## 6.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom? More materials

Guides, teachers' books

According to the teachers, these should give ideas on what teacher should teach. Presently, teachers have to come up with topics for their lessons without any guidance.

## 6.7. If you had one important piece of advice to the Department of Education, what would this be?

Teachers need:

More workshops on OBE

Follow-ups: to evaluate if the teachers are on the right track as far as OBE is concerned.

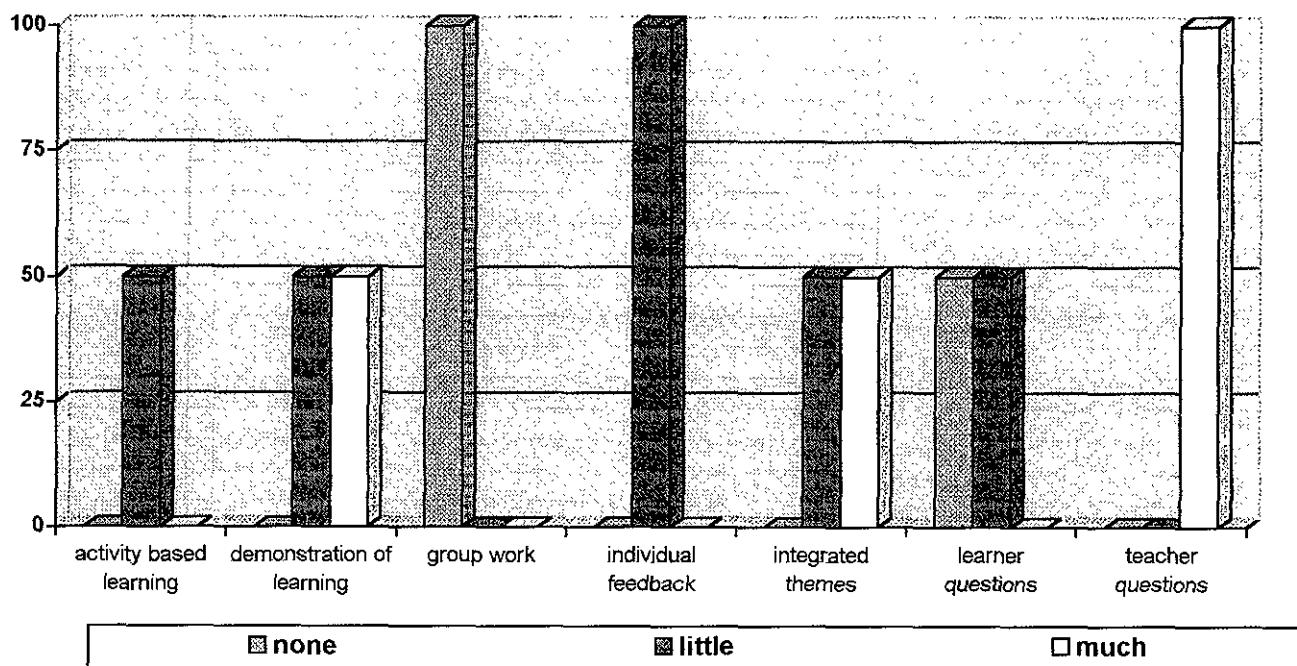
# 7. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

## 7.1. Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Data in this section was collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule with 7 indicators. Experienced senior researchers carefully identified these indicators for OBE, after going through the OBE documentation and the policy document. The researcher completed this instrument for each session observed. For rating used in the instrument please refer to the Appendix.

## 7.2. General Classroom Observation T<sub>1</sub>

### 7.2.1. Classroom observation

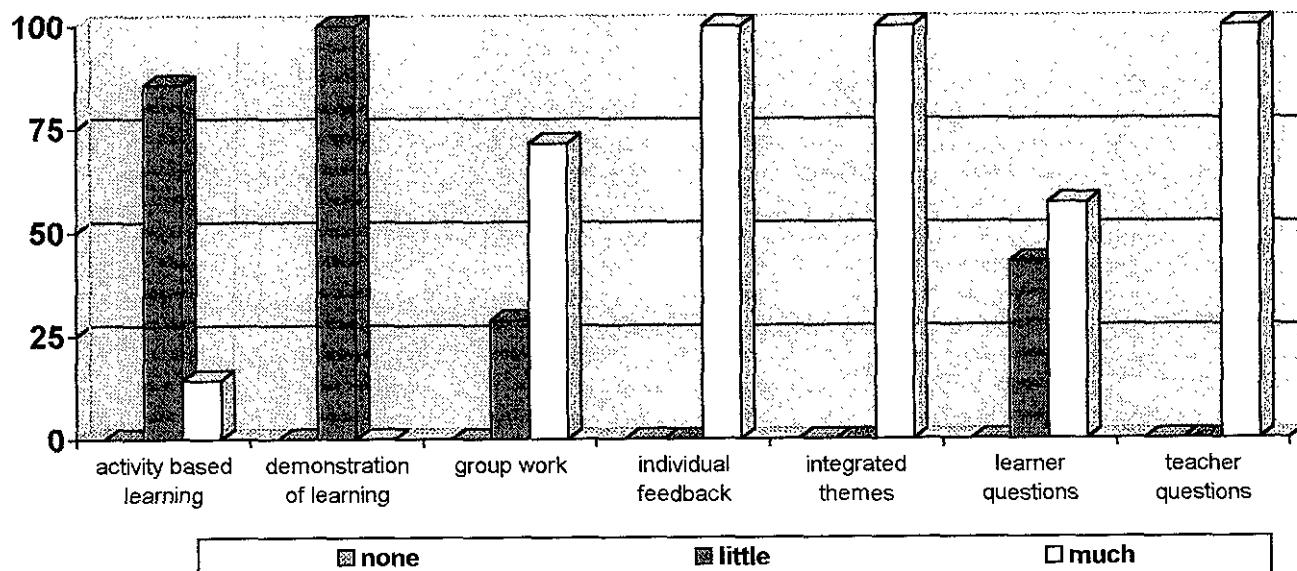


GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASS, PHASE 2

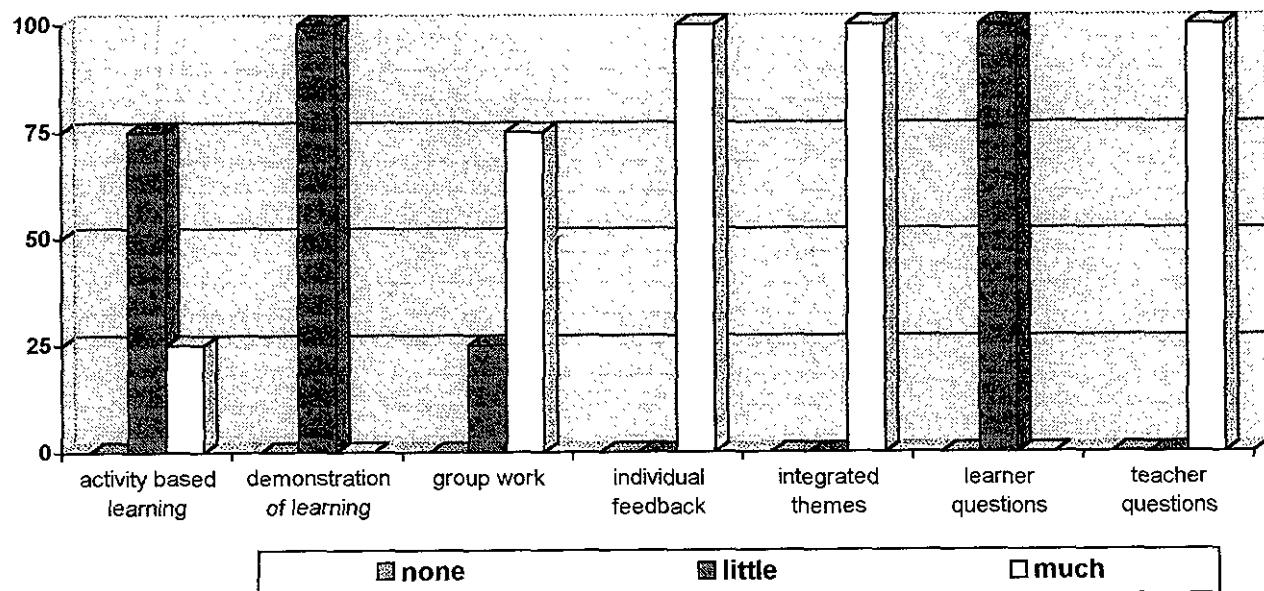
This graph represents the phase 2 of the data collection. During that phase a number of teachers were on study leave and that included two of the grade 1 teachers. Mrs Ndlovu thus became the only available teacher in grade one and on one occasion she was one of the 3 teachers who came to school the whole day. This situation resulted in many lessons being missed by the teacher.

## GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASS, PHASE 1

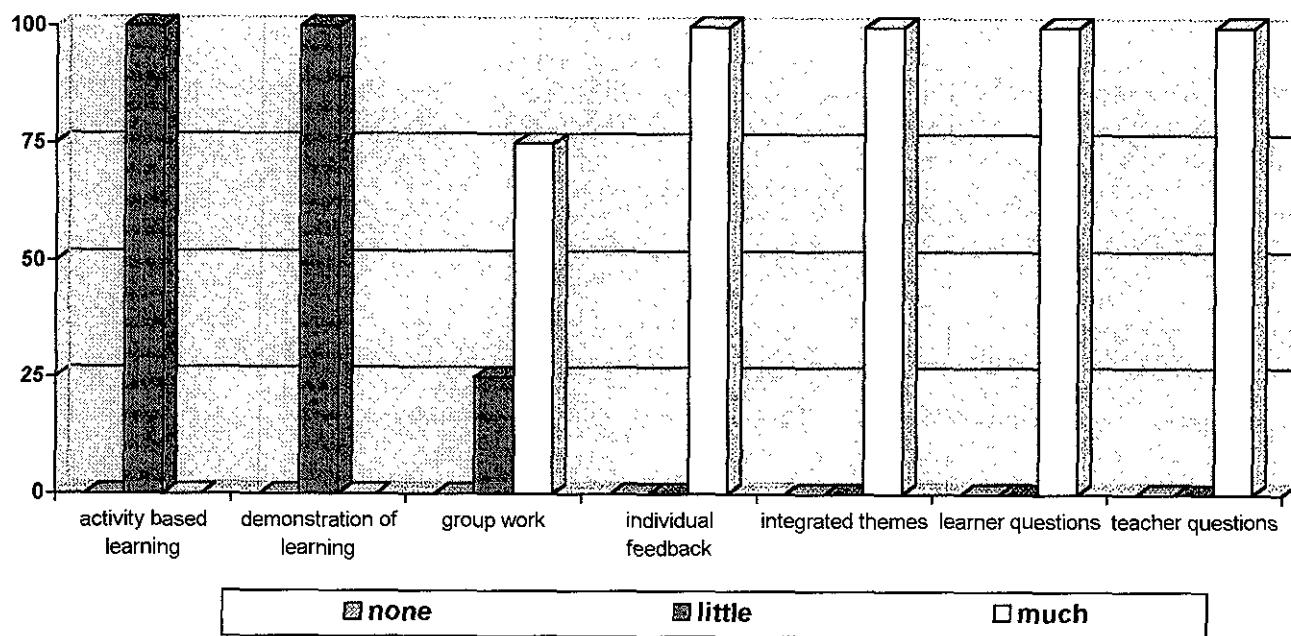
This graph represents observation of both teachers during the first phase of the study.



## GRAPH SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASS, PHASE 1 (Mrs. Ndlovu)



## GRAPHS SHOWING OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASS, PHASE 1 (Mrs. Thubane)



### 7.2.2. Group work

In these classes, it was observed that learners were always seated in groups even when doing individual work. They took their books out in groups, put them away in groups and shared their stationery within a group.

### 7.2.3. Learning is activity based

Learning in this class was activity-based on most of the time. The teachers indicated that they tried very hard to plan for activity based learning in their classes since:

- ☛ it makes learners more active in class
- ☛ it encourages critical thinking
- ☛ it creates an atmosphere for actively commenting in almost everything done in class
- ☛ but most importantly it is fun for the learners

### 7.2.4. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas

Almost all the time the teachers integrated themes from different learning areas. During an informal interview, the teachers discussed how they planned their lessons. The teachers developed themes together and extended it to the different learning areas. It

was also observed, from all lessons, that all the lesson themes were integrated across the learning areas.

### 7.3. Teacher led-questions

Teachers were observed to ask most of the questions. These questions were for developing the lessons further and drew on the learner's experiences. Sometimes the questions were asked so that learners would review what they had said. This type of questioning is the same as the Socratic method.

### 7.4. Learner led-questions

Learners were observed to comment most of the time instead of asking questions. They were freely and actively participating in class. From the observations, when learners were asking management-related questions like, 'where should I write this', 'where is my exercise book', etc.

### 7.5. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teachers assessed regularly and kept the record book, but the learners were not aware of how they were doing. The only time they knew about their progress was when the teacher marked their books. I found this form of feedback not to be enough since the learner's progress changed daily, i.e. what the learner did incorrectly today could be correct the following day.

Sometimes learners were given the opportunity to demonstrate what they had learnt. The teachers claimed that they gave learners a chance to demonstrate what they had learnt. The researcher observed that the learners demonstrated what they had learnt by either singing (recital), actively commenting, reading from the board and counting. This is similar in almost all the schools that were observed.

The teacher created the atmosphere for learners to actively participate in the lesson. Learners did not ask questions often but they commented on the lessons. They were participating all the time.

In both classes, learners were sometimes taken outside the classroom. Learners were taken outside the classroom to see the different types of houses, trees, road safety signs, number plates, colours, effects of the season (weather), etc.

Because of the atmosphere created by the teacher, learners were freely participating in the class activities all the time. The teachers never used corporal punishment.

## 8. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

### 8.1. What kind of documents are produced by the teacher 8.1.1. Teachers preparation

Both teachers have preparation books. This is used to do long-term preparation and short-term preparation. This includes activities and objectives. The lesson plan (a few copies of these are available) is divided into:

Activity 1: Numeracy Activity 2: Literacy Activity 3: Life Skills These are done each day in different time slots.

#### 8.1.2 Assessment Book

Both teachers use the same assessment procedure. According to the assessment book analysis and the interview, assessment in both classes is based on the following:

- ☒ Effective organization and management of the self and other activities: Here the teacher assesses the independence of the child, ability to adapt, socialization, task completion, and small and gross motor operation. The teacher have to decide whether the learner needs help, is satisfactory, good or excellent in each of the above.
- ☒ The collection, analysing, critical evaluation and organizing of information: The teacher assesses whether or not the learner needs help, is satisfactory, is good or excellent in sharing, comparing, collection of the information, evaluating and using

information, feedback, distinguishing between writing and drawing, and in writing skills.

- ☛ Effective communication by means of visual symbols and/or language skills: Here the teacher looks at the learner's use of language, word order, making up of stories, listening skills, classification and sequence.
- ☛ Understanding of the world as a system and that problem solving never happens in isolation: The teacher assesses the learner's exploration of change, relationships with fellow men, critical thinking, interests and awareness of cause and effect.
- ☛ Understanding of the basic concepts dealt with in class: This part of assessment looks at the exploration and selection of materials/equipments, distinguishing of colours, exploring patterns, recognition of patterns, measurement and environmental consciousness and safety.

In all of these categories the teacher decides (using the ranks) whether the learner needs help, is satisfactory, good or excellent. These categories are from the seven critical outcomes.

## 8.2. Learners transcripts

In both classes learners have seven transcripts. These are for:

- ☛ English- this exercise book is for English spelling, dictation and story writing. Usually the stories, which are written here, are from the magazines.
- ☛ Zulu- this exercise book is for Zulu spelling, dictation and story writing. Usually the stories, which are written here, are from the magazines.
- ☛ Environmental studies - this exercise is used for everything related to the environment, magazines cuttings and drawings.

- ☞ Life Skills - this book is used for drawings mostly after going outside of the classroom they draw what they have seen or write about what they have seen.
- ☞ Numeracy - this is an activity book. They also have an exercise book for writing other numeracy work done in class that is not from the book. This book was given to the learners by the department of education.
- ☞ Literacy - after story telling or any related theme, learners write sounds in this book. Both Zulu and English sounds are recorded.
- ☞ Writing skills- this book is for improving the learners' writing skills

In both classes the homework books were assessed everyday (when homework had been given) and the learners, with the help of the teacher, did the corrections.

## 9. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Both teachers implement OBE and they work together in planning, and in decision making.
2. They give each other support.
3. Most learners have all required materials for all subjects.
4. The teachers are adequately trained for OBE.
5. Group work works well for most of the time.
6. The teacher mentioned that parents are not involved in their children's learning.
7. Most lessons taught were based on OBE resources.
8. Teacher kept assessment books that had detailed records of individual learners, both skills and conceptual abilities.

