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TEACHERS REACTIONS TO OUTCOMES-BASED MUSIC EDUCATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

ABSTRACT

This article examines the reactions of specialist music teachers to the introduction of Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) in South Africa. OBE has been seen in post-apartheid South Africa as a way to transform education and address the imbalances of the past. The study reported here used questionnaires to explore attitudes of teachers at independent schools in Johannesburg in the first year of implementing OBE. Analysis of data revealed both positive and negative attitudes as well as the strong need for teachers professional development if OBE is to succeed.

This article presents a case study of specialist music teachers’ opinions and attitudes towards an outcomes-based approach to music education implemented in a representative cross section of independent schools in Johannesburg. It is part of a wider study (Joseph, 1999) which provided a critique of outcomes-based music education in South Africa at the beginning of its implementation (1998) across all subjects in the new National Curriculum. The purpose of the present article is to provide an outline of the new outcomes-based system of education (OBE) in South Africa, reporting specifically on music teachers’ attitudes and opinions and implications for current classroom practice at the primary school level. The findings may provide a point of comparison for music educators in other countries where an outcomes-based approach to teaching and learning has been adopted.
The Reform of the South African situation

Since the advent of the new post-apartheid government in 1994, policy makers felt it imperative to introduce a new system of education—one that would be appropriate and applicable to meet the needs of the twenty-first century. Until that time, South African education was characterised by a uniform and predictable curriculum policy environment. The apartheid state managed a centralised system, which was variously described as racist, Euro-centred, sexist, authoritarian, prescriptive, unchanging, content blind and discriminatory (Jansen, 1999, p.4). It was necessary that an equal and just system should be installed to include the masses of the population who were previously denied a proper education.

Although during apartheid all schools taught a core curriculum based on a ‘schools subjects’ approach, schools had vastly different resource environments and accordingly produced different consequences within the different race groups. In my own experience as a product of the ‘old’ South Africa, for example, most non-white schools in Johannesburg did not include the ‘arts’ in their curriculum as there were insufficient qualified teachers to teach it in the pre-apartheid days. Music was not viewed as being as important a subject as language, mathematics and science. Many students of that time—like myself—had to attend private music lessons outside of school time in order to gain a music education.

The new South African government is still faced with the challenge of transforming education and addressing the imbalances created by apartheid. A paradigm shift in the education system has been central to this challenge. This involves a shift from a more traditional approach to curriculum—one that was driven by a rigid structure, ruled
by an inflexible context and characterised by a racially differentiated curriculum—to that of an outcomes-based curriculum, based on critical thinking, independent work and integrated studies. The emphasis now is on what the learner knows and can do as a result of the teaching received, rather than on what the teacher knows and does in his/her teaching. This approach has been aptly termed Outcomes-based Education (OBE). Used in conjunction with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), OBE allows for education and training to represent a partnership between teachers and students in the learning process. OBE also encourages schools and teachers to become more accountable to the community for results, and for teacher-and school appraisal to be more systematically undertaken.

Two leading South African authorities on OBE, Boschee and Baron (1993, p.1), suggest that “OBE is a student-centred, results-orientated design premised on the belief that all individuals can learn”. Spady and Marshall (1991, pp. 67-72) support this by arguing that, under OBE, students are able to learn and succeed far better than under a more conservative approach as ‘success breeds success’. To a large extent then, schools (teachers) control the conditions that determine whether or not students succeed. Mamary (1991, pp. 21-28) adds that, because all students have talent in at least some areas, it is the function of the school to develop this talent. Within performing arts curriculum, talent may not necessarily involve performing but may also include aspects such as composing or creative writing, choreography, dramaturgy or other creative activity.

OBE has been seen as a ‘giant step forward’ because it provides a structure for moving away from traditional ways of teaching and learning. It attempts to replace a
system that has been characterised as promoting rote-learning and encouraging passive learners, and a syllabus which is more content-driven than process-driven, imposing boundaries between subjects rather than a shared responsibility between students and teachers. In the South African context, the curriculum content has also been characterised as biased in most respects towards Eurocentricism, maleness and middle- and-upper-class perspectives of knowledge (Mahomed, 1999).

