

## Can Qualitative Research Inform Policy Implementation? Evidence and Arguments from a Developing Country Context

*Brigitte Smit*

**Key words:** policy implementation and qualitative research, teacher voice, teacher experiences, teacher resistance, Atlas.ti, educational change

**Abstract:** How can qualitative research inform policy implementation? This article hopes to shed some light on this complex yet relevant issue and locates this inquiry in a transitional South African context. I intend to qualitatively reveal the local teacher voice, in times of transition and show how such knowledge could contribute to policy implementation. That said, I argue that although teachers play an important role in our education system, more often than not, the teacher voice is a silent voice, which implies that local knowledge for policy implementation might be underplayed, discounted or simply ignored. First, I briefly discuss the development of qualitative research in policy-oriented work. Second, I work from an interpretive perspective to illuminate teacher voice as local knowledge, discussing resistant behaviour and the responses of experienced teachers. Finally, I conclude how qualitative research offers substance and deep nuanced understandings of the complexities at the levels of policy implementation.

### Table of Contents

- [1. Introduction](#)
- [2. Problem Statement](#)
- [3. Aims of the Study](#)
- [4. Research Methodology](#)
- [5. Towards Qualitative Education Policy Research](#)
- [6. Putting Policy into Practice: A Conceptual Framework](#)
- [7. Discussion of the Findings: What Policy Makers Can Learn from Teachers](#)
- [8. Resistant Behaviour](#)
- [9. Experienced Teachers' Behaviour](#)
- [10. In Conclusion](#)

[References](#)

[Author](#)

[Citation](#)

### 1. Introduction

In this article, I intend to argue that qualitative research for education policy offers substance and deeper nuanced understandings of the complexities at the levels of policy implementation. It is based on an investigation into the experiences of primary (elementary) school teachers of education policy in South Africa. The broad purpose of this article is to discuss the possibilities of qualitative research for education policy implementation. [1]

*How can qualitative research inform policy implementation?* This key question guides the inquiry for this article, as I intend show some empirical evidence to substantiate my claim and to argue my case. I use an interpretive and qualitative

framework to design my study and present some theoretical and empirical evidence to respond to the stated research question. To begin with, not many education policy inquiries in South Africa have been undertaken inductively. That is why I have decided to conduct a micro-level inquiry, i.e. classroom level inquiry, into policy implementation, to show how qualitative inquiries can inform policy implementation. Also, micro-level understanding of policy implementation could narrow the gap between policy as theoretical text and policy as practice. Ultimately, I argue that better informed choices regarding policy implementation could be made if evidence of qualitative findings were to be seriously considered in the development and formulation of policy. [2]

## **2. Problem Statement**

More often than not, CROSSLEY and VULLIAMY (1995, p.6) argue that while national education policy influences teachers' work, there are hidden contextual micro decision-making processes and dynamics which have been ignored. These hidden dimensions—including teachers' emotional experiences and resistance to policy—impact the manner in which national and local (here provincial) education policy is (or is not) implemented at school and classroom level. It appears that teachers who construct, filter, mediate and shape their educational practice are not recognised as part of the education system in terms of their social and historic context and their subjective realities. Teachers do not receive policy as empty vessels or naïve readers. This implies that the real impact of policy implementation remains an intellectual problem. [3]

Qualitative and interpretive research can extend the comprehension of the vastness and complexity of such policy processes and may facilitate a deeper, sophisticated and more complex understanding, enabling and supporting the policy implementation process. In other words, people, processes, practices, and policies evoke interwoven and complex dynamics in the field of education. Such processes cannot be viewed in a linear approach, as if once policy has been initiated it is implemented as intended. On the contrary, as stated in the previous section, all too often teachers remain in the background, while policy makers at provincial and national level produce policy. Although teacher unions may represent them at policy level, teachers' voices are seldom heard. That said, little research is conducted that relates to the silent voices of the teachers, who are either overwhelmed "beyond their control" or "autonomous resisters or subverters of the status quo" (BOWE, BALL with GOLD, 1992). [4]

## **3. Aims of the Study**

This inquiry seeks to explore and explain how a group of teachers engage in policy implementation and aims to capture the dynamics of policy implementation from a qualitative and interpretive perspective. This descriptive exploration brings to light how qualitative research can inform policy implementation at a micro-level. [5]