## **Case Study**

### **KwaZulu Natal Schools**

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
EKUJABULENI PRIMARY SCHOOL (1)**

KWADABEKA TOWNSHIP, KWAZULU-NATAL

**CASE STUDY EVALUATION**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Ekujabuleni is a former Department of Education and Training (DET) primary school situated in KwaDabeka, Clermont Township, North of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal. The school was selected as an established school with the basic infrastructure in place. It was, also selected for the case study as a reputational school in which one teacher was not doing very well with the implementation of OBE.

**2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY**

Case study data collection was conducted in this school during August 1998. The principal completed the school profile. The teacher filled the teacher characteristics profile and a teacher questionnaire. The researcher completed the classroom observation schedule. The classroom observation schedule was done every day, except for the days when there was no teaching in the classroom or when the class was on a field trip. The researcher did an analysis of the teacher and learner transcripts.

**3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Ekujabuleni is a primary school with classes ranging from grade 1 to grade 7. The school has a total number of 247 grade 1 pupils, five grade 1 classrooms and five teachers. The school has no teacher-aides. All the grade 1 learners from the school have isiZulu as their home language as well as language of instruction.

**4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES**

According to the acting principal, most or all the classrooms need minor repairs. The school has the following materials, all in good condition: telephone, fax machine, photocopier, storeroom, running water, electricity supply and the staff room. The school does not have a sports field nor a swimming pool. In fact, I considered the school one of the "better-resourced" African schools.

## 5. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 5.1. For the grade 1 class

According to the acting principal about 80-90% learners have all required learning materials in all school subjects.

Table 1 below indicates the resource profile of the Grade 1 class as observed by the researcher.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE**

|  | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment  |
|--|-----|----|--|
| 1. Pupils have adequate space                                  | X   |    | This is because almost the same numbers of pupils are absent each day. Pupils who are present occupy any empty spaces. |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                      | X   |    |  |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                       | X   |    | Teacher never used the chair;  |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                 | X   |    |  |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks          | X   |    |  |
| 6. There are charts displayed on the wall                      | X   |    | The teacher never used the charts.   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well maintained                       |     | X  | Painted but not well maintained.   |
| 8. There is ventilation  | X   |    |  |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                              | X   |    |  |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repairs | X   |    | Only one window was broken   |
| 11. Chalkboard is available                                    | X   |    |  |

### 5.2. Resources to teach OBE

According to the teacher the school received the following OBE materials from the Department of Education:

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | ✓   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       |     | ✓  |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    |     | ✓  |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with Teachers Guide      |     | ✓  |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides |     | ✓  |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  |     | ✓  |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             |     | ✓  |

According to the case B teacher, they also developed OBE materials with the assistance of the school management.

## 6. PROFILE OF THE CASE B TEACHER

Case study B teacher is a female teacher between the ages 31-40. She has been a teacher for eight years, all of which were spent at this school. She has been teaching grade 1 pupils for the past 3 years.

She obtained her Junior Primary Teachers Diploma (JPTD) in 1988 and in 1997 she qualified for the Higher Education Diploma (HED).

She attended a five-day workshop, which she did not find useful. She did not specify whether or not she was confident and competent in relation to teaching OBE, but she said that she needs more training in OBE.

## 7. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

### 7.1 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

This teacher does not believe she practices OBE. According to her, OBE is still foreign to her. She does not understand it and she feels it cannot work for grade 1 pupils, particularly, 'in black schools'.

### 7.2. What specifically has changed?

According to the teacher during the interview, nothing has changed in the way she teaches. Also when comparing the case study observation and the phase one observation, there was no visible indication of change in her teaching.

### 7.3. What are the main successes with OBE?

The teacher thought so far there are no successes. In fact she thought OBE was not appropriate for Blacks (Africans).

### 7.4. What do you see as the obstacle(s)/limitation(s) with regard to implementing OBE?

Teacher B said she does not have enough materials and enough time to implement OBE. She felt that she has not been properly trained for OBE.

## 8. GRADE 9 CLASSROOM

### 8.1. Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Like in the impact evaluation study, the Classroom Observation Schedule with 11 indicators was used to collect data. These 11 indicators (see Appendix) were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documentation and the impact evaluation observation. The researcher completed the observation schedule for each session observed.

### 8.2. Learners' attendance over the Case Study observation

The class enrolment was 45 pupils. There was never full attendance in this class for the whole observation period. The highest attendance was 39 and the lowest 32.

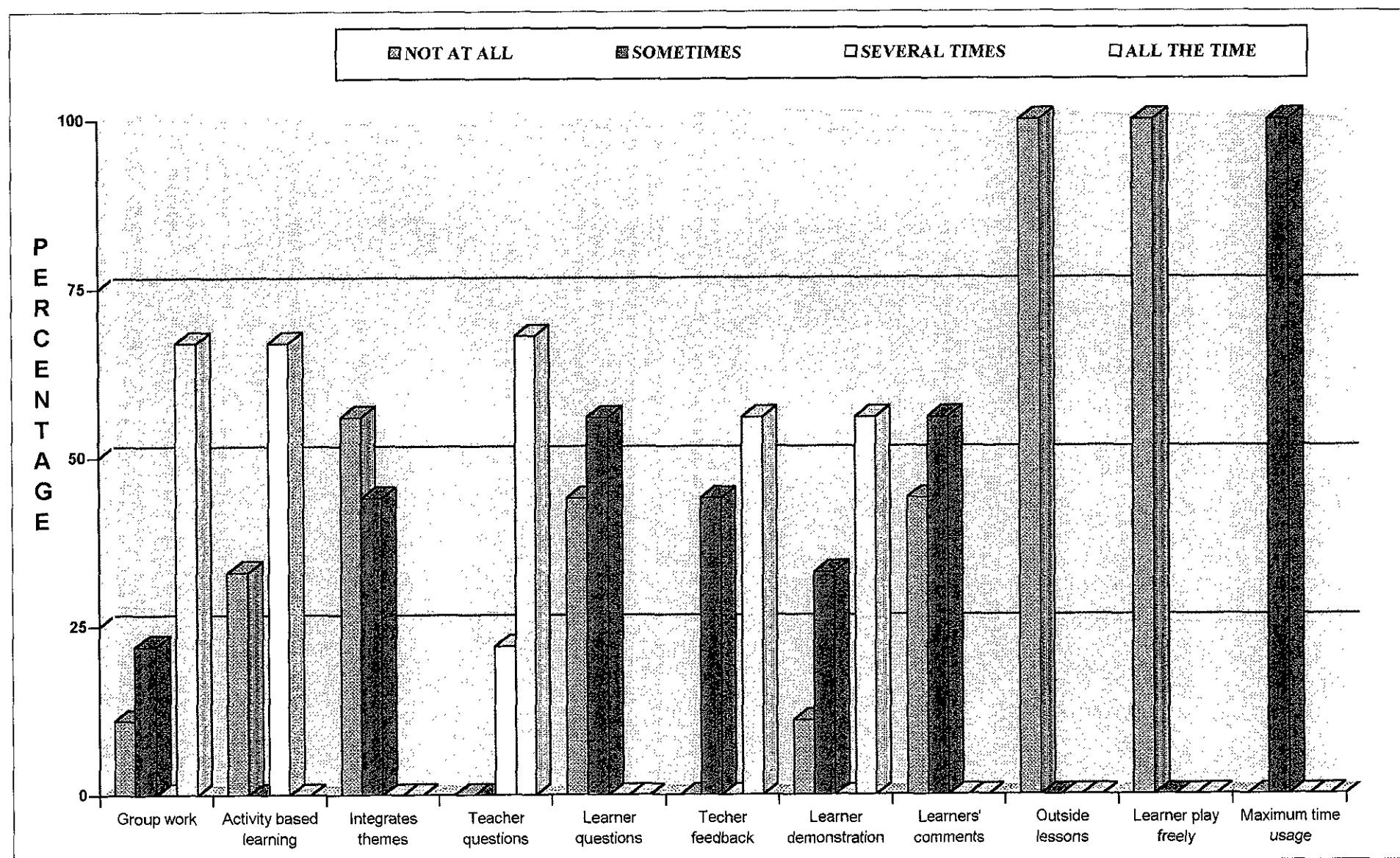
### 8.3. General Classroom Observation

Because of the misunderstanding between the researcher and the teacher, the first 10 days were not covered.

#### 8.3.1. Classroom observation

Figure 1: below indicates the OBE observation in grade 1 classroom.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM.**



**INDICATORS (OBE ACTIVITY TYPE)**

## Group work

- 8.3.2. Learning is activity based
- 8.3.3. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas
- 8.4. Teacher led-questions
- 8.5. Learner led-questions
- 8.6. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback
- 8.7. Learners given opportunity to demonstrate what they learn
- 8.8. Learners comment actively on the lesson
- 8.9. Learners taken outside their classroom
- 8.10. Learners play freely within or outside the class
- 8.11. Teacher makes maximum use of instructional/ teaching time

## 9. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

- 9.1. What kind of documents are produced by the teacher

This case study teacher did not have many transcripts. The only transcript she had was the assessment book.

