

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER MAY/JUNE 2008

PROGRAMME : **MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS AND
MANAGEMENT**
: **MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
CURRICULUM AND TEACHING**

TITLE OF PAPER : **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHODS**

COURSE NUMBER : **EDF/EDC 621**

TIME ALLOWED : **TWO (2) HOURS**

INSTRUCTIONS : **ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS**

**THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN
GRANTED TO DO SO BY THE INVIGILATOR**

Question 1

Compulsory

Read the article and answer the questions that follow.

The following article is a shortened version of the article entitled *Shifting ground: making sense of context in examining HIV/AIDS and schooling*

Vaughn John and Peter Rule: *Journal of Education* No 38 by 2006. University of KwaZulu-Natal

Abstract

The authors are involved in a study that is investigating how HIV/AIDS affects schooling in Richmond, and how it intersects with other barriers to schooling in a context where the prevalence of HIV infection is high. Initial analysis in this study has indicated that an understanding of the context, particularly Richmond's violent past, is central to an understanding of HIV/AIDS and schooling. This article reports on a qualitative micro-study that emerges from the larger Richmond study. It attempts to provide a contextual understanding of Richmond as a geographic and socio-historic space, as a community and as a discursive space.

Introduction

The project can be described as a qualitative, localised study which draws on a wide range of stakeholders using participatory methods to understand how HIV/AIDS and other related barriers may affect various types of education provision in Richmond. The project is also keen to explore the epistemological value of participatory methodology. In a move away from large-scale surveys across a range of locations, the design for the University of Kwazulu Natal (UKZN) project was intended to capture both depth of experience and a range of perspectives in understanding the intersections between HIV/AIDS and other barriers to schooling within a limited geographic space. Providing a textured account of this space, to serve as one lens through which to view the data, is the central intention of this article.

Methodological approach

We need to distinguish the methodology for the research for this article from the methodology employed in the larger UKZN study. The UKZN study has a large team, is targeting a wide range of participants and is using several participatory methodologies. The authors of this article have been involved in the UKZN project and are responsible specifically for the data collection involving parents, caregivers and school governing body members. The idea for this article and the return to the field that it initiated emerged from the data already collected in the UKZN project. When looking at this data, we were struck by the frequency with which the past violence in Richmond featured as an anchor point for discussions on HIV/AIDS and a range of barriers to schooling. It occurred to us that understanding the data on barriers to schooling required a deeper understanding of the context from which the data had emerged. The violence appeared to be a central part of 'Richmond in context' thus generating a new research question: How does the historical context of violence inform HIV/AIDS and schooling in Richmond?

This set us off on a new and more focused phase of research. We examined a vast collection of secondary source data on the violence in Richmond including contemporary newspaper accounts, monitoring reports, sociological analyses and historical narratives. We re-examined transcripts in the UKZN project using the lens of violence. We also interviewed four purposefully selected key informants from Richmond; people who had lived in the area for many years and who were familiar with its history. Informants included an undertaker, a retired policeman, a retired policewoman and a school principal.

Our analysis of this data enabled us to identify key moments in the recent history of Richmond, which we present below in the form of a periodisation and a narrative. A thematic analysis of the data yielded a number of factors that were associated with Richmond's violent past and have a continuing impact on the Richmond community, and on schooling in particular. We shift from narrative to a more analytical discourse in discussing each of these in turn. Finally, employing grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), our analysis suggested a new conceptualisation of context in relation to HIV/AIDS and schooling. We theorise context in the last section of our article.

- (a) Explain fully why the present study was undertaken. [3]
- (b) What had the previous research overlooked which the researchers now felt was important? [3]
- (c) What aspect of the previous research in particular pointed to the need for the present research? [5]
- (d) What type of sampling was used in this new research/ in your view why was this sampling technique appropriate? [5]
- (e) Show how information contributed by each of the following informants would lead to a clearer understanding of the history of violence in Richmond.
 - i) Undertaker
 - ii) Retired policeman
 - iii) Retired policewoman
 - iv) School principal 4×5 = 20
- (f) In addition to the informants what were the other sources of data? [3]
- (g) Explain the meaning of the sentence 'We re-examined transcripts in the UKZN project using the lens of violence.' [4]
- (h) Cite at least one aspect of this research which strikes you as qualitative in nature. [3]
- (i) What do we learn from this research about how new researches originate? [3]

Total = 50 marks

2.
 - a) Differentiate between group interviews and focus group discussion.
 - b) Explain the role of the focus group as a research tool, showing clearly the strengths and limitation of focus group research?

[25 Marks]

3. Discuss points that you would consider in presenting a qualitative research report. How would you make your report more authentic?

[25 marks]