

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES
OF TEACHERS IN SELECTED FORT BEAUFORT SCHOOLS.
A CASE STUDY IN THE EASTERN CAPE.**

By

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DECLARATION

I herein declare that An Investigation into the Formative Assessment Practices of Teachers in Selected Fort Beaufort Schools is my own work. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination purposes to any other institution. All sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Mongezi William Kuze

December 2009

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ABSTRACT

South Africa has, since 1994 undergone significant political, social and economic changes and all these changes have had an effect in most of the governmental departments. One department adversely affected in particular, is the Department of Education (DoE). The implementation of a large number of educational policies being developed at national and provincial levels to bring about radical changes, leave much to desire. That has led the researcher to be investigating Teachers' Formative Assessment Practices in Grade 9 Technology classrooms of selected schools in the Fort Beaufort District of Education.

The DoE had explored ways to better educate learners and to improve the entire school performance, hence the introduction of the new methods of assessment, to quote but one, assessment policy No. 19640 of 1998. The new assessment policy in the GET Band is a means of assessing learners in order to enhance individual growth and development; to monitor the progress of learners; and to facilitate their learning. This policy states that assessment and feedback are integral to the teaching and learning process and policy planners and practitioners must be adequately prepared to implement these policies.

Assessment is the most powerful lever educators use to influence the way learners respond to teaching and behave as learners. It is crucial that

appropriate and effective methods of assessment are employed to ensure effective learning.

Therefore, the study examined, within the interpretive paradigm and taking a constructivist approach, experiences and concerns raised by participants concerning the implementation of formative assessment in the case. In order to investigate teachers' perceptions and the implementation of formative assessment practices, in relation to emerging educational policies, one Grade 9 learning area – Technology - in five schools were purposefully sampled.

Data from the participants were mainly collected employing qualitative methods, being in-depth interviews, observations and document studies. The main findings of the study were that participants' (School Management Team members, teachers and learners) perceptions were not quite clear pertaining to what formative assessment is all about. They did not know how to implement it in their classes and as a result had a negative impact on them.

This led to recommending that these practitioners must adequately and rigorously be re-trained in implementing the policy. The DoE ought to outsource such trainings to tertiary institution for certification purposes. In future, the DoE should, before implementing any policy, make sure facilitators know the policy, are adequately and thoroughly trained and skilled before embarking on any further training of policy practitioners.

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Table of Contents	Page
Title page	i
Declaration	ii
Abstract	iii
Acknowledgement	v
Table of Contents	vi
References	ix
Appendices	ix
List of Figures	ix
List of Tables	ix
 Chapter 1 The Context of the Research	 1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	7
1.3 Purpose of the study	8
1.4 Research Questions	8
1.5 Objectives of the study	9
1.6 Assumptions of the study	9
1.7 Significance of the study	10
1.8 Rationale of the study	13
1.9 Delimitation of the study	14
1.10 Definition of terms	15
1.10.1 Assessment	15
1.10.2 Formative Assessment	16
1.10.3 Summative Assessment	17
1.11 Summary	18
 Chapter 2 Review of Literature	 19
2.1 Introduction	19
2.2 What is Assessment	19
2.2.1 Formative Assessment	22
2.3 South African Context	25
2.3.1 Outcomes-based education and Curriculum 2005	28

2.4	How Teachers Perceive Formative Assessment in South African Schools	35
2.5	Policy Implementation in South African Schools	38
2.5.1	Implementation of Formative Assessment in South African Schools	40
2.5.2	Teacher Training and Development in South Africa	44
2.5.3	The Impact of Formative Assessment on Teachers and Learners in South African Schools	48
2.5.4	Factors Inhibiting the Implementation of Formative Assessment in South Africa	49
2.6	The International Context	51
2.7	Theoretical Framework	55
2.7.1	Planned Formative Assessment (PFA) Model	55
2.7.2	Interactive Formative Assessment (IFA) Model	57
2.8	Summary	61
Chapter 3	Methodology of the study	63
3.1	Introduction	63
3.2	The Research Approach	63
3.3	The Research Design	66
3.4	Population, sample and sampling	69
3.4.1	Schools participating in the study	72
3.5	Instrumentation	73
3.5.1	Interviews	73
3.5.2	Observations	75
3.5.3	Document Analysis	78
3.6	Triangulation	79
3.7	Data Collection and Analysis Methods	81
3.7.1	Inducing themes	85
3.8	Reliability and Validity/Trustworthiness	86
3.9	Ethical Considerations	89
3.10	Limitations of the study	91
3.11	Summary	92

Chapter 4	Data Presentation and Analysis	93
4.1	Introduction	93
4.2	Demographical data of respondents	93
4.2.1	The location of schools	94
4.2.2	The gender of respondents	94
4.2.3	The age of respondents	96
4.2.4	Qualification and Experience of respondents	98
4.3	Qualitative Operationalization	101
4.4	Analysis of data	102
4.5	Research themes	103
4.5.1	Teacher and learner perceptions of Formative Assessment or Feedback	103
4.5.2	Implementation of Formative Assessment or Feedback in the classroom	105
4.5.3	Training undergone by Teachers in the Implementation of Formative Assessment	107
4.5.4	The Impact of teachers' current Assessment Practices on learners	108
4.5.5	Factors Inhibiting Formative Assessment or Feedback Implementation	109
4.6	Summary	110
Chapter 5	Discussion of findings	112
5.1	Introduction	112
5.2	Demographic data of the respondents	112
5.2.1	Location of the selected schools	113
5.2.2	Qualifications and experiences of teachers in the selected secondary schools	115
5.3	Teacher and learner perceptions of FA and or Feedback	117
5.4	The classroom implementation of Formative Assessment	120
5.5	Training undergone by implementers	126
5.6	The impact of teachers' current assessment practices on Learners	132

5.7	Factors that inhibit the policy implementation	136
5.8	Summary	138
Chapter 6	Conclusions and recommendations	139
6.1	Introduction	139
6.1.1	Teacher and SMT perception about Formative Assessment	140
6.1.2	Formative Assessment classroom implementation	141
6.1.3	Teacher training for FA implementation	142
6.1.4	Impact of current assessment practices on learners	144
6.1.5	Factors inhibiting FA implementation	146
6.2	Conclusions	148
6.3	Recommendations	149
6.4	Areas for further research	150
	References	152
	Appendices	161

List of Figures

2.1	Planned Formative Assessment Figure	56
2.2	Interactive Formative Assessment Figure	58
2.3	Model of Formative Assessment Figure	59

List of Tables

Table 1	Location of Schools Table	94
Table 2	Gender of SMT's Table	95
Table 3	Gender of Teachers	95
Table 4	Gender of Learners	96
Table 5	Age ranges of SMT	97
Table 6	Age ranges of Teachers	97
Table 7	Age ranges of Learners	98
Table 8	Professional qualifications and experiences of SMT	99
Table 9	Professional qualifications and experiences of Teachers	100
Table 10	Teachers specializing in Technology	100