### 9.1.1 Teachers preparation

Teacher B claimed (in an informal interview) that she did not do any preparations because she has been doing the work she does for a number of years.

### 9.2. Assessment Book

This teacher only kept an assessment book. It only had one page of assessment, which looked like this:

| Name of the child | B | C | D | E | F | G | H |
|-------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dube Sindy        | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |   |   |   |
| Mhlongo Zweli     | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |   |

This was done for all the learners in the classroom. This was the only tangible evidence as far as assessment is concerned. The teacher was unable to provide the researcher with the assessment book for numeracy and life skills learning areas. This form of assessment (according to the teacher) determined the groups each learner belonged to.

### 9.3. Learner transcripts

#### 9.3.1. How many types of learner transcript were produced?

Learners had three transcripts:

- ❑ Apple- this was an exercise book for transcriptions and homework.
- ❑ Pear- for mathematics
- ❑ Banana- for spelling

### 9.3.2. What kinds of questions do teachers use?

Basically the teacher asked content-based questions, which did not force the learner to think critically. The learner only had to recall and reproduce what s/he had learnt. Worth noting about the questions this teacher asked were mostly about things pupils had done incorrectly (management-type questions) viz.,

Did I say that is how we write that?

Who said we must erase this?

### 9.3.3. How often are homework books assessed?

The homework books were never assessed throughout the observation period. That is because no homework was given to the kids for the rest of the case study observation period.

## 10. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS Case Study B teacher:

- ❑ The teacher uses traditional modes of teaching
- ❑ Most learners have all the required materials for all subjects Spent most of the time outside the classroom
- ❑ Most of the time she came to school late and left very early, to go to a meeting or to the doctor
- ❑ She spent most of the time punishing the kids. She hit them on their foreheads, buttocks, and bodies for:
  - ? Not being able to read, write or do numerical tasks
  - ? Erasing what they had already written

The learners were only free when the teacher was not in class. Outside the classroom they also played freely.

The teacher treats every subject independently from others. There is absolutely no integration across the learning areas.

The teacher does not create an atmosphere of speaking freely. When the teacher asks a question the learners start shivering. Even if they are making words up from cards, they are too scared to show the teacher because they are afraid of the punishment should they get it wrong.

The teacher does not do any preparations for her lessons. She also does not consult with other grade one teachers.

Her class lags behind all the other classes. Teacher does not try any group work.

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOMS  
RIVERVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL**

PHOENIX, KWAZULU-NATAL

**CASE STUDY EVALUATION**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Riverview Primary School is a former House of Delegates (HoD) school situated in Phoenix, an Indian township in the northern side of Durban. The school was selected for this evaluation study because it fitted the criterion set in the sampling set, viz., "an effective classroom". This school was selected as a reputational school with teachers who were doing very well in the implementation of OBE.

There are fewer than seven hundred learners in the school. According to the teacher most of the children who attend this school come from very poor backgrounds. Many learners come from single-parent families. The school day begins at 07h50 and ends at 13h00 each day. The school holds assemblies twice per week, on Wednesdays and Fridays.

**2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY**

Data from this school was collected in the first two weeks of August 1998. Three instruments, viz., A (School Profile), B (Teachers Characteristics Profile) and D (Teachers Questionnaire) were completed by the Principal. The Researcher completed instrument C (Classroom Resources Profile) and instrument F (classroom Observation Schedule). At the end of the first week the researcher conducted one interview with the Case A teacher. The teacher was then given the transcript to read against the interview questions to check whether there were things that she would like to add. All data was captured on SPSS for analysis.

Teachers records of teaching and assessment (record book, planning book and mark sheets or assessment books) and learners completed work (homework book or test books) were collected for transcript analysis.

**3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Riverview Primary School is a single shift primary school offering Grade 1 to Grade 7. The total enrolment in the school is 675 learners. There are 330 (49%) boys and 345 (51%) girls in this school. Most of the learners are of Indian descent. The home language of most

learners in the school is English and do is the language of instruction. There are very few African isiZulu-speaking learners in the school.

The school has one principal and deputy principal, both on 'acting' capacity, and 18 teachers. There are no teacher-aides for the grade 1 teachers. The Case A teacher said that the principle, the principal applies "... is not to 'police' and monitor but to leave everything in the hands of the teachers".

The school has two Grade 1 classes, each with a teacher. The total number of Grade 1 learners in the school is 89. The case study classroom had 44 pupils.

#### 4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES

According to the principal the school buildings are in good condition with minor repairs required in few classes. The school had the following facilities: a telephone, a fax machine, a photocopier, a storeroom, a staff-room and a sports field. The principal described these facilities as in good condition. There is no swimming pool. The school has a library with facilities for showing audio-visual materials. There is mains electricity powers and running water supply to the school.

#### SCHOOL RESOURCES

##### 5.1 For Grade 1 class

Between 60 - 70% of the students are reported by the principal to have all the required learning materials in all school subjects. Table 1 shows the resources that are available in the Grade 1 classroom that was observed.

**TABLE 1: CLASSROOM RESOURCES PROFILE**

|   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Qualitative comment</b>  |
|---|------------|-----------|---|
| Pupils have adequate sitting space                        | Y          |           | Desks are not suitable for all learners. Some desks are cramped.  |
| Adequate writing space                                    | Y          |           |   |
| Chair for the teacher                                     | Y          |           |   |
| There is adequate lighting in the classroom               | Y          |           |   |
| There is adequate space for movement between desks        | Y          |           | If all learners were to be present on a particular day there would not be enough space for free movement between the desks. |
| There are charts displayed on the wall                    | Y          |           | All walls were covered with very colourful charts and other displays  |
| Walls are painted and well maintained                     | Y          |           |   |
| There is ventilation                                      | Y          |           |   |
| Classroom is adequately roofed                            | Y          |           |   |
| Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | Y          |           | All windows on one side, i.e. the side with the sports field, are broken  |
| Chalkboard available                                      | Y          |           |   |

## 5.2 Resources to teach OBE

Table 2 shows OBE materials that the Case A teacher said that her school received from the Department of Education:

**TABLE 2: OBE MATERIALS GRADE 1 MATERAILS THAT WERE RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL**

|   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | Y          |           |
| Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y          |           |
| Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | Y          |           |
| Life Skills programmes without teacher's guides | Y          |           |
| Illustrative Learning Packages                  | Y          |           |
| Stationery Packages                             | Y          |           |

The Case A teacher said that she had developed some OBE materials for herself some of which were developed while she was a facilitator of OBE workshops for the Department of Education and the Ikhwezi Community College of Education. She also purchased some OBE resource materials when the school ran out of the materials supplied by the Department of Education.

## 5. PROFILE OF THE CASE A TEACHER

Case A teacher is a female teacher aged between 31 and 40 years. She has nine years of teaching experience of which eight years were spent at the school. She has taught Grade 1 for the past six years.

She has a Bachelor of Music and a Higher Education Diploma and is currently studying for a Masters of Education degree. She attended a five-day Re-Training of Grade 1 teachers' course for the Foundation Phase Advisors run by the National Department of Education. She found the course useful in the implementation of the OBE policy. She missed the last two days of case observation session because of her involvement in facilitating OBE workshop for local teachers.

The teacher feels confident and competent to teach OBE. She feels that she does not need further training in OBE. However, she values highly the OBE training she has received.

## 6. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

### 6.1 Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

The teacher believes that she is in fact teaching OBE. She believes she is using OBE assessment and assesses more than just knowledge and content. She feels she allows children to participate more instead of "telling the child what to do". Although she arranged pupils into groups in the past, she believes now she uses a different approach. Initially she grouped children according to their ability, now she has mixed ability groups. She feels that this approach works far better than the mode she used in the past.

### 6.2 What specifically has not changed?

The teacher says that she uses the same teaching skills that she used in the past. She feels she "spent the first two terms using traditional methods of teaching skills". These skills she refers to are mathematical skills (the four operations), literacy skills (use of flash words, reading, and writing skills). She feels that teaching these in the first two terms has not changed. She feels those things have to be taught in order to provide the children with the background they need for her OBE classes. The teaching of skills in Grade 1 has not changed.

### 6.3 What are the main successes with OBE?

Case A teacher said that at the time of the interview she could not make any judgement about her implementation of OBE as she was still in the process of doing it. She feels that when she prepares for her classes "... there is always something that does not work, there is always something new that I am learning ... there is always something that I am leaving

out". The teacher feels that it is still too early for her to say she has achieved anything as she was still learning something new.