The new OBE system of education then, aims to provide access to many more people and to encourage a variety of reflections of knowledge found in different life experiences of people. For more mature learners, the possibility exists for them to access education courses, which can be completed at the learners’ pace. Once fully operational, the aim is to move from a textbook-based approach to a more interactive, possibly technology-based approach to learning which involves the Internet and CD-ROMs and in classroom setting a return to an oral tradition where learners are encouraged to ask questions and to be critical and analytical thinkers. Teachers who used to rely on the textbook approach without engaging their pupils in active discovery and application of knowledge and skills now have the opportunity to be exposed to ways of ‘learning about learning’ to ways of accessing information and using content in a more effective way (Rasool, 1999). It is hoped that these teachers will embrace OBE as a richer learning environment.

**Hasty Introduction of Outcomes-Based Education**

OBE was introduced in South Africa at the end of December 1995 in order to overcome the problems in school education at a national level. Educational change, and
the controversy that surrounds it, is not unique to South Africa and motivation for change is often politically, economically or socially-based or a mix of these factors (Mahomed, 1999). With the prevailing social, economic and political climate in South Africa, a change to OBE was seen as a way to better equip all learners with the knowledge, values and attitudes necessary for success once they left school or completed a course.

The development of the new *Curriculum 2005*\(^1\) (C2005) and its implementation in South African schools, however, has not been a smooth process. Although the post-apartheid government recognised the need to replace the content-based curriculum of the apartheid era, curriculum change took second place to more immediate pressures such as finance, governance and organisations of schools (Christie, 1999).

In the main, teachers at many state (as opposed to independent) schools were not prepared for the new OBE curriculum. This was partly due to the poorly planned and hastily introduced OBE curricula by the new government and the Department of Education. Although curriculum ideas and initiatives for the South African context were adopted and adapted from countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada (Joseph, 1999) as well as from Scotland (Jansen, 1999 & Malcolm 1999), it would seem that too little time was spent on the integration or interrogation of educational ideas at the school level. Jansen (1999) contends that the debate on the integration and competencies was largely confined to and conducted within the labour movement and its expanding relationship with business rather than with schools. He further reports that on the occasion of the OBE launch in 1998, schools only received a series of documents to

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\(^1\) *Curriculum 2005* is probably the most significant curriculum reform in South African education of the last century. It arose out of collation processes designed to ensure the integration of education and training through the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
explain OBE, accompanied by one week of information sessions (billed as training) in January 1998. Christie (1999) further points out that the new curriculum was implemented in top-down ways that resemble the imposition of the previous apartheid-era curricula. To date, work with teachers and schools has been minimal and resources totally inadequate. Despite this state of affairs, and given the haste of the implementation on a national level, independent schools have generally coped well at the early stages of implementation, having smaller number of pupils, more adequate resources and more highly qualified specialist teachers.

**Research Context**

It is with this context that I conducted a questionnaire based survey of independent school music teachers in the early months of OBE. This article reports on teachers’ attitudes to and opinions of both OBE and music education at the foundation phase (Grade 1-3) at Independent Schools in Johannesburg (the capital city of the Gauteng Province) where implementation took place in 1998. Although the Gauteng province occupies the smallest area (in square kilometres) of all of the South African provinces, it has the highest population density per square kilometre.

There are two types of schools in South Africa—state-aided schools and independent schools. Due to the legacy of apartheid, independent schools have generally been able to establish music departments, employ specialist teachers, and provide greater resources and better facilities in comparison to state-aided schools. The schools in this study were chosen because music was taught at these schools as part of the curriculum before OBE was introduced in 1998. Unlike state-aided schools, the schools provided a
more balanced curriculum with a wider range of subjects that better catered for the needs of students.

The learning area entitled ‘Arts and Culture’ is now mandated as one of the eight official learning areas in South Africa's new outcomes-based *Curriculum 2005*, with music education forming a component of this learning area. While the ‘Arts and Culture’ learning area was not new to independent schools, most state-aided schools do not currently provide music education as part of their curricula due to the lack of qualified class music teachers, funding and resources. In contrast, most independent schools offer one or more of the four art subjects (music, art, drama or dance). Independent schools in Johannesburg, like independent schools in Australia, have the freedom to set up their own curriculum.