#### 4. Research Methodology

This qualitative and interpretive inquiry deals with contextual issues pertaining to "what happens on the ground", or "the educational dynamics on the ground" (SAMOFF, 1994, p.144). These "on the ground" issues are revealed through five in-depth, non-directive interviews with elementary school teachers to sensitise, inform, and stimulate education policy process debates. These teachers were purposively sampled using the network strategy. These teachers were in the process of implementing new policy, in particular a new curriculum; the Outcomes Based Education Curriculum 2005. Numerous education policy changes saw the light after the abolishment of *apartheid* in South Africa. It is against this political transitional background that teachers were interviewed about their experiences regarding education policy change. All the teachers chose to speak about the curriculum change. I then transcribed the audio recordings, and analysed them inductively, using grounded theory approach, such as open coding, axial and selective coding, as described by STRAUSS and CORBIN (1990, 1998) implementing computer-aided qualitative data software, Atlas.ti (MUHR 1994, 1997a, 1997b). The key question for the interviews was how teachers experience policy. Importantly for this inquiry is that on the local/micro level in the education system, educators (teachers) take on a dynamic stance towards policy and often re-shape policy-makers' suggestions that fit their local contexts. This implies that teachers respond to the ideas they construe from policy, rather than some uniform, fixed vision of policy. [6]

#### 5. Towards Qualitative Education Policy Research

Conducting policy research and understanding how policy is implemented for lasting reform has been debated for many years. In the eighties, FINCH (1986) argued for instance, that qualitative research played only a minor role in policy-oriented work, that it had an underused potential, and that it should be developed in relation to policy-oriented research. She discussed various reasons for this. One, is that qualitative research methods were seen as soft, subjective and tentative, while the dominant quantitative approaches were said to be hard, objective and rigorous (FINCH, 1986, p.5). In the South African context this is still the case. Two, it relates to how policy itself was judged: Policy makers might see research in instrumental terms, while researchers might investigate the intrinsic value of policy. Put differently, research *for* policy, and research *of* policy. Three, she argued that research and policy were differently organised, notably in the time scale of research, which often was longer than policy makers were prepared to wait before coming to a decision (FINCH, 1986, p.139). And lastly, she contends that conceptually the worlds of the policy maker and the social scientist differed, and that this impacted on the focus and the approach to research and policy. The makers of social policy, including education policy, relied mostly on recommendations emanating from quantitative data analyses and neglected qualitative research (FINCH, 1986, p.110). [7]

Against this background, and many years later, research scholars and readers argued both the relevance and importance of qualitative research for education,

particularly for comparative and international studies, which often incorporate policy research. [8]

To begin with CROSSLEY and VULLIAMY (1995, p.2) in this context, they contend that:

"Qualitative research in education has a special potential in developing countries; for various historical and cultural reasons, education research in such countries has been dominated by positivist strategies. Many educational research questions in developing countries to which a quantitative research strategy has been applied when either a qualitative one or a combination of the two would have been more appropriate. ... [Importantly,] the narrative style of qualitative research reports can also be more accessible to a wider range of potential readers; and in predominantly oral cultures the advantages of personal fieldwork, in-depth interviews and observation are most significant. ... [However,] there remains a tendency in many developing countries for research and policy planning to be based on a system perspective that still neglects the realities of schooling in an everyday context." [9]

Appropriately STROMQUIST (1999, p.VI), too, makes a strong appeal:

"Comparative education needs more qualitative and ethnographic studies that illuminate complex processes such as educational decision making in governmental bureaucracies ... we hope to receive more studies that explore the processes of meaning-making in international and comparative education." [10]

Two pertinent issues from the above-mentioned section draw attention to first, the methodology of qualitative field research, such as narrative inquiries, by local, experienced teachers who could present findings that may be beneficial in policy and for more sophisticated analyses. This would imply that policy makers and policy researchers might acknowledge the wisdom and the expertise of teachers and build on that. Second, qualitative inquiry reveals nuanced understanding of policy that could lead to more focused and in-depth investigations of policy implementation. DYER (1999, pp.45-61) in this regard appropriately affirms, that policy implementation if not done properly, results in strong resistance and unexpected outcomes. In practice, ad hoc adjustments and short-term strategies for coping are made. This relates to a view that policy making is seen as more prestigious than policy implementation, which is often neglected. Essentially, how policy is viewed, understood and experienced, however, only becomes real once teachers attempt to implement policy. Mistakenly, it is thought that policy decisions automatically result in improved education practice. [11]