6.4 What do you see as the obstacles/limitations with regard to implementing OBE? Case A teacher believes that groupwork has not been working in her Grade 1 classrooms. She attributes putting children with different abilities together as one of the reasons why groupwork is failing.

She sees diversity and language barriers as the main obstacles as most English-speaking (Indian) teachers cannot cope with the influx of isiZulu-speaking children into former Indian schools (HoD). Many of these African children cannot communicate in English. The teacher also says that most of the African children enter straight into Grade 1 without going through pre-school. She contrast these children with their Indian counterparts most of which go through pre-school before entering Grade 1.

6.5 Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

The teacher feels that OBE should be implemented from the third term of Grade 1. She "was unable to do it (OBE) in the first two terms". She feels that teachers should help pupils acquire basic skills and good background before working with them on OBE.

The teacher indicated that she has devised an assessment schedule that also informs her about other things, like how the children behave in class. In this way she would know which learner(s) needs more attention and which one is progressing well.

6.6 What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

The teacher maintains that she needs a lot of commitment from the parents, (which is currently lacking). She sees community commitment as vital for OBE to work in her classroom. She acknowledges however, that most of the parents are not educated, and as a result fail to respond when invited to the school on matters relating to their children. There seems to be no culture of education or thirst to learn at the homes of these children.

She reiterated the fact that the parents of these children are poor by saying that most of the parents had not paid school fees by the time of the observation session.

6.7 If you had one important piece of advice to the Department of Education, what would this be?

She strongly advised that the departmental OBE-Managers and school managers need training on OBE management. She feels that the school management was oriented too late into OBE and was not given the same training as the Grade 1 teachers. There is no OBE-monitoring system in place and she feels that this monitoring system ought to have been in place before teachers were trained for OBE and before OBE implementation.

## 7. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

### 7.1 Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Data in this section of the study was taken from the 'extended' Classroom Observation Schedule. There were 11 indicators that were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documents. This instrument was completed by the researcher for each observation session completed (the 1 ½ hrs - 2hrs before or after break).

### 7.2 Learners' attendance over the 7 day observation period

The enrolment of the teacher's class is 44 learners. The majority of the learners were of Indian origin. In the 4-day observation period, class attendance varied between 36 and 31 learners per day.

### 7.3 General Classroom Observation

There were some Black a (African) learner in this classroom. The teacher complained of the poor attendance of these learners. What the researcher noted over the 4-days spent in the school was that these children did not take any part in the lessons. The teacher attributed this lack of participation of the African children to the "language barriers", as these children could not communicate in English, the language of instruction in the school, and the teacher does not speak isiZulu.

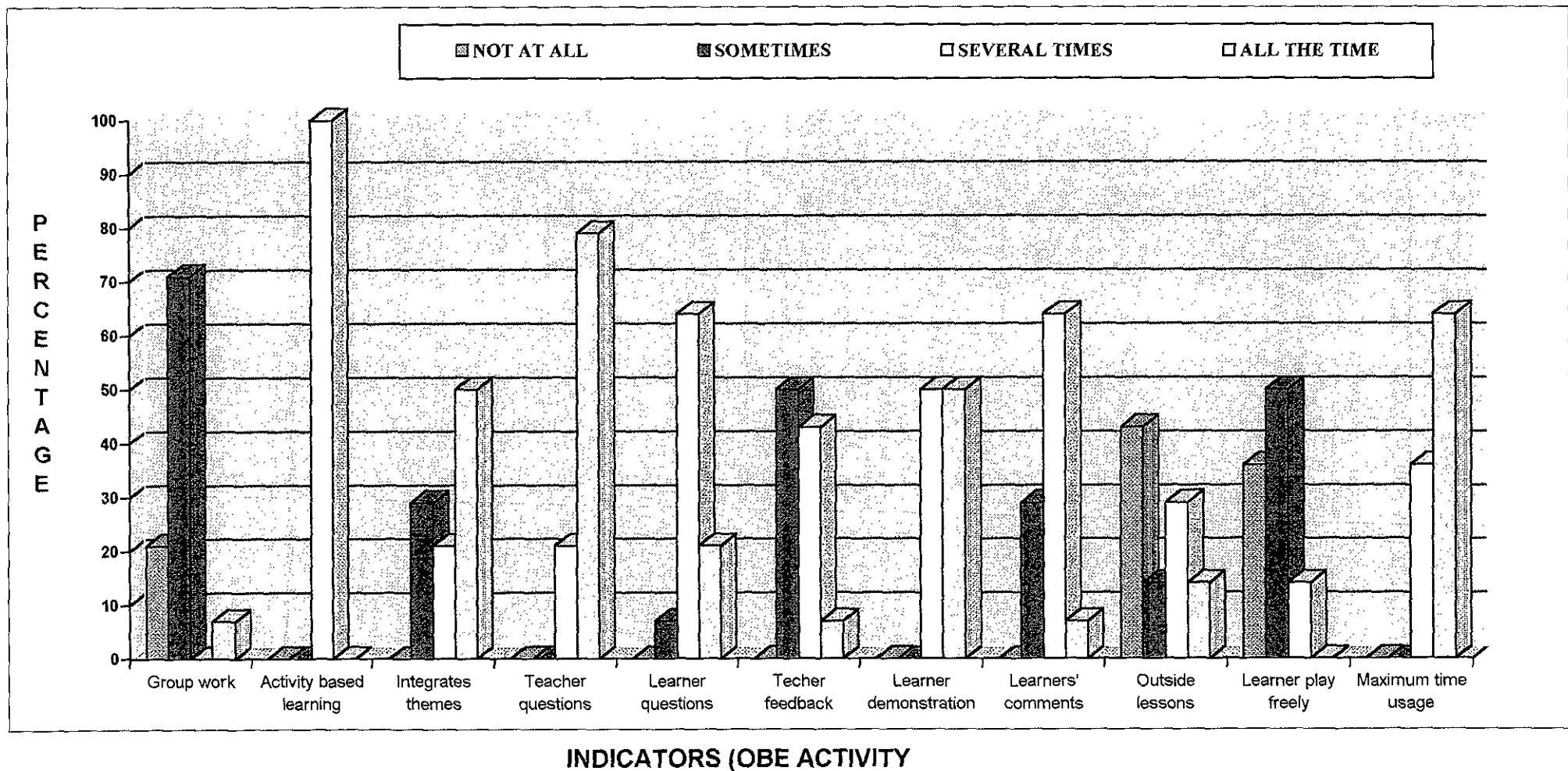
The teacher build a word bank made of words that were unfamiliar to most learners. Each time a new word was brought up in the lesson, the teacher would write this word on a chart. After discussing the meaning of the word with the pupils she would try to make learners construct sentences using the new words. Learners interjected with loud choral singing and recitations and counting. On a number of occasions the teacher did this to redirect the attention of learners when they lost interest in the lesson.

### 7.3. 1 Classroom observation

Despite the fact that the Case Study observation period was initially intended to cover 10 teaching days, this did not happen in this school. One day was lost because it was a holiday. Two other days were lost because the Case A teacher had to facilitate an OBE Grade 1 teachers' workshop run by the Department of Education.

Table 3 shows the bar graph of the observations of the Case A classroom over a period of seven days.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM.**



### 7.3.2 Group work

There was evidence of groupwork taking place in this classroom. Figure 1 above indicates this was observed in three-quarters of the time observed. In most instances where the learners had to work in groups, there appeared to be fierce competition for materials. Many learners hid their work from the rest of the group members. The teacher indicated that she had difficulties in trying to make children work in groups. She feels that sometimes she found herself providing too many instructions and too many tasks for learners to do. Some children had problems with in-group communication. It also appears that children are too self-centred at this developmental stage. They care more about themselves than working with other children.

The teacher also mentioned in the interview and noted in her assessment book that she had experienced difficulties with group work. Many learners either failed to communicate well or were not prepared to work with other learners.

### 7.3.3 Learning is activity based

All the lessons that were observed had learners repeating recitations and choral singing. In most cases the whole class did this. The teacher made several attempts to initiate activities in her lessons but soon had to revert to whole class instruction, when most of the learners experienced difficulties. Most of the teacher's activities are from the OBE activity sheets whereas some came from commercial and personal activity materials.

### 7.3.4 Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas

In many lessons the teacher developed a theme of lessons around pupils' daily experiences. The teacher was observed to integrated themes from different learning areas for about 50% of the time she was observed. Although there were lessons in which the teacher could be clearly observed shifting from one learning area to another, in most lessons this transition was be done very smoothly. On many occasions the teacher would develop a theme from one lesson in one learning area and extend this theme into the next learning area.

