Activity 5 — Understanding the newspaper

ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

In this activity students examine information from a table given in a newspaper article. They are required to read values in rows and columns and understand the relationship between them, including those with three variables. They are working with much larger numbers in this exercise and accurate calculator work is needed. The context is skills development projects in the provinces organised by the Department of Labour. The Specific Outcomes and Assessment Criteria addressed by this activity are: SO1 – AC1, 2, 3; SO2 – AC2, 5.

MANAGING THIS ACTIVITY

This activity needs to be located in its social context and could be introduced through a class discussion around the high unemployment in South Africa, and the need for skills development. Ask students to describe any skills development programmes that they know about and discuss to what extent they have been successful. Explain to them that the extract they will study in this activity — taken from a wall chart published in the Mail and Guardian by Independent Newspapers and the Department of Labour — is only one small project in a much bigger national strategy of the Department of Labour. The aim of this strategy is to halve unemployment by the year 2014. The government has spent almost R690-million over four years to ensure that over 380 000 unemployed people could benefit from these programmes. Students will be looking at the figures for the Northern Cape Province as well as a case study called 'Sunshine Farming' which is operating in that province.

5.1 The tables show the numbers of unemployed people in the Northern Cape Province who have been trained per year. Draw students' attention to the fact that the title of the table is very important, as one can easily read a whole table of figures and miss the point of what is being shown. The table also shows the number of unemployed people trained per category — gender, qualification and age group. The time period is four years and two months — the years 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003 and the first two months of 2004.

5.2 1 830 people were trained in 2001 in the Northern Cape. Find this figure by reading down the column 'Total trained' and across at 2001.

5.3 1 585 females. Find this figure by reading down the column 'female' and across at the year 2003. The total trained in 2003 was 3 054 so the percentage that were female is :

$1\,585 \div 3\,054 \times 100 = 51{,}9\%$

5.4 Look down the 'male' column and across the 'total' row to find 4 591 males out of a total of 9 937 trained, which is $4\,591 \div 9\,937 \times 100 = 46{,}2\%$.

5.5 Look at the second table to find 'split according to ages'. Look at the row of figures for the year 2000 and search for the highest one. Look up to find what the name of this column is. We see 606 is the highest figure and it is in column '26 – 35', so most people trained in 2000 were in the age group 26 – 35 and this was a total of 606 people.

5.6 Yes. Look across the rows for all the other years and you will observe that the highest figure is always in the same column.

5.7 This question requires you to look at both tables. In the second table, look down the column 46+ and across the year 2004 to find that 43 were trained. Then go to the first table and look down the column 'total trained' and across 2004 to find 254 trained in total. To find the percentage of people trained in the 46+ age group multiply the fraction by 100: $43 \div 254 \times 100 = 16{,}9\%$.

5.8 Year 2000: $281 \div 1848 \times 100 = 15{,}2\%$

Year 2001: $163 \div 1830 \times 100 = 8{,}9\%$

Year 2002: $541 \div 2951 \times 100 = 18{,}3\%$

Year 2003: $654 \div 3054 \times 100 = 21{,}4\%$

We see the percentages are fairly consistent except for a drop in 2001.

5.9 Yes. Look at the 5 columns 'split according to qualifications'. The highest figure across the row for 2000 is 716, which is in the junior column. Looking across the year 2001, however, the highest figure is 835, which is in the senior qualification column.

5.10 Yes. The column 'Post-school' consistently has the lowest figure for the year. This is probably because a smaller percentage of people with post-school qualifications are unemployed. The job possibilities are probably better, so fewer would be involved in skills-training projects.

5.11 We would look at the row for 2003 in the second table and add all the people in all age groups: 47 + 836 + 926 + 591 + 654 = 3054.

5.12 Read in the case study under the title 'profile of beneficiaries' to find 11 females were trained and find the total trained was 19, by looking under the heading 'number of people trained'. This gives a percentage as follows: 11 ÷ 19 × 100 = 57,9%.

5.13 The cost table lists only three skills under 'Sunshine milling'. The most expensive is communications at a cost of R13 200,00 out of a total of R 30 500,00, giving a percentage of: 13200 ÷ 30500 × 100 = 43,3%.

5.14 Weed foliage and pest control is the most expensive at R7 500,00 out of a total of R31 800,00 giving a percentage of: 7 500 ÷ 31 800 × 100 = 23,6%.