## **6. Putting Policy into Practice: A Conceptual Framework**

To unpack the meaning of teachers' understandings and experiences of education policy, calls for a conceptual background on the education policy and practice debate. Some underlying processes characterise the policy-practice interface. Generally speaking, it appears that many countries experience difficulty putting policy into practice. DE CLERQ (1997, p.129) argues in this regard that

"the evaluation of many World Bank policies has revealed remarkable discrepancy between their policies and what happens on the ground, especially in Africa". SAMOFF (1999, p.417) questions appropriately:

"What, then, is policy? From one perspective, the policy is what the ministry has promulgated, and what the teachers do is a deviation from official policy. From another perspective, the actual policy (i.e. the working rules that guide behaviour) is what the teachers are doing. In this view, the ministry documents are just that: official statements that may or may not be implemented and certainly do not guide what people actually do. Stated policy may thus be very different from policy in practice." [12]

The split between production and implementation of policy creates a direct top-down conception of the policy process, as if policy can "get done" to people. Teachers and schools appear to be disconnected policy receivers (BOWE et al., 1992, p.7), "absorbing implementors to deliver" the goods, excluded from the generation or the production of policy. Contrary to this perception, BOWE et al. (1992, p.9) have shown that education policy in the form of legislated texts is recontextualised through different kinds of interpretations. They maintain that "... it is not simply a matter of implementors following a fixed policy text and 'putting the Act into practice' " (BOWE et al., 1992, p.10). Instead, policy texts initiating educational need to be understood within a variety of contexts. As such, policy is by no means a fixed or rigid text; "instead it is a constantly changing series of texts whose expression and interpretation vary according to the context in which the texts are being put into practice" (BOWE et al., 1992 p.ix). Put slightly differently, OZGA (2000, p.2) summarises her view of policy, "as a process rather than a product, involving negotiation, contestations or struggle between different groups who may lie outside the formal machinery of official policy making." So, policy is contested and debated from contrasting and opposing points of view, which in itself may impede the implementation process. Evidently this is no simple process and requires not only more tentative approaches to its understanding, but also further investigation into its contexts. [13]

## **7. Discussion of the Findings: What Policy Makers Can Learn from Teachers**

Policy debates and policy development processes that are removed or uninformed from a local teacher knowledge base, which consists of experiences and understandings, may run the risk of unsuccessful or inadequate implementation. This is notably so if the inquiry is not grounded qualitatively in micro-level, school-based research—that is, research "on the ground". That is why I worked in an interpretive paradigm, which implies that selected aims construct an epistemological and ontological understanding in a trustworthy and authentic manner. To stay true to this approach I assumed that realities are varied, and that there are great differences in how different individuals shape reality (cf. DENZIN & LINCOLN, 2000). Presuppositions about education policy are powerful and often unconscious sources of behaviour. Put differently, educational policy is filtered by teachers, and those parts that "fit" with their personal perspectives and intuition are selected. This suggests that pre-existing

knowledge, attitudes and behaviour impact the responses, the meaning and the implementation of education policy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the realities of education policy will also be diversely constructed. [14]

Teachers can no longer be overlooked. The realisation that teachers are imperative as implementers of policy, calls for a focus on teachers who are often seen as either impervious or unaffected, or as resistant to education policy. This notion reflects certain reservations about stances that place teachers in the role of implementers of policy, discounting what BOWE et al. (1992, p.119) call different "interpretational stances", implying an active role on the part of the teacher. This resonates with HARGREAVES (1994, p.54); "what the teacher thinks, what the teacher believes, what the teacher assumes—all these things have powerful implications for the process, for the ways in which [curriculum] policy is translated into [curriculum] practice." [15]

Undoubtedly, implementation of policy poses several demands on teachers in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes. These demands cannot be met without interpretation or re-creation of policy. These interpreted versions of policy are created from personal, subjective frames of references. BOWE et al. (1992, p.22) refine this point:

"Practitioners do not confront policy texts as naïve readers; they come from histories, with experience, with values and purposes of their own, they have vested interests in the meaning of policy. Policies will be interpreted differently as the histories, experiences, values, purposes and interests which make up the arena differ. The simple point is that policy writers cannot control the meanings of their texts. Part of their texts will be rejected, selected out, ignored, deliberately misunderstood, responses may be frivolous, etc." [16]