### 7.3.5 Teacher led-questions

This is one of the common features of the Grade 1 lessons. Most discussions in the lessons are led by teacher questions. Most of the questions are low-order closed-ended

questions. As indicated above, the teacher often used questioning to draw on learners' experiences (comments) in order to develop her lessons.

#### 7.3.6 Learner led-questions

Figure 1 above indicates that the learners volunteered questions 'several times' i.e. for over 60% of the time. Many of the questions that the learners asked were to seek clarity about instructions they had to follow management-related questions).

#### 7.3.7 Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teacher believes she assesses her learners on a regular basis for various aspects of the work and keep records of this in a record book. The teacher often provided learners with feedback by way of commenting on the responses the learners gave to her questions. Now and then she would also give learners tasks to perform, and at the end, request them to explain how they had gone about doing the given task. The teacher also corrected and commented on the class exercises and worksheets that she gave the learners during lessons.

#### 7.3.8 Learners given opportunities to demonstrate what they learn

For half of the time (50%) observed, the teacher was observed to give learners opportunities to demonstrate what they had learned in different ways. Learners were often requested to recite different things as a class. The teacher often requested the learners to read words, sentences, and count aloud as a group. Sometimes she would ask individual learners to perform some task on the chart or solve problems on the board while other learners are listening and observing or to perform some tasks individually for her. It was often noted that while many children would volunteer to demonstrate what the teacher did in front of the class, they often had difficulties in expressing themselves aloud. The teacher often had to assist the learners by way of probing and questioning as well as inviting other learners to assist.

It is difficult for one to imagine how the teacher monitors or even notices learners who do not participate when the class answers as a group. It is likely that there could be learners who merely go through the motions without necessarily saying what the teacher expects of them.

Another thing that was noted was that many African learners were not given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning in these lessons. The few that were given opportunities were often unable to communicate their ideas.

#### 7.3.9 Learner comments actively on the lesson

The atmosphere in this class was very relaxed. Many learners volunteered comments in the class. The researcher also noted that on many occasions learners would comment on what other learners were doing, mostly those seating next to them in the group. Most of the comments that the learners made were about themselves.

#### 7.3.10 Learners taken outside their classrooms.

The teacher spent about two fifths (40%) of the observation period outside the classroom. The teacher took learners outside for a number of tasks. On one occasion, the learners went to the library to watch a video on different modes of transportation. On the other occasions the teacher took the learners outside to perform tasks that were clearly explained and discussed with them in the classroom.

#### 7.3.11 learners play freely within or outside the class

Learners played freely for about 50% of the time. They however, did not play at all for about 40% of the time. During most of the play sessions, learners got distracted from the instructions and the intentions that the teacher had for the lesson. The teacher herself used a few ordered 'games' to elicit or to develop concepts that were her desired outcomes of the lesson. One example of such play was, when the teacher introduced 'even numbers'.

#### 7.3.12 Teacher makes maximum use of teaching time

Figure 1 shows that the teacher lost three-tenths (30%) of the teaching time. On two occasions teachers had been called to the office for one reason or another. There was one lesson where pupils were left idle for more than 15 minutes. Another time was lost when the attendance register was called. In most of the lessons (over 50% of the observation session) the teacher appeared to have thoroughly prepared for the class activities. Most of the lesson time was used to implement these lessons.

## 8. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

### 8.1 What kind documents are produced by the teacher

The teacher produced an assessment book and Literacy, Numeracy and Life Skills teacher's guides. When asked to produce a preparation book she said that she planned her lessons following the teacher's guides, and therefore she did not have an additional preparation book.

#### 8.1.1 Teacher's Preparation

On careful scrutiny of the extracts of the teacher's guides that the teachers produced, I found that there were some notes that she had written on a section marked 'Notes for assessment'. For example, at the end of Day 2 LPO 14 Numeracy the teacher had written "Remedial group-counting to 10 and Advanced counting in 2's". In the Life skills section the teacher wrote:

Make a bus,

- Cardboard, paint.
- Group 1-Body
- Group 2 - 5 one wheel each
- Group 6 bonnet.

A third extract read: -

1. Write sentences for new words.
2. Start building reading charts
3. Phonic-revise ap - make words-teach-1p
4. Language- add 's' car, truck, bike

Apart from these there were no other notes that were made. It can be seen that these notes did not provide enough information. They were not made on a regular basis and no pattern could be identified from them.

When going through the teacher's guide extracts there was evidence of the guide being followed in the lesson. Some of the notes taken during classroom observation sessions match some sections of the guides. But there were other sections of the lesson that the teacher clearly prepared the lesson for herself. The teacher mentioned that she uses other materials and sources for her lessons. This could not be detected from the documents that the teacher produced, although it was witnessed in the classroom.

## 8.2 Assessment Book

The teacher kept an assessment book. This book had two sections. At the front, she recorded the cognitive progress of the learners and at the back she recorded information on how learners behaved in class, how they worked with other learners, etc.

### 8.2.1 The Cognitive progress

This part of the assessment book has the following:

- (a) The name of the topic or theme the teacher is working on, e.g., communication, recognition of seasons or reading e.g. transport, etc.
- (b) The teacher then has names of the learners as they are grouped in the class. Next to the names of the learners the teacher then writes comments about what she noted with individual learners. This is done either by way of writing a complete comment or using a symbol. Some examples are:
  - c for completed the task,
  - nyc for not yet complete

The teacher would then note next to a learner's name, some special attention that an individual learner may need, e.g., 'lack of concentration'; problem with 7, etc.

Other examples of the comments that the teacher noted against individual learners read: Ezekiel - grammar incorrect -'done' instead of 'did'- "we done a scarf".

Jeremiah - speaks very softly - can't hear anything.

Rashina - very good.

Siyabonga - competent when prompted.

### 8.2.2 Other Observations

At the back of the assessment book the teacher records miscellaneous information about individual learners. Each learner is assigned a page and the teacher records any peculiar information pertaining to the learner and the date when this was noted. The extract below is an example of a record kept on two learners:

Veronica Naicker

27/07 - Good understanding of shapes

4108 - Correctly interpreting pairs of numbers and writing the sum.

Aslam Govender

5/08 - Becoming very playful not completing work

Main course of attention - Sershen

13/08 - Sershen removed - Aslam still not completing work

14/08 - Pencil breaks after lunch -> work not complete.

Another extract that was taken from the teacher's assessment book read 08 -

Group work - not working in groups

- Pairs of 10 - one group of counters
- Children prefer to use the counters individually rather than with the whole group.
- Pair of 10 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt
- More understood.

The last extract indicated that the teacher also uses this section of the assessment book to note and evaluate some activities taking place in the classroom.

The above section shows that the teacher keeps a record of both intellectual and social progress of the learners in class and also assesses some of the classroom activities that learners engage in.

### 8.3 Learner transcripts

#### 8.3.1 How many types of learner transcript were produced?

There are two types of learner transcripts that were produced for this evaluation. The learners produced exercise books and worksheets. The exercise books included work from the three learning areas.

#### 8.3.2 What kinds of questions do teachers use?

Most of the questions are pre-set in the work sheet and teachers guides. Most of the questions were low-order closed-ended questions. Questions in the worksheets were mainly completion type question. Often these 'questions' were simple instructions

requesting the learners to perform given tasks. Examples of these tasks are counting, performing simple Numeracy operations, colouring etc.

### 8.3.3 How often are homework books assessed?

The teacher said that she does not provide learners with any homework as the school's policy forbade the practice of giving learners homework. The main reason behind this policy was that the home environment of most learners was not conducive for doing schoolwork.

## 9. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. The school has adequate facilities to implement OBE
2. Most learners have all required materials for all subjects 3. Grade 1 class that was observed is overcrowded
4. The school has all OBE resource materials.
5. The teacher is adequately trained for OBE - she is an OBE facilitator.
6. Group work did not work well for most of the time.
7. The teacher believes that the 'language barrier' with non-English speaking learners creates a lot of problems in the class.
8. The teacher recommended a massive need for parental awareness and involvement in OBE.
9. The teacher uses traditional modes of teaching for the first two terms of Grade 1. She believes pre-school education is an important prerequisite for OBE.
10. Most lessons taught were based on OBE resources.
11. Teacher kept an assessment book that had detailed records of individual learner's intellectual and social progress and abilities.

## **Case Study**

### **Mpumalanga Schools**

**A SUMMARY OF OBE IMPLEMENTATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM  
ELUSINDISWENI PRIMARY SCHOOL (11)**

UMHLUZI TOWNSHIP,

MPUMALANGA CASE STUDY

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Elusindisweni is an ex-Department of Education and Training (DET) primary school situated in Umhluzi Township, Middelburg Mpumalanga Province. The school was selected as an established township school with the basic infrastructure in place. Even though it was not selected as a well-resourced school the teachers were doing very well in the OBE implementation.