The wider research study of independent schools included data collected from four sources: questionnaires, interviews, document analysis and classroom observation. The primary aims of the wider study were to examine Outcomes-based Education since its introduction in 1998, to discuss the role of music within the Arts and Culture Learning Area of Curriculum 2005, analyse and discuss teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards OBE in music education at Independent Schools in the central Gauteng region, to compare and contrast music education at four selected schools in the Johannesburg region, and finally to recommend an OBE lesson scheme and plan for class music at the foundation phase. The secondary aims of the wider study were to ascertain the extent to which the six broad aims for music education suggested by the Department of Education and Culture (1991) are still followed within the new OBE system of education and to, analyse the status of music and its role in the life of independent schools.
This article reports only on one aspect of that study, namely music teachers’ perceptions and attitudes through a questionnaire at the early stages of implementation in 1998. Every school registered at the pre-primary and primary level for the central Gauteng region with the Independent Schools Council was asked to complete the questionnaire during the course of the 1998 school year. Only the class music teacher was asked to complete the questionnaire as opposed to the instrumental teacher. The questionnaire was tested before mailing and respondents were given a period of six months to complete it. Although there were seventy schools registered with the Independent Schools Council, only 51 schools participated in the study. Ten of the schools were registered as either remedial/deaf or specialised schools and, as a group, did not offer music while nine schools fell under the category of senior school and were not eligible to be part of the study. It must be noted that all respondents (n=32) were white music teachers. This reflects the fact that the majority of teachers in independent schools in 1998 were white—with music teachers in particular being an almost exclusively white population. Table 1 reflects the number and type of independent school registered in the central Gauteng area which responded to the survey.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF SCHOOL</th>
<th>NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS</th>
<th>NUMBERS RETURNED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BOYS</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO-ED</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>32 (63%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the rate of return it can be seen that 63% responded to the questionnaire in the central Gauteng region. Although the questionnaires were self-administered, there was no assurance that the addressee was actually the person who responded. Neither was there any assurance that the questions were understood, even though they were carefully planned, clearly stated and pre-tested. The questionnaire employed ‘yes’, ‘no’ and ‘don’t know’ response options, preference boxes to tick, as well as open and closed questions.

Presentation and Discussion of Findings

Outcomes-Based Education

The questionnaire examined music teachers’ attitudes and opinions to OBE. 93% of respondents saw OBE as a promising approach to classroom practice because OBE promotes more creativity and participation across all subject areas as well as subject integration. The overwhelming feedback provided by the current music teachers was positive even at the early stage of implementation of OBE, not only in relation to music education, but for education at large.

Given that all independent schools in the province of Gauteng were required to adopt OBE in 1998, respondents were asked to define what they thought was meant by an outcome. 62% of music specialists surveyed defined an outcome as an end result; they saw it as what the child is able to demonstrate in terms of learning at the end of the lesson. 28% defined OBE as an approach that promotes creativity and participation but did not give a definition of what they thought an outcome was. 5% chose not to answer the question and 5% gave illogical information which had to be discarded (for example,
an outcome can be linked to factors such as school subjects, more creativity and more examinations).

Respondents were also asked to cite reasons for their opinions regarding the concept of OBE as applied to music education. Some music teachers felt that the OBE is a good approach as it promotes subject integration; these teachers felt that music would not be taught in isolation—rather, it would be seen as one of the branches in Arts and Culture and therefore contribute to the entire education of the child. They believed that the new system promoted creativity and participation, which effectively represents a move away from a teacher-centred to a more student-centred approach. Despite education undergoing change nationally, some of the teachers were not prepared to be part of the change or to be challenged by contemporary developments. 21% of respondents could not clearly give a reason why they thought OBE is or is not a promising approach. Although teachers in the survey were generally well qualified, OBE did not form part of their teacher training and therefore they would understandably have found the planning and preparation for an OBE approach a challenging aspect of their work.

About 7% of respondents indicated that they were not enthusiastic about OBE. In relation to classroom practise, 87% of respondents stated that OBE would represent a challenge to both learners and teachers, whereas the other 13% of respondents were of the opinion that implementing OBE would not challenge their current practice. The latter group of teachers fell into the age group of 41 years and over. It may therefore be argued that age has a major influence on opinion and impacts on attitudes to new trends.
In relation to curriculum content, 69% of respondents said that OBE would make very little difference to their teaching in terms of content, whereas 31% reported that it would make some difference, but did not offer any further comment regarding how it would make the difference.