This assumes that teachers' understandings of educational policy impact educational practice since they are the most prominent persons mediating and implementing. They become part of the interactive process of reflection and action with regard to the intentions of policy and their personal response to a particular historical context. According to FULLAN (1982, p.120) an understanding of the subjective world of those involved in a process is a necessary precondition. The subjective way in which teachers mediate meaning through assumptions and perceptions, and act with regard to policy has an impact on the possibilities of realising the educational ideals represented by policy. This implies that teachers play an active role in the education policy process. They construct their own frame of thinking and their meaning. In this context BRUNER (1996, pp.19ff) argues that "the 'world' we inhabit is a constructed one. As such, reality is made or created and not found." Similarly, FULLAN (1991, p.43) clarifies this issue: "The real crunch comes in the relations between these new programs or policies and the thousands of subjective realities embedded in people's individual and organizational contexts and their personal histories." [17]

Subjective realities, visible in emotional responses cannot be divorced from intellectual stances (cf. HARGREAVES, 1998; BEATTY, 2000), such as contestations, debates and other cognitive constructions of knowledge. These emotional responses are evident in the empirical materials, which are supported by my review of the literature, although "emotions are virtually absent from the literature and advocacy of educational" (HARGREAVES 1998, p.559). He (ibid. p.560) holds that "another misconception about emotions is that they are somehow separate from reasoning", and cautions, "consistently dispassionate educators are highly dysfunctional ones". [18]

The leading theme from my empirical interview data, recounts the emotional responses and reactions towards education policy. The mere fact that the emotional dimension emerged from the data so distinctly shows clearly that it cannot be ignored. Also, if we want understand how teachers interpret and implement policy, such cognition cannot be fully grasped without recognising the emotions and feelings that drive and shape them (cf. FINEMAN, 1993, p.1, EISNER 1998a). Unfortunately, though, "relatively few theoreticians dealing with the epistemological issues in education underscore the importance of feeling as a source of knowing" (cf. EISNER, 1998b, p.115). Also, "emotions are virtually absent from the literature and advocacy of educational change ... it is as if teachers think and act; but never really feel" (HARGREAVES, 1998, p.559). The theme of emotions manifests mostly in teachers' resistant behaviour and teachers' experienced behaviour. [19]

## 8. Resistant Behaviour

To begin with, education policy can be in the eye of the beholder and if the beholder has initiated the policy, then it probably is seen as logical, rational and well thought out. If, however, the beholder sees policy as illogical, irrational and improperly conceived, more than likely policy will be resisted, either implicitly or explicitly. In the educational field, resistance comes mostly from teachers for whom the policy has the greatest impact. Subsequently, if policy feels threatening—particularly when it affronts deeply-embedded assumptions about the interaction of education, power, culture, and society—then conflict may arise between those who make policy happen and those who resist it. While not unique to educational organisations, resistance manifests most frequently in relation to policy text. Empirical data revealed that some teachers are anxious: "*it [policy] instils more fear, more fear ...*" (P4 [participant number 4] 4:41 564-578).<sup>1</sup> Political reactions to policy may relate to fear of loss of rights, status and privileges. P4 (4:14 148-159) expresses her views on the politically-driven changes in this country and concludes that they were necessary. She does, however, raise some concerns of uncertainty:

---

1 P4 refers to the fourth participant (as P4 in the Atlas.ti programme for qualitative data analysis), 4:41 refers to code 41 in the fourth interview, and the subsequent numerals refer to the line numbers of the verbatim quotation. This pattern is followed throughout. Author's note: Interview data in italic (indented) is verbatim, and not edited.

"I can understand and I really have a compassion for that, that a policy change was needed to include people who could have been formerly excluded from certain things and I can see that with a new government ... I don't know though, a whole new system that we are going to face as far as teaching is concerned ...?" [20]

P2 (2:50 280-284) also expresses some political mistrust:

"So I just feel that you cannot throw something out. What they did was they disbanded the old regime, well everything to do with old regime to go and it has to go immediately, that was the error." [21]

Policy that elicits negative reactions is usually perceived as forced upon people rather than negotiated. P6 (6:16 75-76) comments in this regard that "*those who do not participate in the planning [of policy] have problems implementing policy*". Put differently, policy which people feel they had no hand in developing, bring forth specially negative and uncomfortable emotions. Thus, the role of perceptions and teacher non-participation in policy processes cannot be ignored. [22]

Appropriately, COREY (1995, pp.106-107) cautions that unless resistant behaviour is recognised and explored it can seriously interfere with organisational processes. It is not something that can be easily overcome since it is an integral part of defensive approaches to life. Often it is precisely the protection from anxiety that causes resistant behaviour, which is evident from teachers' responses. Worthy of note is the direct correlation between resistant and anxious behaviour, which can facilitate nuanced understanding of education policy. Also, some teachers may show an unwillingness to co-operate (rather than overt resistance) when they sense perceived unqualified leadership, lack of trust or political issues. [23]