## **2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY**

Case study data collection was done in this school during August 1998. The principal completed a school profile once only. For this school we used already existing teacher profile since the school was also part of the OBE Impact Evaluation study. The teacher questionnaires were administered to the teacher to complete. The researcher filled the classroom resources profile (once) and the classroom observation schedules for each session observed (except for the days when there was no teaching in the classroom or when the class was on a field trip). Teacher and learner transcripts were analysed by the researcher.

## **3. SCHOOL PROFILE**

Elusindisweni is a primary school with classes ranging from grade 1 to grade 7. The school is an ex-DET institution with 984 pupils including 135 grade 1 pupils, 3 grade 1 classrooms and 3 grade 1 teachers. The school has no teacher-aides. The learners are from different backgrounds socially, as well as culturally and their home languages are different. Most learners speak isiNdebele with a few who speak siSwati, isiXhosa, isiZulu, seSotho, sePedi, seTswana and xiTsonga. For higher primary learners, English is the language of communication.

## **4. SCHOOL BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES**

According to the principal (acting), some classrooms need minor repairs. The school has the following materials all in good condition: telephone, store room, running water, electricity supply and the staff room (in poor condition). Jet later contributed a computer

and one teacher fundraised for a fax machine. The school does not have a sports field nor a swimming pool. The school was considered one of the better-resourced African schools.

## 5. SCHOOL RESOURCES

### 5.1. For grade 1 class

According to the principal about 80-90% learners have all the required learning materials in all school subjects. Table 1 indicates the classroom resource profile as observed by the researcher.

**TABLE1: CLASSROOM RESOURCE PROFILES-Mrs Ndlovu**

|   | Yes | No | Qualitative Comment   |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Pupils have adequate places                                | X   |    |   |
| 2. Adequate writing space                                     | X   |    |   |
| 3. Chair for the teacher                                      | X   |    |   |
| 4. There is adequate lighting in the classroom                | X   |    |   |
| 5. There is adequate space for movement between desks         | X   |    |   |
| 6. There are charts displayed in the wall                     | X   |    |   |
| 7. Walls are painted and well-maintained                      |     | -  | Bricks used for the classroom. The class is thus not cemented and painted, but it is well maintained. |
| 8. There is ventilation                                       | X   |    |   |
| 9. Classroom is adequately roofed                             | X   |    | The class has ceiling board. This is highly unusual in the African schools.                           |
| 10. Windows are available and in a reasonable state of repair | X   |    |   |
| 11. Chalkboard available                                      | X   |    |   |

### 5.2.Resources to teach OBE

According to the teacher the school received the following OBE material from

|  | Yes | No |
|--|-----|----|
| 1. Policy Document for the Foundation Phase        | ✓   |    |
| 2. Literacy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 3. Literacy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 4. Numeracy programmes with teacher's guides       | ✓   |    |
| 5. Numeracy programmes without teacher's guides    | ✓   |    |
| 6. Life skills programmes with Teachers Guide      | ✓   |    |
| 7. Life skills programmes without teacher's guides | ✓   |    |
| 8. Illustrative Learning Packages                  |     | ✓  |
| 9. Stationery Packages                             |     | ✓  |

According to the case C teacher, they as teachers developed OBE materials.

## 6. PROFILE OF THE CASE B TEACHER

Case study C teacher is a female aged between 31-40 years. She has been a teacher for 17 years and has been teaching in this school for 4 years in which for the past 3years she has been teaching grade 1.

She obtained her Higher Education Diploma (HED) in 1996. She had since attended four workshops offered by the Department of Education, which she found useful. The first workshop was a five-day workshop focusing on the implementation of OBE and the second one was a 4day workshop, which dealt with the school readiness. The next two workshops were one day each and they dealt with long term planning and assessment respectively.

Case C teacher said she is confident and competent in relation to teaching OBE. Even though she values the training she received in OBE, she feels she still require more training on OBE.

## 7. TEACHER'S UNDERSTANDING OF OBE

### 7.1. Does the teacher in fact practice OBE?

Case C teacher believes she does implement OBE in her classroom because of the following reasons:

- ✉ Her lessons are integrated.
- ✉ The themes cover all the learning areas and
- ✉ She referred the researcher to instances when she taught environment studies, mathematics (numeracy) and colours all during the same lesson.

### 7.2. What specifically has changed?

According to this teacher, the following has changed in her lessons:

- ✉ Planning: when she plans her lessons she integrates them across the learning areas. She does long term planning which then informs her short term planning.
- ✉ Integration: her lessons are now integrated
- ✉ Learning outside the classroom: she takes learners outside the classroom more often than she did before.
- ✉ Assessment assessment is now outcomes based and continuous assessing skills rather than content.

### 7.3. What are the main successes with OBE?

#### SUCCESSES:

OBE relieves teachers because:

- ☒ it is child centered - a lot of work is done by the learners the teacher now does less 'preaching' than before
- ☒ the teacher is more of a guide OBE caters for slow learners:
- ☒ facilitation is done at the learner's pace it is not exam driven

### 7.4. What do you see as the obstacle/limitations with regard to implementing OBE?

#### OBSTACLE/LIMITATIONS:

- ☒ Not enough material for OBE
- ☒ Parents do not participate in the learning of their children 7.5. Do you think OBE is appropriate for Grade 1 learners?

Case C teacher thinks that OBE is best-used 'right from the start since we need to prepare learners right from the start'. She thought school readiness could be done using the OBE method for best results. She felt that implementing OBE later in the year would mean that during the earlier part of the year, learners would not be exposed to creative learning and they might not adjust for a very long time.

### 7.6. What would you need to optimally implement OBE in your classroom?

- ☒ More materials
- ☒ Guides, and teachers' books

According to this teacher, these should give ideas on what teacher should teach. Presently, teachers simply have to come up with topics for their lessons without any guidance.

### 7.7. If you had one important piece of advice to the Department of Education, what would this be?

Teachers need:

- ☒ More workshops on OBE

- ☛ Follow-ups: to evaluate if the teachers are on the right track as far as OBE is concerned.

## 8. GRADE 1 CLASSROOM

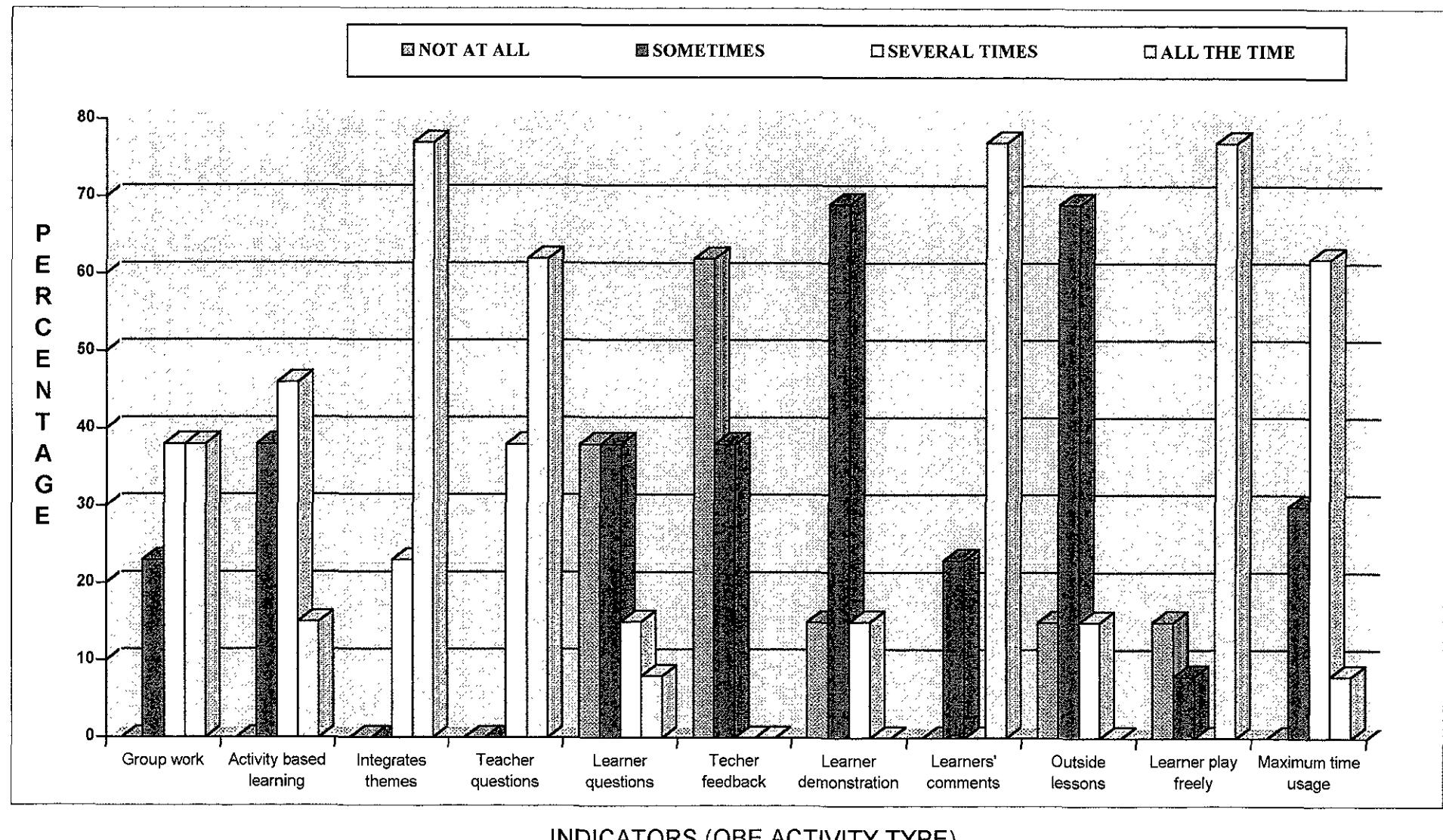
### 8.1. Instrumentation of Classroom observation