Respondents were also asked to specify whether implementing OBE would be more or less demanding than traditional methods. Only 4% of respondents felt that practising OBE would be less demanding, whereas an equal percentage felt it could be as demanding as traditional methods, if not more demanding. Teachers found that the OBE approach allowed for greater pupil participation and consequently, there was a need for them to carefully plan and prepare their lessons for maximum participation, creativity and integration.

The questionnaire also considered teachers’ competencies in relation to OBE. Due to the demands that OBE places on teachers, 55% of respondents felt that OBE would certainly increase their teaching competence. These teachers indicated that they were open to change and were receptive to new ideas. In this regard, it may be noted that curriculum development is not static and should therefore be a process through which teachers develop and expand their abilities in order to be successful and competent facilitators in education.

Teachers indicated a need for more professional development to be provided within the area of ‘Arts and Culture’ in order for effective teaching and learning to take place within the new OBE approach. Teachers are an important educational resource and they will determine whether or not the new curriculum succeeds. Therefore, the success of the new curriculum will depend on the training and support that teachers receive and
their ability to mobilise and manage the resources around them to implement the curriculum. This finding is supported by later studies of Jansen & Christie (1999) which reveal that professional development should be a national priority. According to Potenza & Monyokolo (1999), the major professional organisations have been explicit about the need for teacher training to be given priority. Unless teachers are properly trained and supported and unless they develop a sense of ownership of the process, the implementation of the new curriculum will not be realised in either independent and state schools in South Africa. Unfortunately, teacher involvement with and development in relation to the curriculum change, appears to have been an afterthought in the process of developing the new curriculum.

**Music Education within ‘Arts and Culture’- based learning**

The questionnaire also focused on the place of class music within the implementation of OBE in the broader area of Arts and Culture-based learning as well as on assessment, music styles and music activities. 60% of respondents felt that they had sufficient knowledge of OBE to introduce it at the beginning of 1998. They also indicated that, by including music within the ‘Arts and Culture’ learning area, music would no longer be perceived as a ‘subject in isolation’ but rather as relating to and complementing the other areas (dance, drama and visual art). 64% of teachers supported the integrating of music into the broader arts curriculum, thus keeping a broad and open mind about the subject, whereas the remaining 36% of music teachers preferred to teach music as a discipline-based subject. Given that OBE moves away from closed subject areas and extends itself beyond to that of integration across curriculum, Rasool (1999) contents that
the newly emerging paradigm of OBE encourages teachers to view the world as an integrated whole rather than as a disassociated collection of parts. According to Rassol (1999, p.179) it becomes the responsibility of the teacher to create ways of fostering these connections, promoting systematic thinking and facilitating interdisciplinary studies.

The question of discipline-based versus integrated subjects emerged as a highly contentious issue. Respondents suggested that, in order to teach an integrated curriculum for the arts, they required further teacher training. They felt that with the aid of workshops and professional development in aesthetics and interrelated arts, integrating other ‘arts’ into the music curriculum would be possible, promising and effective. Age seemed to effect teachers’ preferences regarding approaches to teaching. Teachers aged between 20 and 40 years preferred an integrated approach, whereas those over 41 years preferred the discipline-based approach, suggesting, perhaps that the attitudes and practices of older teachers are more difficult to change than younger teachers, who have a greater propensity toward change. It would seem that the older teachers are also more experienced at teaching their subject as a ‘pure’ art form in a discipline-based education.

Teachers’ qualifications also appear to have influenced their attitudes regarding an integration versus a discipline-based approach. A remarkably high (70%) percentage of teachers who had undertaken a Higher Diploma in Education preferred the integrated approach. A preference for integration was also reflected in a high percentage (75%) in BMus(Ed) and BA graduates who preferred an integrated approach. However, teachers who had undertaken a BMus, BMus(Hon) and MA qualification generally preferred a discipline-based approach which reflects the discipline-based nature of the tertiary training received.
Teaching Approaches to Class Music

In order to gauge preferences in relation to music curriculum implementation, respondents were asked to select from a choice of seven approaches to teaching those which they preferred and used. Their choices are tabulated in Table 2. OBE focuses on integrated concepts and a cross-curriculum approach whereas the ‘old system’ of curriculum focused on segmented content structure.