## 9. Experienced Teachers' Behaviour

Experienced teachers have their own unique understanding of education policy. Empirical data, show that experienced teachers present their resistance in unique ways. Many have been teaching for many years and have developed their own ways of doing things—"old recipes work" (P1 1:22 144-151)—which fit their situations. Based on hard data, teachers are "*principally*" reluctant to abandon tried and tested methods for new ones, which they fear will fail. P1 (1:22 144-151) shares her viewpoint:

"I must say your older staff feels very threatened always. They feel that they have a recipe that works and so on." [24]

She (1:75 381-385) elaborates:

"So suddenly for somebody like me I mean I have been teaching for ten years, to suddenly be told you know ten years in private education that from now onwards you will behave according to this set piece of paper." [25]

Teaching experience can also be defined differently in that some may see it as doing the same thing for many years, while others may see it as doing something different in a shorter period of time. P2 (2:67 394-397) expresses her concern with doing more of the same in education:

"You know some teachers will use it as a compliment to themselves that they are doing exactly the same thing as they did 20 years ago." [26]

This relates to teachers, who doubt their own ability to learn new approaches and methods. They fear that they will have to learn too many new things. Hence, they will have to work harder and consequently resist the policy process so much the more. These experienced teachers have seniority by virtue of their age and can have considerable influence on younger and junior staff. Even though the policy is legally enforced it is possible to go through the motions and present an *appearance* of policy implementation taking place (cf. P3 3:55 574-583). Needless to add that policy can be overtly or covertly sabotaged by doing things wrong or by blatantly refusing to co-operate, which clearly correlates with the notion of resistance. Younger teachers tend to show more enthusiasm and commitment to change than older staff, although they lack the skills and expertise that is necessary. [27]

The older, more experienced staff are more resistant to change and less likely to believe that policy change will work. Interview data reveals that "*a lot of your younger staff are quite keen*" (P1 1:22 144-151). Also, P1 (1:91 494-498) explains that if policy "*feels imposed*" it leads to resistance. HUBERMAN (1973, p.45) supports this view and remarks that if policy is viewed as an imposition, people react defensively and regress (cf. COREY, 1995) to former practices, often secretly. Teachers may suggest that policy changes have indeed been implemented or are taking place, but in reality, the gap between rhetoric and practice is wide, as discussed earlier. Mostly it is a matter of "business as usual" in the classroom despite legally imposed policy. Imposition of education policy often elicits some form of criticism, which inevitably colours teachers' perceptions and ensuing responses. Imposed and forced education policy implies an official authority, which may challenge the professional experience and expertise of teachers. This challenge or the perceived confrontation is viewed with greater disfavour by older, experienced staff. And lastly, apart from being "*thrown into the deep end*" (P3 3:35 255-258), policy implementation also depends on the response of the principal:

"It also depends on your principal ... and what does your principal expect? We are lucky our principal does also resist change you know, to the extent he says you do not throw away what works for you, you carry on with that, you add to it" (P3 3:56 590-595). [28]

## 10. In Conclusion

In this article I argued that qualitative research for education policy offers substance and deeper nuanced understanding of the complexities at the level of policy implementation, presenting empirical data through the reflections of some teachers. Theoretical data showed how in the past the quantitative approaches to policy-oriented work dominated the research. In later years the need for different lenses to capture and analyse complex policy issues were expressed. I used themes from the empirical data to answer this research question. I showed theoretically and empirically, that qualitative research can contribute to the policy knowledge base, particularly when it can add value to the deeper complexities of policy implementation. Furthermore, research in the past focussed mostly on the generation or production of policy, while little attention was paid to what happens on the ground, at the micro levels where policy text translates into practice. It is precisely at this level where research can tap into a vivid information base of teachers' understandings and experiences of policy. This rich source of local knowledge has been described here in terms of teachers' resistance to policy, and how experienced teachers might impact the policy implementation or non-implementation process. [29]