Data in this section was collected using the Classroom Observation Schedule with 11 indicators. These indicators were carefully identified for OBE after going through the OBE documentation and the phase 1 observation. This instrument was completed by the researcher per observation session (one instrument or more times per day). For rating used in the instrument please refer to the appendix.

### 8.2. Learners' attendance over the Case Study observation

The enrolment in this class was 45. However class attendance varied from 41 to 39 pupils per day.

**Figure 1: OBE OBSERVATION IN GRADE 1 CLASSROOM.**



### 8.3. Group work

In this class, it was observed that learners were always seated in-groups even when doing individual work. They took their books out in groups, put them away in groups and also shared their stationery within the group. Figure 1 indicates that 38% of the observed time, learners were observed to be working in-groups. And it also indicates that there was no lesson observed which did not have some form of group work.

### 8.4. Learning is activity based

Figure 1 shows that learning was activity-based most of the time. The teacher indicated that she tried very hard to plan for activity-based learning in the class since:

- ☛ it makes learners more active in class
- ☛ it encourages critical thinking and
- ☛ it creates an atmosphere for active involvement in almost all class activities.
- ☛ but most importantly it is fun for the learners

### 8.5. Teacher integrates themes from different learning areas

The teacher integrated themes from different learning areas almost all the time. During the interview, the teacher discussed how she plans her lessons. The teacher developed a theme and extended it to the different learning areas. It was also observed that all the lessons themes were integrated across the learning areas.

### 8.6. Teacher led-questions

The teacher was always asking questions. These questions were for developing her lessons further and drew on the learners' experiences. Sometimes the questions were asked so that the learners could review what they have been discussed. This type of questioning is the same as the Socratic method.

### 8.7. Learner led-questions

Most of the time learners made comments instead of asking questions. They participated freely and actively in the class. Figure 1 indicates that most of the time the learners did not ask questions. However in instances where they asked questions, learners asked questions such as; 'where should I write this', 'where is my exercise book", 'when are we going to Botchabelo', etc Management-type questions).

## 8.8. Teacher provides learners with individual feedback

The teacher did assess regularly and keep the record book, but the learners were not aware of how they were doing. The only time they knew about their progress was when the teacher marked their books. I found this form of feedback to be insufficient since the learners' progress changed daily, i.e. what the learner did incorrectly today could be correct the following day and vice versa. Figure 1 indicates that for slightly more than three-fifths (62%) of the time observed learners were not given individual feedback.

## 8.9. Learners given opportunities to demonstrate what they had learnt

Figure 1 also indicates that sometimes learners were given the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learnt. The teacher claimed that she gave learners a chance to demonstrate what they had learnt. The researcher observed that the learners demonstrated what they had learnt by either singing (recital), actively commenting, reading from the board and counting.

## 8.10. Learners comment actively on the lesson

The teacher creates the atmosphere for learners to actively participate in the lesson. Learners participated all the time. For slightly more than three-quarters (77%) of the observed time learners commented actively and for slightly more than one-fifth (23%) of the time they commented occasionally.

## 8.11. Learners taken outside their classroom

In this class learners were taken outside the classroom. They were taken outside the classroom to see the different types of houses, trees, road safety signs, number plates, colours, effects of the season (weather), etc. On one occasion learners were taken to the museum - Botchabelo Ndebele Museum. This museum had Ndebele houses with traditional patterns and from these learners learnt about colours, shapes, different houses, etc. This activity took about 69% of the time.

## 8.12. Learners play freely within or outside the class

Because of the atmosphere created by the teacher, learners participated freely in the class activities all the time. They played freely in class most of the time, i.e. 77% of the time observed. Only one girl in grade 12 intimidated the learners in this class. When she was around they would be so quiet you would think they were not in class, but when their

teacher or the researcher was around they would make the usual noise. The teacher never used corporal punishment.

### 8.13. Teacher makes maximum use of instructional/ teaching time

Case C teacher is now a deputy principal in the school. During the Impact Evaluation Study (Phase 1) observation she was always in class but now she is either in the office, attending meetings, other classrooms or outside the school. However, Figure 1 indicates that most of the time she makes maximum use of the instructional time.

## 9. TRANSCRIPT ANALYSIS

### 9.1. What kind of documents are produced by the teacher 9.1.1.Teachers preparation

The teacher has a preparation book. This is used to do long-term and short-term preparations including activities and objectives. The lesson plans (a few copies of these are available) are divided into:

Activity 1: Numeracy Activity 2: Literacy Activity 3: Life Skills These are done each day in different time slots

### 9.1.2 Assessment Book

According to the assessment book analysis and the interview, assessment in this class is based on the following:

- ☛ Effective organisation and management of the self and other activities: Here the teacher assess the independence of the child, ability to adapt, socialisation, task completion, as well as small and gross motor operation. The teacher has to decide whether the learner needs help, is satisfactory, good or excellent in each of the above.
- ☛ The collection, analysing, critical evaluation and organising of information: The teacher assesses whether or not the learner needs help, is satisfactory, is good or excellent in sharing, comparing, collection of the information, evaluating and using

information, feedback, distinguishing between writing and drawing, and in writing skills.

- ☛ Effective communication by means of visual symbols and/or language skills Here the teacher looks at the learner's use of language, word order, making up of stories, listening skills, classification and sequence.
- ☛ Understanding of the world as a system and that problem solving never happens in isolation: The teacher assesses the learner's exploration of change, relationship with others, critical thinking, interests and awareness of cause and effect.
- ☛ Understanding of the basic concepts dealt with in class: This part of assessment looks at the exploration and selection of materials/equipment, distinguishing of colours, exploring patterns, recognition of patterns, measurement and environmental consciousness and safety.

In all of these categories the teacher decides (using the ranking order) whether the learner needs help, is satisfactory, good or excellent. These categories are from the seven critical outcomes.

## 9.2. LEARNERS TRANSCRIPTS

In this class learners have seven transcripts. These are for:

- ☛ English- this exercise book is for English spelling, dictation and story writing. Usually the stories, which are written here, are from the magazines.
- ☛ Zulu- this exercise book is for Zulu spelling, dictation and story writing. Usually the stories, which are written here, are from the magazines.
- ☛ Environmental studies - this exercise is used for everything related to the environment, magazines cutting and drawings.
- ☛ Life Skills - this book is used for drawings mostly after going outside of the classroom. They draw what they have seen or write about what they have seen.

- ☛ Numeracy - this is an activity book. They also have an exercise book for writing other numeracy work done in class, which is not from the book. The Department of Education provided these books to the learners.
- ☛ Literacy - after story-telling or any related theme learners write sounds in these books. Both isiZulu and English sounds are recorded.
- ☛ Writing skills- this book is for improving the learner's writing skills

The teacher also provided a detailed explanation of how she assessed homework books everyday following the day homework was given.

## 10. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS (Case Study C teacher:)

1. Most learners have all required materials for all subjects
2. The teacher is adequately trained for OBE
3. Groupwork works well for most of the time.
4. The teacher mentioned that parents are not involved in their children' learning. She feels that parents need to be informed about role in their children's learning. There is a great need for parental awareness and involvement in OBE.
5. The teacher uses traditional modes of teaching for the first two terms of Grade 1. She says that she believed that pre-school education is an important prerequisite for OBE.
6. Most lessons taught were based on the official OBE resources.
7. The teacher kept an assessment book that had detailed records of individual learners' skills and conceptual abilities.