Table 2

Respondents’ choices of approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROACH</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>DON’T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theme-teaching</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated subjects</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated projects</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team-teaching</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside experts</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modular system</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separate subjects</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 indicates that theme-teaching was by far the most commonly employed method. However, several respondents commented that OBE made little difference to their teaching when theme-teaching. This form of teaching is commonly used across arts learning areas where a common theme is set across the curriculum for a period of time. Integration of subjects and integrated projects were also highly favoured (83% and 76% respectively). The use of theme and integrated approaches strives to build understandings and skills in all areas of the curriculum which is part of the OBE approach. Many
respondents also chose team-teaching (60%), although teachers sometimes felt that it was only effective as a ‘model’ for integration if the length of the lesson was taken into account, as well as focus of the content, expertise, support materials, co-operation and assessment. This type of approach seemed more possible to implement at the independent schools rather than state-aided schools given the greater flexibility in the timetable and the employment of specialist teachers. However, teachers did comment that such an approach would demand much more planning, discussion and amicable rapport between teachers than other approaches.

The use of ‘outside experts’ (57%) was also highly favoured; however, this could present classroom teachers with logistical/organisational problems and challenges as many of these ‘experts’ in specific music teaching areas (Indian, African and other culturally-based musical styles) may well teach at several other schools making it difficult for them to be accessible on a casual basis. Few respondents favoured a modular system as music lessons at the primary school level are not taught as separate units or modules. The low (38%) response from those who taught music as a ‘separate subject’ implied that these teachers were willing to integrate across the arts and were open to cross-curriculum teaching and learning.

In the main, a very high percentage (78%) felt that OBE as an approach was more demanding in planning and preparation when correlating and integrating projects and subjects; they also indicated that assessment was problematic and time allocation for each subject area could prove a daunting task. This could be partly due to the fact that some teachers still want to maintain a disciplined-based approach to teaching; they are not prepared to integrate, keeping a closed subject boundary.
Regarding OBE as an approach to teaching and learning in the classroom, teachers believed that OBE might increase their teaching competence. In general, teachers felt that, whatever way they incorporated music with other learning areas, OBE would certainly impact in a positive way on their teaching competence. All teachers agreed that OBE would be challenging whether they taught their subject as a closed or open subject.

The questionnaire also addressed assessment in relation to class music. The new South African curriculum, *Curriculum 2005* proposed that learners need to be assessed as part of an ongoing process. Ten possible types of assessment were listed in the questionnaire (Joseph, 1999, p.129) from which teachers were asked to indicate their preferences. Formal assessment was the most common form selected, as 90% of respondents use this method. 89% also applied ‘continuous’ means of assessment. In the majority of instances, no strict record of assessment was kept for music at the lower grades, even though 50% of respondents indicated that they used simple recall tests. When asked if teachers applied summative and formative types of assessment, a large percentage indicated ‘don’t know’ in the questionnaire. This may mean that these teachers were simply not aware of the other forms of assessment. Teachers indicated that assessment was a major concern and represents an area in need of teacher training, professional development and further research.

Regarding the styles of music taught, the results indicated that 94% of the respondents taught western classical music. This most probably reflects the type of training that these teachers received. Although South Africa is a multicultural society, most teachers have not been exposed to, nor are many qualified to teach, African or other
types of world music. It is self evident that, if students do not have an appreciation of ‘other’ types of music, or if teachers have no understanding of other types of music in the wider community, it will be difficult to teach the future generation of South Africans to understand and therefore be tolerant of the multicultural society in which they live. It is rather disconcerting that the teaching of western classical music is so dominant to the almost complete exclusion of African music. Indigenous music is highly favoured in many African and European countries, yet it is markedly absent from the music curriculum in both independent and state South African schools. Although all schools that responded to the questionnaire embraced a multi-racial student body, western classical music was the dominant musical genre as opposed to African, Chinese and Indian music. Teachers expressed positive views about including African and ‘world music’ in their lessons and saw the need to embrace and educate children about the indigenous musics of South Africa. If application of OBE to music education is to embrace a move from Eurocentricism to that of multiculturalism whereby the wider school community can be accommodated, then such shifts will need to be facilitated by teacher professional development.

