

Abstract

This study seeks to establish if teaching Grade 7 Algebra accords with Outcomes Based Education [OBE] in a sample of three state primary schools in a province, South Africa. Following the methods of illuminative evaluation the researcher looked for 'matches' and 'mismatches' between what was planned in an OBE text with what 'actually happens' in classroom teaching to gauge if the shift to outcomes has taken place in teaching Mathematics in these schools, and make recommendations to improve. Data was collected using document analysis to establish how percentages was planned to be taught by teachers and using naturalistic observations with follow-up probing interviews to establish how this teaching actually took place in classrooms. The data was checked by questionnaire data seeking the views of educators doing this teaching. The data showed 5 Patterns in this teaching, one only according with planned OBE teaching, 2 other Patters where teaching was more-or-less as intended, and 2 further Patterns where teaching failed to accord with the OBE text. Just over half the teachers or 58% of the sample seemed to have shifted to OBE, and less than half or 42% of educators seem not to have done so. Primary amongst the findings is that educators failed to teach Mathematics conceptually first as planned, preferring in a variety of ways to omit conceptual explanations by way of introduction to lessons in favour of 'guiding examples', 'group work' and 'report back', 'teacher and learner assessment' and 'concluding exercises', the six categories which emerged for teaching in these lessons. The study recommends primarily that educators re-claim teaching Mathematics conceptually first, and prior to completing examples and giving exercises to learners. It concludes that fewer educators than expected seem to have shifted towards OBE teaching in these Mathematics classrooms, 6 years into the national innovation, C 2005.