## References

- Ball, Stephen & Bowe, Richard (1992). Subject Departments and the 'Implementation' of National Curriculum Policy: An Overview of the Issues. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 24(20), 97-115.
- Beatty, Brenda (2000). The Emotions of Educational Leadership. Paper presented to the Australian Association for Research in Education Annual Conference, Sydney Australia, Dec. 3-8 2000. Available at: <http://www.soe.waikato.ac.nz/elc/beatty.html> (broken link, FQS, September 2003)
- Bowe Richard & Ball, Stephen with Gold, Anne (1992). *Reforming Education and Changing Schools. Case Studies in Policy Sociology*. London: Routledge.
- Bruner, Jerome (1996). *The Culture of Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Corey, Gerald (1995). *Theory and Practice of Group Counselling*. Fourth Edition. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.
- Crossley, Michael & Vulliamy, Graham (1995). *Issues and Trends in Qualitative Research: Potential for Developing Countries*. Paper presented at the Oxford International Conference on Education and Development: Globalisation and Learning, September, New College, Oxford, UK.
- Crossley, Michael & Vulliamy Graham (1997). *Qualitative Educational Research in Developing Countries*. New York: Garland.
- De Clercq, Francine (1997). Policy Intervention and Power Shifts: An Evaluation of South Africa's Education Restructuring Policies. *Journal of Education Policy*, 12(3), 127-146.
- [Denzin, Norman](#) & Lincoln, Yvonna (Eds.) (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.
- Dyer, Caroline (1999). Researching the Implementation of Educational Policy: A Backward Mapping Approach. *Comparative Education*, 35(1), 45-61.
- Eisner, Elliot (1998a). *The Enlightened Eye. Qualitative Inquiry and the Enhancement of Educational Practice*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Eisner, Elliot (1998b). *The Kind of Schools We Need. Personal Essays*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Eisner, Elliot (1999). *Concerns, Dilemmas, and Possibilities for Qualitative Research in the Next Millennium*. Keynote address: Advances in Qualitative Methods, Alberta, Canada.
- Finch, Janet (1986). *Research and Policy. The Uses of Qualitative Methods in Social and Educational Research*. London: Falmer.

- Fineman, Stephen (1993). *Emotion in Organizations*. London: Sage.
- Fullan, Michael (1982). *The Meaning of Educational Change*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Fullan, Michael (1991). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. 2nd Edition. London: Cassell.
- Hargreaves, Andrew (1994). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times*. Toronto: OISE Press.
- Hargreaves, Andrew (1998). The Emotions of Teaching and Educational Change. In Andrew Hargreaves (Ed.), *International Handbook of Educational Change* (pp.558-570). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Huberman, Michael (1973). *Understanding Change in Education: An Introduction*. Paris: Unesco.
- Muhr, Thomas (1994). *Atlas.ti Computer Aided Text Interpretation and Theory Building. User's Manual. Release*. Berlin: Scientific Software Development.
- Muhr, Thomas (1997a). *Visual Qualitative Data Analysis Management Model Building in Education Research and Business. User's Manual and Reference. New version 4.1 designed for Windows 95 and Windows NT*. Berlin: Scientific Software Development.
- Muhr, Thomas (1997b.) *Atlas.ti—The Knowledge Workbench. Visual Qualitative Data Analysis Management Model Building*. Berlin: Scientific Software Development.
- Ozga, Jennifer (2000). *Policy Research in Educational Settings. Contested Terrain*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Samoff, Joel (1999). No Teacher Guide, No Textbooks, No Chairs. Contending with Crisis in African Education. In Robert Arnove & Carlos Torres (Eds.) , *Comparative Education. The Dialect of the Global and the Local* (pp.393-431). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Strauss, Anselm & [Corbin, Juliet](#) (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. London: Sage.
- Strauss Anselm & Corbin, Juliet (1998). *Basics of Qualitative Research. Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage.
- Stromquist, Nelly (1999). Editorial. *Comparative Education Review*, 43(4), i-v.

## Author

BRIGITTE SMIT (PhD) is a senior lecturer in the Department of Education Management and Policy Studies, in the Faculty of Education, at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. She teaches Comparative Education and Qualitative Research Methodology. She is also a senior researcher in the Centre for Educational Evaluation and Assessment at the University of Pretoria.

Contact:

Brigitte Smit

Department of Education Management and Policy Studies  
Faculty of Education  
0002 University of Pretoria  
SOUTH AFRICA

E-mail: [bsmit@hakuna.up.ac.za](mailto:bsmit@hakuna.up.ac.za)

## Citation

Smit, Brigitte (2003). Can Qualitative Research Inform Policy Implementation? Evidence and Arguments from a Developing Country Context [29 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 4(3), Art. 6, <http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs030363>.