Of the seventeen musical activities (experiences) listed in the questionnaire, most teachers indicated that singing, movement and playing instruments were those musical activities that children chiefly enjoyed and consequently were most often incorporated into lessons by the teachers (see Figure 1).
Although instrumental playing and moving to music were rated highly as activities to be engaged in, it was apparent from lesson observations as well as teachers responses to the questionnaire that improvisation was an area that was not well developed. According to open-ended responses on the questionnaire, teachers felt that some primary school children were physically too small to effectively play some instruments (melodic and non-melodic) which limited improvisation to body movements at the early levels of schooling (5-7 years). OBE proposes that students be more creative
and innovative and this can be realised in improvisation. The voice, together with body movements, is an excellent tool for improvisation at all levels of schooling, and if introduced as such, children “will reveal a broad spectrum of improvisatory and compositional processes” (Burnard, 1998, p.84). Improvisation in relation to OBE allows the students to apply their skills and knowledge, thus allowing them to think and act more independently. The learning task becomes a more student-directed rather than teacher-directed activity.

**Findings about Outcomes-Based Education**

The findings from this study are necessarily tentative because of the small sample and because they only reflect music teachers’ attitudes and opinions about OBE at the early stages of its implementation in 1998. This study confirmed the findings of other studies in South Africa which emphasised positive responses of teachers to the introduction of OBE (see Anstey, 1997, Manickchund, 1998, Garson, 1999, Potenza & Monyokolo, 1999). The new approach to teaching and learning also marks a major shift in the role expected of the teacher. Under OBE, it is necessary for the teacher to assume multiple roles; no longer is he/she just a transmitter of knowledge, rather he/she takes on the role of encourager, advisor, instructor, facilitator, mediator, assessor and partner (Lawson, Plummeridge & Swanwick, 1993, p.9). OBE places emphasis on preparing students for lifelong learning and not just for short term learning. As Killen (1996, p.5) expresses it, “Teaching is no longer defined as the transmission of knowledge; it is the process of helping students to understand information and to transform it into their own personal knowledge”.

Thus teachers in the present study generally indicated that they were challenged to be more innovative and creative in order to help their students succeed in achieving a set of learning outcomes. Music and arts education lend themselves to this approach. If teachers want to succeed with OBE, they need to adopt the position that there is no such thing as failure, only feedback and results.

Despite these optimistic possibilities for OBE in South Africa, the study also confirmed some criticisms of OBE. Jonathan Jansen (1997), a leading academic in South African education, believes that OBE will fail. He strongly contends that ‘the three R’s’ (reading, writing and arithmetic) will be replaced by ‘the three P’s’ (portfolios, projects and performance) which in turn will result in ‘the three D’s’ (deliberately dumbed down). As yet, not all schools have had access to the new documentation for *Curriculum 2005* and, moreover, many teachers in state schools expressed the view that it was simply not possible to implement OBE in the early part of the first year of its introduction.

Teachers in the present study claimed that the language used in official *Curriculum 2005* documents was difficult to understand and not all of the outcomes stated could be practically demonstrated, especially those dealing with attitudes, opinions and values. Similarly, assessment may prove to be a daunting task: “[T]he amount of attention and record keeping required of teachers to assess changes continually and qualitatively in Curriculum 2005 outcomes for whole classes and individuals is vast” (Schollar, 1997, p.13). Schollar reports that the degree of subjectivity and variation in standards evident in teacher assessment of pupils was unacceptably high when tried elsewhere. Currently there are no assessment criteria for class music from the Gauteng
Department of Education, Independent Examining Board or Independent Schools Council.

Teachers also reported their belief that OBE is a threat to traditional values of hard work in a competitive world. Because learners are allowed to work at their own pace and within their own time frame as part of the OBE approach, it may be conjectured that they no longer have the urge to compete and excel. In practical terms, this may result in the intelligent learner not being challenged and the slower-paced learner stagnating.