5.15 Add the two sections to find the total cost: R30 500,00 + R31 800,00 = R62 300,00.

5.16 There were 19 people trained at a total cost of R62 300,00 so the average cost of training one beneficiary is 62 300 ÷ 19 = R3 278,95.

This activity could usefully finish with a discussion on the cost per beneficiary — is the cost of training surprising? What are the implications for the state? And for the individual?

Activity 5 — Understanding the newspaper

In Handout 5 you have been given tables of information for the Northern Cape Province and a case study of one of the projects running in that province. Use this data sheet to answer the questions that follow:

5.1 What is the overall information that is being shown on the given tables and what is the time period shown?

5.2 How many people were trained in 2001 in the Northern Cape?

5.3 How many of the people trained in 2003 were female? What percentage of the total people trained in 2003 were female ?

5.4 What fraction of the total number trained, were male? What percentage is this?

5.5 In which age group were the most people trained in 2000? How many is this?

5.6 Would it be true to say that this age group had the highest numbers in all the other years as well?

5.7 What percentage of all the people trained in 2004 were in the 46+ age group?

5.8 Does this percentage for the 46+ age group stay fairly consistent in the other four years? Calculate the percentage for each year to help you answer this question.

5.9 Would it be true to say that in 2000 most people trained had a junior qualification, while in 2001 most had a senior qualification? Use numbers to help you answer.

5.10 Would it be true to say that in all cases mentioned, post-school qualifications was the smallest group? Why, do you think, this is the case?

5.11 We can read from the first table that the total number of people trained in 2003 was 3 054. If we only had access to the second table, how else could we reach this same answer?

5.12 In the case study 'Sunshine Farming', what percentage of the beneficiaries were female (a beneficiary is someone who benefits from the training)?

5.13 Consider the cost of providing skills in milling. Which skill was the most expensive to provide? What percentage of the milling cost is this?

5.14 In garlic production, what costs the most and what percentage of the total garlic production cost is this?

5.15 What is the total cost of running both parts of this project?

5.16 Now calculate the average cost to train one beneficiary.

DATA SHEET
Unemployed people trained per province per year

Province: Northern Cape

Year	Total trained	Split per gender		Split according to qualifications				
		Female	Male	None	Primary	Junior	Senior	Post-School
2000	1 848	1 048	800	74	424	716	600	34
2001	1 830	968	862	35	312	631	835	17
2002	2 951	1 585	1 366	79	523	1 200	1 138	11
2003	3 054	1 585	1 469	105	737	1 033	1 161	18
2004 Jan/Feb	254	160	94	4	60	127	62	1
TOTAL	**9 937**	**5 346**	**4 591**	**297**	**2 056**	**3 707**	**3 796**	**81**

Year	Split according to age				
	15 - 18	19 - 25	26 - 35	36 - 45	46+
2000	50	561	606	350	281
2001	57	641	653	316	163
2002	57	813	895	645	541
2003	47	836	926	591	654
2004 Jan/Feb	2	50	93	66	43
TOTAL	**213**	**2 901**	**3 173**	**1 968**	**1 682**

Source: Extract from a wall chart in the Mail and Guardian celebrating 10 years of freedom, published by Independent Newspapers and the Department of Labour.

CASE STUDY

Name of project: Sunshine Farming — Northern Cape Province

The project is situated in Hopetown and has two components, namely garlic production and milling production. The project produces and sells maize and garlic to local farmers and to the community at large, providing a needed service at an affordable price in proximity to an area with a high rate of unemployment and poverty.

Number of people trained: 19

- Milling production: 10
- Garlic production: 9

Profile of beneficiaries: 11 females and 8 males

- Milling production: 7 females and 3 males
- Garlic production: 4 females and 5 males

Skills acquired (Costs):

Sunshine milling	
Financial management	R 10 200,00
Marketing management	R 7 100,00
Communication skills	R 13 200,00
Total	**R 30 500,00**
Sunshine garlic production	
Business skills, agriculture	R 2 800,00
Weed foliage and pest control	R 7 500,00
Vegetable propagation	R 3 630,00
Cultivation of potatoes	R 4 770,00
Basic bookkeeping	R 6 000,00
Marketing management	R 7 100,00
Total	**R 31 800,00**