Despite the recent publication of the general curriculum framework in *Curriculum 2005*, there have still been no music education or ‘arts’ learning programmes produced to date (2002), either by the Gauteng Department of Education (Arts and Culture Learning Area Committee) or by the Independent Schools Council. These programmes are currently being formulated by the Standards Generating Body, namely the Arts and Culture Learning Area Committee. Until these programs are published, it will be very difficult for music educators to integrate and teach across the arts. In addition, as Hauptfleisch (1998, p.13) maintains, the use of cross-curricular themes and topics could create the false impression that music knowledge is being developed, while in fact learners were merely ‘dabbling’ in music activities. The findings from the questionnaire indicate that music teachers were concerned that this scenario could become the case if no proper planning and training was given to teachers of the ‘arts’.
Conclusion

The State of OBE in Music Education

Although the respondents in the present study were competent music specialists, they were not trained to implement OBE. They nevertheless felt confident about the new process because they taught in a learner-centred manner. These teachers were accountable for their program delivery and were generally focused on what the learner should know and do through multiple teaching strategies. *Curriculum 2005* contains no specific prescriptions for music; it is therefore in the hands of music educators to define a meaningful role for music within the Arts and Culture Learning Area. It would seem appropriate that some sort of matrix should be included in the Arts and Culture Learning Area to assist teachers with planning, as many teachers may find it difficult to apply the outcomes and performance levels to specific teaching programmes within the classroom. Although music teachers at independent schools are specialist teachers who have knowledge and skills to prepare their own programmes for class music, they would undoubtedly benefit from practical examples and resources being provided in order to implement OBE effectively.

Responses to the questionnaire revealed that specialist music teachers, although Western classically-trained, were generally open to different styles of music and types of activities. Given South Africa’s cultural diversity, teachers should be encouraged to incorporate African and ‘world music’ into class music lessons as this would help bring people (children) of different backgrounds together and would contribute positively towards nation building or ‘Masakhane’–the clarion cry introduced to South Africa by the post-apartheid government.
The questionnaire highlighted distinct difference between those teachers who preferred music as a discipline-based subject and those who wanted to integrate music with other subjects. By integrating the curriculum, it would seem that teachers are now beginning to acknowledge that making connections may actually reinforce skills and understanding more effectively than teaching in insular content areas (Burnaford, 1993, p. 44). Despite this, teachers were strongly supportive of a variety of teaching approaches being employed in the classroom, with theme- and team-teaching being highly favoured. Although music teachers were receptive to the idea of new challenges and opportunities facing both teachers and learners when utilising an integrated curriculum, they fully recognise the fact that they only see their students twice per week, which is necessarily a limitation to success.

It was evident that music teachers’ attitudes were unanimously positive towards their subject; they felt it contributed towards educating the whole child. However, they were concerned about proper planning, implementation and assessment. Although independent schools were well resourced for music, teachers felt that regular meetings for class music educators would prove to be useful and resourceful in both independent and state-aided school sectors.

**Recommendations for Further Action and Research**

Given that Gauteng represents a broad cross section of the population in South Africa, one of the limitations of the present study is that the findings only reflect the attitudes, opinions and perceptions of teachers who were all white and from independent schools; they were therefore not representative of all the racial groups in South Africa.
The study was also undertaken at the dawning of the OBE process in South Africa. A wider study, which would include both state and independent schools across all race groups would yield a more comprehensive set of data in terms of teachers’ attitudes and perceptions towards outcomes-based education, music education and its role in ‘Arts and Culture’-based learning.

In the case of South Africa, cross-curricular development in arts education should be developed for both independent and state-aided schools. Teachers in the present study reported that integrated arts programs are an area of concern. Such cross-curriculum programs need to be developed with the input from specialist ‘arts’ teachers in consultation with policy makers.

From the questionnaire data, it would seem necessary that tertiary institutions in South Africa keep abreast of the new system of education in terms of teacher training, assessment and development. A positive move in this direction is evident in recent course structuring for pre-service primary and secondary teacher education.

In terms of music education, teacher training courses at South African tertiary institutes need to be cognisant of African and ‘world music’ styles in order to cater for the multicultural and changing population. The ‘new’ South Africa through an OBE system aims to recognise all types of learners and to foster multiple teaching strategies. Accordingly, further research needs to be undertaken at both independent and state-aided schools regarding assessment in the ‘Arts and Culture’ learning area and lessons from abroad could be learnt to improve the situation of the arts in South Africa.
This article is based on the author’s doctoral thesis entitled: ‘Outcomes-Based Music Education in the Foundation Phase at Independent Schools in Gauteng, South Africa’, accepted by the University of Pretoria, South Africa in 1999.

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